

= Tifa Lockhart =

Tifa Lockhart ( Japanese : ティファ・ロククハート , Hepburn : Tifa Rokkuh?to ) is a fictional character in Square 's ( now Square Enix ) role @-@ playing video game Final Fantasy VII . Created and designed by Tetsuya Nomura , she has since appeared in the fighting game Ehrgeiz and made cameo appearances in several other titles , as well as the CGI film sequel to Final Fantasy VII , Advent Children and related games and media in the Compilation of Final Fantasy VII series .

A member of the eco @-@ terrorist group AVALANCHE and owner of the 7th Heaven bar in the slums of Midgar , Tifa is the childhood friend of Cloud Strife , the protagonist of Final Fantasy VII . Convincing him to join the group to keep him close and safe , she later assists him in saving the Planet from the game 's villain , Sephiroth . Installments in The Compilation of Final Fantasy VII later expanded upon her character , such as in the film Advent Children , where she attempts to convince Cloud to let go of his self @-@ imposed guilt , and move on with his life after Sephiroth 's defeat .

Named the pin @-@ up girl of the " cyber generation " by The New York Times , Tifa has been compared to Lara Croft as an example of a strong , independent and attractive female character in video games . Media have repeatedly praised both the character 's strength and appearance and described her as one of the best female characters in gaming .

= = Appearances = =

= = = Final Fantasy VII = = =

Introduced in Final Fantasy VII , Tifa is the childhood friend of Cloud Strife , and owner of the 7th Heaven bar , as well as a member of the eco @-@ terrorist organization AVALANCHE , who oppose the megacorporation Shinra and their use of Mako energy as a power source . She convinces Cloud to join the group to keep a closer eye on him after noticing his personality has changed , and she follows him in pursuit of the game 's antagonist , Sephiroth . Unable to keep him from being manipulated by Sephiroth , she helps him recover after his mind becomes fractured , and they realise their mutual feelings for one another , working together to defeat Sephiroth .

In flashbacks , it is revealed that as children Tifa and Cloud had decided to follow a path to a mountain near their hometown of Nibelheim . However , they were both injured and Tifa was in a coma for a week , with her father holding Cloud responsible for the incident . Cloud eventually left to join Shinra 's SOLDIER program in order to become stronger , but it is later revealed that he did it primarily to attract her attention . In response , she requested if she was ever in danger , he would return to save her . Years later , after Sephiroth destroyed the town of Nibelheim , Cloud rescued Tifa after she was wounded by Sephiroth . Surviving the incident , Tifa was taken to safety by her martial arts instructor Zangan , eventually arriving in Midgar and meeting AVALANCHE 's leader , Barret Wallace . Upon recovering , she joined AVALANCHE so as to get revenge for the destruction of her home . She eventually encountered an incoherent Cloud at the city 's train station , and convinced him to work for Barret , so as to keep him close and safe . This is the point at which the game begins .

In early drafts of Final Fantasy VII , Tifa was to be a background character . Her role in AVALANCHE was to add support behind the scenes , and to cheer everyone up after missions , as well as having a particular fondness for Cloud . She was also supposed to have a large scar on her back caused by Cloud , and partial amnesia from the incident when she had received it . A scene intended to imply herself and Cloud having sex was proposed by Masato Kato , one of the event planners , but it was replaced with a toned down version by Kitase in which a risqué line is followed by a fade to black . In an interview Nojima stated that none of the staff thought the scene would become such an issue at the time .

= = = Compilation of Final Fantasy VII = = =

In 2005 , she appeared in the CGI film Final Fantasy VII : Advent Children , set two years after the events of the game . In it , she tries to give emotional support to Cloud , urging him to come to terms with the unwarranted guilt he places upon himself . In addition , she takes care of Barret Wallace 's adopted daughter Marlene and another child , Denzel . During the film , she fights against one of the antagonists , Loz , and later she helps battle the summoned creature Bahamut SIN . Script writer Kazushige Nojima described her role in the film as " very much like any woman who 's been left behind by a man , " stating that while they did not want her to appear clingy , they also wanted to portray that she was emotionally hurt by Cloud 's departure . In the film 's initial draft , she was intended to have a more central role in the then @-@ short film , which only featured herself , Cloud , and several children , with the story revolving around a note being delivered to him .

Tifa is featured in the prequel games Before Crisis : Final Fantasy VII and Crisis Core : Final Fantasy VII , as well as the OVA Last Order : Final Fantasy VII . In each , her appearance relates to Nibelheim 's destruction . The novella " Case of Tifa " , written as part of the On the Way to a Smile series , is a story set between the original game and Advent Children . Told from her point of view , the story details how she creates a new 7th Heaven bar in the city of Edge , and attempts to hold onto the concept of a normal family with herself and Cloud , despite him beginning to isolate himself from others . Tifa also appears briefly in the game Dirge of Cerberus : Final Fantasy VII , set one year after the events of Advent Children in which she helps the protagonist Vincent Valentine defend the Planet against Omega WEAPON ; she later appears in the game 's epilogue , discussing Vincent 's apparent disappearance .

= = = Other appearances = = =

Outside of the Compilation of Final Fantasy VII , Tifa appears in the fighting game Ehrgeiz , as an unlockable character and an optional boss . She later appears in the electronic board games Itadaki Street Special and Itadaki Street Portable . In Kingdom Hearts II , she appears in her Advent Children attire , searching for Cloud and later fighting various Heartless , the series ' monsters . She was originally planned to appear in the Final Mix version of the original Kingdom Hearts , but due to time constraints the staff members chose to incorporate Sephiroth instead . Tifa is one of player characters in the fighting game Dissidia 012 Final Fantasy , which features characters from various Final Fantasy games . She is featured in her Final Fantasy VII outfit , but the player has also access to her Advent Children form and a third form that is shown during Tifa 's appearances in Nibelheim . The first print run of the game also features another form based on artwork by Yoshitaka Amano . In LittleBigPlanet 2 , Tifa is featured as a downloadable character model .

Korean singer Ivy portrayed the character in a 2007 music video for the song " ??? ??? " ( " Sonata of Temptation " ) . Recreating a fight scene from Advent Children , the video was banned from airing on Korean television after a copyright lawsuit by Square Enix citing plagiarism . In 2015 Tifa was added to the iOS game Final Fantasy : Record Keeper as a playable character .

= = Creation and development = =

Designed by Tetsuya Nomura , Tifa was not present in early versions of Final Fantasy VII , as initially , the game was to have only three playable characters ; the protagonist Cloud Strife , Aerith Gainsborough and Barret Wallace . However , during a phone call to project director Yoshinori Kitase , it was suggested that at some point in the game , one of the main characters should die , and after much discussion as to whether it should be Barret or Aerith , the producers chose Aerith . Nomura later joked that this was his idea , so as to enable him to introduce Tifa into the game . Regardless , the notion of having two concurrent heroines , and having the hero waver between them , was something Kitase liked , describing it as something new in the Final Fantasy series . Nomura describes Tifa 's character in Advent Children as having several dimensions , calling her " like a mother , a sweetheart , and a close ally in battle " and " remarkably strong , not only emotionally , but physically as well . "

Tifa was designed to use the " monk " character class that appears in previous games in the series

. She has long , black hair in a style resembling a dolphin 's tail at the tip , and garments described as simple and monotone , consisting of a white tank top and black miniskirt . She also wears red boots and gloves , and sleeves extend up her arms from her wrists to her elbows , with suspenders connecting her skirt to her shoulders , and a large metal guard covering her left elbow . She stands about 5 feet 4 inches ( 167 cm ) tall , and has measurements of 36 @-@ 24 @-@ 35 " ( 92 @-@ 60 @-@ 88 cm ) .

Initially , Nomura had difficulty deciding whether to go with a miniskirt or long pants . Seeking input , he passed his sketches around Square 's offices , and the majority of the staff members approved of the miniskirt design . This additionally served as a contrast to Aerith , whose " Long Skirt " was her trademark . The attire was explained in respect to the game as giving her freedom of movement , due to her affinity with hand @-@ to @-@ hand combat , and the skirt , referred to as " quite short [ ... ] giving a considerable degree of exposure , " was kept as a staple of her alternate costumes . The developers additionally noted that due to her figure , her otherwise plain garments took on a pleasant appearance .

When producing Final Fantasy VII : Advent Children , co @-@ director Takeshi Nozue had difficulty developing a framework for Tifa 's body that was " balanced , yet showed off her feminine qualities . " Her outfit too was redesigned at this point , with emphasis on expressing those qualities , while still being pleasing to the eye . A white tank top with black zipped up vest covers her front , a pink ribbon wraps around her left biceps , and boots cover her feet . A black buttoned @-@ up skirt covers her thighs , and she wears shorts beneath , with a piece of cloth similar to a coattail extending from the back of the skirt 's waistband and ending at her ankles . While her gloves remain , they are worn only during the film 's fight scenes . Her hairstyle was changed to end at the middle of her back , with the removal of the dolphin tail from her original design . This alteration was because of the difficulty of animating her original length of hair , as well as problems that arose due to its black color and lighting .

Nomura noted he liked Ayumi Ito as an actress , and wished to work with her on Advent Children . With Aerith 's voice actor already decided , Nomura asked Ito to voice Tifa , feeling her " husky voice " would offer a good contrast to Maaya Sakamoto 's soft @-@ spoken Aerith . Nomura additionally noted that after completing Tifa 's updated design , the producers debated about her finalized details , but once Ito had been cast for the role they chose to blend many traits from the voice actress into the character 's final appearance .

= = Reception = =

Since her introduction , Tifa has received an extremely positive reaction from both critics and fans . In 2000 , GameSpot readers voted her as the fifth best female character in video games , with the site 's editors noting they agreed . In 2004 , Play featured Tifa in the first issue of their Girls of Gaming annual periodical , describing her as " the most adored female in recent history . " In 2007 , Tifa was named the eighth best character of all time in Dengeki PlayStation 's retrospective awards feature about the original PlayStation , the third highest ranked character from Final Fantasy VII . That same year , Tom 's Hardware listed her as one of the 50 greatest female characters in video game history , describing her as " one of the more richly drawn and intricate female characters around . " In 2008 , UGO listed her as one of the top " girls of gaming " , placing her at number five , and stating a preference for her over Aerith , adding " Tifa 's outfit is a marvel of understatement ? but it 's her natural assets and unforgettable personality that earn her a spot on this list . " That same year , Chip ranked her as the tenth top " girl of gaming " . In 2009 , IGN named Tifa one of the ten best heroines in gaming , describing her as " without a doubt , a legendary heroine of the Final Fantasy universe . " A 2010 poll by Famitsu named her the 19th most popular video game character by Japanese audiences . Complex ranked her as the 13th greatest heroine in video game history in 2013 .

In 2001 , The Beaumont Enterprise cited Tifa as an example of a strong female character in video games in the wake of Lara Croft 's introduction . In 2008 , Joystiq named her their top pick out of 20 characters from the Final Fantasy franchise they wished to see in Square Enix 's crossover fighting

game Dissidia Final Fantasy , describing her as one of the series ' " greatest heroines . " IGN listed Tifa as the 13th best Final Fantasy character of all time in 2008 , describing her as an attempt by Square to " give Final Fantasy characters real sex appeal , " and someone who " could take care of herself in a pinch " ; in a follow @-@ up Reader 's Choice edition of the list , Tifa placed first , with the staff repeating their previous comments while attributing her placement on the list to her breasts . In a 2009 IGN article focusing solely on Final Fantasy VII characters , Tifa placed fourth , with a comment that while her sex appeal contributes to her popularity , " Tifa helped drive a tradition of tough , independent RPG heroines . " Other sources too praised Tifa for that aspect of her character . Mania Entertainment placed her tenth in the 2010 list of " video game women that kick ass , " stating that while subsequent games in the Final Fantasy series introduced other memorable female characters , " Tifa is our first Final Fantasy girl and holds a special place in our hearts . " In 2013 , Gus Turner of Complex ranked Tifa as the 12th greatest Final Fantasy character of all time , stating that " next to Lara Croft and Samus , Tifa Lockhart stands out as one of gaming 's most independent and empowered females ever . "

Much of Tifa 's reception regarded her sex appeal . In 1998 , The New York Times featured her as the pin @-@ up girl of for the " cyber generation . " That same year , Electronic Gaming Monthly awarded her the " Hottest Game Babe " of 1997 , calling her " as well @-@ proportioned as they come , " and praising her as a viable alternative to Lara Croft . UGO ranked her as 24th in their 2008 list of " videogame hotties , " adding they could not " get over how much better she looks in each subsequent game release . " That same year , GameDaily ranked her 31st on their " hottest game babes " list , sharing UGO.com 's preference for her and praising both her appearance and combat abilities . MSN shared a similar sentiment when they included " this loving , caring , super @-@ sexy gal " on the list of " gaming 's hottest babes " , placing her at number six , and stating that her presence in the series was " a little subtle , giving her more of an emotional undertone , " and that the franchise would not be as special without her . Manolith ranked her at second place on their 2009 list of the " hottest " female video game protagonists . In 2010 , VideoGamer.com included her among the top ten video game crushes , while Sarah Warn of AfterEllen ranked her as the ninth " hottest " female video game character . In 2011 , Complex ranked her as the 16th best looking " sideline chick in games , " while UGO placed her 13th among the " fighting games ' finest hottest women " just for her appearance in Ehrgeiz . That same year , GameFront placed her breasts at ninth place on the list of " the greatest boobs in video game history , " calling her " the existential crisis version of Lara Croft ; " she was also included on the list of " incredible chests in video games " by Joystick Division , but with a comment that she " has much more than sex appeal . " In 2012 , Complex ranked her as the second " hottest " video game character overall , while MSN included her among the 20 " hottest women in video game history " , adding that " she 's one of the famous game gals in history , and has everlasting appeal . " In 2013 , Scott Marley of Daily Record ranked her as the second most attractive female video game character , while CheatCodes.com declared her " the # 1 hottest " female video game character of all time . Similarly , La Nueva España included the " sexy , independent and strong " Tifa among the top ten sexiest video game characters of both genders in 2014 , and Thanh Niên ranked her as the most sexy female video game character in 2015 .