Shu Yun [ys2976@nyu.edu](mailto:ys2976@nyu.edu) Combo Breaker Fighting game, in my opinion, is a very unique genre in games. Its mechanics is very simple and that fighting games today haven’t been much different compared to those launched two decades ago. One platform, two fighters facing each other, three rounds, timer, and health and energy bar, I could picture a fighting game easily in my mind by hearing its name, and these elements are always the classics. Yet mastering a fighting game is another story, and getting familiar with each playable characters’ skills and learning their combos are the first and foremost things to do to beat others, because performing combos allow you to maximize the damage you could deal to your opponent in a very limited time during which your opponent is “controlled” (like stunned, knocked out, or hit in the air).

The classic 2D fighting game The King of Fighters (KOF) is a great example of how combo could bring a huge advantage to players. I was pretty bad at this game when I first played it, because I was often combed by my opponent, which was an AI with the second lowest out of seven difficulty levels. However, during my playthrough, I invented a simple combo --- uppercut + jump kick + throw a fireball, though it might not be very effective in that I could only damage my opponent about one sixth of his or her health bar each time I performed this combo, but it was a lot better than putting luck in single attacks against the AI. Before I used my combo, my attacks were very loose and random since I wasn’t familiar with the controls. I could only stun the AI few times a round, but there were no follow up attacks even when he was stunned due to the distance between me and the AI. I found out later I could throw a fireball as a ranged attack even though I could not reach my opponent. I decided to use my combo then most of the times. Uppercut could stun my opponent and brought him or her into the air, followed up was a jump kick so that I could deal some damage the second time, and lastly when my opponent was about to fall, I would throw a fireball to deal even more damage the third time. During my combo the AI could not defend himself or make a counterattack. Once I applied combos to this game, it became more of a turn-based game like chess, and whoever made the least mistakes and caught most opportunities to perform combos won.

Fighting games are about combos, and more than combos. Though the gaming mechanics in most fighting games stays the classic way as it was decades ago, modern graphics have provided fighting game players a visual feast, and today’s physical engine has made the punches and kicks realistic and enjoyable, but a good fighting game always makes your adrenaline boost like crazy and makes you try hard to win the round.