

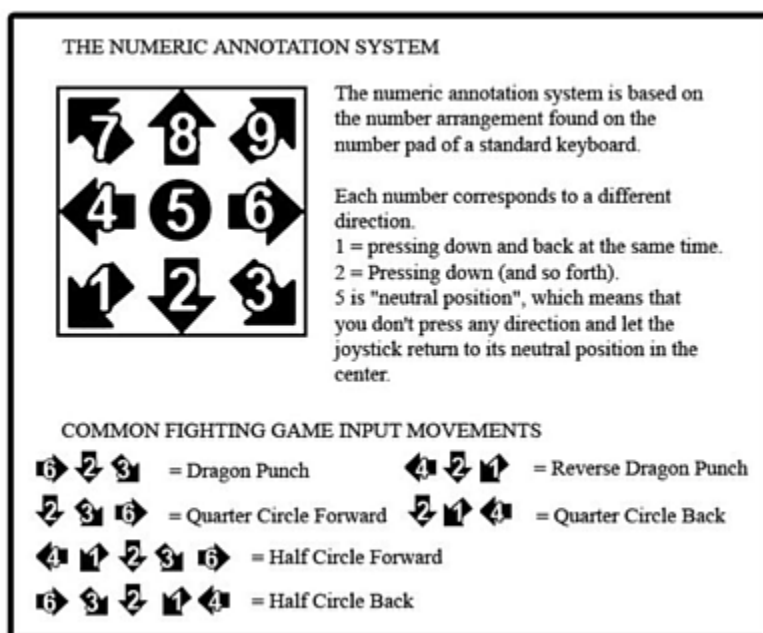
# In Under Night 101

*By: Salty*

*Edited by foxof*

Multiple terms used in here can be found in the FG Glossary [here](#), please reference it if you are ever confused!

This document also uses numpad notation, feel free to refer to this image if you are not used to using it:



**DISCLAIMER:** If you are new player to fighting games or aren't comfortable with some of the concepts mentioned, there will be a \* on pieces that are made for less experienced players. These are recommendations towards a particular playstyle with tips that will help you improve at those approaches. If you feel comfortable with the basics and want to refine your play, you can take them into consideration.

## Introduction to Under Night:

Q. Who do I play?

A. Play whoever you think is cool and/or fun! If you aren't familiar with the characters in Under Night, this video can give you a starting point to finding a character you click with.

<https://youtu.be/A-s7rb5hAFQ?si=yPg3VdpSRLQSH1SZ>

As an aside, the game is balanced well enough that tier placements in Under Night largely do not matter. Case in point, Waldstein got third at Combo Breaker 2022 and easily could've won that event.

Q. Where can I find good information on my character?

A. The [Under Night In-Birth Discord server](#) has a series of character channels made just for this, and a wiki of each character is generally in the pins. Please check the pins of the associated character channels to see common information they might have stored. There is also a vod storage that can be found [here](#).

Q. What is the bar on the bottom of the screen?

A. The bottom bar is *GRD*, and after the middle circle completes 1 revolution, the player with the most GRD blocks wins the *vorpals cycle* and gains access to a set of buffs.

The first is the ability to *chain shift*. Chain shift (or "CS") allows a player to freeze the screen. On defense, it is used to see what the attacker is doing and potentially use a reversal if the attacker is vulnerable to one. On offense and in neutral, it is used to cancel special attacks to start or extend pressure.

The second is a damage boost. Winning the vorpal cycle gives a 10% damage boost. A new mechanic introduced in UNI2 is *celestial*, which is activated when a vorpal cycle is won with more than 6 GRD blocks. When a player wins celestial, all 12 blocks of the GRD gauge are instantly given to them. Instead of a 10% damage boost, the player gains a 20% damage boost.

Finally, using chain shift converts the current number of GRD blocks into meter. When celestial is immediately chain shifted, it can fill the entire meter gauge!

Winning the vorpal cycle is extremely important. Gaining GRD = based, losing GRD = cringe.

Q. I don't know what to do first to get better!

A. If you're a beginner or a newer player, you have the freedom to pick anything to get better at, and you'll drastically improve. There is no "correct" way to start your own personal improvement. I recommend fully reading this doc and then choosing something you want to improve at first or copy from another top player.

## How to run offense:

Under Night, at the end of the day, is a fighting game, and follows a majority of the principles that are found in normal fighting games.

Offense in under night can be run very straightforward, especially as a rushdown character. This section will cover offense at a general level, however some characters (ex: Hilda, Vatista, Yuzuriha) might not use everything found in here.

[Video by Mo.Sin I recommend to check out on pressure](#)

### **Basic Blockstring:**

After you have found a character that you enjoy, spend some time getting down a simple combo and an idea of a basic blockstring. My general suggestion for one is one that follows an A normal meaty\* that uses a majority of staggerable options which could lead to throw. This blockstring should end safely and in a way you can dash back in to "loop" this blockstring if the opponent doesn't contest the dash.

\*Note: a "meaty" is an attack that hits the opponent on their wakeup in the later active frames. In the case of UNI, you can use a meaty A normal to recover fast enough to block a wakeup *veil off* ("VO"), a universal reversal. If you are coming from Granblue, you may know this as a "safejab."

For example, if I use

2AA (delay) 2B (delay) 2C

This string contains two frame traps and will condition the opponent to stay blocking. However, once the opponent believes that I will complete the string, I can instead use

2AA (dash) 2AA

Or, instead I could use

2AA (delay) 2B (no cancel) (dash throw)

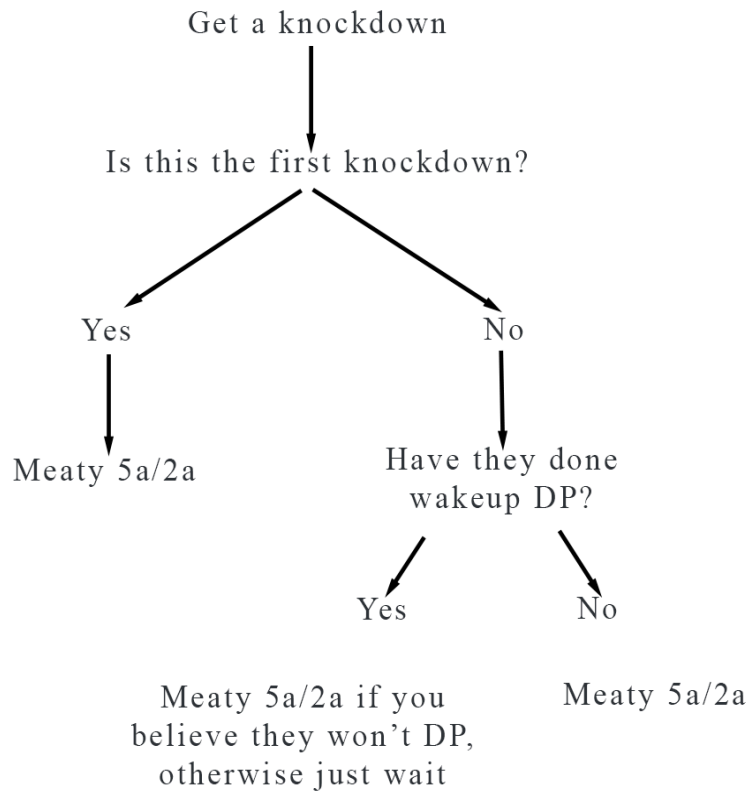
If you're unsure what type of blockstrings to go for, refer to the vod review database I previously linked and search for matches featuring the character you play!

**Basic Blockstring Variations:**

Your blockstring should have a few variations so someone isn't too comfortable, even if it's swapping around two buttons. Minor variations on a blockstring can have huge implications for your pressure.

Variations to pressure can be made in any number of ways. Mess around with them and figure out what feels best, and implement them as a “mixup” to your normal blockstrings.

Once you get a hit in neutral, follow the associated flowchart to find what to do.



In short: Generally you will always want to go for a meaty option, however there are exceptions to this that will be explained in the GRD section of the doc.

## **Throw Usage:**

At any point in the blockstring following knockdown, you should be able to *throw* your opponent to keep them guessing, however this should only be done if they are *not mashing\**. If you are consistently getting a combo from your pressure, feel free to continue what you're doing!

### [Example Here](#)

\*Note: Under Night is a game with *throw protection*. Unlike Street Fighter 6, for example, you cannot be meatied by a throw. The opponent has *8 frames* of throw protection on their wakeup. There is also throw protection applied to blockstun - the opponent must be out of blockstun for 8 frames or the throw will register as a "gold throw" - a throw that takes much longer to connect and is easily tech'd by the opponent on reaction. For this reason, you must always consider whether or not the opponent is willing to mash your throw attempts.

## **How are Opponents always teching my throws:**

Under Night is a game that includes something referred to as an "OS," or an option select. OS's are very commonly used on defense. The concept is extremely simple: any input can be followed by "AD" to either use the first action or tech a throw if one connects. This is often written as  $x\sim AD$ , where the " $\sim$ " signifies pressing AD immediately after the first input.

For example, my opponent dashes at me. I want to either

-antiair my opponent's assault, or

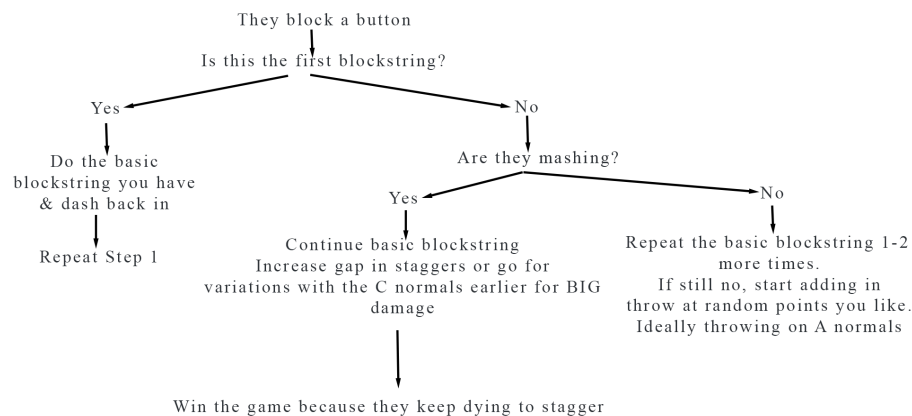
-tech the throw when they dash up

I can input my character's antiair button followed by  $\sim AD$  to cover both options. For Hyde, this is input as  $3C\sim AD$ . If you would like more information on OSing, I would strongly recommend playing through the game's tutorial.

This concept is important to understand on both offense and defense. Refer to [this sheet](#) for different OS options & what to do to beat them. Generally, it's recommended to use stagger pressure to check for OSing because of how UNI2 handles the AD input. If an opponent is inputting AD in late in blockstun, there's a timing where the throw animation will "leak" out as a reversal action. Natural frame traps like dash up 5A 5C will hit the opponent for teching at the wrong time.

### Blockstring Flowchart:

After you have gotten your meaty, here is a general flow for how you can expect your offense to go with your basic blockstring you've made/stolen.



- Because of the risk involved and relatively low damage from throws, you should only go for throws if your opponent seems to not care for mashing. Throws can be used to make your pressure more threatening so that the opponent considers mashing or teching to give you a hit. You can use a delayed throw on their wakeup that beats throw protection, "shimmies" like backdashes, and tick throws - anything that convinces the opponent to mash into one of your frame traps.

**Rebeats:**

An important factor that many high level players use in undernights are rebeats. In undernights, you are able to press any button in any order. You can go from A to B to C, or C to A to B, or anything similar!

Rebeats generally are done when you want to do a C normal, and “rebeat”(reverse beat) into a whiffing an A normal. A normals have the shortest amount of recovery, allowing for you to be safer, usually -2 to -3 depending on the character. However, characters like Hyde and Mika have some rebeats that can be plus, so watch out for those.

Rebeats are used to restart pressure dynamically. If the opponent is not fully prepared to contest them, rebeating into more pressure can catch their attempts to mash. [Example Here](#)

Rebeats do have an obvious flaw: they are (almost) always negative. Because of this, if you consistently rebeat in a certain spot, you can be punished. Be careful when you go for rebeats! They have many uses that we'll be covering later on.

**Shield:**

Shield is an important factor in your offense that you have to consider. Successful shields will remove GRD from the attacker and give it to the defender. Shields also reduce the attacker's



blockstun by 3 frames, meaning a move that you use that is normally -2 will become -5. It is also extremely useful as an anti-air. When an air normal is shielded, the opponent is in full recovery until they reach the ground, and they have added recovery once they do. Many assault normals are punishable when shielded.

Shield is a defensive option that takes two forms, blue shield and green shield. Blue shield can only be done in a neutral state and locks you into shielding either high or low for a set duration. If you blue shield incorrectly and are hit, you will be *GRD broken*. For example, if you try to crouch shield and an opponent assaults at you, the overhead will break your low shield. Or, if you try to stand shield the assault and they fake you out and go low, the low will break your high shield. A blue shield can also be broken with a throw.

Green shield can only be activated in blockstun and acts like a "bet" that an incoming attack will connect with it. If another attack connects with the green shield, it turns into a successful shield. If nothing connects with the green shield, the defender both loses GRD and is put into a long period of extra recovery. If the defender is thrown in this recovery period after green shield begins, they will be GRD broken. The attacker can use staggers to look for green shields in their pressure and either reset pressure or hard punish the defender by throwing them. Green shield also creates extra pushback, so it can function as a minor pushblock (although not a particularly strong one). Also, although blue shield costs nothing, green shield costs 10 meter, so misusing it can be a waste of resources.

### **How to beat shields:**

A few easy ways to play around shields is to rebeat when you believe a shield is coming to GRD break them via throw, or if they're green shielding, letting it "whiff" (miss) so you can redash back in and make them lose GRD & meter.

[Examples here on how I punish different shields](#)

Mess around and figure out ways you can punish various shields!

## How to make your opponent feel dumb:

Even with the strong system mechanics in Under Night, if you can out-read your opponent, you will always win. When it comes to recognizing other players' habits, it can be simple, you just need to know what you're looking for.

### **Habit breakdown:**

Habits can be broken down into two categories. Player habits, and GRD habits. Player habits are habits that would exist without the existence of GRD as a mechanic, GRD habits are habits that exist only in the context of GRD in the game.

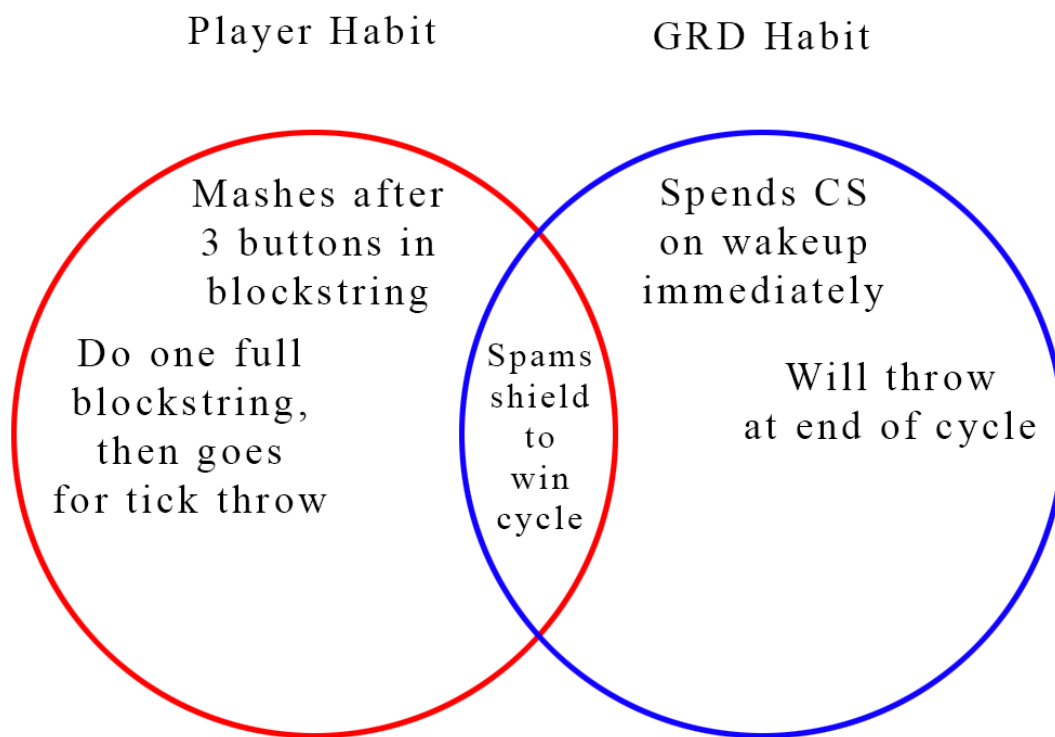
Habits exist no matter the level, even the best players in the world are prone to bad habits. The difference is being able to identify them.

### **What to look for when identifying habits:**

When you play, think of why they are doing something. Are they using long blockstrings with lots of frame traps? They must be fishing for a counter hit, that means you can shield on defense to gain GRD.

When you are on offense, are they shielding your pressure often? End it early with a rebeat and go for a GRD break!

Below is a venn diagram to show some ideas of habits in Under Night that are commonly found.



Once you identify a player's general habits, you are able to start out playing them at a much easier pace. It's important to learn this skill early, as everything you do will be built on it.

### **Reasoning Behind Every Button:**

Thinking about habits allows you to give more purpose to your moves. Every button that you press should have a "reason" behind it, even a bad reason done with confidence has a better

chance to win than a good reason done with doubt. If you fully believe in the read, full send it!

You can only get better from here anyway, so there's no risk in trying out new things.

Stay conscious of what your opponent is doing - if you can get in their head, they'll feel like everything they do is "wrong." Once this feeling is established, the game is in your favor.

## Under night layers at a basic level:

A common topic that will be seen is regarding the "layers" of Under Night and its different states that can be confusing, even coming from other games. Here I'll go over some explanations for what these layers mean specifically, and how to know once you're in them. I'll go into more detail on layer 3 specifically in a later section.

### **\*How do I play around my opponent?**

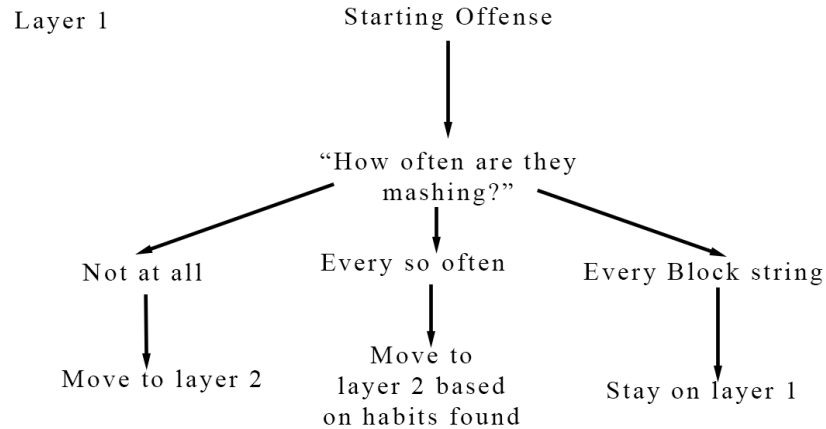
The following section should answer this, however you should ignore how to play layer 3. That is going to be too complicated, and you should instead focus on identifying when someone is on layer 1 or layer 2 specifically for offense and defense. From there, you can figure out how to keep someone on layer 1 for longer or mess around with the habits you've found. Until you can comfortably do that, layer 3 is going to be too complicated.

### **Offensive Layers:**

First let's go over what the layers look like from an offensive perspective. This will look similar to the blockstring flowchart, however it will go over more specifics and I'll include examples of how to identify the layer you currently are in.

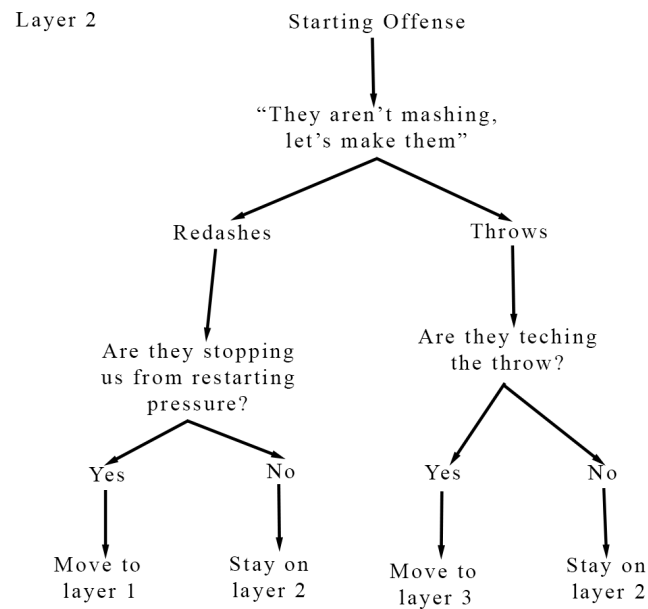
Layer 1 is where you are keeping it most simple and opening yourself up the least amount with redashes. You want to stagger here a lot to stop the opponent from mashing.

Below is a flowchart of how I recommend thinking about layer 1 offense.



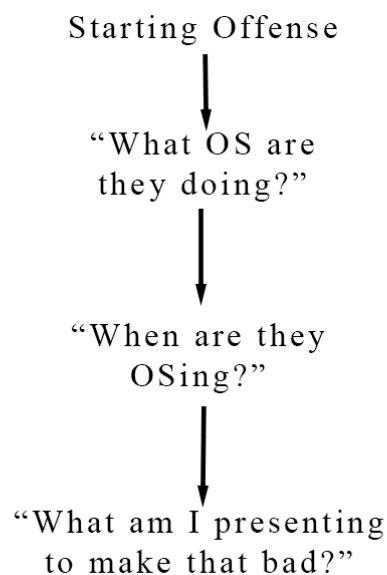
Layer 2 is where your opponent is respecting the stagger pressure you've shown, and has stopped mashing. Here you can go for redash to do pressure again, or go for throws of any variety.

Ideally you want them to start mashing a button, as this has a higher reward for you in the form of a combo rather than them going to layer 3, however this is character and MU dependent.



Layer 3 is where your opponent has started to tech your throws from layer 2 and is doing so consistently. This is because they are starting to OS. From here, you need to identify the type of OS your opponent is doing and aim to beat it and common options. This layer is where it gets interesting, and I'll go into a bit more detail in it later in the doc. For the most part, it's a series of questions you must answer to know how to beat said OS. If you can answer any 2 questions, you should be able to answer the rest, but knowing the what and the when are most important. For example, I know my opponent is using an anti-air OS right as I get in range to throw. To counter this, I can redash into throw range and then press 2A at a timing that catches their anti-air button.

Layer 3



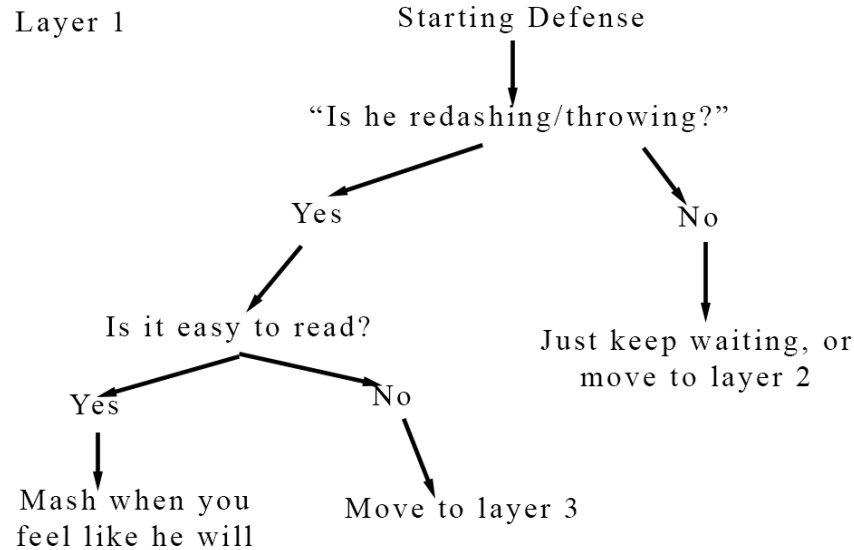
In short, for offense in under night, layer 1 is staggers, layer 2 is throws/redashes, layer 3 is OSing and OS crushing.

**Defensive Layers:**

These are simpler than the offensive layers, as the options are much more straightforward since we have less total options.

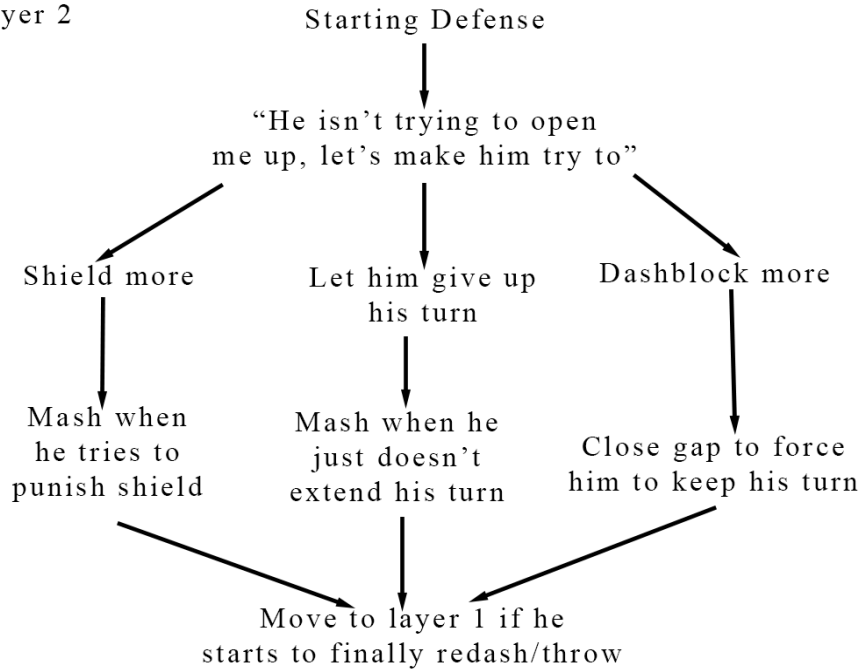
The main thing to look for is going to be similar to the section on habits.

Layer 1 is where you're trying to identify the habits of the opponent in their blockstring, and specifically aiming for when they're trying to redash back in to restart pressure.



Layer 2 is when they've shown they won't redash or do clear openings, so you have to force them to attempt something by baiting them with different options, or forcing yourself into a spacing where you can keep taking your turn back otherwise

Layer 2

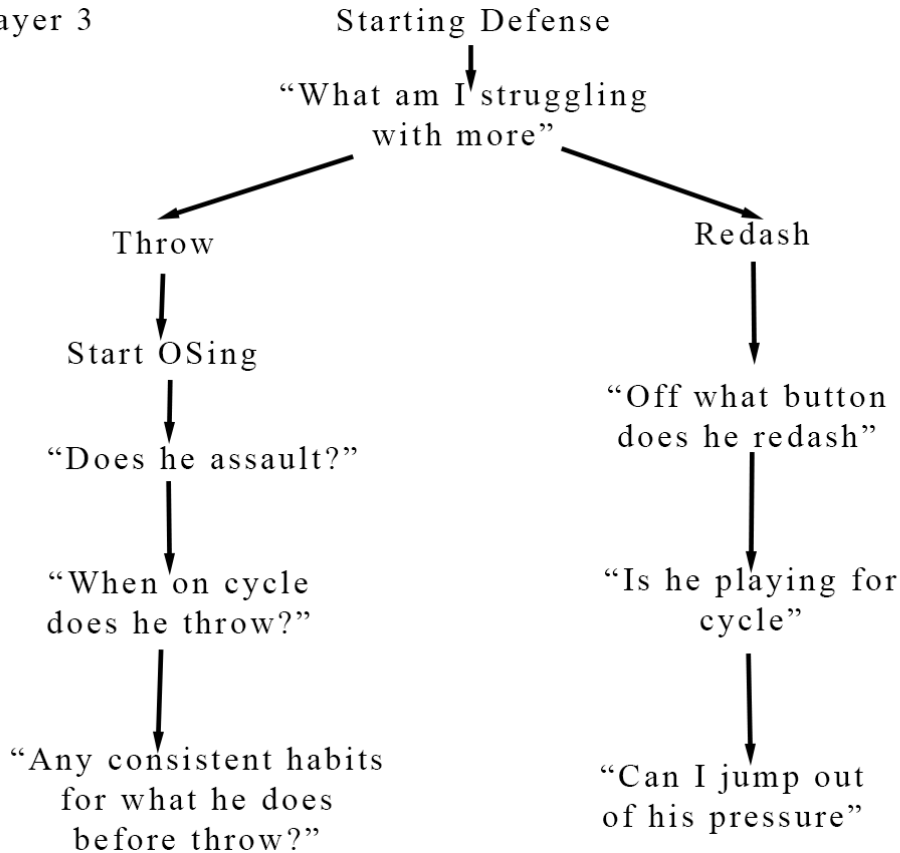


Layer 3 is where they are rotating their offensive options well enough that it's hard to consistently read their intention, so you rely on throw OSing to cover multiple options. It's important to be able to answer at least 2 of the questions for each row, as that can allow you to limit your options down to very specific ones.

For example, I'm struggling with the opponents pressure, but they are not playing for the GRD cycle. That means they are going for really big moves I can shield easily and are not going for throws. This means I can wait to win the GRD cycle so I can CS and start my own turn.



Layer 3



## Blocking doesn't equal losing:

Unlike in many fighting games, blocking isn't equal to losing in Under Night. This section is going to go over what you're expected to do on defense, and what to look for to get rid of those “how do I escape this” type feelings.

### **Blocking = More GRD:**

For starters, blocking gives you access to passive GRD gain! As long as you don't have vorpal, you'll gain it for blocking attacks, and gain extra for blocking any high attacks. Having more GRD than the opponent can allow you to take advantage of them overextending to try to throw you. It can also allow you to win the cycle so you can use CS.

### **How to escape opponents pressure:**

Every blockstring has an end point, but it's ideal to continue pressure through things like rebeats or *redashes*. A redash is when someone ends their pressure string and dashes back in to restart it. When this is done, they are giving you an opening to contest them with a button to get your turn back. Do NOT try to react to the dash; instead, use the information that you've gained from the set so far and mash when you fully believe they will leave a gap in their pressure.

### **\*How do I beat throw?**

Beating throws with throw OSing is an important skill to learn, but it's not the most important thing when it comes to counterplaying your opponent's throws. Focus less on the proper execution/timing of your throw OS and more on the “when” of the throw. Are they throwing at a certain point in the cycle? Or is it after a series of buttons?

Defense is where the skills you've built for habit recognition really shine through, and allow for insane comebacks with the right read.

### **They keep doing assault without any button, what do I do?**

This is referred to as an “empty assault” and is common if you are showing shield vs it, as they get the ability to grd break you by going low. What you want to do is hit 4A at the timing where they're just about to land, this way you are blocking if they really do an assault button, or catch them landing and get a combo! This is known as “fuzzy mashing”, and can greatly decrease the strain you put on yourself vs assaults. [Here](#) is an example of me showing it off.

### **I'm constantly wrong when I mash,. How am I supposed to mash "correctly?"**

When you choose to mash, it should be with 100% confidence, and ideally within the buffer window. Pressing a button on reaction to your opponent's rebeat is a more advanced skill that is certainly possible, but for the most part, you should be contesting pressure based on the information the player has given you on their habits. *If you try to react to every rebeat all the time*, you will usually just get hit! If you are losing from mashing like this, stop mashing and go back to blocking for a while. It's important to watch your opponent to get a read on their habits so you can fight back once they leave a clear opening. Until then, just block and shield.

### **Ok but how do I use shield?**

Ideally you want to use green shield only in guaranteed interactions like fireballs or moves that have multiple hits. If you can, try to shield projectiles in neutral, as they are easy to react to and allow for a lot of GRD gain at no risk. Identify when your opponent is going for consistent buttons and take those as free shields!

### **GRD rules the world(kind):**

GRD is the main mechanic in Under Night, and is prevalent in everything that you do. No matter what, you will always be fighting for GRD one way or another, even on accident.

[Video by Mo.Sin on GRD situations I recommend](#)

### **\*How I want you to see GRD:**

GRD until a high/top level is mostly going to be a "snapshot" of the GRD timer, and who outplayed who better. Some actions will affect the cycle more, like getting a hit, throwing

someone, or shielding a button. While it's ideal to win the vortal cycle yourself, also keep in mind how much your opponent is prioritizing winning the GRD cycle and how much they are willing to risk on offense and defense to make that happen. This is a skill you will get over time, and I don't expect to be picked up easily. It is extremely useful to identify if someone is playing too aggressively for the cycle, because they will leave you opening in their offense/defense that you can exploit.

### **The Many GRD playstyles:**

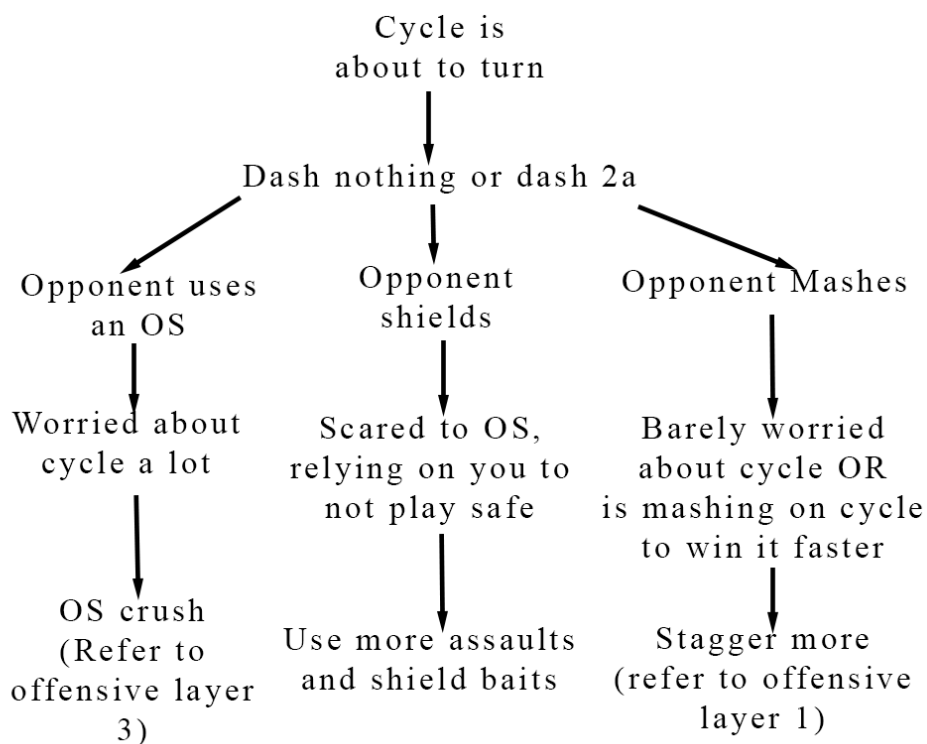
GRD is one of the most important things in the game at a high level, and it can allow for an insane comeback, but most importantly, it can be used to add a new layer of habit recognition. Because of this, there are many play styles that can be broken down just to how someone plays for the cycle.

An example of this would be how people try to get an early cycle lead or a late cycle comeback, the latter being very common if you have a strong usage of your defensive shields and habit recognition, while the former can be very strong if you have an understanding of the opponents overall GRD play & want to enforce it early on with a very fast playstyle. From there, you can choose how quickly you want to spend CS which can determine a lot, as some want to win it fast and hold onto it, while others will immediately spend it to cash out.

GRD allows for many many different ways to play, but at a macro level, everyone still plays for the cycle. Some even go as far as to equate winning the cycle to winning the game, and will do anything for it.

An ideal playstyle is one that does not take unneeded risks when it comes to cycle. A good example of this is if you have a GRD lead late in the cycle. Instead of pressing more buttons, giving up your turn is very common to ensure you will win it. This can also then be used to get info from the opponent to identify the type of GRD playstyle the opponent has.

Below is a GRD example of some playstyles you might see while on offense. These are just a few examples, but it should give you an idea of what to expect and how to think going forward.



### **GRD's Risk Reward:**

When it comes to cycle, there is also this concept of not being able to play one side too hard. If you try to play for cycle a lot, you might struggle when it comes to strike throw. As you're

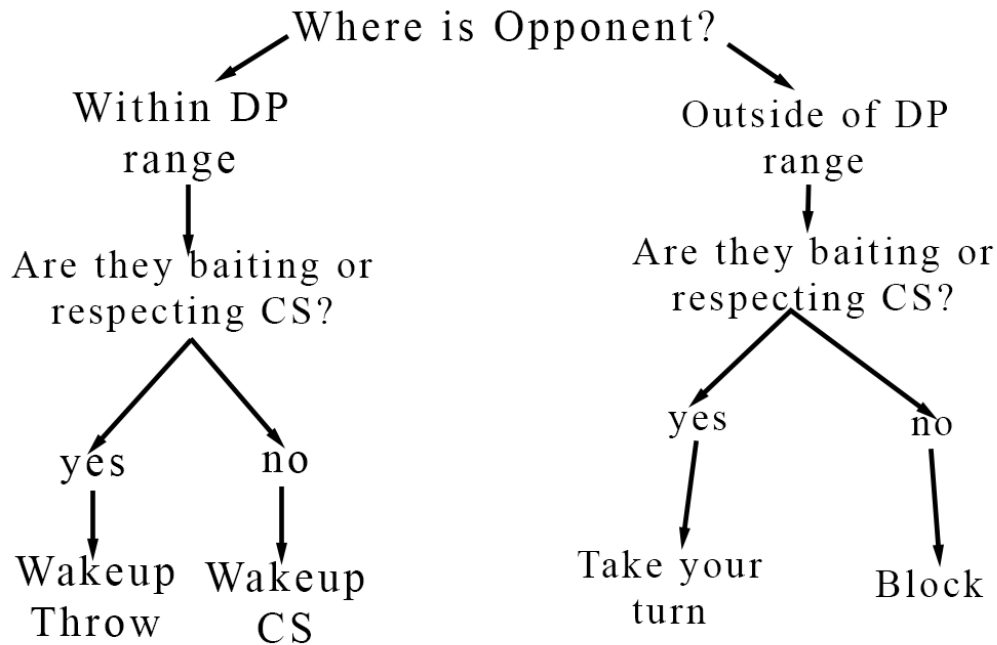
learning Under Night, try to keep a strong balance of this, while also understanding that playing for cycle is a skill you will always be refining.

Sometimes it will be better to give up cycle for a better position, and others you'll have to give up everything for it so you don't lose. There's no clear cut way to flowchart it out, however it's important to know going forward.

This is where OS can come into play, as it allows you to skew risk reward more in your favor on defense, however it can also counteract that if they go to an earlier layer. You have to be very conscious of how your opponent is playing in relation to cycle, otherwise one mistake could cost you the entire match.

### **How do I use CS?**

So you've won the cycle and have access to vortal, and in extension, chain shift, the strongest mechanic in the game. CS allows you to freeze time for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a second, and can get you a free punish if someone is doing something. The most common point to spend this is on wakeup, but it can be a confusing situation if you don't know the flow of this situation. Below is the flowchart you should follow if you have vortal on your own wakeup and can reversal on wakeup. If you can't reversal on wakeup, just default to blocking and saving your CS for later. Assume your opponent will be following the same flowchart if they have vortal on wakeup.



**Threatening the Threat of CS:**

CS is one of the strongest tools in the game, and allows you to quickly turn a situation around. Players running offense on an opponent in vorpal have to change how they structure pressure in order to not be vulnerable during the opponent's CS. Because of this, you don't have to spend it the moment you have it. Holding on to it can allow you to take your turn back if someone keeps baiting out your CS. Keep in mind, the threat of the option is just as strong as doing it!

**How GRD and shield are related:**

Shield is one of the main ways you will be trying to win cycle or prevent cycle wins. As mentioned earlier, rebats can be a great help in this. This is because on the whiff of a green

shield, you will cause them to lose a substantial amount of GRD. Continuous use of this can add up quickly, and all but guarantee you a winning cycle.

## End of Lesson:

Under Night is a fighting game at its core with system mechanics that give it a very intense depth. However, you must first build a solid foundation before you're really able to play the GRD mindgame at a high level.

You don't need to be proficient at playing around GRD until you are looking to advance out of beginner status, as you can still win at lower levels simply by outplaying your opponent's player habits. These main points in this doc, as well as the flowcharts in them, are pieces of how I see Under Night dialed down to a level that is simple enough to easily replicate. If there are any questions, reach out to me on discord (@SaltyGoku), or on twitter (@Supergokudude).

I'm always available to help out players looking to improve at Under Night, and if this doc has any issues you've noticed or something that isn't explained well enough, let me know and I'll do what I can to fix it.

Thank you very much.