

Dissidia 012[duodecim] Final Fantasy Vaan Guide

by Nachtauge

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Dissidia 012 [duodecim] Final Fantasy Vaan Character Guide

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1. Introduction

[1.1] FAQ History

Version 1.0 - Initial release.

Version 1.1 - Edits throughout the FAQ, general cleanup.

[1.2] About the Author

Well, here we are. Well, here you are, reading my first FAQ, I s'pose. My usual handle on the internet is Nachtauge. I am not a regular on most any forum, so chances are you do not recognize me. I am an avid gamer since the tender age of 8. [duodecim] is more or less the only UMD that has the privelege of gracing my PSP. It is a fantastic game worthy of much praise and play.

[1.3] About the FAQ

I decided to attempt to write a FAQ about one of my (if not the) favorite characters in the game, Vaan. Seeing as this is my very first FAQ, it almost goes without saying that some things will not be perfect or great as far as FAQs go, but I hope it will give players who love Vaan some more information on what to do. Also, since this IS my first, my little infrastructure quickfind system (among other things) may not be right. Any pointers or tips people would like to give me would be very much appreciated.

2. Character Information ***SPOILERS AHOY***

[2.1] Vaan (Final Fantasy XII Profile)

Vaan is the arguable main protagonist character of FFXII. He is young, and has visions of becoming a Sky Pirate. In the start of the game, Vaan's older brother Reks is murdered by who appears to be Basch fon Rosenberg, the other arguable main character. As a result, Vaan takes a vow to gain vengeance for

both his brother and the city of Rabanastre, which is where he lives. Vaan was forced into a leadership roll for the orphans living in Lowtown, a district of Rabanastre. He and Penello both help take care of them.

When Vayne Solidor becomes the consul of Dalmasca, Vaan decides it's high time for some thievery and breaks into the Palace of Rabanastre. There he finds the Goddess Magicite and runs into Balthier and Fran, two honest-to-goodness sky pirates. Vaan eventually gets caught being stupid, and is brought before Vayne, whom he tries to attack. Judge Magister Gabranth stops him, and Vayne decides to execute him for attempted assault on an official. But of course, Vaan is rescued and spirited away by Fran and Balthier before Fran crashes her vehicle in a sewer.

In the Garamasythe Waterway, they run into a Resistance fighter named Amalia. She expresses distaste at Vaan's skullduggery in the Palace. Then they get attacked by Archadian soldiers and separated. Vaan, Fran and Balthier get thrown into the Nalbina Dungeons.

While there, Vaan attempts to be "a nice guy" and help out a fellow bangaa prisoner. This causes a disturbance, so Vaan is forced to fight the seeg jailers. After the scuffle, Gabranth strolls in. They use the visit as a chance to get out of dodge. As they discover, Basch is also imprisoned there. When he asks Vaan to set him free, Vaan throws a tantrum and alerts everyone to their escapee status. Fran drops Basch's cage and they all escape into the Barheim Passage.

They all eventually make their way back to Rabanastre. Vaan reports in to his grandfather or something, Old Dalan. He gives him a sword (Old Dalan's Sword. Seriously.) to give to the Resistance member Vossler Azelas. Vaan finds Vossler badmouthing his dead brother and everyone else in the attack. Vaan throws another hissy fit, but this time Basch is there to back him up, saying that Reks was no liar. Vaan feels better towards Basch and they become friends. The two go and find Balthier in a bar. They also discover that Penello has been kidnapped. Vaan bribes Balthier with the Goddess Magicite to take them to Bhujerba. Vaan gets to ride in an airship.

En route to the Lhusu Mines, they meet an Archadian boy named Lamont. They take him with. They venture into the mines to discover Penello has been set free. Judge Ghis shows up and Lamont reveals himself as Larsa Solidor, brother to Vayne. Penello is there. Later, they all decide to get captured so they can rescue Amalia who is aboard the Dreadnought Leviathan.

Aboard the massive airship, they rescue Amalia who is revealed to be Ashelia B'nargin Dalmasca (who the hell makes these names), rightful heir to Dalmasca's throne. They get captured and then get sprung. Vaan and Co. find Penello again, this time with Larsa.

They all travel to the tomb of Raithwall (minus Larsa) and get captured after retrieving Ashe's family jewel, the Dawn Shard. Vossler ended up being a bad

dude. They all escape prison yet again.

They travel to a town called Jahara. Vaan has hallucinations of a ghost named Lord Rasler. Ashe sees him too. I want what they're smoking.

With Larsa in tow again, they all travel to Mount Bur-Omisace. They go to retrieve the nethicite-destroying sword, the Sword of Kings.

Then they head to the Draklor Laboratory to seek out Doctor Cid and his Midlight Shard. Then they go to Giruvegan after Cid says it's what the cool kids are doing. Ashe gets a new anti-nethicite sword, the Treaty Blade. Then they go look for the Sun-Cryst, the motherstone of the Dusk, Dawn and Midlight Shards.

Gabranth is there when they get to the Sun-Cryst. He taunts them to destroy it.

Gabranth reveals himself to be the true killer of Reks and King Raminas. Gabranth then goes after Vaan but is stopped by Reddas, who is revealed to be Judge Zecht, the dude who annihilated Nabudis two years ago with the Midlight Shard. The group kills Doctor Cid, but not before he puts the three Shards back together with the Sun-Cryst. This causes bad things to happen. Reddas sacrifices himself and destroys the Sun-Cryst, resulting in a large explosion which was totally awesome. Oh and the world gets covered in mist which is bad.

Sky Fortress Bahamut is now powered up and operational. The Resistance fights desperately against the Arachadian battlestation while they hover over Rabanastre. They board the Bahamut and kill Vayne and Vayne Novus. Then Vayne and Venat (the real bad guy) merge and form The Undying. Then Balthier and Fran seemingly sacrifice themselves to stop the decaying Bahamut from messing stuff up.

A year later, Vaan still has the Strahl (Balthier's airship) and is working with Penello. One day, the airship is mysteriously gone and in its place a note from Balthier saying he is looking for treasure. Vaan goes for it. Also Basch takes up Gabranth's armor because they were like brothers or something and he protects Larsa. Whatever.

[2.2] Vaan (Dissidia [duodecim] Profile)

"A cheerful youth who skillfully uses a variety of weapons in battle.

Confident

in his skills, he fearlessly enters any fierce battle."

Much like his original appearance, Vaan is portrayed as a happy-go-lucky individual with a free spirit. He gives little thought to the conflict in which

he was summoned, focusing instead on just being in the moment. In his chapter,

Stern Eyes, he encounters Terra Branford, a warrior of Chaos, and decides to help her rather than fight her. This is very confusing for Terra, who thoroughly believed that what she had been summoned into was simply her lot in

this world, and that fighting against her fate was pointless. Vaan remembers

some of Terra's concerns, and even aids in getting Terra onto Cosmos' side in the 13th Conflict. After rescuing Terra from Chaos' forces, he travels with Lightning and Friends to close the rift from which the manikins were emerging.

In the end, they all succeed, but Vaan fades away with five other warriors of Cosmos, never to return to the Divine Conflict.

3. Attacks and Abilities

[3.1] Bravery Attacks

Alright, now with all of that stuff out of the way, we can get to what you're actually here for. The good stuff, if you will. The FIGHTING. After all, Dissidia is hardly about the story, is it? The game was born out of a heaping pile of fanservice, and that's what we oughta focus on, eh? Without further ado...

Vaan's Bravery attacks have rather interesting qualities. To put it one way, each attack he has is not just one attack, but essentially two or even three, because of Vaan's inherent Adroit Attacker trait: he Switches his weapons rapidly in combat. For instance, Spear attack (Ground or Air): While Switching

weapons, Vaan will perform an altered attack with special properties. In the case of Spear, while Switching weapons, Vaan will twirl the spear, drawing in the opponent, then lunge forward, sending them flying for a potential Wall Rush.

Now, if you do not Switch, but use Spear consecutively, each attack after the initial Switch will be the "normal" version. In Spear's case, he will perform a

small combo into the air, finishing with a hard thrust downward which sends his

opponent flying for a Wall Rush. In a few cases, Spear being one of them, Vaan's EX Mode grants an additional bonus. Spear's EX Mode bonus is while Switching, Vaan will twirl the spear twice instead of once, causing additional

damage before finishing with the thrust. Get it? Huge paragraphs are fun!

Before we begin, a bit of info for you all.

Range: The distance at which you can reach out and hit someone with an attack.

Physical/Magical (P/M): The type of damage the attack deals.

CP: Capacity Points. These denote how much space you have to equip abilities and how much they cost to equip.

AP: Ability Points. These are obtained after battle to master an ability, reducing its CP consumption.

Master (M): Mastering an ability reduces its CP consumption, and if it is a Branching ability, unlocks the next ability in the skill tree.

Level (LVL): The Level this attack is gained at.

Switching Weapons (SW): Vaan's exclusive trait. This happens when you perform a BRV Attack while Vaan is unarmed or has a different weapon equipped.

EX Mode: Denotes whether the attack gains a special trait in EX Mode.

On to the attacks then.

Ground Abilities

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Vaan naturally has a wide variety of attacks. His Ground arsenal is nearly identical to his Air, with the exceptions being very small alterations between the two types. Do note that none of Vaan's attacks Branch into anything ever.

Greatsword (Ground)
Range: Short ~ Long (SW Only)
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: Start
EX Mode: SW Charges faster

Greatsword is a staple in Vaan's arsenal. It's strong, fast and reliable. It performs Wall Rush. It uses the Tournesol in EX Mode. What's not to love? Well, the charge up time during SW for one thing. When you use this attack, Vaan will yell and charge up a bit before rushing forward very quickly and attacking twice. Aside from the initial wait, this attack is great. The normal version of this attack is a very, very quick short-range strike that deals decent damage. Both attacks Wall Rush straight forward.

Spear (Ground)
Range: Short
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: Start
EX Mode: Two twirling attacks

Remember that example somewhere back up beyond that wall of text? No? Alright. Spear is another nice attack in Vaan's arsenal, though not as reliable as Greatsword is. What Spear really has going for it is not its SW attack, but its normal attack. The SW attack has the nifty function of Absorb, which draws your opponent near, but it is too easily avoided despite its rather quick start-up time. The redeeming factor for Spear SW is the lunging stab after the twirl, which is very nice since it causes staggering should someone try to block it, not to mention the Wall Rush. Also, the twirling move is difficult to block. The normal attack is a very very nice combo. The normal version makes Vaan leap up into a small combo which ends with a very sharp stab towards the ground, causing Wall Rush. It has a tiny delay at the beginning, but it often connects and can be used to set up Assist combos.

Crossbow (Ground)
Range: Mid/Long (SW only)
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: 3

EX Mode: SW Range boost

Crossbow, Crossbow...I have a love and hate relationship with this attack. It is wonderful when it works, and it can backfire in so many ways. The normal attack shouldn't even really be talked about. Sure, it's a powerful mid-range four round burst, but it has a stupid start-up time and it really is not great.

No, where this attack shines is right in SW. When you perform the SW attack, Vaan will roll forward in the air and unleash a veritable torrent of bullets (arrows? bolts? can't tell). This is FANTASTIC when it connects, because it holds your opponent in the attack, giving you freedom to initiate an Assist. It also piles on damage quickly, and from a safe distance. The Chase bonus at the end is just the cherry on top. Where does this fall short, you ask? It's so easy to see coming and block, it's not even funny, not to mention avoiding it altogether. When the SW version is blocked, the bolts will rebound back towards Vaan and knock you out of the attack, leaving you with the Crossbow in your hands and your thumb up your ass. Check back with the Air version.

Katana (Ground)

Range: Medium

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 11

EX Mode: More strikes

This is a solid move when it hits. That's really the best I can say about it. The normal version is nice and quick, causing fair damage and Chase. The SW version is really quite nice (when it connects). Vaan will SW, wait for a second, then perform a dashing slice through his opponent, leaving them to get assailed by your blindingly fast strikes. At the end of those strikes, Vaan will say "Chop ya!" while performing a finishing slice, initiating Chase. The trick with this attack is timing it just right so that you get the maximum amount of strikes. You'll know it's choppin' time when the final strike is done because the last damage amount will be larger than the rest. When you see the bigger number, finish the combo. Note that the initial dash forward on the SW attack causes stagger when blocked.

Axe & Shield (Ground)

Range: Short/Mid (EX Only)

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 16

EX Mode: Extra cleave

This ought to just be called Axe. The shield isn't even used. Nitpicking aside, this is a fun attack. The normal version is a handy little three hit combo

that hits decently fast and causes Wall Rush straight down, which can be utilized with Banish Traps or just more Brave damage. The SW attack is even more fun. Vaan will perform a single mighty blow, crushing defenses and causing Wall Rush straight down. It also has the added fringe benefit of hopping Vaan far enough off the ground to avoid some horizontal attacks (Warrior of Light's Sword Thrust comes to mind). EX Mode grants one extra cleave to the SW attack for those who just love seeing enemies squished beneath axes.

Sword & Shield (Ground)

Range: Short/Mid

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 22

EX Mode: Block more attacks

The shield in this attack's name is actually applicable this time around. S&S is a so-so attack in my opinion. The normal version has Vaan perform a quick three hit combo which results in Chase. The SW attack begins with a Block, using the shield Vaan pulls out of thin air, then one reprisal, regardless if an attack was blocked or not. The reprisal leads into a Chase. Yes, Riposte would be useful with this attack, but with only one attack after performing a Block, it really doesn't add up.

Rifle (Ground)

Range: Low ~ Mid

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 27

EX Mode: Two shots

Rifle is another ho-hum attack. It's defensive in nature, like Sword & Shield, but instead of blocking during SW, Vaan simply dodges. From my experience I have found the Dodge to be extremely unreliable in avoiding nearly any attack. The normal version just has Vaan fire one blast. A note with this attack, the closer you are to your enemy, the more damage this will do. It tapers off eventually though.

Staff (Ground)

Range: Short

P/M: Magical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 31

EX Mode: Two spins

Staff is an oddball in Vaan's arsenal, I believe. It is a decent enough attack,

generating extra EX Force 'n all, but it just really isn't that useful with Magic damage. The normal attack is a small combo, ending with Vaan saying "Sayonara!" and initiating a Chase. The SW has Vaan twirl the staff around himself with magic, extracting more EX Force with a succesful attack, followed by a potential for Chase. The thing is, neither attack seems to hurt much, and even with the benefit of generating more EX Force, this attack doesn't measure up too well.

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Air Abilities
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Greatsword (Air)
Range: Short ~ Long (SW Only)
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: Start
EX Mode: SW Charges faster

Not a lot has changed between this Air attack and its Ground partner. This version has a bit more versatility, as being in the air gives Vaan slightly more vertical tracking, but overall it is just as useful as before. Personally, I prefer this version over the other. Find what works for you.

Spear (Ground)
Range: Short
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: Start
EX Mode: Two twirling attacks

Again, the same attack, just in a different wrapping. I HAVE found that this move does greatly benefit from being based in the air for whatever reason, particularly the normal attack version. Fantastic for setting up Assist attacks.

Crossbow (Air)
Range: Mid/Long (SW Only)
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: 4
EX Mode: SW Range boost

Remember how much I did not like the Ground version? It is alleviated here. The freedom you gain from being able to set this attack up from any altitude makes

it a killer. The normal attack still sucks, but you shouldn't be using it anyway except as maybe a quick poke to start a Chase. The SW mows down unsuspecting and stationary opponents now though. Use it.

Katana (Air)

Range: Medium

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 13

EX Mode: More strikes

Katana also gains somewhat of a benefit from being in the air, though not nearly as much as Crossbow did. The SW attack seems to track a bit less strongly here, which is a bummer, because when it hits it hits hard. Try to use it off of a Block. I will warn you: using this off of an Assist Chase takes a little practice with your timing. Get used to it if you like this move. The initial dash forward during SW attack still causes stagger when blocked. You can even finish the attack if the enemy tries to block it!

Axe & Shield (Air)

Range: Short/Mid (EX Only)

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 17

EX Mode: Extra cleave

Almost useless, in my opinion. The Ground version had the extreme benefit of usually having you in close proximity before even initiating the attack, but since the air gives you freedom of movement and position, it makes this attack more difficult to set up. You're better off sticking with the Ground version if you feel like using this move.

Sword & Shield (Air)

Range: Short/Mid

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 90

LVL: 24

EX Mode: Block more attacks

The same exact attack as the Ground in almost every way, except that Vaan will point his shield in whatever direction the enemy is during SW. I'd still advise against using it unless you love the quick Chase combos that the normal version of this move carries.

Rifle (Air)
Range: Low ~ Mid
P/M: Physical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: 29
EX Mode: Two shots

Rifle gains a bit of an edge in the air, whatwith the better positioning lending itself. It still ends up being one of Vaan's weaker and more useless attacks, unfortunately. Using it off of a Dodge is pointless, as this attack Dodges on its own, and using it off of a Block is also useless, as the Stagger will wear off by the time you fire the bullets. Maybe against mages...

Staff (Air)
Range: Short
P/M: Magical
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 90
LVL: 31
EX Mode: Two spins

Staff has improved a bit with the switch to the skies. It now has very limited vertical tracking which works nicely with the manual horizontal movement. The attacks still feel underwhelmingly weak, but the EX Force generation combined with Chase does have the potential for EX Mode builds. Choose what works for you.

[3.2] HP Attacks

Now that we have covered Vaan's extensive arsenal of goodies, it's time to focus on the killing aspect of things. What makes saving up all those Brave points worth it? HP Attacks, of course! Unfortunately for Vaan, he has trouble hitting with almost all of his HP Attacks when used alone. Let's get into the details.

Cataclysm (Ground)
Range: Medium
P/M: N/A
CP: 30 (M): 20
AP: 140
LVL: Start

Vaan's basic HP attack. He creates a magic array on the ground, then stomps and punches the ground, yelling "Let's roll!" while unearthing several large earthen pillars. He tracks the opponent for a second, then fires it off. Not a bad attack, but easy to miss with. Limited vertical attack range and decent

horizontal range. Works best off of a Block.

Torrent (Ground)

Range: Short ~ Long

P/M: Magical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 140

LVL: 8

A decent long range harassment attack. Vaan creates a magic array directly above him, then hits it, sending large water globs raining down on the opponent.

Appropriately, he yells "Rain down!". Hits for two weak Brave attacks before hitting HP. Always causes Wall Rush straight down when succesful, resulting in more damage. Best used in conjunction with Windburst and a distraction Assist, I've found. The magic array he creates deals Brave damage if the opponent comes into contact with it, creating the perfect opening to finish this attack up.

Inferno (Air)

Range: Medium

P/M: Magical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 140

LVL: Start

Vaan's basic air HP Attack. He creates a magic array directly in front of himself, then dashes through it, cloaking himself in flame. Has a notable start up time with a very obvious "Haaaahh!" from Vaan before he lets loose with the attack, yelling "Burn up!". Vaan tracks the opponent during start up, then tracks weakly during the attack. Causes a few Brave attacks before finishing. Causes Wall Rush straight ahead. Best used off of a Block or an Assist Chase or in conjunction with Windburst.

Windburst (Air)

Range: Short ~ Medium

P/M: Physical

CP: 30 (M): 20

AP: 140

LVL: 36

I call this attack "The Great Facilitator", because while it stunningly sucks alone, pairing this with other attacks in Vaan's arsenal makes it amazing. Vaan creates a magic array directly below him, then stomps and spins, hitting the array with his fist while yelling "Sunder!" while spawning a tornado. This attack has wonky targeting. It has fantastic vertical targeting, but the horizontal has a method to its madness. It will not spawn right on top of the opponent, but rather at a stand-off distance so you can utilize its greatest ability: Absorb. The tornado created sucks in the opponent, distracting them so

you can hit with another attack such as Crossbow or Inferno. I can tell you from much experience that Inferno works particularly well when trying to score a HP hit. If you fire off Windburst, then get relatively close to it and your opponent and fire Inferno, the opponent will more often than not dodge TOWARDS Windburst. Even if they dodge away, they are getting slightly drawn back while you rush forward with your red-hot flames. Boom. HP damage. That is just one of many possibilities. I must warn you though, it does have drawbacks. This attack will almost never hit all by itself. The enemy would have to purposefully walk into it. Also, the tornado CAN be reflected, making it a danger to you instead. It's difficult to notice when this happens, but watch and listen for the telltale signs and be wary of Absorb's effects. The magic array created hits for Brave damage, but unlike Torrent's setup, Windburst will most likely not hit even if this happens due to the horizontal targeting. Performing Windburst while a tornado is in play will not result in the renewal of the first or a creation of a new tornado. Experiment with this attack!

[3.3] Actions/Support/Extra Abilities

I won't cover every single ability here, since they are standard across the board for nearly every single character in this game. Instead, I will cover the ones I use and what I think you might find useful.

Ground Evasion, Midair Evasion, Ground Block, Midair Block, and Aerial Recovery all go without saying. If you don't have these equipped, you're not playing Dissidia.

Controlled Recovery is extremely useful, and at only 5 CP mastered, it's foolish not to have this.

I am an advocate of Free Air Dash, but if you like Omni Air Dash or Multi-Air Slide, be my guest.

Omni Gound Dash is something I find useful. The + version is unnecessary, but nice for avoiding attacks.

Free Air Dash Boost sucks up CP, but it really enhances your mobility and makes grabbing EX Cores easy.

Speed/Jump/Jump Times Boost are all at your discretion. If you like 'em, use 'em.

Evasion Boost is nice. Use it.

For Support abilities, all you truly need is EX Core Lock On and Assist Lock On.

Everything else is a waste. If you like Auto-EX Burst and Defense, go for it, but it uses a lot of space.

For Extra abilities, I personally always equip Sneak Attack and Counterattack.

I love criticals. Snooze and Lose is always nice, but man it just annihilates CP. Magic/Physical Shield is useful but not entirely needed. Assist Critical Boost is very useful for Assist builds, obviously. "EXP" to abilities are up to you, but if you need to choose one, I usually pick HP or Brave.

4. Character-specific Tactics

[4.1] General Tactics

Phew! You sick of reading yet? I won't blame you. That was a lot to cover.

But

now that you have a better idea of what Vaan is capable of, knowing how to apply it and make it work for you is the next logical step. I covered a small bit of Vaan's tactics in the Windburst breakdown, and that's kind of my model for explaining these things. If you'd rather learn your own, feel free. This game is all about customization. If not, continue to read, o reader, and absorb my knowledge.

Utilizing Vaan's huge array of Brave Attacks can certainly be a daunting thing.

When to use Crossbow? When to use a short charged Greatsword? Should I use the

second cleave with EX Mode SW Axe & Shield? Well, that last one is rhetorical,

as it is a forced combo...but you get the idea. Vaan has a lot to offer, and you need to use it.

Movement

Vaan should almost always be on the move. Positioning yourself is key to setting up attacks with almost any character, but with Vaan's Brave Attack traits, you need to keep it at the forefront of your mind. Getting a good angle

with SW Crossbow will often mean the difference between Breaking your opponent

or getting severely punished.

Blocking

Quite a few of Vaan's attacks work best when used directly off of a Block.

One

attack, Sword & Shield, even Blocks for you. A short range SW Greatsword used off of a Block can cause some decent damage and disrupt your enemy's flow, especially when you're near a wall. SW Katana (Air) is very very nice off of a

Block because the start up time on it usually lends itself to an inevitable Dodge.

Dodging

Dodging is more important for Vaan when it is applied to HP attacking moreso than Brave. Inferno works well off of a Dodge, as does Cataclysm occasionally.

His Brave attacks mostly have good qualities that can be enhanced by active Dodging, but they don't require it to work all the time.

[4.2] EX Mode

Obtained All Licenses!

Vaan's EX Mode is in reference to the License Board from FFXII, which was the method of learning new abilities, equipping different weapons and armor and getting generally more kickass. Vaan gains a few neat perks from switching into EX Mode.

Free Switch - Lets Vaan revert back to unarmed at any time by pressing R and Square.

This is useful to a degree. Obviously, it lets you perform SW attacks from any weapon with ease, but it really only sounds good on paper. In practice, it usually leads to more misfired HP attacks rather than doing what it was intended for. Don't let that stop you from trying it out. You may find it to be the best thing ever.

Zodiak - Makes Vaan's attacks stronger and gives certain attacks extra bonuses.

I covered all of the SW attack EX Mode bonuses in the Bravery Attacks section, so look there for those. The other side of this perk is Vaan just gets even stronger, and boy is it noticeable. He hits HARD in EX Mode thanks to this. Always active in EX Mode.

Regen/Critical Hit Boost

Everybody gets these. Doesn't mean they're not useful. Regen simply regenerates a small amount of HP at set intervals. Critical Hit Boost raises the rate of critical hits. Nice.

EX Burst - Quickening

The big finale! Vaan unleashes a series of Quickenings, each causing Brave damage before finishing the opponent off with Luminescence. Identical to Gabranth's EX Burst, you have to shuffle the attacks with the R Button and press X when the next attack becomes available. Vaan will always use Red Spiral White Whorl and Pyroclasm, in that order. This EX Burst does respectable damage and always looks flashy. Luminescence will always activate even if you miss one or two of the Quickenings.

[4.3] Combos

Due to the nature of Vaan's attacks, he really can't combo very well, but damned if we can't try to make him! Assist attacks really make comboing extremely viable, as a lot of Vaan's moves cause Wall Rush.

Ground Combos

Since almost all of Vaan's Ground attacks lift him off the ground, it's rather difficult to chain anything together into something reliably used. Experiment on your own to find what works best for you.

Torrent > Cataclysm

Air Combos

Spear > Wall Rush > Staff

Katana > Dodge Cancel after strikes > Greatsword

Rifle > Crossbow > Chase > Wall Rush > Greatsword/Spear/Staff

Windburst > Greatsword/Spear (normal)/Axe & Shield

Windburst > Inferno

Whatever Combos

Windburst > Torrent

If anybody would like to add their own combos, find more that I am unaware are useful or think I missed any, please bring it to my attention. I will post it here and give you credit.

[4.4] Builds

Making a proper build for Vaan really isn't that difficult. Equipping anything that increases Magic damage is a complete waste of time, as Vaan has all of 4 Magic attacks including Ground and Air Staff. So don't focus on Magic damage. Instead, focus on beefing up his Physical and Wall Rush damage, because that's where his strength lies. EX Mode Vaan isn't a farfetched idea, but to be rather honest, his EX Mode doesn't grant him an extreme edge in combat. He really truly shines when he has a solid Assist build. Since Vaan has natural access to every weapon except Instruments, he can be versatile right out of the box. No 500,000 Gil scrolls required! Just add water.

Standard Build

Weapon: Excalibur/Ragnarok

Shield: Hero's Shield/Seydlitz

Headwear: Grand Helm or better

Armor: Brigadine or better

Hyper Ring

Muscle Belt

Booster

Sniper Eye

Sturm und Drang

and whatever Booster Accessories you want.

HP: 9972
BRV: 957
ATK: 176/177
DEF: 186/185
LUK: 60

This is a solid build for Vaan. It gives him admirable defense while maximizing his natural talents for damage. I would personally recommend Ragnarok over Excalibur, but if you just love that initial Brave boost, by all means, have it. Ragnarok's Physical Damage +10% persists all battle long, though. The Hero's Shield grants him potentially life saving defense against HP Wall Rush damage while the Seydlitz grants a nice 20% bonus to Regen, which is really better off for EX Builds. The Grand Helm is just the standard choice for level 100 builds if you have nothing better to put there. It affords him a little more Chase Brave Defense. The Brigadine is another "put something there" piece of equipment. The 50% Wall Rush Brave Defense is nothing to scoff at though. As far as the accessories go, it is obviously geared towards squeezing every last drop out of Vaan's physical attacks. Even if you do not use Booster Accessories, with Ragnarok equipped you are already going to deal 125% physical damage. Right on!

EX Build

Weapon: Ragnarok
Shield: Seydlitz
Headwear: Grand Helm or better
Armor: Brigadine or better

Hyper Ring
Muscle Belt
Pearl Necklace
Dragonfly Orb
Angel's Bell
Tenacious Attacker
Platinum Hourglass
Center of the World
HP = 100%
EX Mode
Pre-Assist Attack

HP: 10299
BRV: 957
ATK: 177
DEF: 184

This is a standard EX Build for nearly anyone. Again, emphasis is placed on Vaan's physical damage, but it will be increased with the EX Mode perk Zodiak. The Seydlitz increases Regen right along with the Angel's Bell, so having HP Booster Accessories is viable. Defense is still admirable. Great Gospel can be interchanged with the Angel's Bell for the fantastic bonus on the Brave

Recovery.

Assist Build

Weapon: Seal of Lufenia weapon/Raganarok
Shield: Hero's Shield
Headwear: Seal of Lufenia headwear
Armor: Seal of Lufenia armor

Hyper Ring
Muscle Belt
Battle Gem (optional)
A Comrade's Vow
EX Breaker
Badge of Trust
Fiery Spirit (optional)
Together As One
Battle Ring
Side By Side

HP: 10299
BRV: 956
ATK: 175 - 178 (?)
DEF: 180 - 183 (?)

A standard Assist Build for almost anyone. It gives you a hearty dose of initial Assist Gauge. It also gives you excellent defense against Assist Break because of the EX Breaker. Yes, it's a random factor, but when it works it works in your favor in a huge way. Damage is naturally high. Defense can take the -10% hit because it too is high. You'll be whipping out huge Assist combos faster than you can keep track of. I think this is Vaan's best mode of operation. I am uncertain on all the Lufenian pieces that grant Seal of Lufenia, hence the question marks.

My Build

Weapon: Zodiac Blade
Shield: Blurry Moon
Headwear: Lufenian Artifact
Armor: Lufenian Artifact

Hyper Ring
Muscle Belt
Booster
A Comrade's Vow
BRV = Base Value
Pre-EX Mode
Pre-EX Revenge
Sturm und Drang
Rebellious Soul
Sturm und Drang
Together as One

This is my personal Vaan. It closely follows my recommendations for a standard build Vaan, with a few tweaks. I use Vaan's exclusive weapon mostly for the free Riposte effect, since it isn't difficult to stagger

an enemy as Vaan. Blurry Moon is a fun choice, granting some extra damage and BRV recovery on block. I use two artifacts I've gained for armor, but good standard choices would be Maximillian or Brave Suit for armor, and Grand Helm or Duelling Mask for headwear. A Comrade's Vow is a great low EX-impact Assist accessory, charging your Assist bar with HP damage you deal. The rest of the accessories are focused on pumping as much physical damage as possible and maximizing wall rush effects.

5. Extras

[5.1] Tips and Tricks

Alright, after all that info, it's time to apply it. I basically covered everything you need to know already. I guess to recap, always keep moving.

Try

to remain in the air as much as possible, because that is really where Vaan is

most useful. When using an Assist build, I would strongly recommend

Sephiroth.

He's standard fare, I know, but he's just so reliable with his Brave Assists.

[5.2] Vs. Character Guides

[5.2.1] Lightning

The former Guardian Corps soldier is versatile, but all of her attacks just feel so fragile. Her one Bravery to HP attack is something you want to avoid, as is Army of One. Her magic is all blockable or easily avoided. Choose your own tactics.

[5.2.2] Vaan

Hey! It's you! But..it's not you! You should be going into this mirror match knowing all of the ins and outs of what makes Vaan tick. You know what to look

out for and how to counter it. He doesn't present much of a problem for you honestly. Reflect his Windbursts to use them for your own!

[5.2.3] Laguna

Laguna can be extremely annoying if you let him keep distance on you, because he is primarily a long-range fighter. Machine Gun hits hard, but it is easily blocked. His rifle attack is a little tricky but very manageable. His HP attacks are all easily avoided. Keep tight on him and you'll win.

[5.2.4] Yuna

The savior of Spira is a bit of a challenge, but nothing you can't deal with. Ixion is probably the most dangerous summon she has, followed by Valefor. Shiva's Heavenly Strike has a deviously effective vertical range, so watch out for it. Remember to dodge to the side to avoid Energy Ray.

[5.2.5] Kain

Kain is kind of weird. His Bravery attacks have the potential for enormous combos, but the computer never does that. His HP attacks all cause a stupid amount of Brave damage provided enough distance is available, so try not to

always be way up in the air. Block as much as you can.

[5.2.6] Tifa

This bouncy warrior can be quite a handful. Her feints have the potential for really fantastic mindgames. Keep on your toes the entire time, because missing a feint can mean serious damage for you. Her HP attacks usually cause a fair bit of Brave damage. Watch out for her feints.

[5.2.7] Warrior of Light

Facing WoL can be quite a challenge. His air moves are very difficult to avoid and counter. Rising Buckler and Shield Strike chain into Bitter End, which is just one of his trump cards, the other being Rune Saber. Attempt to block, but mostly dodge the rest while getting in what attacks you can. WoL can be severely punished when he whiffs attacks.

[5.2.8] Firion

Firion is an absolute beast on the ground. Rope Knife is the main attack you have to look out for. It hits hard and chains into Double Trouble, which hits even harder and will always Wall Rush you unless you are sent into a Banish Trap, which also sucks. Look out for his Magic Arts: Flame attack, as a savvy Firion can use his own blocked Fires to initiate a Shield Bash, which is hard to avoid. Try to block what you can, and avoid everything else, then punish with impunity.

[5.2.9] Onion Knight

This quick little bastard is chain-attacking nightmare. He loves to spam his Bravery to HP attacks. Swordshower, Guiding Swipe, Quake, and Flare all hit really really hard. You need to avoid these at all costs. Lucky for you, most of his attacks are really easy to avoid. Definitely counterattack at every opportunity.

[5.2.10] Cecil

Cecil is not too much of a pain to deal with, really. His Dark Knight mode hits hard, but is very easy to punish. Paladin mode is significantly more dangerous, but still not even that bad. Whenever Cecil whiffs Paladin Force, Luminous Shard or Saint's Fall, punish it with Katana or Inferno. Just try not to get locked into his Searchlight and avoid his combos.

[5.2.11] Bartz

Bartz doesn't present a huge challenge either. His attacks hurt, but once you figure out what each one does, they become rather easy to dodge. Rush Impact is probably his most dangerous attack. Holy can chain into an HP attack, so blocking that is the best thing to do.

[5.2.12] Terra

Terra is a fierce mage if there ever was one. Her attacks all hit hard. Fire chains to Firaga and often hurts badly. Her Holy Combo is a complete bitch to

deal with once it connects. It almost forces you to Assist Change out of the attack when it hits, and that may not even work. The good thing for you is some of her attacks are redirectable, so do that if you can.

[5.2.13] Cloud

Cloud hits hard. His Bravery to HP attacks are rather devastating. He can set up nice Assist attacks. His EX Mode annihilates defenses. What's the catch? Well, he's slow and he broadcasts a lot of his attacks. His magic is poor. Dodge and attack.

[5.2.14] Squall

Squall is a Bravery eating monster. Solid Barrel is just magnificent. Beat Fang is one of the best Bravery attacks in the game. His magic is very very solid. Where Squall completely falls short is his inability to hit with HP attacks easily. Punish him with no remorse when he whiffs HP attacks.

[5.2.15] Zidane

Zidane is very quick and has one of the best HP attacks in the game, Free Energy. He also has Brave to HP attacks, and one of his Bravery attacks, Booster 8, basically chains into Free Energy or Grand Lethal. His Bravery attacks are all easily blocked though. His magic isn't anything to be afraid of. Try to stay ahead of him in the air because that's where he shines.

[5.2.16] Tidus

Tidus does not pose a huge threat to Vaan. Even though his attacks have tricky timing to them, learning them isn't hard and you can dodge and block easily afterwards. His long range attacks aren't scary. Try to avoid his Bravery to HP attacks.

[5.2.17] Garland

The Wall Rush grandmaster poses a bit of a challenge. His attacks have high priorities and often stagger when you block. His HP attacks work well off of a block, and I find that Tsunami is tricky to avoid. Try to avoid and counterattack. Don't get caught up in Wall Rush hell.

[5.2.18] Emperor

Honestly, he's not a threat to you at all. You can use SW Greatsword to get through most of his traps, and Cataclysm reflects Aerial Flare like a champ. Starfall is of little concern to you because you can hit him out of it with SW Crossbow or whatever else you choose. Have your way with this delusional tyrant.

[5.2.19] Cloud of Darkness

She provides you with a lot to think about with her enormous HP attacking arsenal. Her tentacle attacks are difficult to read sometimes, but when she is

initiating one, count the swipes of the tentacle. If it's one swipe, it's a short range attack. If it's two, it's a mid-range multi-hit attack. If it's three, it's a long range projectile attack. Read the signs and act accordingly.

[5.2.20] Golbez

Golbez always presents a fearsome challenge. He LOVES to abuse Cosmic Ray and it can easily force you to keep your Assist gauge locked or drained to get out of it. Black Fang is kind of threatening, but not overmuch. Really, just keep on the move and keep on your toes because his attacks have a nasty habit of catching you unawares.

[5.2.21] Exdeath

The blocking grandmaster isn't threatening. If a human is using him, get ready for a long and tense fight. If it's a computer, laugh at him and crush him. Axe & Shield isn't as effective as you think it might be. Look for openings and try to initiate long Assist combos to keep him from blocking.

[5.2.22] Kefka

The Mad Mage is slightly confusing to fight against, but he creates openings in himself if you position yourself at the optimal distance. Forsaken Null is irritating, especially when he is in EX Mode, but persist. Havoc Wing reflects nearly everything it touches, so be careful.

[5.2.23] Sephiroth

Sephiroth is a punishment character, so don't give him any opportunities to punish you. He will try to zone you a lot with Shadow Flare, but it's a low priority attack and it can be avoided easily. It can be reflected away with SW Spear. When he begins casting Black Materia, either find something safe to hide under if you are far away or try to catch him with SW Crossbow. Avoid getting caught in his physical attacks.

[5.2.24] Ultimecia

She is fantastic at assailing you from afar, so don't let her. Get in close and stay there. Harass the hell out of her. If she gets too far away from you, launch a Windburst and close the gap. Just keep the pressure up and she'll fall to your hands quickly.

[5.2.25] Kuja

Kuja can either be a nightmare or a breeze depending on your amount of mistakes. If you let him control the flow of battle, you will be annihilated. If you keep

Kuja responding to you, you will conquer him. Ultima is annoying and cannot be stopped with SW Crossbow, so just avoid it. Serpahic Star isn't a threat. Just keep pressure applied.

[5.2.26] Jecht

This guy can pummel anyone into oblivion if he is allowed to. Do not let that happen. Blocking isn't very effective against this guy because his charged Bravery attacks will stagger you everytime. Watch out for his Bravery to HP attacks. None of them are set in stone, but they can be pulled out at anytime during a combo. Don't hesitate to Assist Change out of major damage. Mind his Jecht Block, as it blocks nearly anything. Higher priority attacks will stagger him, but you'll be left reeling too.

[5.2.27] Shantotto

The mini-mage can be quite fearsome. One of her nastier tricks is using Bio on you, which will cause instant Break if you land an HP attack while it's sucking the life out of you. Be aware of her stunning spell and try not to let her land any Bravery damage on you, because the more Bravery she has the more devastating her HP spells are.

[5.2.28] Gabranth

Vaan's arch-nemesis is the EX Mode grandmaster. Under no circumstances should he be allowed to shift into EX Mode, because he becomes stupidly powerful. EX Gauge Depletion granted from Lufenian gear helps, but a solid Assist build can work too. Just be extremely careful about EX Breaking him, because his EX perk Jamming will cause you to be unable to get stage bravery afterwards. Be careful on Chase attacks, because nothing is more humiliating than getting beat by a non-EX Gabranth.

[5.2.29] Gilgamesh

The bumbling swordsman is fairly dangerous. Respect what he is able to do. Rocket Punch is a really effective HP attack just because of its blindingly fast speed. Jump is tricky, but almost identical to Kain's, so act accordingly. Try to avoid getting hit by Tsumabegaeshi, because it does cause decent Brave Damage. Block what you can and hit him hard.

[5.2.30] Feral Chaos

This guy...yeah, he sucks. All of his attacks stagger you out of blocks. Some of them can hit you off of a Wall Rush right into another Wall Rush. His HP attacks cover large areas and cause Brave damage. He is large. He is fast. Dodge as much as you can and catch him in Assist combos. Use Windburst and Inferno, especially in small stages, because his large size will lend itself to your advantage. Do not be intimidated!

6. Stuff

[6.1] FAQs

Seeing as I don't have any yet, this is empty. Give me some questions and I will give you some FAQs (and maybe answers).

[6.2] Credits

Square Enix: For making this amazing game.

Gamefaqs: For providing endless information on the games we play.

Neoseeker: For wanting to host this humble FAQ.

Anyone else who deserves credit, I guess. More will be added as more people add to this.

[6.3] Contact

If you should desire to contact me, the best way to do so is e-mail. Make sure you put "Vaan FAQ" in the subject field so I don't just breeze over it and delete it. Do not send me spam.

E-mail: nachtaugel@gmail.com

AIM: NachtaugeAIM

[6.4] Legal

Dissidia: [duodecim] Final Fantasy, characters and logos are all owned by Square Enix. I claim no right to these.

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