Introduction

Fighting games are widely known as a very hard to get into genre , with plenty of entry barriers for new players~~, the entry barriers are~~ commonly referred as “outdated” or “unfair ~~for new players~~” ~~elements~~ by journalist and players that are not into these games. Although more modern fighting games attempt to lower the entry level to attract a newer audience , the stigma of the games being ~~for comfort~~ prevents most these new players ~~the new audience~~ to stick with the genre. Punto y aparte

In this paper we will explore in-depth those entry barriers, determining what kind of skill-set is required to perform well in these kind of games, as well of offering ways to develop the previously mentioned necessary skill-set.

# Fighting Games and the Arcades

Before we start talking about some of the so-called outdated design decision that fighting games still engage in, we should understand what fighting games are and have a brief look at their history.

A *working definition* of fighting games would be, as Todd Harper defines in “*The Culture of Digital Fighting Games”*, aqui tienes que citar, o al menos pon (el año) entre parenthesis “ the games are about close-quarter combats between the on-screen characters; furthermore, those characters usually have normal and special attacks -or special moves-, players can see the match parameters somewhere in the in-game screen and finally the most important aspect that the games share is that: fighting games are competitive and allow multiplayer competition”. Las citas entre comillas

~~The part of fighting game history that~~ First, we~~’ll~~ will talk about in this section is the arcade-era , ~~where games like~~ Focusing on *Street Fighter II,* a game releasedin the 90s wich found huge success and essentially made the genre what it is today. ~~in the arcades upon using a~~ This game was released in an arcade machine wich need a quarter to play, and ~~had~~ only had 2 ways of being played; ~~either~~ against a series of CPU-controller opponent in what will be later known as “Arcade Mode” or against another player. ~~either way~~ If the player loses, in order for them to continue, they will have to spend another quarter. The catch was that at any point during your match against the CPU, if another player inserted a quarter in the machine then a match between the two players would start and the ~~player~~ one ~~that~~ who won would ~~then~~ be able to continue or start their Arcade Mode. We can say that this system made the players compete with each other, where the winner would be able to keep playing.

Aqui al principio pones arcade era porque imagino que querras poner mas “eras” despues? Ya me diras

# The outdated elements

The website *pressbuttonwin.com* published an article called “*Are fighting games too hard*” where it showcases some of the elements that general audience points too when discussing why they don’t play fighting games. ~~The article first part about game mechanics focuses more on the games and their mechanics themselves while~~ ~~later parts talk more~~ The article mainly talks about problems with the competitive nature of a typical one versus one game ~~competition~~ , where one side wins and the other loses. lack of good in-game learning tools, hard to learn just by playing the game, lack of single player content, game inputs and execution requirements. ~~From the first part we see the following problems with fighting games:~~

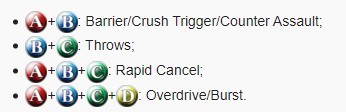
The three first problems can be summarized in fighting games lack a safe space where a player can play alone and gradually get better as they played, for example in an RPG, like Dragon Quest XI, the player starts in a very easy zone with not a lot of options and they gradually get more options as the game gets gradually more difficult and if the player is not ready yet to face the challenge the game presents they can go back to a previous zone until they are ready. Fighting games don’t offer ~~the player~~ that: the game doesn’t ~~really~~ change the more the player plays it and outside the very basic functions the game doesn’t teach ~~the player~~ the more in-depths details of the system the player is engaging in , or at least they don’t teach it in a natural and intuitive way for newer players. Street Fighter II, as we mentioned early?¿?¿ mencionas SFII, pero no dices que no tenia tutorial ni nada antes., didn’t have a tutorial or even a practice mode when it released and the current release *Street Fighter V* has explanations of their more complex systems and interactions but they are that, explanations and very specific simulations where the player can “perform” not practice those systems.

Explica esto diferente, di algo rollo que lo que explican los juegos nuevos son solo texto, no sirven para una partida de verdad. Ejemplfiica por ejemplo con ajedrez, que solo te explican las reglas, pero no te enseñan las tácticas.

## Game Inputs

The last point the article showcases is the ~~one more~~ (one more, really cross)most relevant to this topic. ~~as~~ The article says ~~puts it~~: *“Traditional fighting game inputs and execution requirements are too difficult.”* Two things are mentioned here, *game inputs* and *execution*. Game inputs refers to both the button mapping of the games, referred as “buttons” from now on, and the dreaded *motion inputs.* First off, without having in consideration the movement buttons, left , right, up, down buttons and any combination of the previous (left + down, right + up, etc.), fighting games have a different number of buttons from which the normal attacks are performed, for example the Street Fighter Franchise have six buttons: three for the three types of punches *(Light Punch, Medium Punch* and *Heavy Punch)* and three for the kicks *(Light Kick, Medium Kick* and *Heavy Kick)* these buttons are displayed and referred to (mostly in writing) as *LP,MP,HP* and *LK,MK,HK*. While other franchise like *Blazblue* have four buttons simply called *A,B,C* and *Drive.* Six buttons are a lot of button and were a lot of buttons when Street Fighter II came out, but that was not all as pressing *some* buttons together performed a special action that *all characters shared* in Street Fighter II pressing the LP and LK at the same time would perform a throw that the other player could not block against.

Fig. 1 shows all the general actions from *Blazblue: Central Fiction* that are performed with a simultaneous press of specific buttons.

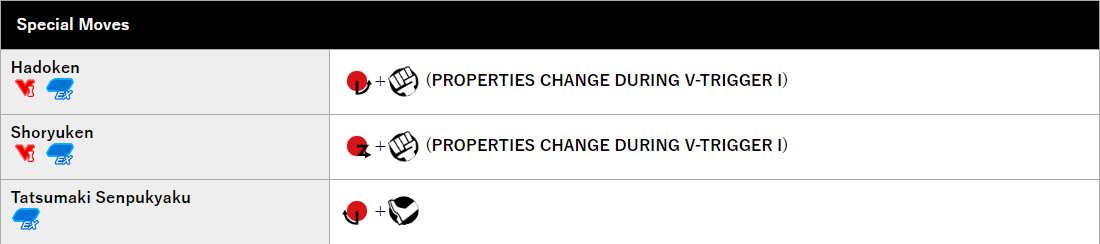


*Figure 1: Screenshot of Blazblue: Central Fiction’s multiple button actions, from the Dustloop Wiki page of Blazblue: Central Fiction*

## Motion Inputs

Now onto the nail in the coffin for many players: Motion Inputs. Harper mentioned that characters in a fighting game can do either normal attacks or special attacks, we know that normal attacks are performed with attack buttons then how does a player do a special attack? The answer differs from game to game but in Street Fighter II you could perform the famous fire ball “*Hadouken*” by pressing down, down + forward and forward + any *punch* button (forward is left or right depending

on where the opponent is, forward is basically the direction towards the opponent) assuming the player is playing as series protagonist *Ryu.* The combination of movement and attack buttons required to do a special attack is called the *motion input*.



*Figure 2: Incomplete command list from Ryu from Street Fighter V, from Capcom’s Official Street Fighter V website*

The most used motion inputs in traditional fighting games are the following:

**Quarter-circle input**: down, down + backward/forward, backward/forward.

**Dragon Punch “DP” input**: forward, down, down + forward also known as the Z input from how it is usually display in command lists.

**Charge input**: hold down or backwards then press up or forward, this is a very unintuitive motion since the player has to hold down the direction button for typically two seconds then release it to the opposite direction.

**360 input**: from 360º, the player would have to input all directions from left to right or right to left, for example forward, forward + down, down, backward + down, backward, backward + up, up, forward + up.

Pon una imagen visual de los inputs, igual que has hecho con lo de ryu

With motion inputs we encounter the first “outdated” no pongas outdated y tal, quiedas muy pomposo y bastante ego entry-level barrier. people like to use as an argument that motion inputs were implemented during the arcade-era to create artificial difficulty so the game would take longer to master which meant more quarters for the arcade machine, which is a completely valid argument. Usually a player would take his time learning to properly learn to do - ~~and if they’re new to correctly time-~~ a quarter-circle input into a Hadouken but then they~~’ll~~  will need to learn the much more daunting and challenging DP input , which for a new player can be hard to understand, visualize and perform. A new player ~~that meet this entry-level~~ is prone to think that in order to “learn the game” they first have to “be able to play the game” by doing this special attacks, otherwise they will always play with less tools than everyone else. Being able to do motion inputs is the first entry-level requirement that “has” to be fulfilled in order to be able to play and enjoy fighting games, **since new players have to compete with veterans that have been doing those inputs for ages which can be deemed as “unfair”. Esto sobra, mas que decir que es unfair contra veteranos, di que no es divertido o la gente no tiene tiempo para aprender movimientos cuando solo quiere disfrutar de su tiempo libre. SI quieres, di tambien que para muchos figthing games fans, la diversión esta en aprender esas cosas**

## Execution

The execution barrier stands for two things, first one is being able to perform any special move or action when required which means mastering motion inputs and memorize the purpose of every button or combination of buttons, the second one is being able to fully the desired or the optimal “*combo*”. A combo is a sequence of attacks that required a specific order and timing, so in any combo there are two things to memorize and practice: order of attacks and timing between said attacks. Combos began as a bug from Street Fighter II, ~~where the player would normally hit the opponent before they could recover from the blow they would hit them again,~~ sobra, o explicalo mas sencillo this was not intended since the game was balanced around single hits, because in the game if a player gets hit constantly in a short period of time, their character would become stunned which made them unable to do anything, but the bug was so popular that it became a feature that almost every fighting game have nowadays. ~~The hardest part about combos is to get the timing right, if the player is too fast or too slow when pressing a button -or worse, doing a motion input- the combo~~ ~~will “drop”.~~ *~~Street Fighter IV~~* ~~had what the fighting game community referred as “1~~*~~- frame links~~*~~”~~[~~1~~](#_bookmark1) ~~which are combos that required one or more attacks to be performed in an exact frame, or 1/60 of a second, which made them really hard to do consistently.~~ Esto sobra porque es mas una curiosidad que otra cosa, con el siguiente parrafo ya explicas la necesidad de hablar de los combos

Newer players believe that the player who can do the longest combos will automatically win as soon as they hit the opponent since they will be able to keep their opponent in a combo for most of the match, so the new players would try to memorize the long combos and if they were already struggling with motion inputs, doing combos, which ask them to perform inputs on top of a chain of buttons might seem very daunting and not worth the effort. We can summarize that execution refers to the ability of doing the necessary things consistently and that execution is the first apparent entry barrier players will encounter.

## Modern Fighting Games

In discussions from different video-game discussion sites (articles, forums) pon citas o algo en la bibliografia, no digas “se ha discutido mucho” y no des pruebas people have argued, as this paper mentioned earlier, that both motion inputs and difficult and long combos are products of the arcade-era and that nowadays they’re not needed and only helps to make the games less accessible. Fighting game developers seem to listen to those requests while not completely abolishing those elements that fighting game veterans say its part of the genres identity. Ways that developers approach accessibility are: replacing motion inputs, simple motion inputs, auto-combos, attack chains and one button *supers*. An honourable mention would be that fighting games now are less strict about the timing necessary for the combos and the precision of motion inputs.

**Replacing motion inputs:** Instead of having to press a combination of directions just pressing one direction and a dedicated special move button would do the special move, games would still allow to do the typical motion inputs and some would add different proprieties between doing a special with the dedicated special button and doing them the traditional way. Some games with a dedicated special button are: *Granblue Fantasy Versus, DNF Duel* and *Capcom Fighting Collection.*

**Simple Motion inputs:** The only motion inputs that the game has are quarter-circle motions.

*Dragonball Fighterz* only uses quarter-circle motions for all the characters special moves.

**Auto-combos**: Players are able to perform automated combos by just pressing repeatedly a button.

This gives the player always a way to combo but it’s rather limited since the combos are always the same. Some games with auto-combos are: *Dragonball FighterZ, Melty Blood: Type Lumina, Blazblue: CrossTag Battle* and *The King of Fighters XV.*

**Attack chains**: This gives most -if not all- characters in the game a standard route or rules in how to combo. The standard attack chain is: light to medium to heavy and finish it with a special move,

but other games can also have chains like: normal attack into a *command normal* into a special move. Most fighting games have this property of chaining attacks.

**One button supers**: Super special moves are really strong moves that require the player to fulfill certain conditions, the most common one is to have a specific amount of a resource commonly refer as meter (from super meter) or in case of Tekken 7 and DNF Duel a certain amount of low health. These moves usually required some kind of harder than usual motion input like two times Quarter- circle or 360, but some games have or offer the player a dedicated super button. Games with dedicated super button are: *Tekken 7, DNF Duel* and *Capcom Fighters Collection.*

[1](#_bookmark0) Term from the Fighting Game Glossary: [The Fighting Game Glossary | infil.net](https://glossary.infil.net/)