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# **1. Character Overview**

## **1.1: why play f-vakiha?**

F-VAkiha is a vicious, fast, and ruthless paper tiger, and one of Melty's most oppressive top tiers.

- She does tons of damage, and even has an infinite.
- She has exceptional neutral tools like air pillar and puffball, which are only enhanced by her insane mobility.
- She has nutcase pressure from pits and puffballs, which allow her to lock you down almost forever and then mix you mid-pressure with unrivaled safety and ambiguity.
- She has extremely safe okizeme that leads directly into her nutcase pressure—assuming she doesn't decide to just mix you on okizeme.

However, as strong as she is, F-VAkiha has one major weakness: her defense.

- She has the worst effective HP in the game, making her an extremely volatile character. At high levels, when F-VAki is on the screen, whoever gets the first hit often explodes the other player.
- Her only DP is metered, and it's mediocre.

- F-Moon mechanics require her to not spend meter if she wants to recover HP, but she wants to spend meter to get a good knockdown almost every time she hits the opponent.
- She has no good specials to cancel shield into, so her only real option off shield is shield counter.

Her defense isn't entirely a wash—her abare is very good. (4C sure is a button.) But in general, if you get hit, you're in the hot seat.

That being said, the positives very obviously outweigh the negatives. She's disgusting, especially in the right hands.

**tl;dr: high damage + setplay monster + busted pressure + pixie**

## **1.2: how hard is f-vakiha to learn and play?**

F-VAkiha's skill floor is pretty low, but her skill cap is pretty high. You only need a few simple bnbs and blockstrings to start seeing good results; however, the infinite—and especially, her pit blockstrings—require a lot of execution.

Luckily, she's strong as hell even without her pit blockstrings and infinities—sure, she isn't the stupid S tier she could be, but she'd be at the top of A+ at even without them. So even if you're not an execution monster, you can still play her and be fine.

**tl;dr: Easy at a basic level, hard at a fully optimal level. But you don't need to be optimal to get results.**

## **1.3: whose matchvids do I watch?**

Tobari, Yukichi, Hato, Kou, Akaren, Acido, HaileyHime.

- Tobari and Yukichi are the technical monsters.
- Hato and Kou are old guard players that played before busted abusive F-VAkiha was the norm. Watching Kou's old vids, especially, can teach you a lot about how to play F-VAkiha without relying on the scam stuff.
- Akaren is just a decent player.

- Acido is the best active F-VAkiha to watch. Very good BR player.
- Hailey is the main active NA player.

## **1.4: a quick warning**

You probably noticed that I said F-VAkiha is a pretty volatile character. This is something you will definitely feel while learning her. And it also leads to a very specific problem, which I'll describe now.

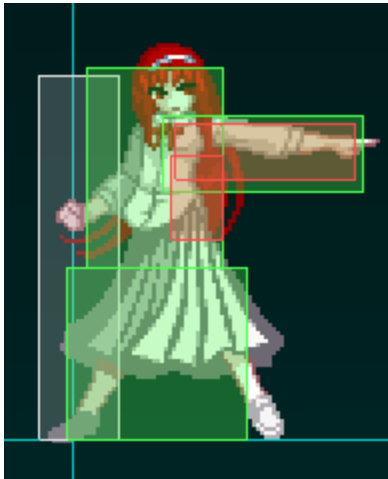
F-VAkiha typically dies very quickly for mistakes. However, F-VAki's reward for getting a good hit is absolutely fucked. (For example, if someone decides to run into a charged pillar, or if they get hit on top of a pit, you can usually start the infinite and get 7k or 8k with okizeme.) And the fact is, as you're learning this character, *you will get rewarded very heavily for making bad decisions sometimes*. You will absolutely rob matches off people for doing things you probably shouldn't have done. And when you get rewarded like that even when you do stupid things, **it's really easy to form bad habits**. And once you form bad habits, you will get slaughtered in 17 seconds by better players.

**You must be vigilant and keep your play clean on this character.** You really need to be able to sit down and separate out what worked from what was actually a good idea if you want to succeed in the long run. And that can be hard. When you lose, you die fast and often forget what caused you to get hit in the first place. When you win, you get to jerk yourself off with insane pressure and feel yourself at every turn as you explode the other player in two combos. Don't forget what causes your deaths, and be realistic about why you won. You cannot improve without paying a ton of attention.

**tl;dr: F-VAkiha can reward you for playing like an idiot in the short term because her risk/reward is so fucked. Don't get duped into thinking you made a good choice just because it got you 7k. Use your brain.**

## 2. Move Overview

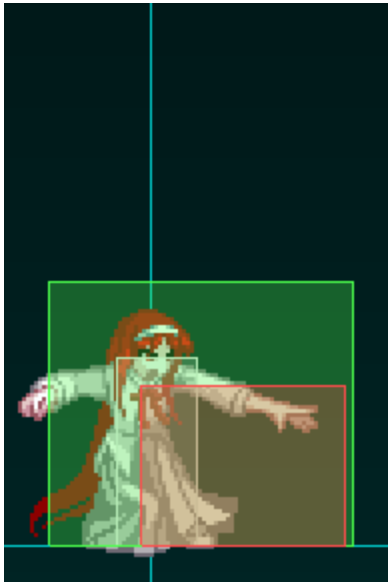
### 2.1: normals



#### 5A

**4f** startup; **4f** active; **4f** recovery  
**+4** on block; **mid**

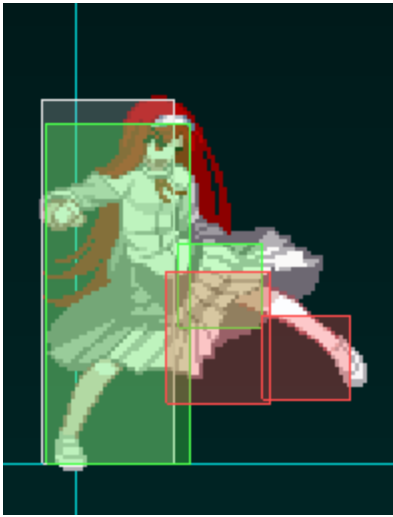
Incredibly good standing jab. It's a nuts pressure tool, your go-to fast button in neutral, and a situational anti-air. Definitely one of the best 5As in the game.



#### 2A

**4f** startup; **4f** active; **5f** recovery  
**+3** on block; **low**

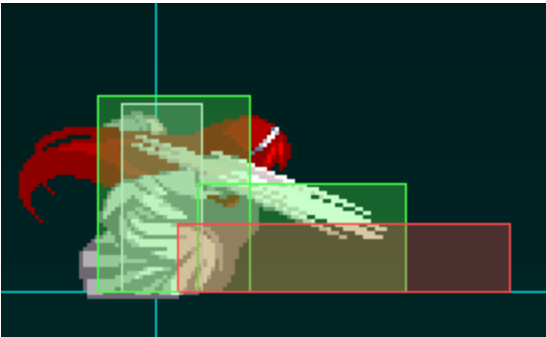
Another very good jab. F-VAkiha's fastest low.



### **5B**

**7f** startup; **5f** active; **11f** recovery  
**-1** on block; **low**

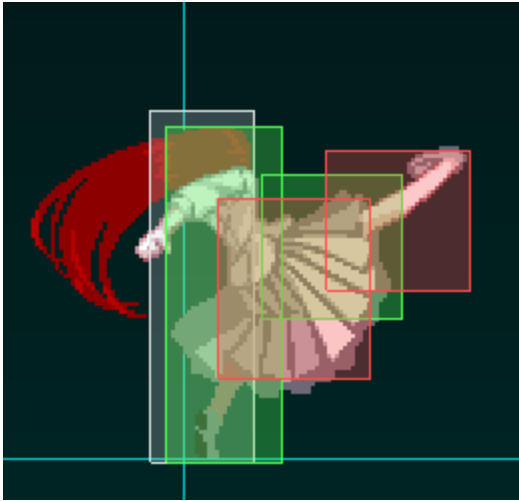
Strong standing low. (Despite being low, it must be shielded standing.) Sometimes works as a ground poke; also strong in pressure, since it's only -1. Links into itself on CH.



### **2B**

**5f** startup; **9f** active total; **13f** recovery  
**-2** if all hits connect; **mid**

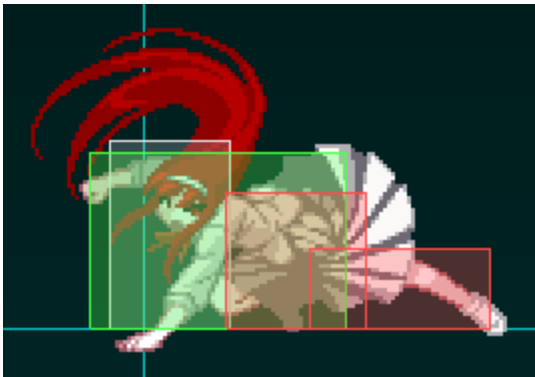
Big and fast, but awkward; has lots of pushback. Has a followup that's trash (2BB>2BBB). Used primarily to punish standing shield.



### 5C

**7f** startup; **6f** active; **17f** recovery  
**-5** on block; **mid**

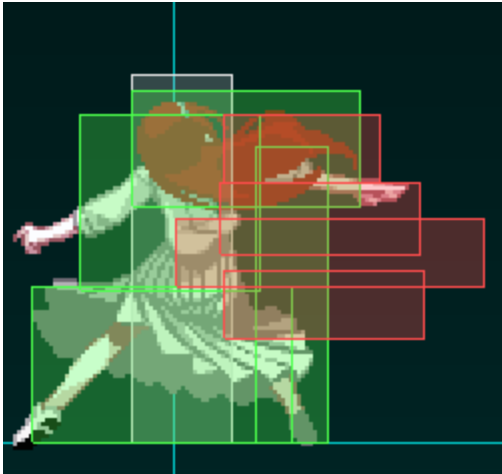
Big facekick. Works as a situational anti-air, and something of a “don’t run at me” button, if you really need one. Can be charged (24f startup) to make it neutral on block; the charge version also moves forward a ton and CHUNKS guard bar.



### 2C

**7f** startup; **5f** active; **16f** recovery  
**-3** on block; **low**

Sweep. Decent poke, though hard to convert off of without guessing it’ll hit. Very safe on block at basically any range you’d use it at.

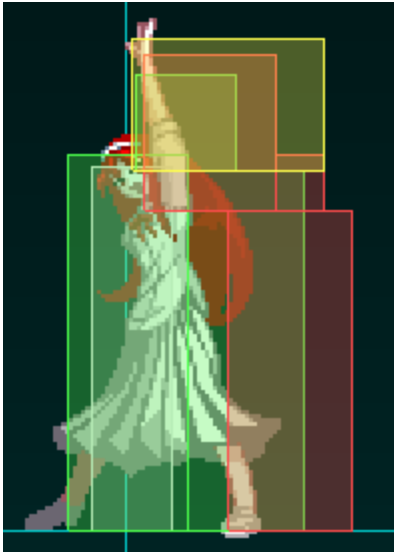


### **4C**

**7f** startup; **4f** active; **31f** recovery  
**-15** on block; **mid**

The famous VAlkiha 4C; big, fast, ignorant, and unsafe as hell on whiff. Good as a stop sign for people running at you, a situational anti-air, and an abare button.

Has 5f worse recovery than C/H-moon 4C, but launches on hit in exchange.



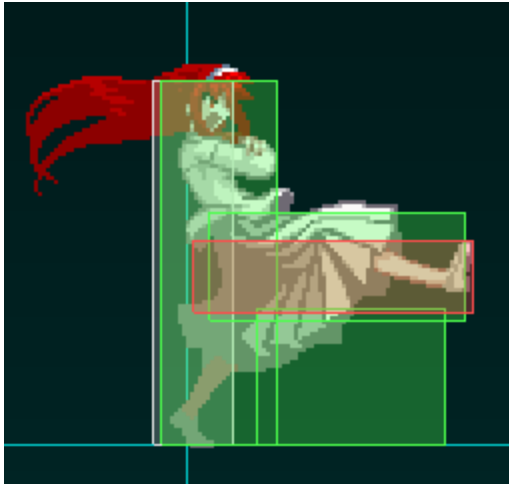
### **3C**

**10f** startup; **4f** active; **18f** recovery  
**-4** on block; **mid**

A situational anti-air; also the launcher you use to confirm awkward hits you can't confirm well with anything else (e.g., you typically confirm anti-air 5a with 3C.)

The yellow is a clash box, which is the main reason it works as an anti-air.



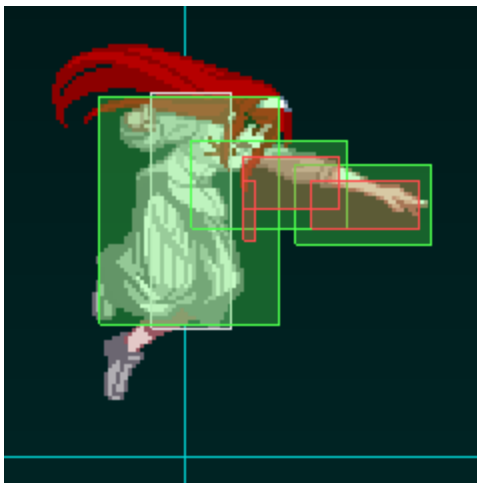


### **6C**

**25f** startup; **4f** active; **18f** recovery  
**-4** on block; **high**

Imouto kick overhead. It's okay to throw out every once in a while when people aren't expecting it, but you usually have better options.

Worth noting that there is no green below the leg until it's active, so it typically trades in your favor if someone tries to mash it with their 2A. Can be dash cancelled on hit with 66, which is needed to confirm midscreen.

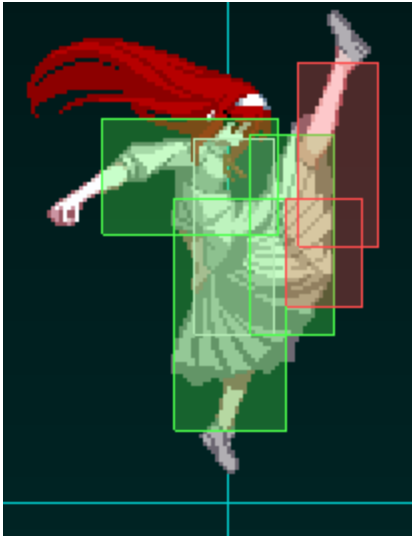


### **j.A**

**4f** startup; **4f** active; **12f** recovery  
**high**

One of the best j.As in the game. It's fast, and hits at a disgustingly good angle.

Good preemptive anti-air and air-to-air. Used to do lows in some airdash mixup as well (IAD>whiff j.A>2A as a low option).

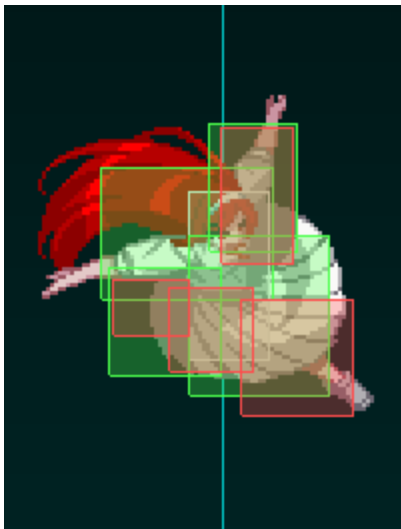


### **j.B**

**6f** startup; **4f** active  
**high**

Another disgustingly good air normal. Smashes almost anything above and in front of you.

Although it's mainly used as an air-to-air, it sees some use in pressure as well; it's decent as a falling normal after puffball.



### **j.C**

**9f** startup; **5f** active  
**high**

God button, and the high in your airdash mixups. It hits behind you, beats basically every 5A anti-air if spaced correctly (vertically). It's worth noting, though, that if you want to air-to-air with this button you need to either 1) be behind them or 2) be a good ways above them and hit the button preemptively. That green at the bottom is very, very close to the red—making sure you respect that is key to making the most of this move.

## **2.2 specials**

No pictures for now. I'll get them later.

## **236A/B/C—useless move**

VAki points and summons a ball of fire a little bit away from her.

Every version of this move is useless in 2020. If you really want, 236C can be used in some outdated combos that you can find in kou vids from 2012.

If you see this move, chances are you fucked up a tk puffball and you're about to eat 5k damage because you're animation locked for ten years.

## **j.236A/B/C—puffball**

The infamous puffball.

j.236A and j.236B have a huge downward hitbox, knock down on hit, and let you do anything after they recover except for air backdash. j.236A is the version that sees the most use; the pop back on j.236B makes it less useful outside of specific situations, and I'd recommend not using it for a while until you have a feel for when you'd want it (which is almost never). j.236C is your best aircombo ender.

In neutral, you use j.236A to

- Stop your movement and add ambiguity to your position.
- Anti-anti-air. A lot of anti-air attempts straight up lose to puffball.
- Harass people below you.

In pressure, you use tk j.236A to

- Begin puffball pressure. [I'll cover puffball pressure in the pressure section of the guide.](#)

In combos, you

- Use EX puffball to get a good knockdown from aircombo. You will end almost every combo in EX puffball, if you have the meter.
- Rarely, use A version puffball to get hard down to set up a 3-way mixup. (You do this somewhat sparingly because you sacrifice a lot of damage for it, and the mixup isn't exactly unseeable.)

During okizeme, you

- tk j.236A to begin puffball pressure and make most DPs whiff
- Airdash while falling after EX puffball knockdown and then j.236A, which looks like a mixup attempt but beats heat and most DPs

I'll go into more detail on these later.

### **623A/B/C—momijis**

**623A** is a forward charge with 2 hits. It has four main uses:

- As a combo piece in corner carry combos and corner combos
- As a way to catch jumpouts in grounded pressure (e.g., 5C slight delay 623a)
  - Note that 623A is -7. It's usually not punishable, but using it like this ends your turn.
- As a decent ground poke in neutral.
- As a button to cancel with instant heat during MAX. (You can cancel with IH even on whiff.)

**623B** is the classic multihit momiji. Its uses are fairly limited; it's basically only used as combo filler and a combo ender after a few reps of the infinite. *Technically*, it also low crushes, so you can use it as a very fake DP if you're convinced the opponent will meaty you with 2A. But please don't roll the dice like that more than once in a blue moon.

**623C** is a mediocre reversal (small hitbox that basically only hits right in front of you, 10F startup, has a reactable superflash). It also sees some use in combos to set up high damage mixups.

### **214A/B/C—ground pillar**

The uncharged A and B versions are useful zoning tools.

- 214A and B both have 20f startup.
- Spaced correctly, the pillars are neutral on block, and are a safe, albeit low reward, way to end a blockstring.
  - Most pillar hits convert into nothing; only a single hit air CH will convert into a valid combo.
- They can be used to stop ground approaches.

- They can be used to stop air approaches from certain vectors. 214A, especially, is a situational anti-air.

The *charged* A and B versions are riskier—but higher reward—tools, since VAKiha summons 5 pillars instead of 3. This has several effects.

- The moves have 28f startup, but are now upwards of +42 depending on how many pillars you block.
  - The startup is long and fairly reactable, so be wary of using charge pillar against characters that can react and punish it fairly easily. Examples include F-Satsuki (EX hop grab), F-Ries (EX pilebunker), F-Kohaku (EX counter), and C/H-Ciel (EX Hiero/EX Keys).
- The moves become easier to call out in neutral, but cover much more space in exchange.
- The reward is far higher; on a clean hit, a midscreen charged pillar leads into F-VAKiha's infinite.

EX ground pillar (214C) is effectively useless, and is only used as a meter burn to avoid hitting MAX.

### **j.214A/B/C—air pillar**

Air pillar is mostly the same as ground pillar, except you do it in the air. ...Or so you think, until you realize just how fucking valuable that is.

A couple of important notes:

- After using air pillar, you just fucking drop. Air pillar is powerful, but every use in neutral is at least a small risk. Just how risky it is depends on multiple factors; how many air options you had left before the air pillar, the amount of air options your opponent has, where your opponent is on the screen, how far off the ground you are, and so on.
  - On the flipside, air pillar is another one of F-VAKiha's suite of tools that alter her momentum in the air and make her movement hard to track. You need to think wisely, and balance this with the risk involved.
- Air pillar is invaluable as a safe okizeme tool. More on that in the okizeme section.
- Air pillar is a core part of pit pressure, and a useful pressure tool in general for F-VAKiha. More on this in the pressure section.
- Much like with ground pillar, a clean charged air pillar hit can lead into infinite. And much like ground pillar, the charged version is far riskier than the uncharged version.

EX air pillar is the same as EX ground pillar—it's just a meter burn.

### **22A/B/C—ground pits**

Pits. Except the grounded pit sucks, and you only use it to safely end a blockstring with no potential reward. ...Which basically means you never use it.

(The main issue with ground pit is just that the recovery is so much longer than an air pit that there's no point.)

### **j.22A/B/C—air pits**

Ah, yes, air pits. This is the shit that busts the character.

When you set an air pit, you pop up a bit in the air, and set a pit at a certain distance from you depending on the version. The highlights:

- This is the last of VAKiha's three momentum-altering air specials. The biggest thing about this one is that **you retain all your air options afterwards, even air backdash.**
- The pits ignite when an opponent ends up in hitstun or blockstun on top of one. This is either big damage (and a potential confirm into the infinite), or big plus frames and solid chip damage.
- Pit blockstun is long enough to chain into another pit. This is why the character is a busted broken S-tier; you can end up blocking pit explosions a very, very, very long time. And good luck predicting when she'll airdash at you for mixup instead of doing another pit.
- Pits disappear after 6 seconds, or when you get hit.
- Note that you basically never manually ignite a pit.

If you're interested in the more jank aspects of pits, this (unfortunately untranslated) resource is a 10 minute primer on just how fucked up they are: [【MBAACC】赫訳・誘尻解説動画【F赤主】](#)

### **63214C**

A nearly fullscreen laser. Can be used to punish a bunch of things on reaction while you're in MAX or HEAT, but odds are you aren't going into either very often.

## 3. Neutral

### 3.1: movement and positioning

The number one rule of F-VAkiha is this:

**Your opponent should have no idea where the fuck you're going to be on the screen.**

If they have half a clue, you're at risk of getting read and dying. And you really don't want that.

Luckily, you have the best mobility in the game. It's not just the fast movement and the double airdashes—though those certainly help. You have 3 air specials that halt or change your air momentum (air pillar, air pit, and air puffball), and 2 of them let you move again after. That allows for disgustingly deceptive movement.

And even more luckily, you can be almost anywhere on the screen relative to your opponent and have useful options. Your air normals and puffball allow you to contest above, below, in front of, and behind you in the air. Air pillar lets you interact with grounded opponents from the air. And if you're not in range for any of this, you can be—if you want to be—because of how fast you zip around the screen.

At this point, though, it is worth noting: while F-VAkiha's buttons are all very strong, she does not have a magic autowin button of unsurpassing stupidity like Arc j.C. (Puffball actually comes close, to be fair. It's dumb as shit. And j.C and j.A get honorable mentions.) So you do have to make sure you're selecting the correct tool for the situation you're anticipating. But often, you don't have to commit to anticipating any situation at all—you can just back away. Just don't forget that if you back yourself into the corner, you're more predictable than if you're near the center of the screen, since you lose options to change your position.

## **3.2: all that being said, how should you generally position with this character?**

**Overall, being in the air and above your opponent is most advantageous.** Your best tools—j.C, air pillar, and puffball—hit below you, and your momentum-halting tools are most effective when you can use them to bait anti-airs as you fall. It also requires a larger commitment from the opponent to swat you the higher you are in the air, so get used to superjumping off the ground and flying around above your opponent. And, well, you just have much better control over your positioning in the air than on the ground. So being in the air above your opponent is best.

**Also remember that you also need to space yourself horizontally, not just vertically.** You'd prefer to be around where they'd get hit by j.214B; or, alternatively, around where they'd run into a falling j.C, j.214A, or puffball if they dash to you to intercept your landing. (Those two usually coincide, though you need to be aware of when they don't.)

**However, F-VAkiha also has very good normals for playing standard MB neutral, and scouting for air CHs with j.A and j.B.** Don't be afraid of doing that sometimes, as well.

If you want to understand all of this and more, please, please, *please* watch [j.g.'s video on Melty neutral](#). Yes, it's long. But all the things j.g. covers here, F-VAkiha does very well—arguably as well as or better than every other character in the game, because of her nuts j.A and j.B, and the amount of options she has to bait people into committing to bad anti-airs or air-to-airs. Knowing the things j.g. covers in this video can really help you play neutral more cleanly.

## **3.3: ground positioning**

That being said, you need to be able to play on the ground some as well, in order to follow that maxim up there in red. After all, being in the air all the time is still being somewhat predictable.

Your positioning on the ground is mainly about

- putting yourself in a better position to jump into the air safely (so you can go back to flying around and being a nuisance)



- putting yourself where you have the threat of fast movement into a normal to act preemptively or whiff punish (e.g. a dash 4C or dash 5A callout, a dash 2C poke, an IAD j.A/B/C)
- getting yourself to a good spacing to zone with pillar
- putting yourself at a good spacing to anti-air or ground-to-air safely

As an aside, you should note that F-VAki's dash is fast, but you can't act until frame 9 of said dash, and can't block until frame 12. **Dashblocking does not work very well for this character.** So when you dash forward, it is a serious commitment. Keep that in mind.

### **3.4: anti-airing**

Sometimes, even though the air is rightfully yours, you will be stuck standing on the ground anti-airing. Luckily, this character has an extremely competent suite of anti-airs. Each individual anti-air is situational, but you can almost always anti-air your opponent and trade *at minimum* provided you select the correct option (and don't get baited).

Your anti-air options are:

- **5A.**  
Quick, and generally best if someone is IADing at you and will be in your face. Can be used to trade with jump-ins with a lot of green, though.
- **4C.**  
Works best with opponents at IAD height, but can succeed at other angles in a pinch. The biggest advantage of 4C is its speed: 7 damn frames.
- **2C.**  
Can anti-air a lot of jump-ins by low profiling them, provided you space the 2C correctly. (This means that this will **not** work against buttons like Nanaya j.C, etc., and that they cannot be directly above you. Look at the hurtbox on 2C again to see what I mean.) Dash under 2C can be particularly strong.
- **5C.**  
If you need a bit of forward movement to smack them, this is a good choice. You need to make sure they'll land on the leg, where the red is above the green, and not on your head, where there's just a ton of green.
- **3C.**  
Fairly mediocre horizontal reach, but good vertical reach. Best when they're high above you, which is a situation none of your other ground normals cover.

- **214A.**  
Works well when you predict they'll be moderately high in the air above you and in front of you. Note that I said *predict*; this move has 20f startup. However, the pillars are active for a total of 22 frames, making it pretty reliable if you predict right. Note that opponents WILL start jumping over and around pillar if you abuse it, but this makes their movement a lot more committal and allows you to punish it in other ways.
- **Rising j.A.**  
This is extremely pre-emptive, but if you CH the startup of their jump-in you get a pretty good reward. It helps that your j.A is disgustingly good.
- **Rising j.B.**  
As above. Make sure you jump correctly for how you're attempting to beat their air button.
- **Shield Counter**  
Has all the general benefits and pitfalls of anti-airing with shield; it's reliable if it's not baited. That being said, F-VAki has a competent shield counter, but not an exceptional one, and F-VAki has no good specials to cancel shield into to prevent people from baiting the counter itself and punishing.

Also—although it's not really an anti-air option *per se*—you should never underestimate the power of just running under your opponent with your fast dash, and repositioning.

### **3.5: ground to air callouts**

I'm putting this in its own section, because it doesn't quite belong in anti-airing.

Sometimes, you just need to (dash) j9B. This is mainly against characters that want to be above you and poke around with big air normals that have massive green boxes before they become active (think Nero j.B or j.C, Koha j.B, and so on). You attempt to catch the extended hurtbox above you with the j.B, convert off the CH, and steal momentum.

### **3.6: less is more—a final note about momentum-altering specials and movement**

This also doesn't go anywhere else, but I feel like it's important.

When you play worse players, you will see very good results using air pillar (and, to a lesser extent, j.236a and j.22x) in neutral. In general, new players have a hard time dealing with momentum stops, and will fail to account for them no matter how frequently you use them. **This can make air pillar look a lot safer than it actually is.**

Remember, although momentum-altering specials do make your position harder to track when used well, they also plop you in one place for the duration of the move. (And air pillar locks you into falling after.) If someone reads you doing air pillar or puffball at a height they can reach, you will get counterhit—possibly into setplay and death. And the more you use *any* of your momentum stops, the easier one gets to read, and the easier you are to counterhit.

So, don't try to be too clever. **The second someone CHs you for using a momentum stop, dial back their use. And also be more frugal with air options, so you can be more noncommittal in your movement.** Your goal is to be hard to predict, and in that game, sometimes less is more.

## 4. Combo game

### 4.1: beginner bnbs

- The first combo you should ever learn on F-VAki is this:
  - **2AA 5B 5C 4C j.BC dj.C j.236C**
- If you don't have the meter to end in EX puffball, you should do this instead:
  - **2AA 5B 5C 4C j.ABC dj.BC AT**
- If you run into a situation you're unsure how to confirm, go into 3C. For example:
  - **anti-air 5AA 3C j8.C dj.BC AT**
- And in case you need it, a gold airthrow combo:
  - **AT falling j.22A j.BC dj.C j.236C**

These should work anywhere on the screen. On a few characters, j.BC dj.C might drop after 4C; try j.AC on those characters instead, and slightly delay j.A. (Hisui is probably the worst about this, but Satsuki and some others are also finicky.)

## 4.2: intermediate bnbs

### 4.2.1: midscreen

You should choose between these bnbs based on

- 1) your distance to the corner,
- 2) how far away from the opponent you are, and
- 3) whether you want to take midscreen okizeme or corner okizeme. (Generally, corner okizeme is the better choice; you can continue pressure better, and your pressure is far more oppressive in the corner. However, you get better mixups midscreen.)

- BNB to stay midscreen (close confirm)
  - **2AA 5B 5C 4C(1) tk 22B whiff j.B land j.BC dj.C j.236C**
    - Do tk8. tk7 sometimes works, but might put you too far away to catch them with j.b
- BNB for far midscreen confirm
  - **2AA 5B 5C 4C(1) tk 22B airdash j.C land j.BC dj.C AT**
    - tk7 preferred here; expect a sideswap mid-aircombo sometimes if you tk8 instead of tk7.
    - If you want to get ex puffball ender instead of airtrow ender, you'll need to do something like **...land j.B sdj.C j.236C**.
- BNB for corner carry
  - **2AA 5B 5C 623A IAD j.C land j.BC dj.C j.236C**
    - I think this works from a little bit past midway on the screen.

Always remember that if the opponent has a sliver of health left after EX puffball, you can airdash out of the EX puffball and OTG them with a pit to finish them.

### **4.2.2: corner**

The midscreen tk pit combo also works in the corner, and is fine to use. (It is also slightly easier to hitconfirm, if you have a problem hitconfirming the BNB below.) However, these are slightly better:

- Corner BNB
  - **2AA 5B 5C 623A j.22A falling j.C land j.BC dj.C j.236C**
  
- Mixup setups
  - **2AA 5B 5C 4C(1) tk22B (s)dj.C j.236C**
    - The amount you delay the dj.C determines if they end up in or out of the corner. (Note that even delaying j.C may not put them in the corner if you start the combo too close to them.) This is a recommended setup; more details in [Section 5.3](#).
  - **2AA 5B 5C 623A j.22a j.236A**
    - Leaves them obviously out of the corner. Don't recommend this.
  - **2AA 5B 5C 623A tk236A**
    - Leaves them less obviously out of the corner. I don't recommend this either.

## **4.3: advanced combos**

I don't label these bnbs, since they're mostly advanced or situational confirms.

### **4.3.1: infinite basics**

[あなたにもできるカンタン赤主永久コンボ](#)

Unfortunately, this video isn't translated. But it does demonstrate the basic idea of how the infinite works.

Normally, you don't do a full infinite; the reward is poor and the combo is a pain in the ass. Instead, you'll do a few reps (usually two) and then end the combo with pillar into 5B>2C>623B,

or maybe pillar into 5B>5C>623A>j.22a falling j.C aircombo if you stayed close to the corner and kept your jump cancel.

You can go into the infinite off of CH 5B, CH 5C, CH j.C, a clean pillar hit, and most any hit on top of a pit. This tweet from HaileyHime is a perfect illustration of it off CH 5B:

<https://twitter.com/H41leyH1me/status/1200710970458423297>

### **4.3.2: everything else**

[【MBAACC 1.07】 Full Moon Vermillion Akiha Standard Combos](#)

And I do mean almost literally everything else. This video has everything you could hope to learn, and a lot that you have no reason to (like momiji loops). If I had to pick out one important thing, it'd be the 623A j22x *midscreen* combos that give a fuckton of corner carry.

There is one thing I don't think it has, though, which is [the fancy Hato setup](#). I think you get the idea here: two pits, big damage, left/right with fucked reward. The improved version (thanks, Funky-kun) is

- **2AA 5B 2C delay 4C(2) 623B 4C(2) 623A(1-2) 623C j.8 j.22A j.22B**

You can see it demonstrated here: [【MBAACC 1.07】 F-VAkiha Mixup And Damage Exhibition](#)

Note that this is good because it's high reward, not because it's hard to react to.

## **5. Okizeme**

Some important things to remember for this whole section:

- Characters have different wakeup speeds. Most of F-VAkiha's okizeme requires you to *manually* adjust your okizeme timing for different wakeup speeds.
  - For each character's wakeup speeds, refer to the table [here](#).
    - Puffball and EX Puffball makes them land on their **back**.

- 2C makes them land facedown on their **front**.
  - 623B uses the **head-first** timing.
  - Ground throw makes them land facedown on their **front**. However, remember you have significantly less advantage after a throw than other knockdowns.
  - Airthrow makes them land on their **back**. However, you have less advantage after airthrow than even a ground throw.
- I can't really describe in text how to manually time meaties against characters, so you'll have to do some work yourself. The best way to figure it out is to set a c-moon dummy to recover D, do your combo, and attempt to hit them on wakeup. The dummy executes all actions a frame late, so:
  - If you hit the dummy with no counterhit and no visible shield, your attack hit true meaty (frame 1).
  - If the dummy EX shielded, you hit between frames 2-5.
    - If you need to know more precisely when your meaty attempt hits inside this window, record yourself doing the combo on a character with normal jump speeds, replay the dummy, and try to jump with j9 and j7.
      - If you don't get hit in midair, you hit on f2 or f2.
      - If you get hit in midair, you hit on f4 or f5.
      - If you're caught in midair doing j9 but not when doing j7, you hit on f4.
      - If you get caught in midair with both j9 and j7, you hit on f5.
    - If you counterhit the dummy, you hit on f6 or later.
- When something is DP safe but is not—strictly speaking—a safejump, there is usually a character that has a way to beat it. Your go-to check for this is Ciel's EX Hiero, but you should also be wary of things like shield>teleport from characters like H-Roa.
- When something is a safejump, it will lose to reversal grabs like C-Akiha's 63214C and F-Kouma's 214C. It will also lose to EX Shield>5A, or possibly Shield>DP. (Thanks, game. I sure wanted to bait a DP only to lose to shield DP.)
- Much of F-VAkiha's pillar okizeme is safe. But it does not hit meaty unless you are careful to make it do so. (And in many cases, doing so is undesirable.) This means that characters with moves that are escapes but not actual reversals—F-Kohaku's EX counter comes to mind—can escape or punish that okizeme.
  - Also remember that non-meaties are far easier to wakeup 5D than meaties. (While wakeup 2D has a 3f buffer, wakeup 5D has a 1f buffer, making wakeup 5D far harder to time. Every frame you're off hitting meaty is an extra frame they have to 5D.) Wakeup 5D is especially relevant because it OSes your normal

high/low (j.C vs j.A whiff 2A). For this reason, deterring shield is important to get your setplay rolling.

- Against people who roll the dice a lot, you will choose the wrong option sometimes, and you will die for it. Evaluate what you could've done better after the match, but while you're in the match, just take a mental note of how they disrespected you and move on.

Also, one last piece of advice:

**As you play more, you will slowly realize that taking an okizeme option that allows you to go safely into pit pressure or puffball pressure is often *more* rewarding than attempting to high/low mix your opponent.** This is partially because your non-fuzzy high/low is fairly reactable on PC; but it's moreso because you'll eventually get to mix them *anyways* during pit or puffball pressure, and you'll have gotten a decent chunk of chip damage onto them by that time—possibly enough to keep you from having to hit them again to kill them. That one fewer hit is a *huge* deal for such a volatile character. Keep this in mind.

## **5.1: post-j.236C okizeme (midscreen)**

### **5.1.1: charged air pillar okizeme (midscreen)**

The basic idea here is you hold 4 after j.236C to drift back, whiff j.A, and then do j.214[B] so that it hits meaty or close to meaty. (You may also need to just hold no direction after EX puffball, whiff j.A, and do j.214[A], depending on spacing.) If they block it, you're plus a fuckton, and can either let it carry them to the corner or mix them with basic airdash mix. If they get hit, it's a free infinite. And it generally puts you somewhere that DPs and heat will whiff.

The downside is that this is the most telegraphed form of okizeme you have, and more experienced players will often react to it and contest it. It's common to see C-Moon characters, especially, try to EX shield and jump out. Some C and F Moons may attempt to shield and then dp when you try to punish the shield. Players may backdash and make a good four of the five pillars whiff. And you cannot block while you're falling after the air pillar.

It's not impossible to deter these options, by any means. (You have more options to punish if you used j.214[A], though that is riskier.) And you can also just hang back and wait to see what they do. But be ready to deal with people contesting your oki.



Despite all this, though, it's probably a good layer 0 choice against people you've never played before. You can infer a lot based on how they try to deal with charged pillar; if they challenge it, how they challenge it, and so on are very useful datapoints.

### **5.1.2: drift back>airdash j.214A (midscreen)**

Similar to the above; safe plus frames and makes most DPs whiff (Ciel 22B is a hilarious exception). However, this is harder to disrespect with backdash. It can also make shield>DP and shield counters whiff, because—depending on the height you were at when you did j.214A—your airdash momentum can make you fall behind them after they shield. (To be clear, the higher you are, the more likely you are to fall behind them.) Unfortunately, it's actually easier to ex shield jump out of this in many cases.

I still would recommend this over charged air pillar because it's just a lot less telegraphed. It's ambiguous between the pillar and doing a mixup—something you cannot say for charged pillar— and that discourages attempts to shield and be a shithead because you're threatening options that can punish it.

I'd say this is your go-to safe option midscreen.

### **5.1.3: raw airdash mix (midscreen)**

After j.236C, drift back and then do one of the following:

- Airdash early whiff j.a land 2a (same side low)
  - You may need to do 5B or 2C to punish shield attempts.
  - If you really want, you can whiff j.B or j.C instead.
- Airdash late whiff j.a land 2a (crossup low)
  - Again, you may need to do 5B or 2C to punish shield attempts.
  - If you really want, you can whiff j.B or j.C instead.
  - This will cross up DP inputs.
- Airdash, air backdash j.C (high)
- Airdash whiff j.A throw
- Airdash late j.c
  - Safejumps chars with fast wakeup timings, but can be somewhat finicky; is height/distance dependent.
  - Whiffs characters with slower wakeups.

- Airdash j.214a (putting this here too! Don't forget about it as a safe option.)
- Airdash j.236a (secondary safe option)

This isn't unreactable, but it's strong, and the reward is good. Note that simply doing airdash j.C will outright whiff slower wakeup timings, and further note **that almost none of these will hit meaty** (not even airdash j.214a, if it's done at the same height as the other airdashes). Keep in mind the amount of time you fall can vary slightly based on your height when you EX puffball.

A common response to the threat of this mix is wakeup 5D. You can throw or do 2B or 2C as a direct counter.

If you want, you can also do similar mix off j.236C>no drift and j.236C>drift forward, but the options are comparatively limited since you can't airdash back after a puffball.

#### **5.1.4: fall and meaty (midscreen)**

After j.236C, do not drift and drop. Then

- Perform a meaty tk puffball.
  - Meaty puffball is very safe against shield—you can jump cancel and block, or jump cancel into whatever you want, really, like another puffball. Most DPs will whiff you, and you stuff any attempt to mash normals or jump.
    - If you were far away from the opponent when you did j.236C, you may need to move forward slightly to have puffball actually hit them.
    - You may also consider tk j.236B for this sometimes. It is less safe, but easier to continue pressure after midscreen, and does better against some mash options.
    - Meaty puffball can be backdashed outside the corner, but an autopilot airdash j.C after will chase it.
    - Doing another tk puffball after the first will punish bunker.
    - Your opponent can dodge meaty puffball. If your opponent spot dodges, though, they can't do anything but block, shield, or DP if you do a jump normal or land 5a/2a/5b after the puffball.
      - Roll dodges, though, are a bit more of an issue; you'll need to do a standard meaty 2A/5A to cleanly beat the roll dodge. Of course, that opens you up to other things. ...But you'll quickly learn there's no free lunch in Melty. They can always try to diceroll if

they want. Always remember that if you're choosing your options correctly, the risk/reward is not in their favor.

- I think Kohaku, Sion, Satsuki, and Miyako have roll dodges. Some other characters might, but I don't remember which.
- Time a meaty normal.
  - This is more an option once the yomi layers are spinning; default to meaty puffball.
  - You can also run up and meaty after j.236C>drift back>land.

## **5.2: post-j.236C okizeme (corner)**

### **5.2.1: charged air pillar (corner)**

Similar to midscreen, but less frame advantage and can't be backdashed. Frankly, I don't recommend this in the corner either.

### **5.2.2: uncharged air pillar (corner)**

Do j.236C, drift back, and j.214B. It's as DP safe as any of the other pillar setups, and has similar callouts, so keep that in mind. If it's blocked, you're +f enough to run up and continue pressure.

You can get it to hit meaty with 2 ticks more easily by ending combos with **j.bc dj8.c j.236c**; this gives up some puffball hits for better positioning for the pillar. Be careful, since if you're not close enough to the opponent after the dj8.C, the puffball may whiff entirely.

The big highlight of this comes when you use it a little fraudulently. If you delay the pillar so it doesn't hit meaty, you can land and tk pit to start pit pressure. (You're probably pretty familiar with this from the Yukichi body montages.) *However*, this normally lets them jump out or do any number of other things if it's read. So you don't want to do it unless they're scared.

### **5.2.3: airdash mixup/safejumps (corner)**

This is a bit different from the midscreen setplay. You lose the ability to do crossups, but in exchange you have much better safe options, and the safe options just go into your nutcase pressure. You can also do high/low as a meaty, though it's fairly seeable.

- At this point, I should note timing meaty mixups and safejumps will require manipulating how long you spend falling. (Keep in mind that you need to fall more for land 2A than airdash j.C.)
  - You can manipulate the amount of time you spend falling with
    - airdashes; any time spent airdashing is time not spent falling.
      - you can further manipulate this by cancelling an airdash with a normal (typically j.A), which makes you start falling sooner.
      - the height you airdash at also matters, because there's falling acceleration until you hit a maximum velocity.
    - the direction you drift after puffball (and if you drift at all) will affect the amount of time you spend falling.
  - Some characters (notably Aoko, Ries, etc.—the slow risers) will require very weird timings to safejump them. For example, Aoko is no drift>land>IAD j.C. Other slow risers will require you to land first as well.

At any rate, your main options are

- Non-meaty high/low
  - Typically, you drift back after j.236C, then airdash forward at IAD height, then j.A whiff 2A or airdash again j.C.
- Meaty high/low
  - You need to check the timings yourself.
- j.C safejump
  - Hit them with a low (IAD height) airdash j.C and land and block.
    - Notably, this safejumps every DP in the game that isn't a grab. F-Moon having no landing recovery = big privilege.
    - You need to check the timings for this yourself. They can be strange, and also can depend on how high you are when you hit them with j.236C—which is different between tk pit combos and 623A combos, and even between different 623A combos depending on the height you catch them with the pit.
    - You can buffer a backdash behind this; the backdash will come out if they heat, but not on hit or block.

- This is fairly weak to ex shield, unless you're against a character with slow wakeup. That's because you're flat out of jumps to bait shield with when the j.C connects. (Against slow risers, you land before you safejump, so you get your jumps back.)
- Airdash puffball "safejump" (usually drift back> airdash j.236a)
  - Can input the airdash into puffball as 236A+B~A. (Thanks, Sydoh.)
  - This beats most reversals and DPs, and gives you plenty of +f to 1) do a falling normal and go into pressure or 2) mix between a second airdash>j.C or fall>2A. This generally doesn't hit meaty, though.
  - This is very weak to roll dodges and shield. You have no tools to bait shield, since all your jumps are gone, and anyone who has a roll dodge is fucking **out** because you can only move forward or fall after puffball.
    - Against characters with smaller shield counters, you can do j.236B instead of j.236A and make shield counter whiff. This doesn't work against Wara, Hime, Roa, Ciel, and Koha, and maybe some other characters. Also note that this will get hit by DPs that j.236A makes whiff.

#### **5.2.4: land and meaty (corner)**

Same as midscreen, but tk puffball has fewer escape options (can't backdash, notably) and leads into much better pressure.

### **5.3: special j.236C crossup/3-way setups (corner)**

These setups require doing one of a few specific combos. I'm going to assume you're doing the one listed in the intermediate bnb section (**2AA 5B 5C 4C(1) tk22B (s)dj.C j.236C**).

You can still do most of your usual options off this knockdown; however, these are the main things of interest here (assume drift back after puffball and an IAD height airdash unless it says otherwise):

- airdash j.C will safejump against normal (i.e. Sion-ish) wakeup timings.
- double airdash j.C for high (can also airdash forward airdash back j.C)
- airdash j.A whiff land 2A; this is crossup low or same-side low, depending on how you did the preceding combo
- Airdash j.236A

Crossups will cross up dp inputs, and often cause shield counters to fail because they can't hit you from behind. You can also play around with stuff from drift forward and no drift.

[Also note that if they block your puffball or j.C, it can start to look a little nutty.](#)

You need to be wary of people trying to OS backdash, DP, shield, bunker, and generally just do anything they can to not block a crossup setup. You can use similar answers as before to most of these. If you suspect they'll mash OS backdash, either put them in the corner so they can't do it, or autopilot 2a 2c 3c when you crossup low.

## **5.4: post-airthrow okizeme (midscreen)**

The only thing you can do that hits meaty midscreen on every character is dash 5A/2A. Because of this, you're basically limited to

- establishing respect for the meaty (i.e., just meatying)
- punishing disrespect for the meaty (e.g. blocking DPs, doing run up 5B/2B to directly punish shield, doing 2A>2C to beat backdash, baiting shield with 1A~7~1AA, combining the previous two into the honestly kind of hard 1a~7~1c OS, etc.)
- abusing respect gained from the meaty (e.g. doing IAD j.c)
  - This includes doing off-the-wall options like charged b pillar if you read that they'll just block or mash a DP
- returning to neutral

## **5.5: post-airthrow okizeme (corner)**

As midscreen, but you gain three other notable options:

- Meaty 2C (and sometimes 5C/4C).
  - Commonly, you will 623a after 2c is blocked to catch jumpout attempts.
- Dash 5AA>3C for anti-jumpout.
- Superjump j.236A. It's absolutely wack and fake, and I always feel like this shouldn't work as well as it does. But if they're respecting you, it lets you start the train.

You can probably see why you always spend meter on j.236C when you can, now.

## **5.6: post-throw okizeme (midscreen)**

You get tk puffball meaty, 214[A] meaty, and basically any other grounded meaty you want. j8.214[A] can be made to hit meaty, but it won't be reversal safe, and you won't recover in time to punish escape attempts.

There are high/lows or left/rights after throw midscreen, but they're fairly weak and telegraphed. (typically, j7 or j9 IAD [whiff j.A land 5B for low] or [airdash back j.C for high].

However,

- there's no ambiguous safejump option to discourage DPing or mashing,
- the mixup attempt is beyond telegraphed,
- the airdash back j.C doesn't hit meaty on normal wakeups, meaning that when you intend to mix, the 5b can't hit meaty either,
- and you will probably just get bunkered, shielded, or mashed. This is especially vulnerable to high shield (j.A whiff land 2C is not a great response).

## **5.7: post-throw okizeme (corner)**

As above, but you now get a safejump (and better pressure after blocked tk puffball).

To safejump, you walk forward some amount (a very small one for characters with normal wakeup speeds—as always, test the timing!), then IAD j.C.

Remember that for once, you actually have your second jump here. So you can effectively bait shield counters, heat, etc., if you think your opponent will do one of those instead of DP.

- You can IAD j.C dj.9~7 falling j.C to OS shield counters, as well as people trying to heat after j.C.
- You can IAD j.8 as a hard callout to bait heat, or IAD j.C 44 land buttons to do the OS described at the beginning of the okizeme section.
- Another, better bait is 66 tk j.236b: the dash momentum will keep you from flying backwards after B puffball while still making heats whiff.

Being able to safejump gives mixup attempts a lot more legitimacy, so you can do airdash mixup sometimes as well. It helps that the blocked j.Cs go into the 9~6A+B j.(A)B fuzzy.

## **5.8: post-623B okizeme (corner)**

This situation doesn't come up much. When it does, the main thing that you should know is that **after 623B, you can tk7 pit and do one of the following:**

- an airdash j.C safejump
- falling pillar, which is safe against most DPs, goes into the infinite pit blockstring on block, and goes into the infinite pit combo on hit
- airdash mixup with insane damage reward

You can also tk9 pit and do a falling puffball.

You can also do most, but not all, of the airdash mixups listed in 6.1 after a knockdown, as well as do safejumps. However, you also get to do all the maniac FVAkiha shit, like blocked j.C into pits, etc. Use your imagination. **Even if it doesn't get used often, 623B is your best knockdown by miles.**

## **5.9: CMV shit**

This character has more questionably legitimate shit than you can shake a stick at, and I don't think even F-VAkiha players know how much of it is real. If you want to try to sort it out for yourself, you can test some of the stuff from these videos:

[【MBAACC】F赤主秋葉 コンボムービー「→unfinished→」](#)

[【MBAACC】F赤主秋葉 コンボムービー「Sword of Virgin」](#)

[【MBAACC】F赤主秋葉 1stコンボムービー「Hesitation Snow」](#)

[【MBAACC】F赤主秋葉 2ndコンボムービー「last fortune」](#)

[【MBAACC】F赤主秋葉 3rdコンボムービー「sister's noise」](#)



## 6. Pressure

I'm going to treat this as three separate topics: pressuring without pits or puffball (which is what you normally get midscreen), pressuring with puffball in the corner, and then pressuring with the infinite pit blockstring in the corner.

### 6.1: basic pressure (midscreen, or corner without pits and puffballs)

This is pressure when you're pressuring like F-VAkiha is a normal F-Moon character. **The cliffnotes version is that you're going to be**

- staggering with 5A and 2A a lot, and ambiguously resetting off their big +f with a microwalk, redash, or IAD,
- punishing people trying to escape or mash those ambiguous resets based on how you expect them to respond,
- throwing a bit (5A walk forward throw is a bitch),
- exploiting 5B being -1 and having good range,
- praying you can make people block charged pillar (especially midscreen),
- using 623A to catch people mashing or jumping who have come to expect you to end strings on safe but -f normals (usually 2C),
- abusing the range of 4C to catch people who think they're safe to escape after things like uncharged pillar or 5C 22x

Your options when you pressure like this are limited, even in the corner, and you can't really make people block for very long. Resetting once you've pushed the string past 5B is nearly always overextending. (Remember, your best special to reset is 214[A] or 214[B], and they're 28f.)

[Since Funky-kun listed sample strings on MeltyBread a long time ago](#), and they're pretty relevant, it'd be a waste not to list them here. This is just copy-pasted from that post, with a few alterations for readability.

### Corner blockstrings:

\* denotes a stagger

Can reset with dash in 2A/5A, IAD, or throw.

On 5B counter link into a second 5B for massive damage.

If opponent uses low shield (or 1A+D OS) use 5B to beat it - although it hits low, it must be shielded high as all 5B's.

- **2A\*5A (x N) reset**
- **2A throw** (risky)
- **2AAA 6C** (use 2A's to move out of their 2A range, risky)
- **2AA(A) 5C 6C** (overhead setup, needs dash momentum)
- **2A~2C** (OS against backdash)
- **2A[7] continue blockstring** (OS against H/F shield counter, can punish with 2A/5A if you're fast; any normal can be used)
- **5A 3C 214A 4C 214B** (catches jumpouts, confirm after 3C into aircombo, or continue on block)
- **5A 3C 214A reset** (risky)
- **5A 3C\*623A** (catches mashing)
- **2A tkj.236A -> mixups [or other things]** (directly dash into tk j.236A after groundthrow)
  - See [6.2](#) for more on this.
- **2A\*A\*5B reset**
- **2A\*A\*5B\*5B\*2C\*4C(1) 623A** (if opponents are eager to escape)
- **2AAA 5A (whiff) cancel into 5B\*5B** (if opponent is looking for whiffs)
- **2A\*A\*5B\*5C**
- **2A\*5B\*5C 214[A]** (pressure reset)
- **2A\*A\*5B\*5C\*4C\*623A**
- **2A\*A\*5B\*5C\*4C\*22B** (you have +frames, but are too far away to safely continue blockstrings)

Be sure to practice the stagger timings by setting a dummy to recover A and attempting to CH them.

### IAD mixups:

- **IAD j.B/C > 2A** (low)
- **IAD j.B/C > IAD j.C** (high, can be 5A'd)
- **IAD j.AB** (double overhead) (does not work on Miyako, WLen)
- **IAD j.AA** (double overhead) (works on Len, WLen, but not Miyako)
- **IAD j.B/C > IAD j.AB/j.AA** (double overhead, airtight, not mashable)
- **IAD j.B/C j.214A** (reset, [IAD j.C j.214A] not mashable)
- **IAD j.C tk (j.22A j.22B) x N**
  - See [6.3](#) for more on this.
- **IAD j.B/C > land throw** (risky)
- **IAD j.B/C > land 6C** (risky)

It's worth noting that **IAD j.C 9~6A+B j.AB** and **IAD j.C>9~6A+B j.B** are **fuzzy guards**, and both hit faster than IAD j.C 9~6A+B j.C. People get opened far more often by them for this reason. **IAD j.C 9~6A+B j.AA** will also be fuzzy, but the second j.A only confirms the first one hitting on WLen, Tohno, Nanaya, Hime, Wara, and Nero.

**IAD j.AA** will also have the second hit fuzzy, if they block the first hit standing. Every character can crouch IAD j.A unless it's part of a fuzzy setup, however.

**IAD j.AB>j9.C** is a Nero/Wara only fuzzy guard. You can confirm with j.236C or j.22A.

## **6.2: puffball pressure (corner only)**

Puffball is the centerpiece of F-VAKiha corner pressure. It's huge +F, and immediately forces your opponent into a situation that risks either 1) them getting hit or 2) you looping the situation or escalating it into pit pressure.

The most common way to begin puffball pressure is with the pressure string **2A(A) tkj.236A**; 5A tk puffball works too. This string low crushes, but *does not actually frametrap*; it does lose to people mashing 5A, and also loses to hard callouts like airthrow. This is why it's generally better to do 2AA tk puff; they're blocking low already, so they're less likely to mash options that would win. If they want to try to call it out, though, just do a stagger instead and hit them.

Once they've blocked the puffball, you have a ton of options to either mix them, punish disrespect, or keep them blocking:

- dj.2369A
  - Beats most forms of disrespect.
- falling j.B
  - Airtight, and forces them to block high. After they block j.B, you can:
    - dj.236a (beats disrespect; input like a tk)
    - Cancel into j.236a without using your second jump; this will whiff, but will beat some mashing, and you can airdash after. You can think of it like a fake extra jump, really.
    - j.214a (full pressure reset; loses to mashing)
    - Land and continue pressure gaplessly (with 2A, usually, though this isn't a mix)
    - Land and walk forward 5A/2A/5B (this actually frametraps)
    - Land and walk forward throw

- dj.9~6A+B j.C (airdash high; not really mix, but is a thing that is there)
  - j.282C
    - uses your second jump to begin pit pressure, and also *frametraps*
      - if you can j.282C6 then j.22B, the first pit will keep them in place so you can confirm more easily into the infinite. For an easier autopilot confirm, j.B>j.282c land 5b frametraps on block and autoconfirms on hit
  - Immediate j9c (special Nero/Wara-only fuzzy)
    - Confirm with j.236c or j.22a.
- Falling j.A (this will whiff most crouchers; see below)
  - Same options as j.B, but cancelling into puffball won't always whiff. It'll only hit at close range, though
  - This will whiff anyone crouching with a shorter crouching hurtbox than WLen. That means it *hits* WLen, Tohno, Nanaya, Hime, Nero, and Wara crouching, if you delay it until right before you'd hit the ground.
  - If they block the last tick of puffball high, this will fuzzy guard and hit everyone or almost everyone. (Need to make sure it doesn't still whiff Miyako and Len.) However, they've got no reason to crouch that soon if they blocked the last tick of the puffball high.
- Land 2A (low)
- Land throw
- Airdash j.C (high)
  - doing j7~6A+B will *probably* OS block shield counters against the first puffball, though I haven't tested it
- Double airdash j.C
- Airdash j.A(A) land 2A

You get the idea. You can also integrate any of the other mixups listed in 6.1.

### **6.3: pit pressure (corner only)**

This is what makes F-VAkiha a nightmare. Unfortunately, this is the part of F-VAkiha that requires the most exec.

The basic tl;dr is this: pits loop into more pits on block. To see how this works, set the dummy to stand block and guard all. Then, try the following:

- First, do IAD j.C 282C, and then mash 22b 22c 22b 22c etc. Play with the timings. You should be able to get 3 or 4 pits out before you hit the ground.

- It may help to think of yourself as just spamming 2 and hitting the B or C button with every other press, as opposed to thinking of inputting separate moves.
- Then do this, but try to get the third pit out low enough to the ground that you can land and get a 272B/C or 227B/C pit to activate. (Yes, you can pit and rejump pit in this way.)
- Then try doing a few pits, then j.214B, then doing more pits.
- Then (and this is the murderer) attempt to do a pit, then airdash and do another pit. This is what allows you to continue to chain pits after you've sent yourself too far out.
  - 22x~6 has one fewer frame of startup than plain 22x, so you should attempt to do 22x~6 for this. The increased leniency does matter.
  - This is actual hell. I tried to do this for two hours straight and could not get it once. I tried again for another two hours and still did not get it. You may not be able to without a lot of practice. It is fucking fast and awful to do. And *there is no trick to it*. You just have to practice.

Then, check what here does and doesn't frametrap. Set the dummy to recover A, and try the following:

- Play with the timings of the pits so that they frametrap. You will notice the gap is REALLY big, and usually impractical.
- Play with making j.C 282C frametrap.
- Then play with the timing of pit into pillar, and make it frametrap.
- Try to make pit>airdash j.a, j.b, and j.C frametrap.
- Now, try to confirm these into actual combos.

**You will quickly notice that confirming pit hits in the real world can actually get kind of difficult. Unfortunately, the best answer to that problem is to input a 6 after every pit, so that the ignite always pushes them into the corner.** And that makes this really awful to input. But if you want the busted characters, you take the arthritis, too.

Of course, it's pretty unlikely that anyone will challenge this pressure. How would they challenge it even, anyways? So how do you hit them?

First, it's worth noting that pits do a ton of chip damage. So even if you don't hit them, it's not exactly a big deal. You can shred their lifebar as long as you can keep hitting 22.

But let's say you *do* want to hit them. What then?

Well... now that you can basically make them block as long as you want, you can mix them up whenever you want and they have no way to be able to tell when you're going to do mixup. And

this is triply true if you can do pit airdash pit. So just mix them up once they've blocked a while and take your win. (Or maybe timerscam them.)

You can go into pit blockstrings off a surprisingly large amount of things. The main ones are blocked j.C and j.B, and blocked j.214a/b when you did them close to the ground; however, any blocked hit over a pit will also work. A character blocking charged pillar and getting carried to the corner is also in position to have you fire off a few pits.

If you need to see what all this looks like, watch the classic Yukichi a-cho body montages. You'll get the idea REAL fast. Or you can check the beginning of [the JP combo compilation video I linked in 4.3.2.](#)

## 7. Defense

**tl;dr:**

[6:40 AM] duskthanatos: defense is probably just going to be "pls use OSeS, use ex guard, and use 4C and fuzzy 5a"

[6:40 AM] duskthanatos: and also "don't diceroll too hard unless you like dying"

[6:41 AM] duskthanatos: "you have a DP but it's shit don't be surprised if it gets blown up"

[6:42 AM] duskthanatos: "just hold [1], stay cool and stay in school"

also 2a is good for mashing the end

~~[this is a placeholder, but these are actually the points i want to make]~~

[this is no longer a placeholder. it is now the introduction. and these are, in fact, the points I'm about to make]

### 7.1: a general note on risk/reward

Before I say anything else, I think it's important to point out how risk/reward ends up working for this character on defense.

This is gonna sound snarky, **but it doesn't work for her well at all in most cases.** Let's think about a typical scenario where you're blocking in the corner.

You're blocking H-Nanaya's stagger pressure, which is pretty ambiguous. You can challenge, but if you do, you're likely to eat a frametrap. Specifics:

- Let's assume you get hit by 2b when he does 5b w5a 2b for damage calcs; further assume that's the only rebeat before he hits you.
  - If he hits you, he does 4117 with 2b 2c 5c j.bc dj.bc AT, or 5253 if he spends meter for j.214c.
    - If he does AT he keeps you in the corner; j.214c is a weaker tech chase.
- If you mash him and succeed, you hit with 2A.
  - You get about 4754 if you opt for airtthrow KD (2aa 5b 5c 4c tk pit j.bc dj.bc AT) and 4853 if you opt for ex puffball (same but j.bc dj.c ex puffball).
    - AT knockdown is garbage, and midscreen ex puffball is pretty solid.

At first glance, you might think, oh, those numbers aren't that bad! I get more damage unless he spends meter and gives up good oki! But remember two things:

- You are much more likely to be incorrect about where to mash than you are to be correct.
- Nanaya gets the option of keeping you in the corner, while you can't put Nanaya in the corner, and this matters because VAKi's pressure is far worse outside the corner. Basically, Nanaya will probably get better momentum off his hit than you get off yours.

Let's ignore the second for now, and focus on the first, since it's more quantifiable. If we assume we're right about where to mash even a generous 30% of the time in this scenario, then we can multiply the the reward by the % of the time we obtain it, multiply the life loss by the % of the time we obtain it, total them, and check our expected return on the decision. Assuming you spend meter and Nanaya takes AT knockdown, we can run the numbers like so:

$$(-4117*.7)+(4853*.3) = -1426$$

Not a good expected return, especially before we calculate in the power of Nanaya getting to keep you in the corner. But what if you were right a literally astonishing 40% of the time?

$$(-4117*.6)+(4853*.4) = -526$$

Still bad. **In fact, you have to be right about 46% of the time to break even on raw damage.** (Remember, we're discounting momentum.) And if Nanaya spends meter?

$$(-5253*.7)+(4853*.3) = -2221.2$$

$$(-5253*.6)+(4853*.4) = -1210.6$$

You need to be right close to **52% of the time** to break even. (Again, though, remember we're discounting momentum.)

If we try to count momentum, things get a bit murkier; the math is arguably too complex to show here. And that's especially true when you start thinking about stuff like:

- how much life you have,
- how much life your opponent has,
- whether your opponent can easily regain lost life,
- how comparatively unlikely it is for you to reach MAX to regain life,
- the expected loss from your opponent getting okizeme when they hit you,
- the expected loss from your opponent continuing to pressure you,
- the expected gain from any momentum you get if you successfully abare, and
- how all the options on defense and offense interact, and how the rewards and penalties vary with each option.

That being said, here's a thought exercise to begin thinking about all this. Imagine the risk/reward on challenging H-Nanaya, now accounting for the following things:

- H-Nanaya's momentum is good but not great, since his AT oki isn't all that hot.
  - Generally, he'll get a meaty after AT. So sure, he keeps good pressure going—but he won't mix you.
  - However, you lack good ways to challenge his meaty other than shield or bunker.
- Now consider your momentum if you're right.
  - Imagine your okizeme if you hit Nanaya, and add that in as well, considering that you have to account for Nanaya DP when doing your midscreen okizeme.
    - I'll trust you to understand the details of this side of the equation on your own.
  - Consider what kind of pressure you get if your okizeme itself doesn't hit.
- Don't forget to multiply the rewards and losses by the amount of the time you expect them to happen!

Now, in contrast, imagine challenging C or F-Nanaya. Imagine giving C or F-Nanaya damage and a knockdown every time you're wrong, instead. How's that change the expected returns?

If you're not sweating thinking about that in comparison, well, you should be.



## **7.2: how do I challenge my opponent?**

This section will talk some about the tools VAKi has for challenging pressure and okizeme. I'll cover the options she gets from system mechanics first, then the options she gets from her kit.

### **7.2.1: system options**

Quick overview of her system options:

- Blocking
  - This is kind of a smartass thing to put here, I admit. But please consider blocking before you consider other things, at least until you get more comfortable making reads.
- Bunker
  - 214D in blockstun will give you a clashbox and a followup hit that will launch them slightly (they can airtech shortly after). Costs 50 meter.
  - You can also bunker outside of blockstun for free; this is typically used as a wakeup option against certain kinds of okizeme, since it covers them hitting both high and low.
  - Bunker loses to throws, delayed buttons, people clashing the bunker on purpose with a clashbox, and several other things.
  - A successful bunker typically results in a scramble. Although the postbunker scramble is slightly in your favor, in general, VAKiha is *not* good in scrambles. Be careful.
    - If you're asking yourself about risk/reward here, the risk is however much damage you take for them reading your bunker + further momentum, and the reward is literally just the scramble. The utility of bunker is that it covers more options and therefore makes you right more of the time, even if it's got shit reward.
- Shield
  - Clashbox that can be cancelled into shield counter on a successful shield (5D>236D or 2D>236D).
    - Shield reward is a little wonky to calculate for VAKiha. Typically, you'll get 2k to 3k for a successful shield counter, depending on how easy the hit is to follow up, whether or not you want to spend meter, opponent life multipliers, and so on. *However*, it's common for VAKiha to forgo damage on the shield counter, take a simple 2c knockdown off it instead, and set up a single pit and do okizeme mix. This makes the reward for the shield

counter itself abysmal, but turns the reward for the okizeme mix into pit infinite party time.

- Some characters have exceptional shield counter hitboxes, and some have bad ones. VAKiha's is just plain average. It will work when you expect it to, but there's not much else to say about it.
- You can also cancel shield into specials, but this doesn't do much for VAKiha, because her specials are poor for this.
- Shield loses to attacks that must be shielded the opposite way of how you chose to shield; throws; people baiting your shield counter, chickenblocking it, and then punishing it; and people making you whiff the shield, then punishing shield recovery.
- Typical uses are shielding jump-ins or IAD resets, and hard-reading your opponent.
- EX guard
  - Tap block a few frames before an attack would connect, and you:
    - reduce attacker hitstop and defender blockstun by one each, reducing the frame advantage of the blocked move by 2
    - Push the attacker further out
    - greatly reduce attacker metergain for that attack (they receive 10% of what they would've otherwise received)
    - Replenish some of your guard bar
  - Ex guard is arguably extra nice for you, because you have the 4C of the gods to catch them after they've been pushed out.
- Fuzzy jump
  - 1~7~1. Blocks low, then if you aren't blockstun, you attempt to jump. An OS that's good in a ton of places.
- Raw jumpout
  - Just inputting 7, 8, or 9. Note that j7 is 4f, and j8/9 are 3f; between the startup speed and the jump angle, j8 and j9 will escape some things that j7 won't.
- 1A+D
  - Throw OS. Shields low if you aren't thrown, breaks the throw if you are.
- 1[A]~D
  - Other throw OS. Does 2A>throw break. If you commit to this, you should probably just also input a few 2As after to hitconfirm, as well.

Overall, her system options are average or below average. She has no good options out of shield other than shield counter, and bunker leaves her in a fairly mediocre position, even if she is arguably benefitted by EX guard slightly more than most characters.

## **7.2.2: character options**

Quick overview of the main defensive options she gains from her moveset:

- Fuzzy 5A
  - OS usable by anyone by anyone with a good anti-air 5A. You just mash 4AAA, and if you stay in blockstun, nothing comes out. This is typically used if you think the opponent will do something like an IAD reset. **This OS is really fucking good for F-VAkiha, because her 5A is one of the best in the game.**
- Fuzzy 2A
  - As above, but 1AAA. Used to mash redashes, and other similar blockstring gaps. F-VAkiha has a particularly good 2A.
- 4C
  - This 7f god normal is really damn good at hitting whatever 5A and 2A won't reach. In exchange, it's extremely committal (31f recovery, anyone?), is often hard to follow up at max range, and gives you worse reward than 2A. Saying that makes 4C sound worse than it is, though; it's definitely busted, and extremely abusable.
- 2B, 2C
  - Not as good as 4C, but they're still okay abare options.
- 623B
  - Low crushes. Note that this low crushes via missing hurtboxes, not via move properties like in UNI or P4, *so this can and will lose to 2As that hit higher than the low invuln*. Nanaya 2A is a good example of this. And of course, 623B is punishable as hell on block.
- 623C
  - True DP, but has a superflash announcing its startup (making it vulnerable to 5A>reaction shield), and a tiny ass hitbox with zero verticality. Use sparingly.

Overall, her abare is good, but her DP game is extremely weak.

## **7.3: when do I challenge my opponent?**

There isn't really a good answer to this; almost every challenge in MB is riskier than not. But despite that, there *are* better and worse places to challenge. The three biggest markers of when to challenge are this:

- Opponent is pushed out
  - When the opponent is more pushed out, they typically have fewer options to catch your escape, or have to read escape attempts much harder. Any reset attempt from far out is also significantly greedier, and easier to punish.
- Opponent blows a normal in pressure that's integral to hitconfirming
  - E.G., a character that relies on their sweep to begin their juggle to go into aircombo blows said sweep.
- Rebeat penalty is high
  - This is specific to playing versus C/H moon, but I still think it's fairly notable. Every time the opponent rebats, the game adds proration to any hits they get for the next short bit, and rebating again refreshes the timer on this. (If you want to observe this yourself, turn on the damage display in training mode, and do some blockstrings on a C/H character you're comfortable with.) Higher rebat penalty = less damage if they hit you = better expected return on mash attempts.
- You must challenge immediately, or you are guaranteed to take damage or lose
  - Say the timer only has a few seconds left, and your opponent has more HP than you and you could get their HP down below yours if you hit them. In this situation, just challenge. If you do nothing, you will lose, guaranteed.
  - Likewise, if you're close to being guard crushed, you at minimum need to clutch out some EX guards, and should also consider challenging.

There are other markers for when to challenge, but they're generally character specific and matchup specific. For example, some characters have moves that signal the end of their pressure, in the way that 623A does for F-VAkiha; you should learn what they are, and challenge or escape after.

## Appendix

### i. where do I go if I have more questions?

If you have more questions, you can ask them in your friendly local Melty Blood discord.

<https://discord.gg/8NrARJA> - Adacord, run by <https://twitter.com/SleepyBasilisk>. Particularly lgbtqia+ friendly.

<https://discord.gg/KeuSaJ5My8> - Melty Blood Community Discord, run by ViviMayoi of Snail's Domain Weeklies.

Asking in the #serious-discussion channels is usually the way to go. Feel free to ping me when you ask (@Rhiya).

## **ii. special thanks**

Special thanks to everyone who helped with this, and everyone who wrote or made a resource I cited here. A few people who come to mind:

Sydoh, Seagull, j.g., Funky-kun, tobari, yukichi, HaileyHime

Special shoutouts to Acido, whose guide I gave a lot of shit, but who also lights Brazil up on the fucking regular and makes you think yukichi moved to South America.

## **iii. to do**

-add pictures for the specials

-add the otg 623c airdash pit airdash l/r

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdbPAKC-6RY&t=3m10s>)

-give an actual chart of safejump timings off different KDs, instead of just telling people to lab it