

# Dissidia 012[duodecim] Final Fantasy Golbez FAQ

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Golbez

Dissidia 012 [duodecim]: Final Fantasy  
Golbez Character Guide by dr4g0n

Table of Contents:

Section 1. Introduction

1.1 - About me

1.2 - About Golbez

Section 2. Moves

2.1 - Brave attacks

2.2 - HP attacks

Section 3 - Playing Golbez

3.1 - Golbez analysis

3.2 - EX

3.3 - Assists

3.4 - Combos

3.5 - Builds

Section 4 - Matchup Analysis

4.01 Warrior of light

4.02 Garland

4.03 Firion

4.04 Emperor

4.05 Onion Knight

4.06 Cloud of Darkness

4.07 Cecil

4.08 Kain

4.09 Golbez

4.10 Bartz

4.11 Exdeath

4.12 Terra

4.13 Kefka

4.14 Cloud

4.15 Tifa

4.16 Sephiroth

4.17 Squall

4.18 Laguna

4.19 Ultimecia

4.20 Zidane

4.21 Kuja

4.22 Tidus

4.23 Yuna

4.24 Jecht

4.25 Shantotto

4.26 Prishe

- 4.27 Vaan
- 4.28 Gabranth
- 4.29 Lightning
- 4.30 Feral Chaos
- 4.31 Gilgamesh

## Section 5 - Miscellaneous

- 5.1 Anti-Golbez
- 5.2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- 5.3 Contacting me
- 5.4 History
- 5.5 Credits/shoutouts
- 5.6 Outro

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## Section 1 - Introduction

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### 1.1 - About me

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Hey guys. I'm dr4g0n, or variations thereof depending on availability of the name on various forums xD. You probably don't see much of me, mainly because I avoid posting/commenting/etc. Up till now, I'm one of the leeches who takes info and uses it without really contributing much, but NO MORE!

I'm from Australia (NOT AMERICA? \*gasp\*), and game fairly regularly. Not to sound like a pretentious twerp, but I'm something of a veteran fighting game player. Tekken, Street Fighter, Marvel vs Capcom 3 (now Ultimate MvC3), Dissidia (original and duodecim), Mortal Kombat, Arcana Heart etc. You name it, chances are I've at least dabbled in it. Again, not sounding like twerp, but I believe my strength is in strategy and tactics; while my execution is pretty bad, so look out for long-winded paragraphs on strengths, abusability, etc. I don't think there are many vids of me online, but thats because we all play the game, but can't really be bothered uploading vids just for the heck of it.

On that note, I'll give a warning right now, my combos section will be fairly brief, since I believe in using simple combos for the sake of consistency. Extra damage is awesome, but as already mentioned, my execution is mediocre at best, so I'll sacrifice some damage for the ability to hit that combo every time.

As far as my 'qualifications' to write this FAQ, I've played Dissidia extensively (original and duodecim), although my pvp experience is sadly mainly limited to ad-hoc games. I've dabbled in all the characters, following the belief that you get a better idea of how to beat a character if you've played them, and got a good feel for their strengths and weaknesses. As far as Golbez specifically, I enjoy playing with him immensely. He ranks with Squall, Firion and Terra as my favourite characters to play, just because they're so darn fun.

But enough of thats enough about me. Here's starting to talk about the character.

### 1.2 - About Golbez

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Golbez (then Theodor) was born to Kluya and Cecilia, making him a half-Lunarian. While growing up, he always wondered why his father was fascinated by

the moon and was unaware of his father's origins as a Lunarian. His father would not tell him until he had mastered the arts of magic. Theodor boasted he can cast magic, but when his father asked if he has even mastered the Cure spell, he admitted he cannot. When Theodor returned home afterward, he saw his mother collapsed on the floor. She told him she was alright, and that she is just tired from carrying her next child. Excited about having a new sibling, Theodor went to bed.

Later, Kluya was attacked by the very magic he had taught to humans. When Kluya wondered if it was right to teach the people of Earth magic, Theodor assured his father it was, comforting his father in his final moments. As Kluya passed on, Theodor tried to cast Cure on him, but was unable to. The villagers took care of Theodor and Cecilia afterward, and when Cecilia finally gave birth, she died in labor. Shortly after their mother's death, the children are seen alone in their house. While staring at his brother, Theodor heard a voice telling him the baby was the one responsible for taking his mother and father away from him, and that he was worthless for letting it happen. The voice told him he was "an insect born from a dragon's corpse", and declared his new name was Golbez. Controlled by the voice and filled with hatred towards his brother, Golbez left him just outside of Baron. The infant grew to become Golbez's brother Cecil Harvey.

In reality, the voice was Zemus. Taunted by Zemus's voice and ashamed of his actions, Golbez fled civilization. Eventually, combined with Golbez's Lunarian blood and his hatred of his younger brother, Zemus was able to influence his mind and take control of him. Golbez subsequently loses many of his memories and begins to gather the Crystals to summon the Giant of Babil. The Giant would depopulate the planet so that the Lunarians, presumably under Zemus's control or command, could live there rather than stay in stasis inside the moon.

Taking control of the four Archfiends Zemus has sent to him, Golbez sends Cagnazzo to assassinate the King of Baron and impersonate him, using the Red Wings to steal the Crystal of Water from Mysidia. Cecil, Lord Captain of the Red Wings, is hesitant over his orders, and is removed from duty when he returns and questions the King's actions.

Golbez takes his place as commander and attacks Damcyan, stealing the Crystal of Fire in an attack that kills a young woman named Anna, daughter of a powerful sage, Tellah. Tellah swears revenge against Golbez and sets out to kill the sorcerer at any cost. Meanwhile, Cecil assembles a group of allies, including Yang Fang Leiden and Prince Edward Chris von Muir of Damcyan, and heads to Fabul where the third Crystal is kept.

With the warning from Cecil and Yang of the impending attack, the King of Fabul tightens the castle defenses and Golbez is forced to enter the castle himself with Cecil's friend, Kain Highwind, of whom he has taken control of telepathically. After Kain wounds Cecil, Golbez effortlessly strikes down Yang and Edward, taking the Crystal of Air and also abducts Rosa Joanna Farrell, the woman with whom Cecil and Kain are both in love.

Golbez takes the three Crystals to the Tower of Zot. Once he receives word Cecil is attempting to climb Mount Ordeals and become a Paladin, he dispatches Scarmiglione to kill him. When this fails, Cecil returns to Baron and kills Cagnazzo, restoring Baron to the peaceful nation it once was. Golbez has already stolen the air fleet and placed Kain in command, who rendezvous with Cecil and offers to return Rosa if Cecil brings them the final Crystal from Troia. Cecil retrieves the Crystal of Earth from the Dark Elf and brings it to the Tower of Zot.

Climbing the tower, Cecil hands over the Crystal, but Golbez refuses to return

Rosa. Enraged, Tellah pushes Cecil aside and confronts Golbez. After fruitlessly casting his best spells, Tellah sacrifices his life to cast the ultimate magic, Meteor. Although Tellah dies shortly after, Golbez is severely weakened and his control over Kain is broken. Golbez retreats, and strikes down Cecil when he attempts to follow. At this time, Golbez apparently recognises his brother, and hesitates to deliver the finishing blow. Although Cecil is confused, Golbez announces he will destroy him at another time and leaves the tower.

Cecil and his companions enter the Underworld, where Golbez has already gone to find the next four Crystals, the Dark Crystals, of which he already has two. After defeating his minion Calcabrina in the Dwarven Castle, Golbez appears and tells Cecil his plan. Cecil and his friends attack Golbez to no avail, and Golbez summons a Dragon to kill them. Rydia intervenes with her Mist Dragon, defeating Golbez's dragon, and with her assistance Golbez is defeated, but again only weakened, and manages to take the Crystal before escaping.

Golbez does not appear for some time, until he again takes control of Kain in the Sealed Cave and has him take the final Crystal. Golbez activates the Tower of Babil to call the Giant of Babil. Cecil and his companions retrieve the airship Lunar Whale and go to the Red Moon, where they meet Fusoya who tells them Zemus is controlling Golbez and returns to Earth with them.

On Earth, the Giant begins its attack, and with the help of the combined forces of the Overworld and Underground, Cid Pollendina flies Cecil and his friends into the Giant. After destroying the Giant's core, Golbez emerges and Fusoya shatters Zemus's control of him. Golbez promptly remembers who he is, surprising Cecil with the knowledge he has been fighting his own brother. Golbez and Fusoya climb up the tower to go to the Red Moon and defeat Zemus.

Following them to the Moon, Cecil and his companions find Golbez and Fusoya battling Zemus. Although they easily defeat him, Zemus is reborn as Zeromus, and their attacks fail. Golbez uses a Crystal to try and turn the tide, but as he has lived a life of darkness he fails and Zeromus strikes them both down. Golbez gives the Crystal to Cecil, and he and his companions are able to use it to make Zeromus corporeal and defeat him.

After the battle, Golbez confronts Cecil with calling him "brother" before the battle, although Cecil does not respond. Realizing Cecil and the people of Earth can't forgive him for his crimes, Golbez decides to go to the Lunar Sleep with Fusoya. He leaves, but Cecil calls out to him and says goodbye before he does, indicating he may forgive him after all. In the DS release, Golbez's armor vanishes as he walks away, showing how he looked before Zemus took control of him.

Soon after this, Cecil ascends to Baron's throne and the Lunarians' moon leaves the Earth's orbit. Cecil receives one final telepathic message from Golbez, saying good-bye

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## Section 2 - Moves

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### Key

P/M - Physical or Magical attack

CP - The amount of CP it takes to equip said ability after mastering

AP - The amount of AP it takes to master said ability

### 2.1 - Brave attacks

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2.1.1 - Ground  
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[Rising Wave]

Mid range - Magical; Close range - Physical

CP - 15

AP - 70

Golbez brings his right hand up and brings up a pillar of dark flame under the opponent, saying "Let us start". The range on this move is deceptively long for a mid-range attack, but the start-up makes this move easily dodge-able. As a result, the move becomes bad as a pressure/poking tool, but incredible for punishing any move that has an opponent remaining still for a while. Examples include, most of Terra's options (Meteor, Graviga, Fire, etc); Squall's Thunder Barret (and Blizzard if you're fast enough); any of the WoL magic casting, and crossover if he's close to the ground; etc.

The move has bad horizontal tracking, and not great tracking below (since the pillar begins under the opponent, and flares up), but its vertical tracking upwards is pretty incredible. Not even Kain with Jump Boost ++ can jump over it in a vertical fashion.

This move chains to the HP attack Cosmic Ray, but in a weird way. See the section for Cosmic Ray for more details.

Rating: 7/10. Don't get me wrong, this move is good. REALLY good. It solves many problems, and can make many viable moves and strategies, dangerous by virtue of a simple punish, however, it isn't the best move to just throw out there.

[Glare Hand]

Mid range - Magical; Close range - Physical

CP - 15

AP - 40

Golbez swipes his right arm from left to right, while giving an impressive sounding grunt, to give off a white 'glare' at mid range in a large, horizontal arc (measures about 160 degrees). His arm motion provides the close-range part of the move, while the 'glare' provides the mid range part of the attack.

This move. Is. AWESOME. It tracks incredibly well horizontally, and will easily catch side-dodgers. The glare portion has surprisingly large hitbox (beyond just the 'glare'), and has a large portion of active frames, meaning that the lingering 'glare' will outlast the invincible period of a dodge. Note that while Glare Hand is a ground only move, the 'glare' arc can appear above or below Golbez' level.

This move can be dodge-cancelled surprisingly early, which leads to its use as a poke/pressure tool that is not only safe, but also can be cancelled for further safety/repositioning.

It also chains into Cosmic Ray, thus getting clipped by the lingering active frames of this move can lead to HP damage.

Rating: 9/10. I seriously love this move, and consider it easily one of the best in Golbez' arsenal.

[Attack System (ground)]

Mid range - Magical; Close range - Physical

CP - 15

AP - 120

Golbez sweeps his hand from left to right, creating three orbs. These orbs track the opponent a certain distance, (about half a normal dash) before each 'takes aim' at where the opponent is at that point, and fires a series of lasers. If you're having trouble picturing it, think paladin-Cecil's Searchlight; except three of them.

This move doesn't have good durability (it can be dashed through), nor does it track the opponent after it begins firing the lasers. If the opponent decides to block, however, it will freeze them in place, as the duration of laser firing will outlast the duration of the block.

A few interesting features about this move. Dodge-cancelling out of the recovery time will NOT eliminate the orbs. This makes this move great for pressuring the opponent, and is effective at provoking mistakes. Next, after each orb travels a short distance, the orbs 'take aim' at the opponent in a slightly staggered fashion, i.e. one at a time. Although the lasers don't track the opponent, this somewhat makes up for the fact, as if the opponent decides to dodge early, the last orb will catch them during the cool-down of the dodge. Thirdly, the orbs do move a small distance through walls, but if they remain stuck within the wall, the lasers will not come out. You can experiment, but I wouldn't suggest using this from behind walls.

The great thing about this move is that if your opponent gets hit by the lasers, you can manually chain it to a Glare Hand, Float/Gravity System, etc. depending on the situation, and then chain that into Cosmic Ray for solid HP damage.

Another thing, Golbez' hand sweep will also hit the opponent at point blank range, but it neither chains into a HP attack, nor is it particularly reliable, I really wouldn't advise using it to keep opponents out.

Rating: 7/10. A very solid tool for pressure, but only if used correctly. Incorrect use will get you punished for it.

#### 2.1.2 - Air

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[Gravity force]

Magical, then after movement, can be physical or magical

CP - 15

AP - 120

Golbez creates a swirling black ball in his hands, and can move freely as he says "No escape". The opening few frames of this move has no hitbox as he "charges" up the ball. He then leaves the ball behind, and moves a set distance (about half a normal dash) rapidly and swiping his arm. Depending on analog direction, this may be a physical hit, or releasing a small orb. Both hits, if they connect, will send the opponent flying into the first ball, where they will constantly take brave damage before being rushed to the floor, where it can cause a Ground Rush.

Several things to note here.

Firstly, the movement phase of this attack is NOT a teleport. You CAN and will get hit out of it, so don't spam this move. Attacks such as Squall's Fated/Aerial Circles will knock you out of it as will Flares from Emperor, Tornado from Terra, Hyperdrive from Kefka, Seraphic Star from Kuja, etc.

Secondly, the aforementioned inactive frames. You can get hit out of the move at this time. Easily. However, before you 'teleport', if you can box in someone in a corner, you can get the large ball to connect, and start doing damage before you 'teleport'.

Thirdly, (and this makes the move pretty darn good imo), after teleporting, blocking either the physical hand sweep, or the smaller orb will cause a stagger, which you can easily take advantage of with a dodge-cancel into Gravity/Float System.

Rating: 7/10. A solid addition to Golbez' arsenal of attacks, and having it cause a Ground Rush makes it simple to Assist combo off to get your HP damage.

[Gravity System]

Physical, then magic

CP - 15

AP - 50

Golbez swings his right hand down saying "Come" to strike the opponent physically before bringing that hand up to create a thin, vertical beam from the orb that he leaves behind, and this deals minor magic damage. With another press of circle, he fires a small white bolt for a little extra damage leading to a chase. Once mastered, he has the option of replacing the second circle press with square to chain the thin beam to Cosmic Ray. Keep in mind that the bolt causes a chase, but will NEVER cause a wall rush.

EDIT: Being a genius, I forgot about one other property of this move. If you mash the circle button after the bolt is fired, it will explode, dealing a nice chunk of brave damage and this is the part that will cause wall rush.

This move along with Float System is one of the more underrated moves in the game. Although it seems very horizontally linear (and it is), vertically, it has incredible downward tracking. Golbez, will actually move a certain distance very rapidly before the physical strike, and as such, the move has deceptive range. To give you an idea, in Planet's Core, you can walk off the middle platform, input this move, and it will connect with an opponent standing on one of the lower platforms around its base. Note that if blocked, the physical part will cause YOU to stagger, leaving you open to punishment, but there is a certain specific range at which the physical strike will go under the opponent, but the magical beam will still catch them similar to if they avoided the initial physical strike with dodge invincibility. Blocking the magical part of the move will 'lock' the opponent in place (pretty much the same as blocking any long-lasting magical move) and they will have to mash on the R, as the duration of the beam (unless dodge-cancelled) will outlast a normal block. Note that the magic connecting is all you need to chain into either the bolt or to a chase.

Rating: 7/10

[Float System]

Physical, then magic

CP - 15

AP - 60

Golbez swings his left arm up saying "Careless" to strike the opponent physically before bringing that hand down to create a thin vertical beam from the orb that he leaves behind, and this deals minor magic damage. If you press circle again, he will reposition himself and shoot a white bolt into the opponent, leading to a chase. Keep in mind that the bolt causes a chase, but will NEVER cause a wall rush. To cause the wall rush, you have to mash the circle button to get the bolt to explode.

This move looks similar to Gravity System, except in an opposite fashion, with the strike coming upwards, the beam coming downwards, and Golbez using the opposite arm. It does, however have a few, subtle differences. Most importantly, it comes out a few frames faster than Gravity System, which makes it more useful for punishing ambiguous aerial whiffs from your opponent (i.e.

if you get to choose a punisher between them, go for this one). In addition, when coming out of an assist chase, this will strike the opponent in the back, as will the beam, causing Sneak Attack to activate (if you have it equipped) for more damage, and this is the reason why it is my preferred attack out of an assist chase.

Note that this move also chains into Cosmic Ray.

Rating: 7.5/10. Pretty good, and imo, better than Gravity System, but not a great move per se.

[Attack System (midair)]

Mid range - Magical; Close range - Physical

CP - 15

AP - 120

Golbez sweeps his hand from left to right, creating three orbs. These orbs track the opponent a certain distance, (about half a normal dash) before each 'takes aim' at where the opponent is at that point, and fires a series of lasers. If you're having trouble picturing it, think paladin-Cecil's Searchlight; except three of them.

Yeah, it's exactly the same move as on the ground, only using it in the air, makes it infinitely worse. The increased freedom of movement in the air makes it inherently more difficult to zone any character no matter what tools they are using, and this is very clear in the case of this move. While the ground version is awesome, the aerial version is far from it, and as a result, I wouldn't recommend using it at all. When it is cast in the air, a savvy opponent will airdash through the orbs and lasers to punish the hell out of you.

Rating: 2/10. Pretty much useless. Slow, easily punished, ineffective. You get the idea.

2.2 - HP attacks

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2.2.1 - Ground

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[Nightglow]

Magic

CP - 15

AP - 130

Golbez waves his arms and dark lightning blasts under the opponent. Range is not fantastic, and slow start-up so I pretty much never see it connect against a savvy opponent. It does have armour that you can take advantage of, but again, against a good opponent who knows this, you'll watch as they dodge the attack and punish the living heck out of you for it. If you do get it to connect, though, it will reliably cause ceiling rush (apart from Ultimecia's Castle, wherein it causes your opponent to eat the banish trap.

It is worth mentioning though, that this is the only move Golbez has access to that reflects magical attacks, i.e. Emperor's Flares, Vaan's Windburst, Terra's Meltdown, etc. However since the attack pops up from under your opponent, you'd have a very difficult time using this to reflect those attacks.

Rating: 5/10. Not too useful, but the armour can surprise opponents who haven't seen this before.

[Sector Ray (Ground)]

Magic

CP - 15

AP - 150

Golbez summons three balls, saying "Pulse". These balls spread out a certain



distance towards the opponent before each fires a continuous red laser. This laser will warp for a while, dealing brave damage (and crushing defence), as Golbez says "Activate". The HP damage comes a little after as he says "Shatter". This move can cause Wall Rush.

On paper, this move is good for harassment, and zoning out opponents, however, you only need to use it against a human opponent a few times before you see the immediate downside. The tracking on this move is similar to that of Attack System, however, it is possible to avoid. Moreover, the range is bad enough that many times, when I see this move come out, I just fall off the nearest edge, and wait for it to miss me, which brings me to its next downfall. The cool-down period is bad. As in REALLY bad. It doesn't take much skill to forward dodge past the beams and punish Golbez with whatever you want.

Another interesting note is that while the lasers themselves will go through walls, if the balls come into contact without any surface while they are spreading out, they will stop moving, and this limits the range, (i.e. this move is bad in Pandemonium).

Rating: 7/10. Fun to use, and good if Attack System connects out of the range of Glare Hand, however you can't just throw it out. You WILL be severely punished for it.

#### 2.2.2 - Air

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[Genesis Rock]

Magic

CP - 15

AP - 130

The standard keep-out option for aerial combat. Golbez says "Time to part" as he lifts 4 rocks up from below, spinning them around him for a few seconds, then sends them flying outwards with an ominous "Farewell". This move is pretty darn good. While the rocks are spinning around him, Golbez will automatically move a little towards the opponent, and the HP part of this attack will cause Wall Rush.

Since the rocks come up from beneath him, the opponent may be hit if they are directly below him. If they do get hit, the rocks bring them up to get caught in the spinning motion, where they constantly take brave damage. The HP damage comes with the "Farewell". This move, like all HP attacks, crushes defence, so the opponent needs to dodge to get out of its way. Interestingly enough, the hitbox of each rock as it gets sent outwards is surprisingly large, and I've seen opponents get 'hit' by the rock, when they appear to miss, so you MUST dodge as they come towards you.

Note that the part of the move where he launches the rocks outwards has infinite horizontal range until it hits something, be it the edge of the map, a wall, etc. however, it will drop a certain amount as it travels.

Rating: 8/10. Good to use, but only to use well. Throw it out, and your opponent will dodge forward through the part where you throw the rocks outwards, and punish you for it.

[Sector Ray (midair)]

Magic

CP - 15

AP - 130

Similar to the ground version, except it has slightly better vertical tracking. Still suffers from the same issues, still has the same advantages.

Rating 7/10. Pretty much the same as the grounded version, so nothing to say here.

[Cosmic Ray]

Magic

CP - 15

AP - 130

This would be THE HP attack in Golbez' arsenal, primarily because pretty much every brave attack chains into it in one way or another. Golbez repositions himself, depending on the length of time you hold the square button, and zaps the opponent with lightning-looking beams from both of his hands. This move can wall rush from mid-range.

The hitbox on this move is surprisingly large, and this gives you plenty of room for hit-confirming, so there shouldn't be a reason you're whiffing this move. This, of course, is a good thing, because if you majorly screw up, or your opponent decides to change assists almost immediately after you commit to this move, they can fall back down and punish you however they want.

There are a few intricacies to using this move. From Gravity/Float Systems, there's not much of an issue, since all you need to do is tap the square button instead of the circle button a second time. Due to the large hitbox of Cosmic Ray, and good hitstun on the thin beam, to maximise damage, you can wait for the opponent to just drop out of the beam before inputting the square button to ensure you get all the damage you can out of the beam.

The difficulty comes with chaining this move to either Glare Hand, or Rising Wave. The issue is that with both of these moves, there are two different components to the move, the physical hand strike, and the magical part; and each of these parts have a different effect on the opponent. Taking Glare Hand as an example, the magical part of the move (the white 'glare') knocks the opponent towards you, so all you need to do is tap the square button. If you connect with the physical part, however, you will knock the opponent away by a significant distance, so tapping the square will cause the Cosmic Ray to whiff. Rising Wave also encounters this issue, except in reverse. Hitting them with the physical part of the move keeps the opponent close enough that tapping square is enough to chain the Cosmic Ray. If you hit them with the magical part of the move, however, the opponent will be popped up into the air, too far away for the normal to connect.

To compensate for this, you need to use the fact that Golbez will move a certain distance, determined by the length of time you press the square button. There is a fairly wide window of opportunity to get this part right, however you need to keep in mind that if you don't press for long enough, you whiff the attack, and if you press for too long, the opponent has recovered, can dodge through the attack and punish the hell out of you. The correct length of time is about a third to half of a second, but don't try to punch a time clock with it. If you're having trouble connecting it, go to quick battle and practice until you get the timing right. For me, it's a matter of muscle memory because I've done it so often.

A word of warning: while chaining Cosmic Ray to a physical Glare Hand is always the same, you will need to get a good feel for this move when chaining to a Rising Wave, as the length of time you need to hold square depends on how far the opponent was when they were hit.

Rating: 10/10. Cosmic Ray is awesome. It alone is the reason why Golbez is so effective at zoning and a strong component of why his aerial game is less bad than most people think it is. I see no reason why you shouldn't equip this move to Glare Hand, Rising Wave, and Gravity/Float Systems the moment you unlock it for each move. It may take a while to get used to timing, but once you've got it, you should have no problems.

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## Section 3 - Playing Golbez

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### 3.1 - Golbez Analysis

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So, enough about specific moves. How does Golbez play and feel as a character? Well, since I'm bothering to write this FAQ, you can bet your ass he feels darn good. Golbez is a mixture of zoning and rushdown, and while many people will tell you that his zoning game beats his rushdown, this is only really because his zoning game is good enough to be brainless, and playable on autopilot, whereas his rushdown (like every other characters') requires you to read your opponent's movement and habits.

I feel his ground game is one of the best in the game. Attack System (ground) is AWESOME for other grounded opponents. It zones the hell out of them. Just by sitting there, it imitates Cecil's Searchlight, only better, because there are three of them. The aforementioned slight delay in each ball taking aim means it becomes difficult to time a side dodge correctly, because dodging early means the last ball still shoots at you, while dodging late means you get hit. Keep in mind, though, that if you use this move while your opponent is out of range, they can just airdash through it for a solid punish.

Glare Hand. It is incredible. Yes it deserves a paragraph of its own. It's just that good. While its vertical tracking is mediocre at best, its horizontal tracking is unbelievable. It catches side-dodgers almost all the time, and lets you chain into Cosmic Ray. It, like most of Golbez's moves, has two distinct ranges, immediately close (where his sweeping hand will hit you) and mid-range, where the white 'glare' connects. Keep in mind that the 'glare' portion of the move has surprisingly long active frames, and will often connect, when the visual animation seems over. To compensate for this, buffer the square pressing during the animation and a little after as well to ensure you can consistently chain the Cosmic Ray. Interesting note here, since the 'glare' portion of the move drags the opponent towards you, Glare Hand, chaining to Cosmic Ray works through walls, (HELLOOOOO PANDEMONIUM =P)

As far as Golbez' air game goes, it is a little weaker than his ground game, but still very good. In fact, imho, his aerial options are one of the most underrated aspects of his gameplay. Forward dodge past stuff, into Gravity System is perhaps my most used punishment, because it just beats so much. In addition, Gravity Force (if you initiate it during a dodge from your opponent), can apply pressure to no end, especially as you're forced to dodge, or eat a stagger into whatever you want.

### 3.2 - EX

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Golbez's EX mode is not too spectacular. It pretty much just gives him more damage when he connects a hit. His armour/skin (depending on the look you give him) has glowy, purple patterns tracing over it. He gets a flashy new move called Black Fang (R + square), where he charges for 6 seconds or so before instantly breaking the opponent. Not a spectacularly useful move, since it does take SO FREAKING LONG to charge up. Personally, I've only connected it once, and that was when my opponent was dashing to the opposite side of the stage (Orphan's Cradle) to collect an EX core. Note that you can cancel it if in trouble, but honestly, unless the situation's perfect, I wouldn't bother using it.

So here goes everyone's favourite question. EX mode or EX revenge? I'm going to wimp out here and say, it depends on the situation. This is my rule of thumb, and I'll stick by it. EX-Golbez is no EX-Terra. When I get EX mode with Terra, my friends squeal and start sprinting in the opposite direction. When I get EX-Golbez, my friends shrug and keep playing the same way they always do. Yes, EX mode is dangerous. You get a little extra damage, you get EX Burst for a little extra damage, you regen a couple hundred health. Good, but not the end of the world (or in this case, the game/round).

Personally, I hold onto the full EX bar until either a burst will kill, I need the regen'd health, or for use as EX revenge. I realise this is a hole in my gameplay, because I am essentially ignoring an element of the game, but this is a carryover from playing Terra (very few other characters have an EX mode quite as devastating).

### 3.3 - Assists

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So this is a matter of preference, and everyone's going to argue their own choice over others, blah, blah, blah.

I'm not getting into that argument.

I feel that for Golbez has less of a need to rely on his assists for HP damage (\*coughSquallcough\*), since pretty much all his moves chain into Cosmic Ray. As such, my assist of choice would have to be Kuja. Both ground and aerial assists are fast and give an assist chase, which Golbez finds it easy to combo off.

Kuja combos consistently off any wall/ground/ceiling rush, and gives good damage, but the reason I go for him as my assist is for the fact that his assist is REALLY fast. This makes it perfect for punishment. As previously discussed, Golbez's game is less awesome when he's airborne, so as a result, a lot of my friends will be all up in my face when we both get into the air, knowing I have to dodge, and won't be able to punish accordingly because Gravity Force is slow as hell, and Gravity/Float System are both incredibly linear. With a bar of assist meter, however, they're back to playing more conservatively, which means I can begin applying pressure with Gravity Force (which does the ground rush that Kuja can combo off).

The most common alternate assist that I have to argue against is Sephiroth. Yes he can also combo reliably off any wall/ground/ceiling rush; yes he also gives assist chase off any of them; yes his HP attacks are arguably better than Kuja's (ARGUABLY being the keyword here). I still stick with Kuja, because what he's missing is the speed required to punish even the smallest lapse in concentration.

### 3.4 - Combos

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This section will be brief because I stick to basic combos. If anyone has suggestions, I'll put them in, but to compensate, I'll give a brief rundown on each of mine.

#### Golbez only combos

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Attack System -> Glare Hand -> Cosmic Ray

The basic zoning tool that will be shamelessly abused. Really good, and for a good reason too. Don't get clipped by the Attack System, or you WILL eat the rest of it.

Gravity Force ->(ground rush)-> Sector Ray  
Gravity Force ->(ground rush)-> Genesis Rock  
Gravity Force ->(ground rush)-> Dodge cancel -> dash (if required) -> Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray  
Gravity Force ->(ground rush)-> Dodge cancel -> wait -> Glare Hand/Rising Wave -> Cosmic Ray

This set of combos aren't really combos per se. I just wanted to demonstrate how scary this particular situation can be. The threat of Sector Ray means they need to wake up with a dodge (not a block or dash, since Sector Ray beats both these options). Once they realise this, mixups ahoy. Genesis Rock beats them if they dodge forward or even for some, to the sides. Dodge cancel to dash or waiting will beat dodging back, etc. For consistency, you can use an assist bar to combo off the ground rush, and that will be guaranteed, but if you don't have the assist bar, or would prefer to keep it for something else, you can use these mix-up options to keep your opponent on their toes, and pressure them like crazy. Another note, the ground rush to Sector Ray works especially well in the corner, or at the edge of a platform.

#### Assist-dependent combos

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As stated in the previous section, I use Kuja as my assist, but others such as Sephiroth are also fine for comboing off the wall rush. As long as an assist provides an assist chase and combos off one of the rushes, then they can be used in those situations. Other combos, I can't guarantee. Again, if you have other stuff that you want included, let me know and I'll acknowledge you in the credits.

Anything -> Wall/Ground/Ceiling Rush -> Assist Chase -> Float System -> Cosmic Ray

This works off anything that causes a rush of any kind. Now, the use of Float System is very deliberate here, because for Kuja (and most assists) the opponent comes out of the chase face down. Therefore using Float system will hit them in the back, thus initiating Sneak Attack (which I have equipped), and scoring a string of criticals.

Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray -> [IMMEDIATELY after inputting the Cosmic Ray] Assist Chase -> Float System -> Cosmic Ray

This may seem like a waste of an assist bar to most since the assist is going to push them out of the HP part of Cosmic Ray hitting, but it comes in handy if you need to either stall until your bravery has recovered, or (more importantly) if you want to switch sides and get wall rush HP damage bonus and continued pressure at the wall.

#### 3.5 - Builds

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So my build isn't really that great, and tbh, its a carry-over from the way I trained to be better at the game. Playing with basic (i.e. bad) sets of equipment/accessories, etc. throughout the game forced me to play smarter than the CPU, which (I think) made me a better player. I've really only recently been actively trying to create a good build. Anyway, here's mine at the moment:

[Equipment]

Zeromus Shard (Damage +10%)

Aegis Shield (Warp def +60%)  
Grand Helm (Chase BRV +10%)  
Maximillian (Physical Def +10%)

[Accessories]

Sniper eye (Wall rush HP + 10%)  
Hyper Ring (damage +5%)  
Earring (mag. +7%)  
Pre-ex mode  
Pre-ex revenge  
After 30 sec.  
Final decision (withstand one combo)  
First to Victory (bravery, EX, Assist, +20%)  
Great Gospel (regen +10; brv recovery +50%)  
Soul of Thamasa (Magic damage +3%, Wall rush Brave, +40%, chase Brave +7%)

Not too spectacular. The equips are there because they give me good effects as well as maxed out stats. The accessories do stuff for me. All of the HP attacks that I use cause Wall Rush, and none of the brave attacks cause it besides Gravity Force. Similarly, the vast majority of the attacks I use do Magic damage, so I don't see a point in extending physical damage. 'First to Victory' is kinda just there. I'm willing to replace it, but haven't as yet found anything worth using to replace it. Great Gospel helps me recover my brave quickly when I'm comboing off the wall rush from a HP attack.

\*\*\*\*\*UPDATE\*\*\*\*\*

So after toying with several different sets, I've decided on a newer build.

[Equipment]

Zeromus Shard (Damage +10%)  
Lufenian Equip  
""  
""  
Equip Effect --> Judgement of Lufenia (Assist Gauge Depletion +15%)

[Accessories]

Sniper Ring (Wall Rush HP +10%)  
Battle Ring (Assist Depletion +5%)  
Soul Smiter (Ex Depletion +1%)  
Large Gap in HP(x1.5)  
Pre-EX Mode (x1.4)  
Pre-EX Revenge (x1.3)  
Empty Ex Gauge (x1.5)  
Great Gospel  
Rebellious Soul  
Force to Courage

[Summon]

Carbuncle

So this set is there to take as much advantage of Golbez's playstyle as much as possible. To summarise, Golbez 'chips' away at HP because, if you play him right, then everything will lead to HP damage. Sniper Eye is because Cosmic Ray, Genesis Rock, Nightglow and Sector Ray all lead to wall rush, so this helps you chip that HP away just a little faster. The assist and EX gauge depletion means that there is a significant decrease in each every time you connect any attack and keeps your opponent on the defensive. Great Gospel recovers your Brv quickly since you're going to deal chunks of HP damage frequently.

Carbuncle also takes advantage of this playstyle. The frequent HP attacks will leave your Brv at zero quite frequently, meaning that you basically have the ability to break your opponent. It can also be used to reduce the opponent's bravery (reducing the effect of the work they have done to get that far).

I've avoided EX stuff, because Golbez' EX mode isn't spectacular and frankly not worth the effort imo. Rather, by putting Force to Courage, you maximise your damage output and enables the use of the three EX related boosters. Rebellious Soul enables the possibility of a comeback because Golbez doesn't build Brv very rapidly (or at all, really).

\*\*\*UPDATE\*\*\*

There is another option for a set proposed by YonKitoTaoshibe, which is similar to mine, but has a very different accessory build. Note that this build requires certain abilities to be effective. Activating Master Mage (the +1000HP bonus), you can add this to an equipped Heavy Armour and Green Gem for 11699 HP. Stick this with an EXP --> HP ability, and you can equip Large Gap in HP, and HP>10000 as effective boosters. He also suggests using Back to the Wall and Achy+ along with Rebellious Soul. This then gives you the decided advantage of having strong boosters when your HP is full as well as an increased critical streak when your health isn't looking quite so good (insurance policy).

DISCLAIMER: This set is NOT mine. It was proposed by YonKitoTaoshibe so all credits go to him for the idea.

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## Section 4 - Matchup Analysis

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### 4.01 - Warrior of Light

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WoL is the poster-boy for Cosmos' warriors and as a result, appears to be almost the generic choice for beginners. I'm not sure if this is wise, or deserved, but thats the way it goes, apparently....

In any case, WoL is dangerous because his attacks easily chain into Bitter End or Rune Saber, so its much better to not be clipped by an attack. All his aerial shield attacks will trade with Gravity/Float System, so pay close attention. Zoning WoL is dangerous on the ground just because Sword Thrust will push straight through Glare Hand and Attack System, so you need to watch out for that. Furthermore, keep in mind that if you block the shield coming out, it will cause you to stagger and eat criticals for the rest of the combo (extended if it rushes at the wall and he has a good assist). In all honesty, however, if you're within relevant range, and see him twitch, you should just forward dodge, as this will beat out all his options, i.e. Ultimate shield, Sword thrust, Dayflash, magic options, Shield of Light. Then while you're flying through or over whatever he's doing, figure out what move he's throwing at you and punish accordingly. Gravity System is a very solid, relevant option here.

Do keep in mind that Radiant Sword has infinite horizontal range, so don't bother running, because it will hit you in the back. Just time your dodge to go forward, over the swords and punish with Gravity/Float system.

### 4.02 - Garland

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Garland is similar to WoL, but is much more focussed on physical attacks,

without many relevant magical options to harass you with. Thundaga can be painful, but you do see it pretty early on so you can dodge and punish. Interestingly enough, many Garlands like to recover from a Cosmic Ray -> wall rush with a Bardiche. It does have good tracking, and if they time it right, it can connect, and hurt. As a result, I'd suggest dodging backwards, and charging a Gravity Force or using Sector Ray to punish them.

He also has Lance Charge, which will also beat your ground zoning options, so rather than playing on autopilot, you do need to read your opponent. Keep in mind, blocking this move will cause you to stagger, and there you go eating more criticals. Again, if you feel the need to dodge, a forward dodge will get you out of trouble fastest. Now Garland's best tool to beat your ground zoning is Chain Cast, where he move up a respectable distance before throwing his sword-chain-type-thing at you. It does punish Attack System very well, but still doesn't shut it down completely. From mid-long range, you have time to dodge-cancel the recovery period or just to block. Speaking of blocking, this move is kinda weird to punish. You have to jump, dash a little (Note: ONLY a little or you'll miss your window of opportunity to punish), then use Float System.

As far as HP attacks go, I found it weird to avoid Blaze and Tsunami (to some extent) at first, so I'll document it here. Blaze has mercifully short range, so it isn't too difficult to run away, but if you want to go for a punish, you can time a forward dodge to Gravity/Float System chaining to Cosmic Ray, etc. Specifically, Tsunami has poor vertical tracking, so the best way to beat it is to gain vertical distance, at which point, landing a Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray should be easy enough.

#### 4.03 - Firion

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Also one of my favourite characters, so I know a fair bit about him. Firion is one of the characters who appears to be mediocre at best until you discover the epic awesomeness of Shield Bash. This is mostly the reason he's such a dangerous character and also the reason why I believe Firion is a character against whom your matchup depends VERY heavily on the skill of the user.

A very good Firion can shut down your ground zoning game completely with Shield Bash beating Attack System and Glare Hand completely. As a result, Golbez has no real option but to take the fight to the air where Firion (let's be honest) is pretty bad. Due to pure stubbornness and extensive testing, I've discovered that a Firion cannot Shield Bash a Glare Hand on reaction to the animation and definitely can't Bash on reaction to the grunt. He need to anticipate it and Bash, so Glare Hand isn't totally useless. I've also discovered that Rising Wave will easily punish both Rope Knife and Reel Axe with ease, therefore this is your best friend on the ground.

In the air, although your own game isn't great, Firion's is far FAR worse, so it's still a win for you if your opponent follows you up. Even if he remains on the ground, Reel Axe is noticeably worse due to increased aerial mobility, and Rope Knife is seeable, and punishable by Gravity System.

As far as HP attacks go, you can dodge the Straight Arrow, but Firion can vary the timing of it to throw you off, so if you're planning to dodge, then best do it from a good distance. Alternately, you can hide behind a non-breakable wall/platform/etc. since the arrow won't go through those. Remember that Lord of Arms has two strikes, and they will track you, so you need to dodge twice. or get hit. For Weaponmaster, the move has a long animation, so the safest thing to do is to dodge to behind him, and then use Gravity/Float System for the punish



#### 4.04 Emperor

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As previously mentioned, Emperor is a bitch for the primary reason that you can't reflect his Flares back at him, so releasing two of them to follow you around is a viable strategy here. Besides this, however, he doesn't pose much of a threat to you. Dodge out of Dreary Cells, or just avoid them in general, and interrupt him before he finishes charging Starfall. In all honesty, this is a matchup where Rising Wave really shines just for the fact that it can punish pretty much all of Emperor's options.

To avoid this, an intelligent Emperor will take the fight to the air. Obviously, this is where the lack of Flare-reflection will really hit, but this is not an unwinnable situation. Sector Ray/Genesis Rock both outrange Emperor's options, and Genesis Rock poses an enormous threat, since it reflects the projectiles from Light Crest as well as allowing you to move to position yourself.

I've mentioned it before, but it bears repeating again in this matchup. Moving for Gravity Force and for Rising Wave -> Cosmic Ray is NOT a teleport. You CAN and WILL get hit out of this movement if you're not careful so don't try to teleport through a Flare. You'll just eat HP damage and look like an idiot.

Overall, avoid making mistakes. Emperor relies on you making mistakes to win, so if you take as few risks as possible and stay patient, then you should be ok.

#### 4.05 Onion Knight

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Ah, my first character, and the one who taught me the importance of punishing whiffs. So imo, Onion Knight isn't really an issue for Golbez, or for most characters, for that matter. Know his moves, and you should be able to punish him for pretty much everything. His two physical attacks can be blocked on reaction, and both magical attacks can be dashed through, or forward dodged through for a solid punish. As far as HP attacks go, they all crush defines, but if you wait until the animations are almost done, then come in for the punish, you should get it every time.

Being an OK player, I know all of this very well, and also know that the best way to get around all of this is to wait and pressure with Thunder until my opponent makes a mistake which I will promptly punish. Moral of the story? Don't whiff moves. Remember he's really fast which makes it VERY easy for him to punish you.

This matchup is all about patience. If you make a mistake, you get punished. If OK makes a mistake, he gets punished. Don't be the one to make the mistake.

#### 4.06 Cloud of Darkness

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So CoD is like Firion. Her effectiveness is directly proportional to the ability of the player to use [Wrath]. imo, [Wrath] is strictly less awesome than Shield Bash because it comes out significantly slower than in original Dissidia and you can dodge the HP reprisal if you're fast enough.

I won't lie. It's a close match-up. CoD has the ability to punish wanton dodges with any of her brave attacks (two swipes version). In addition, she has a plethora of HP attacks that you need to watch out for. This makes it REALLY hard to fight her from a distance unless you're Terra. As Golbez, however, I prefer to get in really close and be the one to apply pressure. You can react to any of her brave attacks by watching her tentacles. As soon as

they twitch, block. You can block the swipes, and send her into stagger immediately. You do, however need to be careful with this and not begin to block in anticipation, because a good CoD player will realise what you're doing, bait a block then punish you with [anti-air] or [0-form].

Basically, you need to play this carefully. Block and punish where you can. Pressure with Glare Hand, and be sure to dodge-cancel it if you see it connect with a [wrath]. Play slow, play careful and you can pull through

#### 4.07 Cecil

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A dangerous opponent. Very versatile in his attacks due to his ability to switch between Dark Knight and Paladin forms. This gives him, essentially, two sets of tools to deal with whatever you try. Dark knight form is threatening, but really the only thing you need to watch out for (besides the HP attacks) is Dark Cannon. It's important because it will eat up Glare Hand and has more range than it. Strictly speaking, if timed right, Glare Hand will trade with it, but in doing so, you'll be right in each other's faces, where you will have to guess, or take damage (since Cecil's options are faster than Golbez'). Moral of the story? Dodge Dark Cannon. The other tool he has that is incredibly powerful is his Nightfall. He not only falls REALLY fast, but the move also staggers on block, leaving you to eat a Soul Eater (or whatever he wants, really...). The trick to punishing this move is to anticipate and dodge out of the way early, which then leaves you free to jump (note: JUMP not DASH OR DODGE) and Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray.

As far as Paladin form goes, it feels much more threatening. With Speed Boost (++) version) attached, this form is almost as fast as OK, making it very difficult to deal with. Searchlight will shut down your ground zoning game, since it beats Attack System, and getting hit will remove anything you have on screen. Note that if the searchlight attack connects, you can and will eat a chunky combo, so avoid at all costs. Otherwise, the other options are all physical-hitting and can be blocked for a punish.

#### 4.08 Kain

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Also on my 'favourite characters to play' list. Despite this guy being new, is really popular, so it's pretty important to know all his ins and outs. Kain has an interesting feature that makes it really hard to keep him away. He is able to press triangle rather than the cross button to close the distance quickly. He can also use Jump (his HP attack) and cancel it to gain vertical distance. Due to this, Kain is one of the characters that requires an actual thought process to use properly.

If you didn't know, good Kain players like to either spend large amounts of time in the air, either attacking down towards you, or pressuring you on the ground with Cyclone. As such, it becomes pretty difficult for Golbez to apply pressure. Personally, I stay on the ground just to make life difficult for the Kain players, since their aerial game is so darn good. Staying on the ground forces Kain to attack downwards, and this eliminates a good number of his options. Most of his downward options are pretty linear, and Crashing Dive (his main downward option) has good downward tracking, but its hitbox (outside of Kain himself) is a spear moving in a vertical spiral, so a side dodge avoids the attack and leaves you time to use Rising Wave -> Cosmic Ray. A common mistake I see is people trying to use Glare Hand. Now, Glare Hand is awesome, but often Crashing Dive will bash through the magic 'glare' section of the move and you've missed your opportunity to punish.

Some of the less skilled players decide to use his HP attacks as pokes, but you should be able to avoid and punish these quite easily.

If you do decide to take the fight to the air, don't take the initiative and try to randomly attack them. He does much better punishing Kain's whiffs than applying pressure. If you desperately need to apply pressure, use Gravity Force, because it's a little safer than either Gravity/Float System.

For general advice, be incredibly patient, and wait to punish mistakes.

#### 4.09 Golbez

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Oh, dear god, the mirror match. Rough as always. The interesting thing about this particular mirror match, however, is that you need to change your playstyle completely. The primary reason for this that Golbez has all the tools to shut down his own ground zoning game. Glare Hand and Attack System can both be really easily punished by Rising Wave, and this means that in the mirror match, you shouldn't even bother trying to zone out your opponent.

I'm rather experienced in this particular area since quite a few of the guys I spar with like to use Golbez. As such, you need to take the initiative. Taking the fight to the air, and then pressuring them with Gravity/Float System since this often beats most of the ground options. You should be floating just out of reach of Glare Hand, see them twitch, then either dash in, or just use Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray.

This is also where it's really important to note that Float System starts up faster than Gravity System, and therefore using Float System to punish mistakes is far more reliable than Gravity System. Note also that Float System works even if the the opponent is at the same level you are because the motion of the hand coming up will knock the opponent on the way up.

Note, however that if your opponent takes the fight to the air, rather than staying on the ground, then you should be able to keep them out rather than becoming aggressive using tools such as Genesis Rock and Sector Ray.

Overall, play to counter your opponent. If they try to keep you out on the ground, break them with Rising Wave, and/or airdash in and use Gravity System to apply pressure. If your opponent tries to airdash in and use Gravity System, then keep them out with Sector Ray and Genesis Ray.

#### 4.10 Bartz

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Oh boy, now this is a fun match-up. For those who don't know, Bartz is a mime, therefore, he has a bunch of random moves from different characters, e.g. Cloud's Climhazzard (Hazard Raid), Terra's Holy, Yuna's Hellfire, etc.

Now, although many of his moves have different enders, this is pretty irrelevant to you since you'll want to avoid the initial attack rather than have to deal with the alternate ending. Of course, the exception here is to note that Holy can chain to OK's Flare for HP damage, so keep this in mind when dealing with attacks.

Deal with it the same way you'd deal with Terra's. Airdash through , which reflects the projectiles back. Note, if you don't have the time to dash, dodge forward rather than to either side. Blocking is unreliable because the 5 orbs each travel at a different speed, so they'll outlast the duration of a single block. In fact, even mashing the block button isn't foolproof. Every now and then an orb will get through.

So you should be able to beat Bartz on the ground, primarily because his only real option to beat you is Hazard Raid which can charge directly through Glare

Hand and Attack System. Now as a result of this is that I use Attack System only if I see a random side dodge. Otherwise, I'll use Glare Hand to keep him out. Eventually, if he decides to start using Hazard Raid, jump (note: JUMP not dodge because a dodge won't recover fast enough), wait for him to pass you, then Gravity System his back, meaning you get a punish, Sneak Attack and Counterattack.

If your opponent takes the fight to the air, however, Bartz has a slight edge on you. Slide shooter (taken out of Tidus' arsenal) will beat all of your options and hit you for a very solid chunk of damage, and since it ends with Kain's Celestial Shooter, it also leads to a chase. As such, you need to avoid using Gravity or Float System as pokes. Rather, use Gravity Force which while not perfect, can knock Bartz out of the move. More often than not, it will trade with the attack, but it's safer than using either System. Alternatively, you can still keep him out with Genesis Rock, but if you start spamming it, a good opponent will either dodge through it and punish you for it or stay above you and punish you that way.

Overall, try to keep the fight grounded, and focus on punishing whiffed/blocked moves. If the fight goes to the air go keep out, and keep punishing mistakes. This will be your major source of damage.

#### 4.11 Exdeath

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So to give a quick summary of Exdeath's game plan, most of his moves only really become scary after blocking a move. This is a large part of the reason I compare this matchup to those against Firion and/or CoD; except far more dangerous.

Now, CPU Exdeath (even on max) gets shat all over, even by my 9-year old cousin. A good human player, however will give you headaches of the likes you have never experienced in your lifetime. Now, while Turn Block is a regular block, except it turns so is infinitely better, the real problem comes with Omni-block. So, for those who haven't played as Exdeath, Turn Block becomes active as soon as (or a few frames after) you input the button AND you can extend the length of time of the block by holding the circle button. Omni-block on the other hand, deploys on button release, and is only active for a certain amount of time, regardless of how long you hold the circle button. Now normally most aggressive moves are ridiculously slow and obvious, however coming off a block, comes much faster, thus ensuring that they actually connect after a successful block. However the reason Omni-block gives you the headache is because it can and will block EVERYTHING. This includes HP attacks and stuff that would normally crush defence. This means that NOTHING you do is safe.

Is the match unwinnable? No. But you can bet your ass it's difficult.

As far as how to play against Exdeath goes, there are two ways to do it. The first is to play careful. You can move, and dash, and dodge without touching either circle or square buttons. This gives your opponent no chance to block any attacks, and leaves his only available options are Black Hole -> Delta Attack or Reverse Polarity.

The other way is pretty much the exact opposite. You head for the air and attack. You get up in his face and apply pressure, so that he can't do what he wants. Do NOT use Gravity/Float System because these can be blocked then countered by any of the blocks Exdeath has at his disposal. If you're going to apply pressure, get close, then use Gravity Force as the original ball will crush defence, and the second part of the attack will cause stagger. You can also use Sector Ray, but avoid Genesis Rock unless you're close enough for the

swirling motion to get them caught up. Otherwise, a good opponent will time an Omni-block -> Grand Cross to block the flying rock and get a chunk of HP damage on you.

So overall, this is an incredibly difficult match-up. Pick your approach, but I'd suggest knowing both so you can adjust according to the skill level of your opponent.

#### 4.12 Terra

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Ah, Terra. Another of my favourite characters to play. Now Terra against Golbez is difficult for Terra, but only if the Golbez is played correctly. You need to keep in mind when playing Terra that she, unlike most characters, doesn't need to get in. In fact, she'll want to keep a certain distance because that's where she plays best.

You need to keep in mind therefore, that Terra's optimal range is further out than the range of either Glare Hand or Rising Wave. As such, most of your game will be to get in while a lot of Terra's will be to get away. In other words, you're reversing your usual role and having to deal with keep away.

So, you need to remember the intricacies of your tools, i.e. which moves allow you to close distance, and how much distance, in what direction, etc. the startup of Gravity System moves downwards, while Float System moves upwards. My advice would be to play with these moves and get used to their range, and use them to close difference. Another option is to use Gravity Force, however this is REALLY dangerous. If Terra is far enough out of the way, she can cast Meteor -> Holy Combo -> Ultima to bash you out of your move. Another option is for her to just use Tornado, which knocks you out of the move and does a decent amount of HP damage. Genesis Rock is also a pretty good option, BUT if you cast it while close, she can again, just cast Tornado which destroys your rocks and does a chunk of HP damage.

Also different to your normal gameplay, you'll desperately want to keep her off the ground because Meteor is painful. If she does get it off, however, airdash and you should be ok. If you're within range, ground game is ok, but most good Terra players are going to want to gain distance. If the player lets you get within range however, Rising Wave shuts down pretty much all her options other than Blizzara, which has been severely nerfed since the original so it's not that good anymore.

Note: You DO NOT want to leave Terra alone because you don't want her to charge up a Meltdown, especially because you don't have a reliable attack which reflects it back at her. The only move that is capable of reflecting a Meltdown is Nightglow and trying to use it to reflect a ball that's tracking you at a decent speed is pretty much not going to happen.

Overall, get in fast and pressure her. Don't let her try to get grounded attacks off. If she tries, use Rising Wave -> Cosmic Ray.

#### 4.13 Kefka

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So, while this Joker-esque figure is one of my favourite villains of all time, he is NOT a fun character to play against. And this is primarily due to the fact that his attacks move randomly. Now the interesting part of this matchup is that both your and his ideal range is pretty much the same. So what happens? Both of you (on the ground) dance around this ideal range, side-dodging a lot to avoid attacks. His best tools to beat you here are Meteor and Scatter-spray Blizzaga. Meteor drops 5 red ball-type-things around you. These fall vertically around you, hit the ground, then bounce off to track you

at high speeds. This, of course, makes side-dodging very dangerous. Similarly, Scatter-spray Blizzaga has two phases. It manifests as a giant block of ice, which then (after a certain period of time) bursts into multiple smaller shards that fly off in all directions. This move got a serious buff in the Dissidia, because now, the large block is all but invincible. If you block it while it's a large chunk, it will stagger you, but some of the shards of ice will reflect and hit Kefka for some damage.

Conversely, if you take the fight to the air, your ideal range is MUCH closer than his ideal range. That's when this fight is pretty similar to Terra's. Due to the increased mobility of aerial combat, moves can either be better or worse. Meteor becomes kinda useless, since it won't hit the ground and won't bounce off the ground and track you. Waggly-wobbly Firaga is a single large projectile that moves in a random pattern. It zigs, zags, and does loops. It will track you in a very random manner, and most importantly, can't be airdashed through. My favourite method for dealing with this is dodging forward or airdashing past the projectile to punish with Gravity/Float System. Another version of Firaga is Extra-crispy Firaga which is when he fires three smaller fire arrow projectiles which also track you with a zig-zagging pattern. This, however is a much less dangerous too because despite there being more projectiles, you can airdash through to reflect them (although they're probably not ever going to hit Kefka).

The most dangerous aerial tool is Lickety-spit Thundaga. This is a series of lightning attacks that increase in power with increased travel distance. The reason this is so dangerous is because it is so darn fast. Since you want to be pretty close to Kefka in the air, this move is quite a serious threat. You'll need to dodge carefully to avoid this, and work your dodges in between your pressure.

Not an easy matchup for Golbez, but if you play smart, you can come out on top.

#### 4.14 Cloud

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Okay, much as I love FFXIII, and much as I love the characters in it, I have to admit Cloud was my least favourite of the characters there. I do, however play him in Dissidia and believe that he's a good first character to use. Very basic movement; big, easy damage; solid tools, including some moves that cover space.

Now Cloud loves to be in the air because Slashing Blow -> Omnislash is a great tool both for poking and punishment, however, his ground game is very solid. Sonic Break will suck you in and chains to Finishing Touch. He has three variations of Fire, throwing a single ball of fire, one that travels faster, and three balls with short range. The fireballs aren't much of a threat kudos to the fact that Rising Wave/Glare Hand/Attack System hitting at point blank range will cancel out the fireball and the magical part of the attack will still hit Cloud. The only grounded attack that actually poses a threat to Cloud on the ground is Blade Beam. Otherwise, Glare Hand trumps pretty much everything Cloud can do on the ground. If he decides to use Meteorain as a poke, get above the stream of projectiles, since its vertical tracking is pretty pathetic. Punish with either Genesis Rock, Sector Ray or Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray.

In the air, the increased aerial movement means it becomes harder for both of you to connect hits. Cloud does, however have an easier time connecting Slashing Blow -> Omnislash because it moves a significant horizontal distance and works as a very solid punishment. In the air, however, he has very few distance options. If you can, try to use Sector Ray and Genesis Rock to keep him out in the air. Further, if you can stay above him and keep him away,

there should be very little he can do.

#### 4.15 Tifa

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Now loving FFVII and Aerith doesn't mean that I hate Tifa. In fact, as a character, Tifa is one of my favourites. In this game, however, Tifa's ability to feint is not enough to overcome her inability to do anything at any range other than point blank.

This means that your victory comes from keeping her out and this, in turn, means you should probably keep to the ground. Now in keeping her out, Tifa only has three options to hit you at a long range and they're all versions of Blizzard. One travels to about mid-range before expanding and doing brave damage that ends with a ground rush; one tracks you slowly and moves a very long distance; and a third that drops on you from above.

You may also need to keep an eye out for random Rolling Blaze (with or without feint) which will blow straight through Attack System and Glare Hand.

No real issues here if you keep her out to the tip of Glare Hand range and keep her out. Dodge up and forward through the HP attacks, and if you can get past or 'through' the attack you should be able to punish with Float System -> Cosmic Ray.

#### 4.16 Sephiroth

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Yaaaay, another of my favourite villains. So Sephiroth, the One-Winged Angel plays in several different ways. Some people love to spam the hell out of Shadow Flare, while others play with Oblivion and the REALLY long-ranged pokes he gets to play with.

Now for Shadow Flare Spamming, I prefer just to airdash through or to dodge forward through and Float System -> Cosmic Ray. Also, Genesis Rock bashes through the four Shadow Flares and because it has infinite horizontal range, it can turn some pressure around and hit Sephiroth, or at least force him to move.

Other Sephiroth players will use Shadow Flare more tactically, then begin using Transience, Fervent Blow, Godspeed etc. to zone you out before using moves such as Oblivion and Sudden Cruelty to hit you for solid, chunky damage. Against these, it becomes infinitely more difficult to deal with. Because each Sephiroth player has a unique style and he has so many tools at his disposal, it becomes a necessity to depend on dealing with your particular opponent. I, for example, like to use SF at around mid range then abuse the instant repositioning aspect of Oblivion before using the assist bar to combo. To beat this, my opponents learned to airdash, then block and punish me as I staggered. If you can learn the habits of your opponent, you can beat this guy. Stall, and play some keep out until you see what they like to do.

As far as HP damage goes, keep in mind that Octaslash moves a LONG distance forward so if you see the name flash up on the screen, dodge immediately, then dodge again, because the final few hits will connect. Now in the air, you will need to watch out for Scintilla, as the green screen does act as a regular block. As such, you should only really be poking with Gravity Force as opposed to Gravity/Float System since Gravity Force will crush/stagger whereas either System can be easily blocked, allowing the HP attack to connect.

Overall, you absolutely NEED to get a good read on your opponent because there's no one-size-fits-all solution for beating this guy.

#### 4.17 Squall

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And yet another of my favourite characters. Now, I know a fair bit about Squall because he was my main back in original Dissidia, and I still use him extensively in Duodecim. Just a quick rundown on Squall...

Squall is one of the characters I believe got an enormous buff in Duodecim. Not only a new tool to play with in Fire Barret, but he also has assists now. Squall, imo is one of the characters who benefitted especially from the introduction of assists. This is because he had and probably still has probably the best bravery attacking tools in the game but is SERIOUSLY lacking in the HP attacking department. As such, the fact that assists allow you to combo off wall/ground/ceiling rush means Squall is now a terrifying threat because he can reliably land HP damage.

So, back to how Golbez and how to beat Squall. Solid Barrel, Beat Fang, Heel Crush are some of the best bravery attacking options in the game. Note that Beat Fang does a solid chunk of damage AND moves a considerable distance on startup. The increased length of the weapon also increases the range of all his moves. On the ground, Thunder Barrett draws you in at long range, and allows him to combo. Frustratingly enough, max range of Thunder Barrett is greater than Glare Hand. This now means that a chunk of your ground game is pretty much taken out. Because at mid-range most Squall users throw out Thunder Barrett, your only effective ground game exists when you already have an Attack System out and your opponent is dodging.

My best advice would be to get a good feel for the max range of Thunder Barrett, sit outside it, and set up Attack System. Then move in and Glare Hand or try using Sector Ray outright to poke for some solid HP damage.

In the air, you lose outright in every way imaginable. You can only try to keep him out using your HP attacks, but spamming them is going to be asking your opponent to dodge forward and through to get you to eat a chain of criticals.

All in all ..... a bad matchup, but then again, so is anyone against Squall. Having an available assist bar REALLY helps here, because you can actually scare Squall enough to begin to apply your own pressure. Without the assist bar, Squall can pressure you all day and you'll get nowhere. With the assist bar, don't save it until you can combo anything. Use it to punish anything whiffed including Thunder Barrett while you're dodging.

#### 4.18 Laguna

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Laguna is a weird matchup. Even after a LOT of time playing him, I can't seem to find anything he's good for other than attempted keep away, and even then, his keep away is relatively easily thwarted.

On the ground, the shooting moves do a fairly decent job of stopping Glare Hand poking. Therefore, I'd avoid using Glare Hand as a poking tool. Stuff that beats Glare Hand includes Ricochet Shot and Machine Gun. Note that because the animation of Machine Gun (when the circle button is held) outlasts that of Glare Hand, the first few bullets will cancel out the magical 'glare' of Glare Hand and the last few will hit you (he can and will move while shooting). Note also that Ricochet Shot will go straight through magical and physical parts of the Glare Hand. Note, that you can punish any of the ground brave attacks with Rising Wave -> Cosmic Ray.

Now in the air, there are a lot of options he can use, but at the same time, they aren't particularly hard to avoid and punish. Homing Bazooka and Missile



Barrage (ground and air versions) are used extensively as pressure tools. Now while Homing Bazooka hits hard, staggers on block, etc. it also has a huge cool-down period, therefore can be forward dodged into Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray punishment. Missile Barrage can be dashed through to destroy the small missiles (up to 6 depending on how long the circle button was held). Split Laser may seem to be in issue initially, but after you learn to anticipate how each of the split-off ends move in a slightly curved direction, you should be able to time a forward dodge to Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray as a punishment.

Overall? Laguna isn't such a difficult matchup. Move around a lot and decide to punish stuff with Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray.

#### 4.19 Ultimecia

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For a time witch, Ultimecia seems very slow. Now she only has 8 moves, but can perform them from ground or air. This having been said, these moves have two versions depending on whether you hold or mash the button.

Now Ultimecia players prefer to stay in the air for a long period of time (read: the entire game). There aren't very many good Ultimecia players primarily because most players lack the patience to use her properly. The good Ultimecia players I've seen get up near the highest point of the map, set up a Knight's Lance, then hang out around that area keeping you out with Knight's Axe/Blade. While this sounds like very simplistic play (and it kinda is), it becomes EXTREMELY effective if you have the patience to wait it out. Obviously, this will need to be adjusted a little depending on who your opponent is, but against most characters, this form of keep out works really well (the exception being those with relevant counters (e.g. Exdeath, CoD) and those with really good vertically attacking options.

Now I've just mentioned what is kinda the only good option to beat Ultimecia, and that's to use/abuse vertical options and this is because Knight's Blade is fantastic for covering horizontal ground. Now a good Ultimecia knows this and as such, won't let you get above her because Genesis Rock has that startup animation that causes an extension of the hitbox below Golbez. This means, your only option is to hit her from below, and you only really have two options that cover this approach: Float System -> Cosmic Ray and Sector Ray (but not from directly below). Now to be specific about this matchup, Ultimecia knows this fact, so she'll tend to use the held version of Knight's Axe (one massive axe that slowly tracks you) to keep you away, although at mid-range, you can forward dodge to punish it with Float System -> Cosmic Ray. Now, to cover this option Ultimecia sets up a Knight's Lance which will either knock you out of Float System or trade with you. As such, the best option you have is Sector Ray. Now to use this properly, you need to be under the hitbox for Knight's Blade, but close enough and high enough to be able to connect with the Sector Ray.

The HP attacks affect the way you move, or are available to move. Apocalypse tracks vertically (above the crest) almost infinitely. You'll never get over it so don't bother trying to get above it. Shockwave Pulsar sucks you in, so don't get near it. Hell's Judgement appears immediately under you, but has a long start-up so you should be able to dodge out of danger and punish.

Overall, for someone who doesn't know what they're doing, you'll take this match easily. For someone with the patience to wait you out and hide behind Knight's Lance/Blade/Axe, you have one hell of a fight on your hands.

#### 4.20 Zidane

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So the interesting thing about Zidane is that at first glance, he's just another melee attacker. Once you get to know him in a little more detail, however, you realise he has incredible pressuring tools from close-mid range.

Solution 9 throws a lot (I didn't bother counting them) of meteor-like missiles at you. This move will track relatively well horizontally, but vertical tracking isn't too great. This move kinda forces you to either airdash through, or dodge. My personal preference is to (you're probably getting sick of this by now) dodge forward and punish with Gravity System, but this won't work for mid-long range because they will be out of range.

Now the normal answer to the majority of melee attackers is to block and punish with anything you want. Zidane, however, has an awesome tool to deal with this, namely Booster 8. This move both staggers on block and recovers fast. Zidane can easily recover and use a Storm Impulse -> Meo Twister. Most Zidane players will use this as part of a mix-up with other attacks such as Tempest -> Meo Twister. Now this is particularly vicious as you need to guess between blocking and dodging when recovering. If you block and eat Booster -> Storm Impulse -> Meo Twister; or dodge and eat a delayed Tempest -> Meo Twister.

So from mid-long range, Zidane is absolutely vicious on the aggressive. As such, you absolutely need to keep him away. Now, you need to keep out with Attack System and Glare Hand, and Booster 8 bashes through both. As such, you need to be able to stay at max range of Glare Hand to stay safe. Then if/when Zidane uses it to bash through, punish however you want. Rising Wave and jump into Gravity System are both viable.

For further tools, Zidane also has access to perhaps the best HP attack in the game - Free Energy. This move is REALLY fast, has a decently fast hitbox and crushes defence. Beware of it. It kills dudes. Tidal Flame is also pretty vicious. The small ring of fireballs tracks you at a decent speed and lasts also a certain amount of time. Now normally, you should be able to just jump over, but the issue here is that if you try to punish anything with Gravity System, the ring could come around and hit you out of it.

Overall? Zidane is a pain in the ass, but stay awake, and space him out VERY carefully and you should be good.

#### 4.21 Kuja

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Now this guy is another that should be straightforward, but can be incredibly difficult if your opponent is good. Now for those who don't know, Kuja's movements pretty much vital to his gameplay.

Kuja has numerous options including a glide and one of the slowest falling speeds in the game. This then means he has perhaps the best aerial movement in the game, and proper use of this can be absolutely vicious. He has fast options such as Snatch Energy, Burst Energy, etc. Used properly, this can be absolutely brutal particularly because the orbs can hit you on the way there and back, so dodging isn't really an option. Rather, block and punish the stagger. Of course, this is dangerous because a rapid Flare Star will crush defence and make you eat damage. Besides the fast options, Ring Holy and Remote Flare are both zoning tools that limit how you move. The (up to three) rings from Ring Holy can and should be dashed through, because in my experience, it will turn around and track your behind as you try to do something. As such, you pretty much HAVE to dash through, which will reflect the rings and use them for you.

The real pain in the ass, however is that Kuja is able to punish any and all of your grounded zoning tools with an Ultima. As you probably would have guessed,

this eliminates all of your ground game, which kinda forces you to take to the air. If you're under him, a Force Symphony is enough to flush you out.

Overall, this matchup depends (again) on the skill level of your opponent. A very good Kuja is going to be REALLY hard to beat. You'd really have to be on the ball with your own movement and evasion as well as punishing pretty much EVERYTHING he does. Otherwise, you're going to get eaten up.

#### 4.22 Tidus

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Now Tidus is one of the really interesting characters. Again, his moves seem to be pretty bad, but that's only if you play your opposing character rather than your opponent. Playing Tidus is all about reading your opponent, what they like to do and when they like to do it.

So, he has three moves that evade, then hit for damage: Stick and Move (which moves Tidus along any horizontal plane, then throws his sword spinning behind him); Dart and Weave (which moves up and then comes swinging back down with his sword swinging in a Kain's Crashing Dive-esque style); and Cut and Run (which retreats quite far back before charging forward with the sword extended in front of him). All three of these attacks chain to Quick Hit for good HP damage.

The danger, however comes in Tidus' superior air game. Hop Step is perhaps the biggest danger here since Tidus hits you then retreats a relatively solid distance. This makes this move incredibly difficult to punish because on hit or whiff, Tidus will move a great distance away. Expect to see this move a lot. It's harder to explain how a good Tidus plays, so I'll give you a vid of Axel playing Tidus. He's a very solid player with a great poking/zoning game. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF46xR1dAAg&feature=related>)

#### 4.23 Yuna

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Some people tend to think Yuna is a less ranged version of Terra, however this really couldn't be further from the truth. Now while Yuna does have solid ranged options, the majority of her game is mid-range. Aerospark charges at mid range, but Yuna herself doesn't move. This makes the move safer on block since this often means that Yuna is too far away for most punishers to connect. As such you need to dodge away from it (since the movement of Aerospark is relatively linear). The range, while mid-range similarly to Glare Hand, bashes straight through the 'glare'.

The other really vicious tool used a lot is Sonic Wings. It covers a LOT of space in the air, and lingers for a long time, which creates an enormous hitbox. As such, I'd suggest staying out of the way and punishing with Sector Ray and/or Genesis Rock. Contrarily to Aerospark, this move is better off if you block it, since the lingering active frames of the extended hitbox may hit you during the cool-down period of a dodge.

Besides these two tools, however Yuna also has other solid options. Meteor Strike and Heavenly Strike are REALLY fast options for ground and air respectively. Do NOT throw out random moves while she's close, or you will eat these moves, and they will wall and ground rush respectively.

As far as HP attacks go, I'm constantly surprised how many people eat Energy Ray. Side dodge. It's not that hard. Now for those who think you can forward or back dodge, it's possible, but risky due to extended active frames of the hitbox. It will connect through walls and slightly below the floor, so falling isn't a good option. Note also that Thor's Hammer will draw you in, but doesn't turn to track you so if you get behind her, don't hesitate to punish.

Overall not a bad matchup, but again, remember that you shouldn't poke with Glare Hand unless Attack System is out and knocking him away. In addition, most of her moves have longer cool down than usual, so Rising Wave works.

#### 4.24 Jecht

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So Jecht shouldn't be much of an issue since he only has two brave attacks, Jecht Rush (ground) and Jecht Stream (aerial). Now both of these moves are at short range, but in EX mode, Jecht is able to finish either string of attacks even on whiff, so in EX mode, stay away from him and keep him away with Sector Ray/Genesis Rock.

For the HP attacks, he has Jecht Blade - which is a series of swings of his sword. Note he is going to finish these swings regardless of hit or whiff, so you should be able wait until it's finished and punish with Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray.

He also has Jecht Beam where he throws a large ball of magic right in front of him. It's range isn't great, so there shouldn't be much of an issue. Similar to this move is Ultimate Jecht Shot where he manifests a random meteor, and then throws it down in front of him. This move has an enormous hitbox, but poor range, so get up high, and dodge forward and punish.

There's also Triumphant Grasp, but it moves down, and tracks you horizontally, so if you can get high, you should be good for whatever punish you want.

#### 4.25 Shantotto

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Shantotto is one of those rarely seen characters and imo, for a really good reason too. Now her only real options to deal damage requires her to Bind or Stun you. A chunk of players will cast Bio. This move appears as a cloud of green poison which (if it connects) will deal brave damage slowly and steadily over a long period of time. This means that the damage is affected by things like if your back is turned to the opponent, if you're attacking, etc. which will trigger Sneak Attack, Counterattack, etc. Note also that if you land a HP attack, you'll get broken almost immediately since your brave drops to zero.

Now although HP attacks connect easily, and hit relatively hard, they each have REALLY long cool-down periods, so you should be able to dash in and punish with Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray.

Overall, a relatively straightforward matchup. Keep her out, and if you see a HP attack, dodge, and punish.

#### 4.26 Prishe

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So it took me quite a while to figure out what to say for Prishe, primarily because she quite literally invents her own bravery attacking strings. Expanding on that, she has different hits and you choose how to string them together. As such, she hits similarly to Jecht in EX mode as in she can potentially finish her strings on whiff. As such, just time a good dodge to behind her and punish with Gravity System -> Cosmic Ray. In all honesty, I can't really go through all options she has, but most of the melee ones are pretty much the same. If you need to get an idea about the range, Prishe fights with her hands so range is similar to Tifa's.

She also has access to Holy and Banish as her only two longer ranged brave attacks. Holy is an orb that tracks you slowly. You can block it to reflect it back at her, but having it connect is a sketchy idea at best. Banish is a

golden arrow directly forward. It's pretty linear and while it comes out relatively fast, it isn't good enough to consistently beat Attack System and Glare Hand pressure.

As far as HP attacks go, the only one that's a serious threat to you is Banshiga because it's really the only one that hits you at mid range. The start up time is enough to react to the word flashing up on the screen. The visual animation is Prishe jumping towards you a little and releasing a shock wave that covers a decent amount of horizontal distance. It has, however very little vertical tracking, and also surprisingly few active frames. As such, dodge forward when you see the name flash up on screen and punish with whatever. To the credit of this move, however, it also recovers pretty fast, so you're going to have to dodge early and rely on the later frames of dodge-invulnerability to avoid the attack so you can Float System -> Cosmic Ray as a reliable punish.

#### 4.27 Vaan

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An interesting matchup and for reasons reminiscent to the Prishe matchup. Vaan has a LOT of different options and each of the options have two versions. The difference comes depending on whether or not he already has that weapon out. Generally speaking, if he's switching weapons to use the move there is an improvement on the move in some way.

The most common move Vaan players use is Crossbow (usually the midair version). If he already has the crossbow out, he will fire four bolts leading to chase. It doesn't do too much damage, and is easily avoided/blocked so this isn't a problem for you. The problem comes if he's switching to the Crossbow from another weapon, or from having just used magic (at which point he puts away his weapons). If he's switching, he fires a long stream of Crossbow bolts that tracks you very well. This is especially threatening at mid range (i.e. your ideal range) because the tracking is most effective at that range. In all honesty, I wouldn't bother dodging it unless you can get under or over it. Every time I or anyone else has tried dodging it, the remaining bolts can and will catch you during the cool-down period of the dodge. To avoid it, I've already mentioned one method. There's a particular area, directly above and below Vaan where the Crossbow won't track, so getting there will work wonders. Note that since this move is only REALLY threatening in the air, you'll want to be either above or below him and fairly close anyway.

Other options to note are Greatsword and Katana as both of these moves travel a significant distance on startup. They do, however, both require some time to 'charge' so you should be able to dodge back while they're doing so and punish the whiff. Be careful about punishing Katana since when it moves forward on startup, it is invincible (it's essentially a teleport with a hitbox).

Other dangerous moves are Staff and Spear, especially if used when he's switching weapons at the time. Their motions are similar, but have different properties. Both moves have Vaan spin the relevant weapon around himself for an extended period of time, however, important to note is the fact that both moves are invincible, so don't bother trying to interrupt either unless its with Sector Ray, and even with Sector Ray, interrupting isn't consistent. Otherwise, you should just be able to just wait it out and punish (particularly Spear, since it has a noticeably different end, where restocks the spear out).

Now while Vaan has a TON of bravery attacking options, his HP attacking options are rather limited. The greatest danger, imo, is Windburst where he creates a crest below him before creating a green 'whirlwind' which sucks you in slightly and deals HP damage upon contact. Now most characters have options that can 'reflect' the whirlwind so it sucks in Vaan and deals damage to him on contact but Golbez' only option for this is Nightglow, and trying to land this on a

Windburst is pretty much a lost cause, so you're stuck having to avoid it. Now a decent Vaan player will know this and abuse it no end, so you really have to be in his face so that he has less room to cast the Windburst. If you leave him alone, then he WILL maintain the Windburst, and this gives him insane amounts of pressure because so many of your moves leave you relatively still for a while, meaning that the Windburst is able to suck you in.

Otherwise, there's Inferno, where Vaan creates another crest in front of him, covers himself in flames and then charges towards you. It has a pretty slow and obvious start up and an even longer cool-down period, so you shouldn't have much of a problem avoiding it then using Float System -> Cosmic Ray as a punish.

The last seriously dangerous HP attack is Torrent. Vaan creates yet another crest on the ground and creates several large droplets of water to rush down on you to deal bravery damage, before a larger drop deals the HP damage. This move works at close-mid range, but doesn't track dodges well, so if you see the name flash up on screen, dodge forward or to the side and punish with either Gravity System or Glare Hand -> Cosmic Ray.

Overall, Vaan is one of the matchups where your success depends HEAVILY on how well you read your opponent. He has a ton of different options and their use will be the determining factor for how successful your opponent will be, thus your ability to read his actions and counter them will determine how well you do.

#### 4.28 Gabranth

Judge Gabranth is a very interesting matchup because, in essence, you're fighting two characters. For those who don't know, Gabranth is more or less useless outside of EX mode, but once he gets into it, he's absolutely terrifying. In all honesty, once he gets into EX mode, I run like crazy, and try my utmost to keep him out with whatever I can.

Outside of EX mode, his HP attacks are EX Charge, which seems pretty self-explanatory. He also has a few options for attacking bravery, but these are all weaker versions of the EX mode equivalent.

I would take advantage of the non-EX mode and get as up in his face as you possibly can. Non-EX Gabranth doesn't mind you trying your zoning game, because he couldn't care less about getting in. He wants to stay away and charge up his EX gauge, enter EX mode, and kill you. As such, I come in very close with Gravity/Float System and Gravity Force. If you let him get away at all, a good player will begin to charge the EX gauge.

In EX mode, as I've said, I prefer to RUN. Here, Gabranth's moves all become much better. Relentless lunge lunges up to 3 times, each staggering you on block and can cause wall rush. Aero is a whirlwind that lasts a long period of time and will follow you around slowly. Vortex of Judgement is pretty scary as well. Gabranth spins up to three times to create a constant circular hitbox around himself. The best way to describe this move is like Vaan's Spear when he switches weapons. It 'absorbs' moves in the same way and is also pretty much invincible.

In EX mode, he also has access to Innocence, which would have to be one of the best HP attacks at close to mid range. Gabranth swings each of his swords in an arc 2 times, creating a shockwave from each swing. These 4 shockwaves track you REALLY well at mid-range, but will fade out at longer range. This move alone is the reason I do NOT suggest zoning Gabranth with Glare Hand, as the reach of Innocence is beyond that of Glare Hand, and you won't recover

in time before you get bashed.

Overall, I'd have to say Gabranth is more or less a pushover outside of EX mode, but once he enters it, be REALLY careful, or you could be like me and run the hell away until its over.

#### 4.29 Lightning

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So Lightning is the new poster-boy (poster-girl?) of Dissidia with three different forms or 'paradigms'. Now unlike other characters will different 'forms' (Cecil/Gabranth), Lightning is free to switch instantaneously between her forms by pressing L and R buttons simultaneously.

What does this mean for you? It means that Lightning has a ton of options (three builds worth of options) to cover different situations and as such, she doesn't have any single weakness to exploit. Of the three forms, Medic is the least useful as she only has Cure/Cura available whereby she increases her own bravery without affecting you.

Her Commando is where she attacks you physically, and of the two relevant forms, this one is the easiest to zone out. Moves of note include Ruin/Ruinga which are grey orbs thrown in the direction of the player's choosing. This is the reason you can't just throw out Attack System/Glare Hand to keep her moving. With that said, it's still possible to zone her out on the ground. In the air, she gets Blaze Rush where she shoots at you before rushing towards you and ramming bodily into you if the shots connect. While the visual animation of the shooting takes some time, the move doesn't track you at all, so it's pretty easy to jump/dodge over to the other side and punish this move. The only move she has that chains into HP is Launch -> Flourish of Steel but Launch has pretty bad range, so she shouldn't be connecting it if you zone her properly.

Her Ravager is where she casts spells to attack. Now while this seems that this mode therefore counters your zoning technique, with careful play, you can still make it work. Now for her options here, Watera is really the only really annoying option. It's essentially a huge ball of water that follows you around slowly. It is pretty much a way for Lightning to cover her approach in Commando form. On block, the ball tracks Lightning, but you have to keep in mind that it staggers you on block, so Lightning can use this to cover her as she comes in. She also has Aeroga, which is a light green ball with fairly good range that travels directly towards you. If this connects, she can chain it into whatever she wants, but it doesn't track at all, so any movement will avoid it. Army of One is interesting because it doesn't seem to be a magical move at all, but...it's there so yeah. Not that hard to avoid, so dodge and punish. Thunder and Thundaga are both pretty fast options to punish whiffs that are all but in your face.

For HP attacks she has Razor Gale, which produces a 'disc' of wind that slowly tracks you, but is unable to turn around if you get past it. As such, you should be able to dodge over it. Crushing Blow moves quickly and covers great horizontal distance, but it is VERY linear and its vertical tracking is laughably bad. Therefore, once you see the name flash up on screen, gain or lose distance then punish with the appropriate System -> Cosmic Ray. Lightning Strike is a close range version of Thunderfall. Thunderfall works great because it surrounds you, but similarly to most of your moves it also hits physically at close range. As such, you should dodge the lightning but not use Gravity/Float System -> Cosmic Ray. Rather, punish with Sector Ray for the sake of constancy.

Overall, there is no single solution to defeat Lightning. You need to deal

with each form as it comes and remember that she's free to switch forms freely.

#### 4.30 Feral Chaos

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OK, this guy is enormous, and this increases the hitbox for the character, which is both advantage and disadvantage. It means his active hitbox is larger as he tries to hit you, but at the same time its easier to hit him. Now, Feral Chaos has several setbacks. He cannot enter EX mode or use assists, and his bravery slowly decreases. He does have abilities to counteract each of these effects, but they cost 50 cp each when mastered, which decreases the other abilities available. This doesn't affect him that much, though because his moves are REALLY powerful.

He has many bravery attacks, most of which cover a large distance. They also have enormous hitboxes and out-prioritise most attacks in the cast. As such, it's not a good idea to try to zone him out under most circumstances. Personally, I try to dodge and use aerial attacks since they come out faster than your ground options. My suggestion would be to cast Attack System when he dodges or if/when you've dodged too late and can't get a suitable punish off. Only use Rising Wave as a punisher, and only use Glare Hand if Attack System is out.

Keep in mind that most of the attacks Feral Chaos uses has significant cool down periods, so punishment is possible. Keep in mind though that he can dodge out early which means that you need to dodge early and use the lingering invincibility frames of the dodge to avoid the final active frames of the attack so you can punish as early as possible.

As far as HP attacks go, people tend to fall for Via Dolorose. Note that this move does have TWO hits. The second hit is delayable, but if you dodge twice, then you should be able to avoid both attacks. Note that it's REALLY hard to get over this move so don't bother, just dodge forward the first time, then sideways for the second time.

Overall, Feral Chaos is an intense matchup because it can turn very quickly. You should be ok if you keep your cool about you and deal damage as it comes, playing as patiently as you can. Lose patience, and the match can turn around really quickly because Feral Chaos can be absolutely vicious.

#### 4.31 Gilgamesh

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Gilgamesh is fun for many reasons. Now he's a relatively straightforward kind of character with relatively straightforward moves, however for those who don't know, Gilgamesh has eight possible weapons for use when performing any of these moves, and this will change the move's properties.

Effects of these weapons include damage output (doubled, reduced to one, randomised, or increased with less HP); random break; EX gauge depletion; producing a lot of EX force; and increased/decreased range.

This makes most of Gilgamesh's moves seem much more random than they are. To give you an idea, his longest range is roughly equal to Sephiroth's Reaper while his shortest range is similar to Tifa's range.

This means it is difficult to avoid Gilgamesh's attacks, so as a result, I prefer to block attacks. From mid range, there shouldn't be much of an issue trying to zone him out because his walk speed is slow and his moves don't have start-up invincibility as they move towards you. In the air, similarly you should be able to keep him out with Sector Ray/Genesis Rock.



As far as HP attacks go, the only threats to you are Sword Dance, Rocket Punch and Missile. While people tend to be scared of Jump, you can dodge early out of the recovery of any of your moves to avoid the damaging part of the move and punish with whatever you want. Missile travels a very long distance but you can dodge forward past it, because it won't turn around and hit you. Sword Dance and Rocket Punch are both threats because they cover distance. While Sword Dance's properties depend on the weapon pulled, Rocket Punch is consistently scary. It has a bit of a start-up, but more than covers Glare Hand range. If properly used (during a dodge), it will catch you during your cool down. This move travels blindingly fast so don't underestimate it.

Overall, Gilgamesh is a relatively straightforward matchup but you still can't let up easily because he can bring a match back.

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## Section 5 - Miscellaneous

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### 5.1 - Anti-Golbez

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So props to iamchangie for suggesting I write this section. While not really needed to play as Golbez, I figure it'll help as it's going to give you a good idea of what people will use against you.

I'll give an overview before going into a ton of detail against specific moves. Generally, Golbez plays a zoning game on the ground which is usually fairly dependent on the use of Attack System to provide some form of protection while other moves then serve the purpose of tagging you during the cool-down of a dodge. In the air, Golbez needs to be pretty much in your face to be effective as effective air-Golbez play uses Gravity/Float System a lot and both of these require Golbez to be fairly close to the opponent to be effective. Overall? Keep away in the air, and get out of the way on the ground. Details will be provided in the following few sections on specific moves.

Since Glare Hand will be your usual method of ground pressure, and one of the moves you'll want to throw out as pressure, your opponent will want to move to pre-emptively counter this. Since Glare Hand tracks from left to right, playing against Golbez, you'll want to be dodging to your left, as this decreases the possibility of getting caught by lingering active frames on the white 'glare'.

For those who try to abuse ground-based Attack System, keep in mind that the initial orbs will only travel a certain distance up to a maximum before they stop. In addition, you can easily dodge back out of range to avoid pressure, or just dash straight through. The orbs themselves have no hitbox, and the smaller lasers that they have can easily be dashed through. These small lasers may also randomly be reflected back at Golbez. The problem with this is that Golbez will often use Glare Hand in conjunction with an active Attack System, since the white 'glare' will add additional pressure but the melee part of the attack (the hand sweep) will cancel out any reflected lasers without affecting the attack. This is probably the number one reason you should NEVER dodge to the side when an Attack System is active. Back is OK, forward is OK, dashing through is also OK, but don't EVER dodge to the sides as this is an enormous risk of getting tagged with active frames then getting chained into Cosmic Ray for a good chunk of HP damage. Of course, intelligent players will counter two of these techniques and back up the Attack System with a Sector Ray rather than Glare Hand.

While you should keep Rising Wave in mind as a great punisher, it's also pretty much never used as a poke since almost any kind of movement will avoid it. It has awesome vertical tracking, but almost no horizontal tracking. As such you won't have to deal with it as a poke, but you need to keep it in mind when you're using pokes against him since it has relatively fast startup. As such, you need to know what moves keep you still while you're performing them and avoid using them as much as possible.

In the air, Golbez is pretty linear with Gravity/Float System and these are the fastest and overall best options (read: the one you'll have to deal with the most). While Golbez does move a certain distance during the start-up of these moves, the tracking is still REALLY linear, and as such, it's pretty simple to side dodge and punish from pretty much any other character.

The other popular option available is Gravity Force, and beating that move is pretty much all down to timing. Stay away from him while he's charging the initial ball since that ball turns most of Golbez into one massive hitbox. After a certain set of time Golbez will move and this is where the danger is, since there are now multiple hitboxes. Since there is no way to vary the time between initiating the move and the movement, getting used to the move will make it far easier to beat the move. There are also character specific options to beat this particular move, e.g. Terra can use Tornado as soon as Golbez initiates the move, and this will knock him out of the movement part of Gravity Force and deal HP damage.

For HP moves, Sector Ray, Genesis Rock and Nightglow are the main things you'll need to worry about. The main issue to worry about with Nightglow is that it has some degree of armour on the move. I haven't tested it too thoroughly, but from what I can see so far, the property on the armour is similar to that of Emperor's Starfall in the slightly later stages, i.e. reflects smaller, weaker projectiles (e.g. Holy orbs, etc.)

Sector Ray has VERY extended active frames, mainly because it deals brave damage for a period of time before dealing the HP damage. As such, the active hitbox lasts a long period of time, in fact, will outlast an ordinary dodge and punish you during the cool-down period unless you've inputted another dodge.

Genesis Rock has interesting properties due to the initial hitbox that extends below Golbez. As soon as you see Golbez start Genesis Rock, dodge away as the initial upwards movement of the rocks has an active hitbox. You have two options to beat this move. You can either stay above/below the spinning part of the move and then dodge forward early so that the final invincible frames on a dodge avoid the outward motion of the rocks dealing the HP damage. This is a way to stay close for a good punish, because Golbez can dodge out of the recovery frames of Genesis Rock MUCH faster than you'd think. The other way of dealing with this move is to stay far away, and dodge the rock as it comes to you. It's far easier to see if you're at a distance, and this can be dodged easier.

## 5.2 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Note: these are questions that were asked of me while my opponents were playing me, and not forum stuff, so if questions begin to pop up over forums, I'll add them to the list, if they're asked frequently enough xD

-Why the Kuja assist instead of [insert assist here]?

Scroll back up to the assists section. I've answered this pretty thoroughly

there. Seriously, people argue different assists all the time. I'll say it again. IT DEPENDS ON YOUR PREFERENCE. Barring useless assists such as Laguna, or Shantotto, as long as an assist gives you what you want, then be happy with it.

-If someone changes assists on me before I input Cosmic Ray, can I do something?

Interesting question. You should be buffering the Cosmic Ray for chaining Glare Hand (if they're not within melee range), but for all other chaining purposes, you can (or should be able to) hit confirm the brave attack before inputting the Cosmic Ray.

An intelligent opponent will wait to see what happens, and change at the beginning of Cosmic Ray to give them the best chance of punishing you, but even if they do change out early, you can't get a guaranteed Cosmic Ray. You can hold the square button to track them a little before the Cosmic Ray comes out, but even then you won't get it guaranteed. If you're lucky, (or playing the computer), they may drop into the Cosmic Ray, but then again, you're not playing someone of significant skill. If someone changes out of an attack before you chain the Cosmic Ray in, your best bet is to dodge cancel the attack, reposition yourself, and try again.

-You seem to view most of your matchups favourably. Would you say that Golbez is top tier?

Yes, and no. For me, most matchups become favourable, because I've played the game enough to know how to avoid situations and moves from characters that give me trouble, e.g. I know that if I cast Genesis Rock around Terra, she can cast a Tornado to destroy my Rocks and drag me in for damage, so I avoid that situation.

I don't believe in a tier list, because imo, it is hard to judge how good a character is when everyone has such unique moves. Firion, for example seems to be a poor character until you realise just how good Shield Bash is. Cloud and Squall seem to be easy to beat until you realise the explosive range of some of their moves and how many criticals you can eat by whiffing the smallest motion.

While there are certainly the more difficult matchups, I am of the belief that a match is not only played between characters, but also between the players. To win a game, you need to spot habits, and get a good feel for your opponent and what they like to do. People play characters differently, and if you learn to beat the player, you'll learn to beat them no matter how bad the matchup is. I've beaten a Terra player using Tifa consistently, even though this should really never happen, because Terra can keep Tifa out all day using Meteor/Holy/Fire.

The moral of this story? No match is unwinnable. Stay awake, read your opponent, punish mistakes and you can win the most difficult of matches.

### 5.3 - Contacting me

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I'm going to be honest and say I'm too lazy to check GameFAQs regularly, so don't bother to PM me. If you need to reach me about something, use my email tehdr4g0n@hotmail.com (since I check it regularly).

If you have any suggestions, requests, corrections, etc. please let me know. I am willing to change anything thats wrong, and if you have more elaborate

combos, shoot me a line, because I can and will admit that mine are pretty basic. In addition, creative builds are welcomed, and I will credit you if I mention them. My build is very basic, and not geared towards anything in particular, so if you have better, please let me know.

Please keep in mind, though that I am currently studying combined a combined degree for Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery, so if it is a major revision, it may take some time to put in properly.

Oh, and to make my life easier, if you are emailing me, could you please put the subject as "Golbez Guide", then tell me whats wrong. That would be muchly appreciated.

#### 5.4 - Version History

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v1.0 - 16/12/2011

Basic outline and stuff. Still missing some matchup analysis details.

v1.1 - 26/12/2011

More stuff is in. Only missing a few matchups. Inserted story details for Golbez, and fixed a few spelling issues.

v1.2 - 28/12/2011

Finished remaining matchups. Fixed margin errors.

v1.3 - 25/01/2012

Added stuff that I missed about Gravity/Float System as well as a new section the Anti-Golbez section.

v1.4 - 7/4/2012

Added my finalised setup for Golbez as well as YonKitoTaoshibe's set and twiddled with the matchup information

#### 5.5 - Credits/shoutouts

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A very big thanks to Square Enix for making an awesome game. This somewhat makes up for the fact that FFXIII was more of a movie than a game x.x

Bosshurst, for being a fun sparring partner

Pfi-Ting, for being competitive enough to force me to think about what I do rather than autopilot

Z-hang, for giving me a rundown on Cloud, along with alternate playstyles

iamchangie, for being the ultimate bro

Additional shoutouts to iamchangie for suggesting the anti-Golbez section.

The Final Fantasy Wikia for details on Golbez's story. (stuff that in all honesty, I'd forgotten)

YonKitoTaoshibe, for the alternate accessory set as well as pointing out some information that I'd forgotten to add about the Vaan matchup.

#### 5.6 - Outro

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As far as legal stuff goes, all characters, etc. belong to Square Enix. I take no credit, blah, blah, blah.

Yeah, basically, don't be a twerp and try to reproduce any of my stuff for any reason without my expressed permission. This may not be a godly guide, but I sure as hell hope it helps, and I know this information helped a lot of the guys I play with locally.

Hope this guide makes your Golbez just that much better.  
dr4g0n

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