

= Rock Lee =

Rock Lee (Japanese : ロック・リー , Hepburn : Rokku Rī) is a fictional character in the anime and manga series *Naruto* created by Masashi Kishimoto . Kishimoto considers Lee his favorite character to draw , and at first designed Lee to symbolize human weakness . In the anime and manga , Lee is a ninja affiliated with the village of Konohagakure , and is a member of Team Guy , which consists of himself , Neji Hyuga , Tenten , and Might Guy ? the team 's leader . Unable to use most ninja techniques , Lee dedicates himself to using solely taijutsu , ninja techniques similar to martial arts . Lee dreams of becoming a " splendid ninja " despite his inabilities . Lee has appeared in several pieces of *Naruto* media , including the third and fourth featured films in the series , the third original video animation , and multiple video games .

Numerous anime and manga publications have commented on Lee 's character . IGN compared Lee to Bruce Lee and Noel Gallagher , and Anime News Network called Lee the " goofiest looking character " in the series . Among the *Naruto* reader base , Lee has been popular , placing high in several popularity polls . Numerous pieces of merchandise have been released in Lee 's likeness , including figurines and plush dolls .

= = Creation and conception = =

In an interview in *Weekly Shōnen Jump* 's *Naruto Anime Profiles* Episodes 1 @-@ 37 , Masashi Kishimoto stated that he enjoys drawing Lee more than any other character in the series . When designing Lee 's appearance , Kishimoto intended to have Lee wield a variety of weapons , including nunchaku ; however , due to time constraints while creating the series , he was unable to do so . Kishimoto has noted that he originally designed Lee to symbolize human weakness ; Kishimoto 's design of Sakura Haruno was also intended to carry the same symbolism . Kishimoto was surprised by Lee 's popularity within fans . He intended to write more about him but the timing was never right .

= = Appearances = =

= = = In *Naruto* = = =

Rock Lee is a ninja from Konohagakure part of Team Guy , a four @-@ man cell of ninja led by Might Guy . Inspired by Lee 's determination to become stronger despite his inability to perform basic ninja techniques , Guy takes a personal interest in him , deciding to help him achieve his dream of becoming a powerful ninja by using only taijutsu that is primary hand @-@ to @-@ hand combat . This relationship with Guy causes Lee to acquire many of Guy 's traits . Lee believes he can surpass the natural talents of others through hard work and passion ; throughout the series , he attempts to surpass Neji Hyuga , who is labeled a " genius " . Lee first appears in the series as a participant in the Chunin Exams , twice a year exams for ninja who wish to increase their rank . During the Chunin Exams , Lee battles Gaara , a ninja from the village of Sunagakure . In the fight , Lee uses the eight chakra gates , limits on the body 's ability to use chakra , increasing his natural abilities at the cost of his health . Despite his effort , Gaara cripples Lee by crushing his left arm and leg , injuring Lee to the point that he must abandon being a ninja .

When Tsunade , a Konohagakure medical ninja , returns to lead the village as the Fifth Hokage , she offers to operate on him . Despite the procedure 's fifty percent chance of failure , Guy encourages Lee to have the operation . Ultimately , Lee undergoes the surgery , which succeeds in healing his arm and leg . Immediately after the operation , Lee follows a team of ninja led by Shikamaru Nara who attempt to stop Sasuke Uchiha from defecting from Konohagakure to the village of Otogakure . Lee battles the Otogakure ninja Kimimaro through using the Potion Punch (?? , Suiken , literally " Drunken Fist " , English TV : " Loopy Fist ") fighting style in which he becomes inebriated with unpredictable attacks . When Kimimaro is on the verge of defeating Lee , Gaara

intervenes , continuing the battle .

In Part II , Lee obtains the rank of Chunin , and is dispatched with his team to help save Gaara following his abduction by the criminal organization Akatsuki . During the events of the Fourth Shinobi War Lee is assigned to the Third Division , Lee helps in fighting the Kabuto Yakushi 's reanimated army and later aids Naruto in the fight against Obito Uchiha and Madara Uchiha . Years after the war , Lee marries an unknown woman and has a son named Metal Lee . In the epilogue , Lee is last seen many years later , training with his son . In *Boruto : Naruto the Movie* , Lee hosts the third stage of the Chunin Exam .

= = = Appearances in other media = = =

Lee has made several appearances outside of the *Naruto* anime and manga . In the third featured film in the series , *Naruto the Movie 3 : The Animal Riot of Crescent Moon Island* , Lee acts as a member of Team 7 for the duration of the film . In the fourth film , which is set in Part II , *Naruto Uzumaki* , *Sakura Haruno* , *Neji Hyuga* , and Lee are assigned to escort the maiden Shion , who needs to perform a ritual to seal a demonic army . Lee also appears in the third original video animation , participating in a tournament .

Lee is a playable character in nearly every *Naruto* video game , including the *Clash of Ninja* series and the *Ultimate Ninja* series . In some games , he utilizes variations of his techniques not seen in the anime or manga . *Naruto Shippuden : Gekitō Ninja Taisen ! EX* marks his first appearance in a video game set in Part II . Rock Lee is also the main character of a spin @-@ off manga by Kenji Taira that follows his training in comical misadventures . The manga was adapted into an anime series titled *Rock Lee and his Ninja Pals* .

= = Reception = =

Lee has ranked highly in the *Shōnen Jump* popularity polls for the series , initially continuously placing in top ten and reaching fifth place once . In later polls , Lee lost his top ten status . In an interview , Brian Donovan , the voice actor for Rock Lee in the English adaptation of the anime , commented that he likes Lee because he felt he was attempting to be a " knight in shining armor but bumbling and stumbling at the same time " . Due to the popularity Lee garnered over the course of the series , Kishimoto tends to place him towards the front of promotional artwork in which he appears . Also , several pieces of merchandise based on Lee have also been released , including action figures of his Part I and Part II appearances , plush dolls , and keychains .

Several publications for manga , anime , video games , and other media have provided commentary on Lee 's character . IGN 's A.E. Sparrow called Lee one of his favorite characters in the series and compared his personality to that of Bruce Lee and Noel Gallagher . Fellow editor Ramsey Isler ranked him as the eight best character on the series and said he " was the true underdog of the series . " Isler added , " Perhaps a little too intense , but always fiercely devoted to his cause , Rock Lee added all sorts of flavor to the series . " However , Rock Lee 's profile on IGN describes him as " kind of stiff " because of his very polite demeanor . *Active Anime* celebrated Lee 's introduction in the series as a comedic relief to the growing tension of the story at that point . *Anime Insider* listed him in their top five list for " pure @-@ hearted heroes " from anime and manga publications , ranking at number five . *Insider* praised him for " never [giving] up , even in the face of people with actual ninja powers . "

Anime News Network referred to Lee as the " star of [the Chunin Exam arc] " , and claimed that he " almost single @-@ handedly rescues this arc from being tossed into the ' entertaining but disposable ' bin " . His fight against Gaara in the exams was listed as second best one in anime by *AnimeCentral* . *Anime News Network* also called Lee the " goofiest looking character " in the series and praised Kishimoto 's " ninja @-@ punk visual sensibilities " that allowed him to make Lee " damn cool when the action starts " . In the *NEO Awards 2007* from Neo , Rock Lee won in the category " Best Anime Character " . He was also listed as one of the three " Honorable Mentions " from *Naruto* by *Wizard Entertainment* 's Danica Davidson with comments from the article being

focused on Lee 's determination .