

In general, I don't like ridiculously long combos. My ideal max combo length is around 10 hits or less and with short supers that don't take forever. The system my game uses is a reflection of that. Basically, the generally chain rules are comparable to the "Simple" magic series. Well really, it's closer to Blade Arcus rules, but I know more people here are more familiar with the various Capcom magic series chains.

What I mean is that you can chain a light into a medium into a heavy, but you can't zig zag and do a high and low light in the same combo, for example. So as such, your basic ground chain is 3 hits. In addition, you can cancel into your command normal if it's of the same or higher strength as your current button. However, most characters aren't designed to have comboable command normals from those situations. For example, Winifred has a 6B overhead, but it's a reset during her ground chain rather than a move she can combo into from any A or B move. Or Gwendolyn has a 6C launcher, but it's not a combo tool. It functions more like Rainbow Mika's 6HP. So its utility is more for plus frames or punish launches.

I'm considering allowing some characters to cancel into their earlier command normals. Something like cl.B into 6A and it will combo. If you've ever played DBFZ, it's like how Vegito can reverse beat into his 2L for longer pressure strings. But I don't think I want that to be a universal system. Probably something only a few characters like Alice can do, since she's supposed to be the high pressure, low health aggression character.

Air combos will primarily be limited to anti-airs. There's a universal 6P anti-air and your AA combo is typically something short like 6A > j. A B C > Ender. What makes anti-airs different in this game is that

air moves typically cause more dizzy than ground moves. So even though there is good air movement, if you actually do get hit with an anti-air (and you need to spend a finite resource to air guard), then you take a significant hit to your stun gauge. That being said, there are 3 ways to end your air combo. You can use the damage/stun ender, which provides more damage to the stun gauge, the knockdown ender, which makes the opponent fall closer to you, or the resource option, which lets you get both good stun and a hard knockdown, but costs either a super or some other unique thing from your character.

Oh, I forgot to actually explain the basic combo structure for a ground combo. It's like 2/5A > 2/5B > 2/5C > Command normal (assuming you have one that combos here) > Special > Super.

An important thing to note is that there is an actual limit on combos in the game. The working name for this mechanic is "Repetition Curse". The way it works is that if any move is repeated in a combo, the opponent immediately enters an invincible falling state where they land on the ground in a soft knockdown state. In other words, it immediately ends your combo. This is dangerous for the attacker because the opponent will typically recover before them. So if you're trying to force some kind of air loop, then you might end up getting hit with an anti-air into stun from that. I'm sure some players will still try to abuse that, so to further discourage them from attempting to repeat moves in a juggle combo, I may add the added bonus that the opponent gains an additional resource from this. Which is a big deal, as you don't gain meter on getting hit in Blades and Beasts.

If that sounds too limiting to you, there is in fact one big exception to this rule. You have access to the Extra Roll mechanic. By spending 80% of your Shield meter (which is used for Supreme Guard), you can cancel your current move and then the combo limit is reset. In other words, you can perform your ground chain again or whatever it is you so desire.

So a longer combo you could perform with Winifred would be like j.C > 5A > 5B > 5C > 6D > 214D > Extra Roll > 5A > 5B > 5C > 6D > 214D > 236BC.

(You can cancel level 1 and 2 supers as well, but most characters don't have just raw damage level 1 supers. Most are utility supers.)

But this, of course, would be something you can only do maybe twice in a match at best. The reason for this being that resources don't reset at the end of the round. So by using that to come back from a deficit when down a round, you're at a huge disadvantage in the next round since you spent everything on that one combo.

There is one last special mechanic related to combos that I'll mention: Dire Hit.

The way counters work in this game is that if you hit an opponent during the startup frames of an attack, you get the basic Critical Hit. This has the same hitstun as a normal hit, but it does more damage and dizzy. However, against certain types of attacks like whiffed command throws or blocked reversals, you get something better. The Dire Hit state is invoked when they enter their recovery animation. The way it works, you get the benefit of increased damage/dizzy like a Critical hit, but you also gain an additional extra hit in the combo. You can do any one normal beforehand and then cancel it into whatever you wish. So for example, the standard route is 5C > 5A > 5B > 5C > Special (> optional Super) for damage. However, you get something even better than that if the opponent has a reversal that raises them in the air like a Dragon Punch. You can 6P anti-air them before they hit the ground. And as I mentioned before, the air stun is so deadly, it's worth doing over a dire hit combo if you wish to invoke stun faster instead. That is to say, even with the Dire Hit, you'll do roughly 35% stun damage from a typical ground chain. But the anti-air route, while less damaging, will do around 50% damage to the stun gauge. So it becomes a matter of judging the situation based on the opponent's current health and stun value.

But really, for most of the match and with most characters, you'll just be doing
A > B > C > 214C > okizeme

Also worth noting, most supers have a relatively short super flash. Like around ST levels where you have time to see it and input a super flash reversal, but it's not obscenely long. The supers themselves are similarly short. I think I mentioned that before, but here's another example. Suzette's level 2 is called Lucky Seven. She just sets a big seven card on the ground and then she can move again. It's about as long as an activate type V-Trigger. That's it. So the whole sequence is roughly 2 or 3 seconds in total. Or if we're speaking of level 3s, they're short, too. If you've ever played Chaos Code, it's like their level 3 supers. Short and snappy, only maybe 5 seconds max (and often shorter.) For example, Gwen's level 3 (which you can't land in a combo anyway) has her bite you, slam you to the ground, then smash you with her axe. Maybe a slight flourish after that to sell the hit and its impact, but again, I can convey that in like 5 seconds or possibly less.

But no, nothing like ground bounce or wall bounce as a universal mechanic. I want to make the game more interesting in ways that people deal with pressure, move around the field, et cetera. Which is why I'm thinking about things like having some stages be longer and having a special rule like "On this stage, you build more meter by using projectiles" so that zoning can be more useful on those stages and encourage the characters that have poor/no zoning to play even more aggressively and not let the ranged characters benefit, or "On this stage, your walkspeed is slightly higher" to make throws better, given that the game uses 1 button throws that you need to walk in order to execute.

Regarding the dizzy state, I actually don't like how a lot of airdashers handle stuns. In Chaos Code, for example, stun is basically just a checkmate. Like Guilty Gear, stun doesn't give much scaling (if any), so it's just a fresh new combo that will probably kill. I think stun resets scaling in KOF, too. Or at least, you're basically near death when you're about to get stunned in KOFXV anyway, so it doesn't matter much. Just about anything will kill for a lot of characters. At least the ones with shorter combos. Ash and Joe notwithstanding. I think that SFV had a good stun system because the combo was still scaled, so you got to do extra hits and build more meter, but the opponent didn't just get killed and could actually come back from that situation for a potential reversal.