

Virtua Fighter 3tb Sarah Character FAQ - Robyrt

by Robyrt

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|VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb|  
|SARAH BRYANT FAQ |  
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Version 1.0

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|I. THE BASICS|  
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A. INTRODUCTION  
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Sarah Bryant may be Jacky's sister, but (as even the AI knows) she plays entirely differently. As you may have noticed, it's very hard to find anybody who plays Sarah; this is both a blessing and a curse. While you can't memorize page-long flowcharts or insane combos, it's a rare opponent who knows how to play against her aside from blocking high and escaping with f+P+G all the time. Combined with her impressive arsenal of flashy moves (think Kage), Sarah is a lot of fun to play and a great crowd-pleaser too. I'm not going to say she's the most powerful or the best turtle or the most stylish combo-wise, but with a little practice, she can still be very effective.

As Sarah, you'll want to keep just outside of throw range as much as possible. Remember, even at long range (where sweeps can't hit you) Sarah can still hit at high and mid levels, while being very hard to punish. If you get in close, she has some nice guessing games, and can go toe-to-toe with punch rushers because of her high speed. This may seem pretty good, but remember that most of Sarah's moves have too much recovery to be used safely at close range! When you have an opportunity, go for a throw and set yourself back up where you can do some damage: medium range, where he must come to you and risk being floated.

This FAQ is designed for the Dreamcast VF3tb, NOT the arcade VF3. Sarah is actually more powerful in the arcade version, since some of her throws do more damage and her delayed elbow-knee will actually float WELL. The Dreamcast also has limitations on the maximum number of hits in a float, meaning this FAQ does not include Sarah's infamous six-punch combo (since it just won't work).

B. LEGEND

| Joystick | Arcade | Dreamcast |
|----------|--------|-----------|
| ub u uf | | |
| \ / | | K |
| b--n--f | P K E | P E |
| / \ | G | G |
| db d df | | |

This FAQ assumes you're player 1 (just switch all B directions with F for player 2, and vice versa). Sarah's combos are very simple, so you should have no trouble pulling them off from either direction even if you're a beginner.

, = hit slightly afterwards
+ = hit at the same time
b = tap joystick away from opponent (lowercase)
B = hold joystick away from opponent (uppercase)

H = move hits high, can be blocked high or ducked
M = move hits mid, must be blocked high
L = move hits low, must be blocked low
G = move hits an opponent on the ground, cannot be blocked
t = move is a throw, cannot be blocked

MC = major counter (hit while opponent starts a move)
mC = minor counter (hit while opponent finishes a move)
TA = turn-away (turns your back to opponent)
TT = turn-towards (done while your back is to opponent)

The move description section is outlined like this:

MOVE NAME (Motion)
Level--Damage
Usefulness
Comments

Damage is dealt on a point scale, with 100 being Wolf's Twirl & Hurl throw. Landing an MC does extra damage (50% of the move you interrupted). This means that your counter-only moves like kickflips, knees, etc. will often do more

than the listed damage.

C. HIT LEVELS TABLE

| Opponent's Position | High Attack | Mid Attack | Low Attack |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Standing non-defender | Hit | Hit | Hit |
| Standing defender | Blocked | Blocked | Hit |
| Crouching non-defender | Miss | Stagger | Hit |
| Crouching defender | Miss | Stagger | Blocked |

If you block an attack, you go into "block stun" where you are unable to do anything except block. This time varies depending on the damage of the move you blocked. However, your opponent still has to go through the recovery time of his own move, so you usually recover more quickly.

Midlevel moves, when they hit a croucher, will force them to "stagger": stand up and freeze for a bit. Staggered opponents "float" very easily, so go for the biggest floater you have time for. The time your opponent staggers is dependent on the move you use (punch-sidekick is the best, elbow is in the middle, normal sidekick is the worst) and whether your opponent is mashing the buttons (of COURSE he is).

D. STANCE EXPLANATION

Your "stance" refers to the position you are in relation to the opponent. It's best to explain this in a diagram, where you are looking down from above and X is where somebody's foot goes:

```
YOU      X      x      OPPONENT
          x  X
```

This is "open stance". Your front leg matches up with his front leg. In this stance, kick moves are more likely to connect (like a kickflip).

```
YOU      X      X      OPPONENT
          x      X
```

This is "closed stance". Your front leg matches up with his back leg. In this stance, throws are more likely to connect (since you can get closer to him).

During standard combat, stance isn't very important (most of your moves will hit regardless of stance), but once you get into float combos, knowing stance can make the difference between connecting and missing the entire combo!

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|II. MOVE ANALYSIS|
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A. PUNCH MOVES

PUNCH-KICK (P,K)

HH--10+20

Usefulness: 8

The all-purpose move after blocking big attacks, it comes out very fast but doesn't knock down. Fortunately, it's uncounterable itself, so use it plenty.

PUNCH-SIDEKICK (P,d+K)

HM--10+19

Usefulness: 9

A great fakeout move to nail crouch- or reversal-happy opponents, it should be mixed up with your PK. With the importance of sidekick staggers in VF3, this is a great way to set up a float if your enemy tries to duck the expected punches.

DOUBLE PUNCH-KICK (P,P,K)

HHH--10+10+30

Usefulness: 5

A great move to force the opponent backward at low risk, and if it hits, you get an easy ground kick. When you aren't concerned about speed, though, go for the various triple punch finishers.

FORWARD PUNCHES (F+P,P...)

HH--10+10

Usefulness: 7

Just like two punches, but you move forward while doing the first punch. Stop holding forward after the first or second punch and you can chain into the rest of your punch strings (described below). This isn't usually a good idea in standard combat (since it moves you really close) but it's obviously very useful (and usually required) in float combos.

FLASH PISTON PUNCH (P,P,P)

HHH--10+10+10

Usefulness: 6

Fairly basic. Don't abuse it, since your opponent will just duck and throw you. If the third punch MCs, your followups (described below) are guaranteed; otherwise, just hit G instead and try something else. You can stop after the second punch if you wish.

FLASH PISTON PUNCH-KICKFLIP (P,P,P,b+K) (P,P,b+P,K)

HHHM--10+10+10+35

Usefulness: 8

One of Sarah's trademark moves, the ending kickflip still comes out like a fourth punch and recovers like, well, a kickflip. It doesn't do as much damage when chained with the flash piston, but it's still a great way to deal plenty of damage quickly. Use discretion: it IS a kickflip.

FLASH PISTON PUNCH-RISING KNEE (P,P,P,K)

HHHM--10+10+10+35

Usefulness: 6

Basically identical to the PPP-kickflip except for the massive forward range, which makes it more useful in some float combos but worse otherwise. It starts up slightly slower and will recover faster than the kickflip, as well.

FLASH PISTON PUNCH-JUMPKICK (P,P,P,u+K) (P,P,P,U+P,K)

HHHM--10+10+10+30

Usefulness: 5

One of Sarah's many showoff moves, the jumpkick looks even cooler than her other followups and knocks the opponent facedown (and the optional u+P comes out faster than the third punch), but recovers even more slowly and does less damage. In a float combo, this will connect better on slopes than a kickflip, but the rising knee is still a better option otherwise.

ELBOW (f+P)

M--12

Usefulness: 9

The essential close-range alternative to a punch, it's throw counterable if whiffed, so be sure you're close. The stagger has been toned down from VF2 levels, but it's still long enough to gain a time advantage and throw your opponent as he recovers. Your main followup is the knee (see Floaters), but if you fear retaliation, hit b+K for a heel seed (reversed high), hit df+P for a chop (almost uncounterable) or simply G-cancel it.

ELBOW-CHOP (f+P,df+P)

MH--12+12

Usefulness: 7

Basically a low-risk option for those times you aren't expecting the elbow to connect (close-quarters guessing games, elbow-knee traps, etc.) Unfortunately, it gives the opponent the advantage even if it hits and it keeps you in close range. Try doing some of these, mixed with punch-sidekicks, to force your opponent into throw range.

ELBOW-HEEL SEED (f+P,b+K)

MM--12+25

Usefulness: 6

Massive style points for this one, but not very useful (since the heel seed can be blocked). It works very well as a generic float combo followup though,

CHOP (df+P)

H--12

Usefulness: 4

While it does sober Shun up a bit and can condition an opponent into blocking high, it has no other real use (since it's slower than an elbow and doesn't have any followups). Stay away from it if you can, use an elbow instead.

DODGING PUNCH (P+E)

H--12

Usefulness: 4

Sarah's old VF2 dodging punch, basically a dodgelet followed by a punch. It avoids punches and can start punch combos (see Punch Combos), but it's got too much of a startup time to be used instead of a standard punch in most cases. If you know you can evade successfully, just sidestep and float combo, you don't need a fancy PPP starter.

TA PUNCH (b,b+P)

H--14

Usefulness: 6

Obviously, turning your back leaves you wide open to those massive back throws, but this punch does more damage than an elbow and sets up for a TT sweep.

LOW PUNCH (d+P or D+P)

M--11 or 9

Usefulness: 7

The basic low punch comes out relatively slowly from a standing position, but it's still great against high attacks too fast to get snuffed by a punt kick.

B. KICK MOVES

TA HOPKICK-TT HOPKICK (b,B+K,K)

HH--61

Usefulness: 6

It has good range and if you don't connect, you can stop after the TA kick to try for a TT sweep. Other than that, purely for style, since it's too dangerous to justify use except at long range.

TT MULE KICK (df+K, back turned)

H--25

Usefulness: 4

While it's got style reminiscent of Jacky's turnaround moves and a surprisingly long range, it starts off fairly slowly and hits high. Basically a mixup with the d+K sweep (which is almost always a better option).

PUNT KICK (d+K)

M--24

Usefulness: 9

While it's not very fast, a punt kick has excellent range, hits mid, and recovers faster than it looks: at mid range, where you'll use it to catch most anything except evades and dashes, only a dashing elbow will counter it regularly. If it MCs, go for the sidekick followup to turn a poke into some serious damage dealing. It's also a generic juggle ender in closed stance.

PUNT KICK-SIDEKICK (d+K,K)

MM--24,23

Usefulness: 9

Like the punch-sidekick, this followup is better than Sarah's normal sidekick (in fact, it's more like an extra punt kick). Just remember to use it only if you're expecting at least an mC on the punt kick and you can tack on an easy pounce afterwards.

ELBOW-KNEE-POUNCE (F+P,K,u+P)

MMG--12+25+30

Usefulness: 8

It's not a built-in combo, but it may as well be. If the knee connects, 90% of the time you can land a pounce as well. Note that this does more damage than any of Sarah's throws, and that unless you get an MC with the knee, you can't float anyway.

LUNGING SWEEP (df+K+G)

L--20

Usefulness: 8

Basically the same as Lion's lunging sweep, except more useful, since your opponent won't expect a low move from Sarah. It guarantees a ground kick, and moves forward in a circle, so it makes excellent okizeme against rising mid kicks. Mix this up with the step roundhouse (f+K+G) for okizeme.

SHIN SLICER (d+K+G)

L--25

Usefulness: 4

This move is so bad that even the AI doesn't use it much. While it does OK damage and has amazing range for a low move, it doesn't knock down except on MC and recovers so slowly that it's almost elbow counterable if it HITS. It's also linear, so dodges can punish it easily. Basically, if you're dead sure the opponent's going for a linear high attack and you're in at least mid range, use

it to impress all present with your ability to actually use this move; otherwise, go for a lunging sweep instead. For extra style points, use it after a floater on mid to light characters and hit them at the last possible moment.

CRESCENT KICK (K+G)

M--20~35

Usefulness: 8

Most characters' crescents are powerful high attacks made to end huge floats or punish obvious evades. Sarah's crescent is the same way, except it belongs to Sarah, so it has her two hallmarks: it's weak and it hits mid (and since it's a mid crescent, even when it's reversed you can mash to retain the advantage). This means you can punish ANY form of movement from long range. Just be sure you're far enough away so the crescent will mC the movement, since it's slow.

TORNADO KICK (uf+K+G)

H--20~50

Usefulness: 3

If you've played Sarah, you've probably lost a couple rounds because this came out by accident. This move is to taunt your opponent and should be treated as such. If you're at extreme range, feel free to use it for its sole purpose: since Sarah does the kick right as she lands, it recovers very quickly and puts you on an even footing at mid range, just where you like it (and if it hits, it'll do max damage). Otherwise, it's basically handing the round to your opponent in the form of an MC knee -> float combo. Of course, it's not reversible (even as a kickflip), but even reverse-happy opponents will be able to block it anyhow.

FULL SPIN DIVE (u+K or uf+K)

M--25

Usefulness: 6

Your OTHER move against low attacks, the spin dive starts slow, ends slow, and can be followed up with a moonsault for a canned "combo". A pounce is easy afterwards, so it doesn't do that much less damage than a roundhouse, and it's got nearly as much style. Also of note against Aoi players: The spin dive is NOT reversible (obvious advantages).

STEP ROUNDHOUSE (f+K+G)

M--25

Usefulness: 7

Although I can rarely land this myself, I'm told that it's the ultimate okizeme tool. Since it's a circular hopping move that lands you close to the opponent, if you expect a rising sweep, knock him out of it with this. Unfortunately, it's too slow to be used anywhere else.

KICKFLIP (ub+K)

M--50

Usefulness: 9

Sarah may not have Jacky's godlike kickflip, but it still causes plenty of pain and hits in a half-circle, making it your primary juggle ender and catch-all evade followup (when you have an obvious MC opportunity but no time for the standard floater, kickflip is your best option). It's also your primary reason for watching stance, as it will ONLY connect in a float if you're in open stance. Your opponent doesn't have to be quick on the draw to punish you if it's whiffed or blocked: it leaves you in the air long enough for any long-range move to mC you (even most knees).

SPIN EDGE KICK (ub+K+G)

M--30

Usefulness: 6

Just like the heel seed, but without the ability to hit OTB on MC. It's got

lots more range, but it's also much slower, so it's an excellent surprise move to catch people rushing in.

LUNGING KNEE (f,f+K)

M--30

Usefulness: 6

Basically a knee that comes out faster while covering more distance, it's great for an opponent who makes a stupid move from long range. Sarah has to recover from the built-in dash, though, so it won't float much at all. Go for a ground kick afterwards if you connect, but you should stay away from this move most of the time, since you'll probably get more damage by mCing with something else.

SNAP LOW KICK (d+K+E)

L--10

Usefulness: 9

The special motion allows Sarah to do a low kick from a standing position, and it's got a surprisingly long range and is nearly uncounterable, making it one of the game's better low kicks. However, it does NOT let you do low kick MC and throw, so be forewarned. Of course, it's a LOW move, so the opponent won't be expecting it. A great mixup move.

DOUBLE LOW KICKS (D+K,K)

LL--12+15

Usefulness: 4

Although Sarah's standard low kick can only be done from crouching, it's got good range and allows you a free throw on MC if you're close (and fast) enough. However, the second low kick is just as bad as everybody else's: it can be blocked and punished fairly easily, and you lose the advantage even if it MCs! This move tends to get abused by Sarah newbies, but you should just stay away from it. If you're SURE he won't block low again, just whip out a shin slicer to MC any retaliation for the first kick; otherwise, a lunging sweep or elbow-knee are your traditional followups.

SIDEKICK (df+K)

M--10

Usefulness: 4

This just comes out too slow to be useful. Even when it staggers, it recovers too slowly to allow you to do combos. If you need a fast mid move, there are plenty of better options, like the illusion kick.

ILLUSION KICK + COMBOS (df+K,K,b+K) (df+K,K,f+K)

MH(L/M)--10+14(+21)

Usefulness: 8

Imagine that your sidekick did double damage and had useful followups on normal hit. This is the Illusion Kick, Sarah's sidekick replacement. Since the first hit is mid, it's almost impossible to duck, and it's a great fakeout move by itself when mixed up with its various finishers (alternate between b+K for a low kick and f+K for a punt kick).

MIRAGE KICK (df+K,K,K)

MHH--10+14+20

Usefulness: 3

The illusion kick has FAR better followups than simply a third high kick, since it does less damage than even the low kick and connects only rarely anyway. Stay away from it; if you're not sure what to do, go for the low kick instead.

DOUBLE THRUST KICK (K,K)

HH--25+10

Usefulness: 5

Your standard high kick, immediately followed by another kick without moving

forward. This means it's safer than most double high kicks, but doesn't hit very often. Its primary use is against players unfamiliar with Sarah or those looking for an excuse to low punch. Of course, after they've ducked, they're conveniently open to your vast array of mid moves.

DOUBLE KICK (b+K)

HH--10+20

Usefulness: 4

Just a faster version of the regular kick. Unfortunately, it hits about as often as the double thrust kick and it can't be G-cancelled or comboed out of, so use it in style games as an alternative to your regular high kick (i.e. fool the opponent into crouching).

C. FLOATERS

A floater is anything that knocks your opponent into the air. While some moves (like knees) will do this normally, most floaters require an MC to work.

To have a fighting chance with Sarah you MUST float your opponent at every opportunity. She can't do enough damage with normal attacks, and her throws are even worse, so train yourself to go for the float on lighter characters even if it isn't guaranteed. You may take a couple PK counters, but the results will be worth it when you start floating with punch combos every ten seconds.

KNEE (f+K)

M--30

Usefulness: 8

The standard floater for most characters, it's generally more useful on a normal hit and less useful on an MC than the Dragon Cannon. It also moves Sarah forward enough for followups to be possible on slopes, but it's got the standard horrible recovery. Great style points after an evade, where it's more likely to connect than the Dragon Cannon.

DRAGON CANNON (db+K)

M--30

Usefulness: 9

Sarah's main floater, it hits mid but is reversed high. It does a better job of floating than the knee, but doesn't move you forward, so make sure to get the MC before trying one. Still, it's generally more useful than a knee (since it ducks under high moves), and more stylish too. Use the "D.C." a LOT.

TOEKICK-PUNT KICK (d+P+K,K)

MM--13+26

Usefulness: 8

Another great addition to Sarah's arsenal. The toekick is fairly slow and the punt kick isn't guaranteed on normal hit, but on an MC, your opponent will be knocked up as if they were kneed, allowing a variety of followups (see combos section below). If you somehow manage to pull this off at close range, you can follow up with a kickflip or PPPK for even more damage, making it just as powerful as the D.C. if used properly.

ROUNDHOUSE (u+K+G)

M--25

Usefulness: 7

The roundhouse floats better than you would expect, allowing a kickflip/punt kick on a normal hit and a forward punch combo on MC. It's actually a jumping

attack, so it will avoid low kicks, and it comes out faster than an elbow, so feel free to abuse it against people who like to play guessing games with the low kick MC. Unfortunately, if blocked, it leaves you wide open, so make sure he's going low.

KICK-PUNCH (K,P)

HH--20+8

Usefulness: 8

The most unorthodox floater in the game returns to VF3 with a vengeance. Since it starts like a high kick and ends like a punch, it's less obvious (and less punishable) than Sarah's other floaters. The float on this is better than a roundhouse, but ONLY if the punch connects. This means that you have to be within throw range for it to float at all (and in closed stance against heavier characters). Your best followup here is a kickflip.

RISING KNEE COMBO (D,f+K,K)

MM--35+22

Usefulness: 7

This move allows a small window of float opportunity (see the combos section for details) when it hits as an MC, or on lighter characters. Unfortunately, it must be done from a crouch, but it can't be reversed and does lots of damage even if you miss the float followup. Great for MCing high attacks at close range, and extremely stylish, but not that great for general use.

AXEKICK (db+K+G)

M--22

Usefulness: 6

Basically an alternative punt kick, it comes out faster but has much less range (since Sarah won't hit at the beginning of her kick, only the end). However, it floats on MC. Although this float is pretty pathetic, the axekick recovers fast enough to allow a kickflip/punt kick, which is always a good thing.

HEEL SEED (b+K+G)

M--30

Usefulness: 5

If you thought a rising knee or triple punch-jumpkick had style, wait till you see THIS. Medium speed, mid hitting, OK damage, and extremely satisfying, and it sets you up for a nice okizeme game (or a rare flipkick on MC). Of course, your opponent should be too cautious for this to connect (he's been eating punt kicks and knees for a while), so you'll rarely get the opportunity to use it.

ELBOW-KNEE (f+P,K)

MM--12+25

Usefulness: 9

One of Sarah's most useful moves IMHO, even with its many drawbacks. Obviously, it's easy to connect with an elbow, and under normal conditions the knee is guaranteed. However, the knee barely floats at all (even on Aoi), unless you get an MC or stagger from the KNEE part, not the elbow. So why is it in the floaters section? Simple, you can delay the K until the elbow has almost finished. (It's as versatile as a bodycheck in the delayability department.) The elbow-knee also sets up for Sarah's uramawari technique (discussed later).

RISING KNEE-KNEE (D,f+K...K)

MM--35+28

Usefulness: 6

On slopes or against heavy opponents, you'll want to wait until you hit the ground after the rising knee, then hit K for an automatic knee strike. A pounce is very easy afterwards, and the knee does a good amount of damage, but it's not nearly as stylish as a float combo. Your call.

TT SWEEP (d+K, back turned) (D+K, back turned)

L--20

Usefulness: 8

The TT sweep floats on an MC, but since Sarah recovers crouching, the only thing guaranteed after it floats is a light pounce. Still a very nice move, if you've got the opening to turn your back in the first place. Be forewarned: 95% of opponents will be expecting this when your back is turned, so once in a while go for the TT mulekick instead.

KNEE-RISING KNEE (f+K,df+K)

MM--30,45

Usefulness: 4

If you want style, it just doesn't get better than this. Despite the execution, it will NOT combo even if the knee MCs. Instead, pull it out against the kind of opponent who'd rather throw counter than PK counter or block (which, thankfully, is a lot of people). When they try for the throw after a blocked (or even whiffed) knee, they get MCed, giving you a free pounce, possibly more depending on weight. Even though it'll only work once, he'll be so scared of throw countering that you'll only eat a PK instead.

D. THROWS

SUPLEX (P+G)

Level: Ht--50

Usefulness: 7

Your basic throw, more useful than most P+G throws. It does mediocre damage (more than most of her other throws, though) and turns you sideways, trashing any RO attempt. Her back throw has a different animation, but is the same as the suplex in every other respect.

LEG HOLD TAKEDOWN (b,f+P+G)

Ht--60

Usefulness: 9

Your best throw. It does good damage, switches sides, and looks cool to boot. If they don't escape it, use it until they do. Your opponent probably won't expect a throw from someone as weak as Sarah, so mix this up with stuff like punch-sidekick or elbow-chop for guessing games.

LIGHTNING KNEE SMASH (b+P+G)

Ht--43 [60 against wall]

Usefulness: 8

Sarah's second best throw, not because it's powerful (even a suplex does more damage) but because it requires a b+P+G escape. It also doesn't change your angle with the opponent like her other throws, and against a wall, the damage becomes VERY nice.

NECK BREAKER DROP (uf+P+G)

Ht--60

Usefulness: 6

Sarah dashes forward and to the right; if she ends up at the opponent's side, she does a sideways clothesline that does impressive damage. If she doesn't, however, she'll sit there, not aligned with the opponent, grinning like a fool. This throw is unescapable, but can only be used from long range because of the required dash. (To really nail turtles, do one at the beginning of a match or after a rising heelkick.)

CLOTHESLINE (f,f+P+G)

Ht--40

Usefulness: 4

The only way you should get this throw is by accident. The new leg hold surpasses it in every way except ease of use.

SHELL BREAK ELBOW (P+G from the side)

Ht--40

Usefulness: 3

Like most side throws, this one is almost completely useless. Go for it only when you don't have time for an elbow-knee (which does more damage).

LOW BACK DROP (P+K+G from the back)

Ht--60

Usefulness: 6

Does plenty of damage, and since your opponent is turned around, it's inescapable as well. You won't often get the opportunity for this one, but when you do, make the most of it!

E. MISC. MOVES

POUNCE (u+P)

G--30

Usefulness: 9

Sarah still has an excellent pounce, which starts fast and recovers fast enough to make this a common followup, even if it isn't guaranteed. You'll be surprised how many times the opponent won't even try to roll out, since there are so many almost-guaranteed pounces for Sarah. Of course, don't expect good players to let you off scot-free when they can make you whiff, but it's still relatively safe for a pounce.

HIGH POUNCE (d,U+P)

G--40

Usefulness: 4

If you have the time to go for a high pounce, you have the time to go for a float combo, and floats are where Sarah really shines, so this move may as well exist only to taunt your opponent. Just stick with the regular pounce, you don't need the extra style.

GROUND KICK (df+K)

G--10

Usefulness: 7

Nothing says "humiliation" like a Bryant ground kick. It's short ranged, but it's guaranteed after your average knockdown, so use it if your opponent has a history of evading pounces.

MOONSAULT (uf+P)

Sarah catapults herself over the opponent's head and lands facing his back. Unfortunately, it's too slow to work at short range and recovers so slowly that even Taka can turn around before you finish landing. Use it for switching sides when you're out of throw range.

BACKFLIP (ub+P) (d,ub)

Self-explanatory. Sarah's backflip covers about as much distance as a backward dash, but takes longer. The only known use for this is to dodge low moves, and even then, you're probably better off with something showier like a full spin

dive or roundhouse.

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|III. STRATEGY AND COMBOS|  
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A. BASIC STRATEGY  
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As has been Sarah's strategy since VF2, control distance! Sarah's fast enough to move basically anywhere you want after a knockdown (even able to switch sides with the moonsault) and where you want is mid range, that is, just out of sweep range. This way the only low moves that threaten you also telegraph themselves, so you can block and retaliate. Remember, most of your moves will actually hit at mid range, whereas your opponent needs to spend 5-10 frames dashing in before he can even be a threat. Of course, there's no way to stop characters like Akira from getting in your face, but even at close range, Sarah can play a fair mixup game.

Your main tools at close range are:

- * Punch-sidekick (HM) -- Keeps him high blocking
- * Elbow-chop (MH) -- Pressure with safety after the elbow
- * Leg hold takedown (Ht) -- The obvious followup to a punch-sidekick
- * Low kick (L) -- Very annoying, can lead to rising knee
- * Dragon Cannon (M) -- Your best floater, and it evades high punches too
- * Kick-punch (HH) -- A really fast, useful floater
- * Rising Knee-Knee (MM) -- Catches high attacks, can't be reversed

At long range, you can still be a major annoyance:

- * Crescent (M) -- Snuffs most movement; opponent must move to your left
- * Punt kick (M) -- Long-range poke, takes down most rushes
- * Lunging sweep (L) -- A rare low move, used for mixups
- * Toekick-punt kick (MM) -- A floater that works at long range - 'Nuff said

Of course, most of Sarah's arsenal is best used at mid range:

- * Illusion kick combos (MHL/MHM) -- Gets your opponent annoyed quickly
- * Elbow-knee (MM) -- Great mC tool (moves forward fast)
- * Punt kick (M) -- Still great as a surprise move, but be cautious
- * Catch throw (Ht) -- Works well against the uninformed
- * Roundhouse (M) -- MCs most low moves
- * Heel seed (M) -- Great for baiting slow opponents
- * Knee (M) -- Your standard floater, with awesome priority

As Sarah, you should be looking for opportunities to float all the time, since that's where she does the real damage. I evade at least 30% of the time at close range, trying for a power move like the Dragon Cannon. Remember, even a NORMAL hit with a D.C., knee, or toekick-punt kick is a free combo for you; although you won't be using knees as much as Jeff or Wolf (since you've got the Dragon Cannon for MCs, the toekick-punt kick for long range, and the roundhouse for speed) it has lots of style and is very easy to connect with.

Remember, your throws may not be very powerful, but they're unblockable.

Sarah's arsenal is geared toward mid attacks, and although it's hard to reverse Sarah's moves (many mid ones are inexplicably reversed high) she's not very powerful when the opponent is simply blocking and throwing out pokes. This is where your throws come in. Even though it's basically a choice between b+P+G and b,f+P+G, most opponents will habitually reverse f+P+G, allowing you to get

in the occasional catch throw or even suplex for some decent damage. The same rationale can be used to explain why df+K+G is so commonly used: it's easy to see coming, but after 20 seconds of being poked at with mid moves, your opponent isn't too likely to low block. Remember, although neither of you will be doing much crouching (unless the other guy insists on attacking high, in which case you crouch and rising knee combo him), Sarah has a very nice low kick and the very stylish (and useful) TT sweep.

While Sarah can't exploit advanced tactics as much as some other characters, she has uramawari ability (she can get behind the opponent's rising kick). Simply f,f+K to get almost on top of an opponent after a knockdown, then evade until you're at his back. His rising kick will completely miss you, allowing a free mC with just about anything up to a D.C. or knee (thanks to Hgamer for illustrating this). Sarah also has a decent okizeme game: just step roundhouse any rising sweep and lunging sweep any rising kick. Both are circular attacks, so they should hit most rolling opponents, and come out at medium speed, so timing isn't too difficult. Also, she has the fastest punches in the game: a 10-frame execution for your standard PPP, and the PPu+P has a third punch that comes out in only 8 frames. This means that just punching will often interrupt other people's big moves, as well as giving you some protection from throws.

B. MAIN COMBOS

1. LEGEND

Instead of listing every single one of Sarah's combos (which would take pages and pages), I'll provide only the best combos for a given situation, and a few notable extra-stylish ones. Combos are sorted by the opponent's weight class:

Heavyweight: Wolf, Jeffry
Middleweight: Akira, Jacky, Lau, Shun, Kage, Lion
Lightweight: Sarah, Pai, Aoi
Not comboable: Taka-arashi

Combos are then sorted by float starter (with the most basic ones first, moving to the weirder, less reliable floaters); "useful" combos are first, with "stylish" combos going at the end of each subsection. Next to each combo is a column for special requirements:

MC: The float starter must hit while the opponent is starting a move.
Open: The float starter must hit while you are in open stance.
Closed: The float starter must hit while you are in closed stance.
OTB: The last move must hit as the opponent bounces off the ground.

Note that combos like F+P,P,P,b+K are listed even if some hits will not connect, since they look cool and will often do plenty of damage anyway.

2. HEAVYWEIGHT COMBOS

| Combo | Requirements |
|------------------|--------------|
| f+K->F+P,P,P,b+K | Closed or MC |
| f+K->ub+K | Closed |

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| f+K->f+P,b+K | Out of throw range |
| f+K->db+K->u+P | Open |
| db+K->F+P,P,P,b+K | Open or MC |
| db+K->ub+K | Open |
| db+K->d+K+G | Closed |
| d+P+K,K->F+P,P,P,b+K | (none) |
| d+P+K,K->ub+K | Closed |
| u+K+G->P,P,P,b+K | MC |
| u+K+G->ub+K | Open |
| u+K+G->d+K | Closed |
| K,P->F+P,P,P,b+K | Closed, MC |
| K,P->ub+K | Closed |
| D,f+K,K->ub+K | Open, MC |
| D,f+K,K->f+P,b+K | Closed, MC |
| db+K+G->ub+K | Open, MC |
| db+K+G->d+K | Closed, MC |
| b+K+G->ub+K | Open, MC, OTB |

3. MIDDLEWEIGHT COMBOS

| Combo | Requirements |
|----------------------|---------------|
| ----- | |
| f+K->F+P,P,P,b+K | (none) |
| f+K->ub+K | Closed |
| f+K->db+K->u+P | Open or MC |
| f+K->d+P+K,K | Open, MC |
| db+K->F+P,P,P,b+K | (none) |
| db+K->ub+K | Open |
| d+P+K,K->F+P,P,P,b+K | (none) |
| d+P+K,K->ub+K | Closed |
| u+K+G->P,P,P,b+K | MC |
| u+K+G->ub+K | Open |
| u+K+G->d+K | Closed |
| K,P->F+P,P,P,b+K | Closed, MC |
| K,P->ub+K | (none) |
| D,f+K,K->F+P,P,P,b+K | MC |
| D,f+K,K->ub+K | Open |
| D,f+K,K->f+P,b+K | (none) |
| db+K+G->ub+K | Open, MC |
| db+K+G->d+K | Closed, MC |
| b+K+G->ub+K | Open, MC, OTB |

4. LIGHTWEIGHT COMBOS

| Combo | Requirements |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| f+K->F+P, P, P, b+K | (none) |
| f+K->ub+K | Closed |
| f+K->db+K->u+P | Open or MC |
| f+K->P, K, G->ub+K | Closed, MC |
| f+K->d+P+K, K | Open, MC |
| f+K->f, f+K | Open |
| db+K->F+P, P, P, b+K | (none) |
| db+K->ub+K | Open |
| db+K->d+K+G | (none) |
| d+P+K, K->F+P, P, P, b+K | (none) |
| d+P+K, K->ub+K | Closed |
| d+P+K, K->d+K, K | (none) |
| u+K+G->P, P, P, b+K | MC |
| u+K+G->ub+K | Open or MC |
| u+K+G->d+K | Closed |
| K, P->ub+K | (none) |
| K, P->F+P, P, P, b+K | Closed, out of throw range |
| D, f+K, K->F+P, P, P, b+K | (none) |
| D, f+K, K->ub+K | Open |
| db+K+G->ub+K | Open, MC |
| db+K+G->d+K | Closed, MC |
| b+K+G->ub+K | Open, OTB |
| f+P...K->ub+K | Closed, MC on knee |
| f+P...K->d+K | Open, MC on knee |

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| IV. MISCELLANEOUS |
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A. CREDITS

Thanks go to:

- * God... for everything. You da man!
- * My family, for putting up with me as I wrote this.
- * S. Hyun Yim's excellent VF2 Sarah FAQ, the one that started it all.
- * John Culbert's VF3 Sarah FAQ, for some really cool combos.
- * VirtuaProject, for TB stats. (You know how hard those are to get!?)
- * Stuart (Lion), Brendan (Shun), and David (Jacky) for human opponents.

That's it. Now go play the game! :-)

