

FIGHT!

UNLOCKABLES: SHONEN



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UNLOCKABLES • SHONEN

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Special thanks as always to the members of the Fight! Group, and to my family that allows me the opportunity to write and play games as often as I do.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Fight! Unlockables: Shonen*. This supplement contains a number of options and new rules to modify the existing *Fight!* rules away from the direction of fighting video game emulation and more in the direction of its close cousin: shonen anime.

The first section of this supplement looks at some conceptual changes to character generation in order to make characters that better resemble the heroes of the shonen genre. Shonen action also eliminates some of the standard combat rules such as Control and Combos in favor of the more descriptive Dramatic Combat system, so certain Qualities and Skills are also in need of modification.

These changes are further developed in the second section, which contains a number of variant rules for character generation. In the same spirit as *Fight! Round 2*, these options are presented in such a way that your group can mix and match different rules in order to capture the right feel for your setting and play style.

The next section focuses on shonen combat and the modifications needed to enhance the Dramatic Combat system from the core rules. Some of the material contained in this section is not necessarily specific to the shonen genre and can just as easily be used in traditional *Fight!* games during Dramatic Combat fight scenes.

The fourth section contains new and advanced ideas to further emulate specific aspects of shonen action. While many options are presented, key

to the shonen genre is the Gambit, a way to act in combat that can end a fight or eliminate an opponent without traditional attacks being used at all.

Finally, this supplement concludes with a summary of some of common tropes of the shonen genre, including how such stories differ from traditional fighting game stories. While these genres are definitely closely related, they each possess tropes of their own.

Let's power up and get started!

A Brief Introduction to Unlockables

Fight! Unlockables is a series offering new content for *Fight! The Fighting Game RPG*. Each entry in the series will cover a particular subject or theme, offering you new rules options and ideas. We hope that these supplements continue to inspire new ways to enjoy the game!

Defining Shonen

Chances are, if you are reading a mini-supplement aimed at shonen gaming for an RPG about fighting games, you already know what shonen is. But in the interest of defining it for the purposes of this supplement, shonen is a genre of manga and anime aimed primarily at boys (hence the name), usually containing stories with an emphasis on action and combat and characterization primarily aimed at camaraderie and rivalry (sometimes both with the same person). While many fighting video games have been made out of shonen series, shonen anime and manga generally have a different sense of what combat looks and feels like.

Why do I need these rules?

The answer is: you don't. But they might make your shonen game that much better. There are two schools of thought regarding genre emulation in role-playing games. One school of thought says that a good, solid system, ideally a fairly simple one, can handle any genre because the players' engagement with the genre and their shared storytelling skills during play captures the feel of the genre perfectly. Trying to create "emulation mechanics" with rules is unnecessarily complicated. (Continued on next page.)

PART 1 • CREATING SHONEN CHARACTERS

Creating characters for a shonen campaign follows all the normal rules from the *Fight!* core rulebook. In fact, simply by using the normal rules for the game and focusing on the Dramatic Combat system over the normal combat system, one could get a significant shonen feel.

However, there are a number of elements of characters made according to the normal rules that have little or no effect in Dramatic Combat, so a campaign focused on that should make some adjustments to character generation.

Regarding Speed, characters do not need to assign bonuses to Control nor should characters be allowed to apply the penalty of a -1 Speed to Control.

Characters should not purchase the Combo Skill, nor can extra Move Points be used on the Combo Skill. Likewise, the rules for Attack Strings should not be used.

Because there are no Combos and Special Moves are used less frequently in Dramatic Combat, the normal rules for acquiring Glory result in slower advancement in Power Level. This may not be a bad thing, considering that a shonen series often will want a slower pace for greater character development. However, the rate of advancement could be increased by allowing greater Glory bonuses for role-playing, especially by playing up the specific tropes of the shonen genre. In addition, because the

Why do I need these rules? Continued

The opposite school of thought recognizes that capturing and sustaining a mood consistent with a specialized genre can be a lot of work at the table, and the realities of life may mean some sessions succeed at capturing this feel better than others. Mechanical genre emulation aids this process so that even when the players' collaborative efforts may not be ideal at representing the genre, the rules of the game keeps things from going too far astray. *Fight!* has always focused on mechanical genre emulation, and this supplement seeks to do the same thing for the shonen genre of manga and anime.

nature of starting characters is different in shonen than in fighting games, it may be appropriate for more experienced players to simply start a campaign at Power Level 3, thus allowing immediate access to Super Moves.

Most Qualities and Weaknesses can be used unchanged and in fact may see more regular use in shonen stories. Remember that any effect that gives a bonus to Control but not Initiative (such as the combat effect of the Buxom Quality) still affects Initiative in a shonen game.

Similarly, any Special Move Element that grants a bonus to Control instead affects Initiative in a shonen game, and Liabilities that only limit Control should not be permitted.

The most significant change between traditional fighting game characters and shonen characters comes down to their motivations and relationships. While combat is a significant part of a shonen series, reasons for fighting may not be the defining aspects of the characters as they might be in a fighting game. Instead, characters are better identified by their relationships: their close friends, loved ones, mentors, rivals, and enemies. While this is true of any extended story with the same characters, the identification, maintenance, and development of relationships takes a prominent role in the shonen genre.

PART 2 • NEW OPTIONS FOR CHARACTER GENERATION

While the core rules for character generation can be used with very few changes to create characters appropriate for a shonen game, this section provides new options to highlight particular aspects of the genre. The Director may choose some, none, or all of these options for his game.

While nothing prohibits a Director from using any of these options in a regular *Fight!* game, some of them could prove unbalancing in the normal system.

Options with the Ki Skill

The following options change the way the Ki Skill is used in the game.

Expanded Ki: Many shonen series involve ki effects that go beyond merely high-powered attacks. While the core rules describe how Ki can be used as a normal Skill outside of combat to allow other supernatural powers at the Director's discretion, it is possible to define these kinds of abilities further without too much added complication.

With this option, any character with the Ki Skill must further divide his Ki abilities into Offensive Ki, Defensive Ki, and Utility Ki. The base Ki Skill is multiplied by two, and then those points are divided between the three categories. No category may be higher than twice Ki Skill (obviously), no category can be higher than Power Level x 3 (as normal), and no category may be higher than 10.

Offensive Ki is used to determine the damage of Ranged Special Moves as usual. Defensive Ki is used for the Ranged Response Defensive Response (p. 138 in the core rules), using Ki in place of Defense in Dramatic Combat (p. 178), and for Ki Face Offs in Dramatic Combat (p. 184). Utility Ki has no effect on combat, but is used for any supernatural effect outside of combat, still according to the Director's discretion in keeping with the tone of the campaign. For example, it might be used to fly, turn invisible, create or transmute objects, read minds, or the like.

Directors should be cautious about potential abuses with this option. A player may never intend any other use for the Ki Skill besides maximizing the damage of Ranged Special Moves and this option can allow one to gain power twice as quickly. The Director may allow this, or the Director may restrict the way the points are split between categories even further, or the Director might just make sure that both specialist characters and more well-rounded characters have equal opportunities to shine in play.

If desired, this option can be expanded even further to allow additional categories. Perhaps instead of Utility Ki, characters might have Movement Ki, Sensory Ki, Mental Ki, or any number of other categories. In this case, the base Ki Skill is multiplied by the number of possible categories minus one (e.g., if there are five categories, base Ki Skill would be multiplied by four and divided up between the different categories). This can be a useful option for games in which most characters have a similar set of "super powers," such as differing

ninja powers, but at different levels of ability. Truly unique abilities can still be covered by the Power Quality and Skill.

Elemental Effects: As an additional option for the Expanded Ki rules, a player can spend one point of available Ki Skill to add an Elemental Effect to his Fighter. The list of available options would need to be approved by the Director, but examples could include fire, ice, darkness, light, gravity, electricity, etc. By choosing an Elemental Effect, it is presumed that the majority of a character's Special Moves, Super Moves, and even supernatural effects outside of combat are "flavored" by the Elemental Effect. For example, a character with a Fire Elemental Effect would have Special Moves that all invoke fire in some way in their description. When using Ki for a non-combat effect in which a character's Elemental Effect would be an asset, the DL of the skill check is reduced by 2. On the other hand, if the Elemental Effect could be seen as a hindrance to the desired effect, the DL is increased by 2 or more.

It is up to the Director whether or not Elemental Effects have any specific effect in combat. As an example, if the Director has constructed a closed list of Elemental Effects available in his campaign, then each Effect could be listed as opposed to certain other Effects. In combat against a Fighter with an opposed Effect to his own, a Fighter would gain a one die size increase on all damage. Elemental Effects might be directly opposed to each other (e.g., fire and ice), or some Effects may be opposed by others, while the opposing Effect is not considered "opposed."

Example: One possible configuration for this system would be to use the traditional Chinese elements. In this scheme, Fighters might have Elemental Effects of Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, or Metal. Depending on which elemental effect a particular Fighter uses, he or his opponent would gain die size increases to damage based on the following:

- ❖ Water: Strong against Fire, weak against Earth
- ❖ Wood: Strong against Earth, weak against Metal
- ❖ Fire: Strong against Metal, weak against Water
- ❖ Earth: Strong against Water, weak against Wood
- ❖ Metal: Strong against wood, weak against Fire

Thus, if a Fire character was facing a Metal character, the Fire character would gain a die size increase to damage. When that same Fighter faced a Water Fighter, however, the Water Fighter would gain a die size increase to damage because Fire is weak against Water. Other schemes, drawn from other traditional configurations of the Elements, or made up entirely, may exist for different campaigns.

A different scheme for Elemental Effects would be to make Elemental Effects Qualities and Weaknesses, in addition to the required Ki Skill point mentioned above. An Elemental Effect can be a Quality, a Weakness, or both (canceling one another out in cost). The basic meaning of this Quality and Weakness are the same as above: it means that most or all of a character's attacks and powers are defined by the Elemental Effect.

With this option, only characters with the Quality get the benefit of additional damage against opposed Elemental Effects, and only those with the Weakness provide the additional damage to their opponents with opposed Effects. This would also mean that a character with the Elemental Effect Quality who was facing an opponent with the opposed Elemental Effect Weakness would gain a two die size increase in damage.

Example: Keisuke, a fire user, has the Fire Elemental Effect Quality. His opponent, Rin, a cold user, has the Cold Elemental Effect Weakness. The Director has defined fire and cold as opposed Elemental Effects. Thus, when Keisuke attacks Rin, his attacks have a two die size increase in damage – one die size for possessing the Fire Effect Quality and one die size because Rin has the Cold Effect Weakness. However, when Rin attacks Keisuke in return, her attacks are unmodified, as she does not possess the Cold Elemental Effect Quality and Keisuke does not have the Fire Elemental Weakness. If either one of these conditions were in place, Rin's attacks would also gain a one die size increase in damage.

Using any of these rules, it is possible that a character may be affiliated with more than one Element. In the core rules, this is simply a matter of describing different Special Moves with different elemental effects; there is no game effect with these different descriptions. The rules contained here, however, require some additional cost to gain the mechanical benefits of additional Elemental Effects.

Regardless of which of the above rules are in effect, the first Element chosen is the base Element. The character may then spend a second point from the Expanded Ki skill in order to acquire a second Element. If the Elemental Effect Quality rules are being used, he must acquire the Elemental Effect Quality for the second Element in order to get the benefit from both of them. However, if he chooses the Elemental Effect Weakness for the first Element, the second Element is automatically affected too, and he cannot choose this Weakness solely for the secondary Element.

In a campaign in which Fighters have the possibility of being affiliated with more than one Element, the Director must also determine how the characters can switch between different Elements. Here are a couple suggestions.

A new Special Move Element can be introduced called Element Swap. This Element can only be applied to a Special Move that also has the Style Change or Buff Element. When the move is built, Element Swap must specify which Elemental Effect comes into play when the move is used in combat and it cannot be changed later. This Elemental Effect then remains in play as long as the Buff or Style Change remains in play. In all other situations, the Fighter's base Elemental Effect remains active.

As an alternative, the Director can rule that a Fighter with multiple Elemental Effects can use the Power Up action in combat to swap from one Elemental Effect to another, without gaining any Super Energy for the action. This option allows for more flexibility but makes

switching between Elemental Effects in the middle of a fight costly, because it consumes a full turn.

Finally, Elemental Effects could be used for other aspects of the setting. For example, instead of the Director creating a list of different elements such as fire and cold and their relationships to each other, "Elemental Effects" could apply to different armed or unarmed fighting styles. Perhaps wielding a sword gives a benefit against a knife wielder, but is weak against a polearm user. Or maybe the Three Dragons School is especially effective against the Argent River School, but is weak against the mysterious Black Tiger school. Any aspect of the characters' fighting styles that could be put in opposition to one another could make use of these rules.

Rapid Ki Advancement: In the core rules, when a character gains new Move Points, three Move Points can be used to increase Combo Skill. With this option, three Move Points can also be used to increase Ki Skill (or Base Ki Skill, if using the Expanded Ki option above). This has the potential effect of both shortening characters' move lists overall (which is appropriate to the genre) as well as increasing Ki Skill levels without hindering development in defensive Skills.

Ki as a Basic Quality: All of the rules in this section presume that Ki is a Combat Skill as in the core rules. If a Director is using Ki as a Basic Quality (see *Round 2*, p. 8) and also wants to make use of some of these rules, Ki should be re-introduced as a special kind of Non-Combat Skill. A Fighter's Ki Skill is subdivided into Defensive Ki and Utility Ki. The Basic Quality is used for Offensive Ki effects as described in *Round 2*.

Options to Modify Moves

The following options offer variations to Fighters' Basic, Special, and Super Moves.

Ranged Basic Moves: Many shonen series feature Fighters that can launch various forms of ranged attacks as basic techniques in their fighting styles. This option gives every character some form of Ranged Special Move (albeit with weaker base damage) without having to spend Move Points. With this option, every Fighter can use a Ranged attack as a Basic Move. Damage is calculated with the Ki Skill as usual and can be used at range, just like a Special Move with the Ranged Element, but the move is otherwise considered the same as a Basic Move: Accuracy +0, base Damage is 1d4, and the move has no Elements or Liabilities (other than the Ranged Element). If this option is used, Ranged Special Moves should have their damage increased by two die sizes when used in the Dramatic Combat System (instead of one as usual).

This option could also be used in a more traditional fighting game campaign for settings in which every character has ranged attacks, perhaps because every character is a high-tech cyborg or wields a gun, for example.

Limited Special Moves: With this option, Fighters still get 10 Move Points per Power Level. However, at PL 1, a Fighter can only purchase one or two Special Moves. At every Power Level after PL 1, a Fighter can only learn one new Special Move. The rest of the unused Move Points can be spent on Non-Combat Skills or

Fighting Spirit. A character can also still choose to close his Move List as usual.

This option formalizes the fact that many shonen characters have a limited number of unique attacks that really qualify as "Special Moves" in the way that this term is used in fighting games. This option could also be used in a traditional campaign. It serves the purpose of allowing players to become better accustomed to new moves at a slower pace, limits the "arms race" of designing Special Moves for every occasion at the expense of character concept, and encourages each Special Move to have a distinctive place in the Fighter's fighting style.

No Super Moves: Since Special Moves are more powerful in the Dramatic Combat System and because the Climactic Super Move Skill functions as a generic "super move" for all characters, the Director might just choose to not allow Super Moves at all in the campaign.

However, the shonen genre certainly does make regular use of the "Power Up" action in combat, sometimes to an almost ridiculous degree. To account for the fact that Fighters have no need for Super Energy, the Power Up action instead restores Fighting Spirit, which makes characters a little more durable and is also thematically appropriate. To balance this option with Re-Focus, Power Up instead restores 1d6 Fighting Spirit + (PL/2, round up), or instead, one Action Point. In this way, Re-Focus is the more defensive option, while Power Up is the more offensive one.

Character-Based Options

The following options bring aspects of a character's background or personality to the fore and give them mechanical benefits.

Power Set: This is a new Quality that replaces Magic, Psychic, and Gadgeteering as Qualities. For the most part, it functions in the same way as any of these Qualities, providing a thematically consistent set of related super powers whose exact limits are up to the Director. Unlike the three Qualities from the core rules, however, the Power Set Quality does not have any required Skills. However, like Magic, Psychic, and Gadgeteering, Power Set is also a Skill in addition to being a Quality.

The intention of this option is twofold. First, it greatly simplifies the way in which a Fighter can acquire a set of powers, putting all of the responsibility of adjudication of effects in play on the Director. This option could also be used if using *Fight!* to run a more traditional superhero game.

Second, this option also allows the Director to further customize his shonen setting by defining what "power sets" he wants to include in his campaign. Power Sets might be different schools of ninja training, different sets of racial abilities, or different types of elemental mastery.

This option works best if there are not traditional Magic, Psychic, and Gadgeteering powers in the setting. Power Set replaces those because there is a greater variety of kinds of

powers available than can be encompassed in those three Qualities.

The difference between a Power Set Quality and a Power Quality is a matter of focus. A character with a Power Set has a collection of related abilities, while a Power would be a single power that would normally be adjudicated as more powerful by the Director. However, it may also be the case that the Power Quality is also not necessarily applicable in games using Power Sets.

Character Purpose: The description of the Reaffirm Purpose Skill states that the player needs to choose a purpose for the Fighter in order to make use of the Skill. This option changes and expands this rule.

With this option, every character has a purpose when he is first created, regardless of whether or not the Fighter possesses the Reaffirm Purpose Skill (though most characters in a shonen campaign are likely to have it anyway). If a scene leading up to a fight scene specifically invokes the Fighter's designated purpose, he begins the combat with Action Points equal to his Power Level (minimum two), rather than one as usual. Furthermore, if the purpose can be invoked again in a narratively meaningful and new way during the combat, the Fighter automatically receives another AP.

At higher Power Levels, this is a very powerful option. It is intended to increase the flexibility of a character in combat when the story focuses on his or her purpose, but it can easily be abused to simply launch strong Special Moves for the first several turns of a fight. Thus, this rule should be strictly

monitored by the Director to make sure it serves the purpose of an improved story and not just a powerful mechanical bonus.

Relationship: One important aspect of the shonen genre is the web of relationships between the characters, especially their friendships and rivalries. This option introduces a new Mechanical Non-Combat Skill for shonen campaigns simply called Relationship.

For each point a Fighter has in this Skill, he can define one important relationship with another PC or NPC. This may be a friendly relationship or a hostile one, but what is most important is that the relationship matters to the Fighter in a significant way. At the beginning of a combat, if the player can describe how the importance of the relationship matters in that scene, he gets a bonus. This may be as explicit as a fight against a specific rival or fighting to save the life of a specific loved one, but it could also be invoked through the memory of an important relationship that somehow affects the present combat. If one of the Fighter's relationships is invoked at the start of a fight, the character gains one bonus AP, and an additional bonus AP that only applies to actions specifically affecting the character established as a relationship. (This may not apply if that character is not actually present at the fight.)

Example: Genji has Relationship 3. Genji's player Wayne has established Genji's three relationships to be with his sister Akemi, his former commander and rival Deacon, and his good friend Jake. In the present story, Genji is about to face a lieutenant of the Break Platoon

who can tell him where his kidnapped sister is being held. Because of his relationship to Akemi, Genji gets an extra AP at the beginning of the fight.

Alternate Relationship Rules: The rules for relationships above allow a Fighter to gain AP to use however they wish in combat. An alternate approach would be to specifically focus relationship bonuses on a character's Super Energy. By being empowered by love or friendship, or inspired by a mentor, or fired up by the presence of a rival, a Fighter gains Super Energy. There are two ways to do this.

The first way is just a slight variation of the above rule. When a Fighter's Relationship comes into play, instead of AP, the Fighter gains a set amount of Super Energy, defined by the Director for his campaign. Five or 10 points of Super Energy would be appropriate.

The second way involves more bookkeeping, but for campaigns where relationships are especially prominent, this variant allows for much greater specification about the differences between a character's various relationships.

In this version, the Relationship skill is still used, but a particular relationship may have more than one point assigned to it to reflect the depth of feeling (positive or negative) in that relationship. Thus, a character might have Relationship 2 with a loved one and Relationship 3 with a rival. While it is unlikely to occur, no single Relationship may have more than a 10, though the total of all individual Relationships may exceed 10.

When story circumstances occur that would engage a Fighter's Relationships, the Fighter immediately gains Super Energy equal to the Relationship value. If the Director thinks the circumstances are worth an ongoing bonus, the Fighter gains that much additional Super Energy each turn.

Transformations

An important aspect of many shonen series is the ability of the main characters to transform in the heat of battle (and at the dramatically appropriate time in the story) into much more powerful versions of themselves. These new forms boast greater power, cool new visuals, and sometimes even new moves. The following rules allow Fighters to access these brand new levels of power.

How Transformations Occur: A character accumulates Transformation Energy in the same way as Super Energy is accumulated in the campaign, although the two resources are tallied separately. However, Transformation Energy is not lost between fights.

Transformation only occurs when the Fighter's Transformation Threshold has been reached. This total is established by the Director based on how often he wants transformations to occur in his setting. Since it is reasonable that a Fighter can easily accumulate 10-20 Transformation Energy every fight, this Threshold may be as low as 50 for campaigns in which transformations occur often, or it could be 500 or more for campaigns in which the transformation indicates a major plot development in the story.

Transforming always occurs in combat and automatically occurs at the beginning of the turn after the Threshold is reached. All other combatants within Range 0 or 1 when the transformation occurs are automatically Knocked Back 1 Range.

Duration of Transformations: Once transformed, a Fighter remains this way for an extended period of time. The Director sets a rate at which Transformation Energy depletes, such as 20 or 25 Energy after each combat. Once Transformation Energy depletes to zero or lower, the character returns to his normal form.

Alternatively, the duration of a transformation could be inversely proportional to the power of the form. In other words, if transformations occur often because of a low Threshold, these forms can also be maintained more easily. On the other hand, a form based on a massively high Threshold may only last for a short time. In these cases, the Director can set a time frame – say, a single fight, the next three fights, or one day in game time, for example. While transformed, the character's Transformation Energy is reset to zero and begins to accumulate anew. If the Fighter can accumulate enough Transformation Energy to transform in that time frame, they can stay in their transformed form for the duration of the established time frame and then the total resets to zero. If at any time the character fails to hit the Threshold, the transformation ends, the total resets to zero again, and the process begins anew.

Example: Shiro is a Fighter in a campaign with a Transformation Threshold of 80. The Director has set a time frame of two fights for the duration of one's transformation. In his last fight, Shiro transformed, so his Transformation Energy total reverted to zero. In his next fight, he accumulates 25 Transformation Energy. This is not equal to his Threshold, but the campaign time frame is two fights, so Shiro still remains transformed. In the next fight, Shiro earns 30 more Transformation Energy, bringing his total up to 55. This is still under 80, and as he has now passed the campaign time frame, Shiro reverts to his normal form. His Transformation Energy also reverts back to zero once again.

If using this alternative method of tracking the duration of transformation, the Director should strive for a balance between the Threshold and the time frame. Having a high Threshold of 300 and a time frame of 20 combat scenes just involves a lot of bookkeeping to essentially say that a Fighter is likely to remain transformed once it occurs. If the point is to keep transformations short in duration, simply make the time frame a single combat. For any Threshold above 30 or so, this will mean transformations will last the duration of the fight in which they occur, one additional fight, and then end.

Alternatively, the Director might just keep things simple and say that all transformations end at the end of the fight in which they occur and Transformation Energy returns to zero to build anew, or even once a transformation occurs, its effects are permanent for the remainder of the campaign. It is even possible that the

transformation is a condition before a Fighter can reach higher Power Levels. For example, the Director might say that a character cannot reach Power Level 6 until his transformation has occurred, and the effects of that transformation remain for the rest of the campaign.

Finally, in some campaigns, Transformation Energy can simply be ignored altogether. Instead, the Director can rule specific story-based conditions for the transformation to occur. It is possible that the Fighters (and the players) do not even know these conditions, but instead the transformation is suddenly revealed. The conditions might include a specific state of mind, some mystic or esoteric occurrence, or even the use of certain chemicals, poisons, magical substances, or technology.

Effects of Transformations: A player must design the basic effects of his Fighter's transformation by the beginning of the Power Level in which transformation becomes possible. If transformations are available at PL 1, they must be designed at character generation. If they only become available at PL 3, a player could design it at character generation or could wait until the character advances to PL 3. Alternatively, the director can design the effects for each Fighter and reveal them to the player on the occasion of the character's first transformation.

A transformation is first defined by its Enhancements. These are changes to the way the character fights. Their effects are mostly the same as the effects of Basic Qualities, but a Fighter's Basic Qualities do not actually change when transformed. The default rule

allows a Fighter to choose four Enhancements from the following choices:

- ❖ Increase all damage by one step (can be selected multiple times)
- ❖ Reduce all damage taken by one step, to a minimum of 1 point of damage (can be taken once or twice, but twice counts as three Enhancements)
- ❖ Increase Initiative die by one step (can be selected multiple times, maximum d12)
- ❖ Increase Accuracy by +1 on all attacks (counts as two Enhancements for each +1)
- ❖ Recover 1 Life Bar at the end of each turn (can be selected multiple times)
- ❖ Add a specific Element to all of a character's Basic and Special Moves (counts as the normal cost in Elements +1)

The last Enhancement is subject to the Director's discretion; some Elements are awkward or unusual if applied to every move and others are too powerful.

A transformation can also be further defined by Special Moves and Super Moves that are only available when transformed. This is a normal Liability, unless the campaign Threshold is greater than 100, in which case, it counts as two Liabilities.

In some settings, characters may go through progressively stronger transformations. Perhaps at the first Transformation Threshold, a Fighter gains a transformation with four Enhancements. The Director may then

establish a different Transformation Threshold for the next level of transformation; while working towards this new level, the Fighter permanently remains at his first level of transformation. When the new Threshold is reached, the Fighter gains another one to three Enhancements on top of the ones that are already in play. This could even be continued for a third or fourth level of Transformation (though, at that point, a Fighter would be ridiculously powerful).

If the campaign has Fighters who have multiple Elemental Effects (described above), they could be tied to Transformations. A Fighter starts with his base Elemental Effect. When a Transformation occurs, the base Elemental Effect also changes to a different Elemental Effect (defined when the Transformation is designed). This option has no additional cost for the character because it makes changing between Elemental Effects much less flexible and could also become a hindrance to the Fighter in the present combat in which the Transformation occurs.

NPC Fighters and Transformations: If PC Fighters are capable of transformations, then it also makes sense that NPC Fighters should also be able to transform. However, it is of little value to try to calculate the Transformation Energy for every NPC Fighter. For NPCs allied with the player characters, transformations can occur around the same time and with the same frequency as the PC Fighters. For opponents, whether or not transformations have occurred should be based on both the narrative and also on what kind of challenge is needed in

the scene. Sometimes the point of the fight scene is to highlight the hero's awesome power, in which case the villain should not also transform in the same battle. Other times, the point of the scene is the opposite, and a transformed villain gets to beat up the hero. And finally, there are the epic showdowns when all characters are showing off their greatest power and everyone is transformed.

PART 3 • SHONEN

COMBAT • ADVANCED

DRAMATIC COMBAT

In a shonen campaign, the only combat system that should be used is the Dramatic Combat system. This rule sub-set best emulates the high-flying, fast-moving action seen in shonen anime and manga, compared to the deliberate tactical precision of the standard combat system. This brief section describes a couple changes to existing rules regarding positioning and environments. The next section contains a number of new ideas and systems to use.

Dramatic Consistency: In a shonen manga or anime, the nature of the narrative will assure that the final victory in any combat scene will be dramatically “earned.” After a 10-minute battle scene, it would be unusual to have it end, for example, with just a random jab. But in a dice-driven role-playing game, such results cannot be guaranteed. However, to encourage these “earned victories,” the Director can rule that, in Dramatic Combat, no Fighter can be defeated with a Basic Move. Only Special Moves can take out another Fighter. If a Basic Move would reduce a Fighter to 0 Life Bar, they remain at 1. If the Director defines the battle as a narratively-appropriate “climax fight,” for example, at the end of an extended story arc, then only a Super Move can finally defeat another Fighter.

Simplified Movement: There are enough options available in the Dramatic Combat system already to

allow Fighters to move quickly, but if the Director wanted to simplify things even further, he could allow a character to move 1 Range for each Action Point spent. This is in addition to the normal movement allowed by the choice of the character's actions.

Environmental Hazards: In the core rules, it is explicitly stated that the rules for Environmental Hazards should not be used in Dramatic Combat. The reason for this is twofold: first, those rules highlight an emphasis on precise, tactical combat that is not in the spirit of the rules for Dramatic Combat. Second, the mobility of characters as displayed in shonen anime often makes such questions of positioning and environment more a matter of cool descriptions rather than such movement actually affecting combat.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Given that the suggestion for a shonen game is to only use the rules for Dramatic Combat, there are times in which the environment might add interesting flavor to a fight. For example, a tournament battle between heated rivals at the climax of a story might benefit from the rules for Ring Outs. A battle along the edge of a cliff might be more exciting if someone might actually fall off. And of course, a battle on floating islands in a river of lava is more interesting if the Fighters could actually push each other to their doom.

Towards this end, the core rules for Environmental Hazards can be vastly simplified for use in the Dramatic Combat system. The game effects of the Hazards remain unchanged (though, given the lower Life Bar of Fighters in the Dramatic Combat system, this

makes these Hazards more dangerous than in the normal rules). However, all references to Distance are simply ignored.

Instead, when the Director sets up a battle with Environmental Hazards, he simply notes that those Hazards are present; Distance is unimportant. Like the core rules, if no Fighter actually seeks to use these Hazards, they have no effect on combat. This even applies to Walls and Ring Outs (contrary to the normal rules).

In order to bring the Hazard into play, a Fighter must move one Range (forward or backward) and make a Maneuver Check. As in the core rules, this is a contested Tactics check rolled on a d6 instead of a d10. If the check is successful, the Fighter trying to maneuver either gains the benefit of a beneficial Environmental Hazard (e.g., a healing fountain or higher elevation) or forces the effects of a negative Environmental Hazard (e.g., a danger zone, falling off a cliff, forced against a wall) on one of his opponents. If the negative hazard is one that has an effect every turn (e.g., some sort of Danger Zone that continues to do damage while one is in contact with it), then that effect happens at the end of every turn until the Fighter moves and makes a Maneuver Check to leave the area.

In the case of a beneficial Environmental effect, if multiple Fighters wish to attempt to stop a character from moving towards it, use the highest Tactics Skill of all the characters and add one for each additional character. When moving an opponent towards a Hazard, only the Tactics Skills of the two characters involved are used.

If a Special Move has an Element that affects the Distance towards an Environmental Hazard when using these rules, anything that moves an opponent towards a Hazard simply means that the attacker can force a Maneuver Check with a +1 bonus, with or without moving.

If desired, these simplified rules for Environmental Hazards can also be used in the core rules. They make Environmental Hazards easier to bring into play, at the price of less tactical precision. Their simplicity also means that the Director could add more features to a battlefield without adding too much extra complexity.

PART 4 • NEW COMBAT OPTIONS

Fighting game combat is a technical affair: there is an emphasis on positioning, a strong defense, the ability to press an offense, and knowing how best to use all of your Special Moves. Shonen combat is an entirely different affair: instead, interesting descriptions of the action combine with consequences derived from the characters' personalities and relationships to make a scene that is far less about technical precision and more about storytelling in the midst of really over-the-top action.

This section adds some new Action Point Options to Dramatic Combat, as well as offering new ways for Skills to be used in combat, including the possibility of winning a combat without throwing a single punch! The goal of these options is to highlight the distinctive characteristics that make shonen combat different from fighting game combat.

Excessive Exposition: This option is in part a send-up of a traditional shonen trope and as such may not be appropriate for all games. Shonen characters talk often during combat, just like the anime and manga versions of their fighting game counterparts. However, a particular kind of exposition happens in shonen in which a character describes his fighting style or special moves in extraordinary detail, either as actual dialogue or as internal monologue, far beyond what seems appropriate in the circumstances. If this style of role-playing appeals to your group and campaign style, any player

willing to do this for his character before using a Special Move can gain +2 damage or the character can gain a +1 bonus on the skill check to start, advance, or defend against a Gambit (see Gambits, below).

Fighting Spirit Options: Fighting Spirit already plays a prominent role in the combat system, but this can be increased even further in order to highlight the specific narrative importance of the concept of “fighting spirit” in the shonen genre. A Fighter who has lost his fighting spirit or one whose spirit is weak is more likely to be defeated in battle.

The Director has several ways in which he can represent this. When a Fighter spends his last point of Fighting Spirit, he automatically loses the combat at the end of the following turn (giving him one last turn to also defeat his opponent before losing). Alternatively, when a Fighter runs out of Fighting Spirit, he then begins to lose Life Bar equal to his Power Level at the end of every turn.

As a more narrative approach to this same idea, instead of any immediate effect occurring to the Fighter who runs out of Fighting Spirit, the character’s opponents instead gain new Action Point options. In lieu of a normal attack, a Fighter can spend an Action Point to make a Skill check against the opponent with no Fighting Spirit. The DL for this check is equal to 7 + the opponent’s PL, or the opponent can oppose the roll with a Skill check of his own. If the attacker’s roll succeeds, the opponent is automatically defeated, as he realizes he no longer has the conviction necessary to win the battle.

The Skills that can be used by the attacker to defeat an opponent with no Fighting Spirit are: Call Forth Wisdom, Draw Ki, Intimidation, Presence, or Reaffirm Purpose (if the Fighter’s purpose applies to the situation). Each of these Skills represents a different narrative effect, which should be incorporated into the description of the attack. Other Skills may be applicable, and certain Qualities may provide bonuses, at the Director’s discretion.

The Skills that can be used by an opponent without Fighting Spirit in lieu of the standard DL are: Grim Determination, Reaffirm Purpose (if the Fighter’s purpose applies to the situation), Realize Potential, or Relationship (if those rules are being used and an appropriate relationship applies to the situation). Other Skills may be applicable, and certain Qualities may provide bonuses, at the Director’s discretion.

Hindering Conditions: Many specific shonen attacks have additional effects beyond damage that freeze, immobilize, stun, or confuse opponents. Rather than create new Elements to generate these kinds of hindering conditions, existing Elements can be “re-skinned” to describe such effects in combat. Of particular note are the Harry Element, Entangle Element, and even the Knocks Down Element. All of these affect an opponent’s Initiative and/or Control and thus can easily represent some effect that slows or confuses an opponent. For example, an attack that freezes an opponent in place could use the Entangle Element. An attack that temporarily confuses an opponent could use the Knocks Down Element, as it makes an opponent both lose an action and possibly reduce Initiative.

Interaction Skills: In place of an attack, a Fighter can spend an Action Point to use an Interaction Skill against an opponent. This can be done at any Range, but a character using this option suffers a -1 on their next defense total (on the same turn or on the following turn). The Fighter chooses the Interaction Skill, describes how it is being used, and rolls a skill check with all applicable bonuses. The target defends with an opposed skill check, using Call Forth Wisdom, Deduction, or Grim Determination (other skills may be applicable at the Director's discretion). If the "attack" is successful, the opponent loses Fighting Spirit equal to 1d10 + the attacker's Power Level. If the attack is unsuccessful, the defender regains Fighting Spirit equal to half his own Power Level (rounded up) and a +2 bonus on the next defense roll against Interaction Skills (from anyone) in the same combat. This option works well thematically in conjunction with the Fighting Spirit options above.

Each Interaction Skill can only be used once in each combat. Each additional use of a different Interaction Skill against the same opponent also suffers a cumulative -1 penalty; if one approach fails to demoralize the opponent, additional approaches are also less likely to have any effect.

If the Director is using the Relationship Skill described above, and the use of this skill would make narrative sense in the scene, it can also be used as an Interaction Skill in this way.

Limited Special Moves: Some shonen combatants emphasize what would be called "Basic" attacks in the core rules, saving Special Moves and using them

more in the way that Super Moves might be used in a fighting game: the fantastic techniques that can only be used sparingly, but which make a huge impact when they are used.

The Dramatic Combat rules already provide for this in a limited way by requiring the use of an Action Point to use a Special Move, but also increasing the Accuracy and damage of such moves. These modifiers can be expanded even further to increase the power of more infrequently used Special Moves.

Instead of one Action Point, a Fighter must expend Action Points equal to the level of the Move to use it the first time in a combat. However, the move receives a series of bonuses based on the level of the move. The Fighter can choose one of the following benefits for each AP used to launch the move:

- ❖ +1 die size to damage (or +1 die size for other effects that affect die sizes)
- ❖ +1 Accuracy
- ❖ +1 to defense total for Special Moves that affect any defense skill
- ❖ +2 time count of duration for Special Moves that have a duration

Stealth Skills: In some situations, one Fighter might be sneaking up on another Fighter to put himself in an advantageous position. Similarly, one Fighter might flee from a battle, in order to move covertly into position to launch a new attack. In the default combat rules, all battles are presumed to begin at Range 3, as this corresponds to the

vast majority of cases in the video game source material. Given the increased narrative focus of shonen anime, other starting positions might be more appropriate.

Stealth rules can be used either on the very first turn of a battle, or on the very first turn after a combatant has left combat (using the rules on p. 179 of the core rules). The stealthy Fighter makes a Stealth skill check (or Lost in the Crowd, if appropriate to the scene). This is opposed by Perception, Danger Sense, Zen State, or Sense Ki. If the stealthy Fighter is successful, then he can choose at what Range combat starts or resumes. If the other Fighter is successful, the starting Range remains three (or four if the other character is re-entering combat after previously leaving).

Three-Point Landing: The three-point landing is a classic anime trope: the Fighter lands after a prodigious leap or after leaping from a great height and lands with one knee on the ground, usually with head bowed. After holding that pose for a moment, the character lifts his head and lets his opponent know that the action has just risen to a new level.

On any turn in which a Fighter has used Athletics or Presence, for any reason, the character can spend an Action Point to land in a Three-Point Landing. This has a number of effects. First, the Fighter earns one Glory. Second, the Fighter can choose to either recover Fighting Spirit equal to 1d10 plus his Power Level or else he can gain a bonus on an Intimidation check on the following turn equal to his Power Level.

Gambits

One of the most distinctive situations in shonen combat is when a Fighter delays attacking his opponent, sometimes through much maneuvering and sometimes through standing perfectly still, and then, with a single move, ends the battle. This may be because of a perfectly executed strike, setting up an opponent to fall victim to a rare technique, or because of some supernatural power. The preparation for such an attack is often accompanied by excessive internal monologuing, by either combatant, as they either describe what is about to happen or wonder what their opponent is doing. This is a Gambit and it requires its own set of rules to use in the Dramatic Combat system.

Starting a Gambit: A Fighter must have Initiative and spend 1 AP in order to begin a Gambit. This is a normal contested Tactics roll and costs FS equal to the opponent's Power Level. It also requires an appropriate narrative description, such as "I maneuver him to a place where he will fall off a cliff," or "I will exhaust all his techniques so he has no more tricks to use against me," or "I will hold him off until I can activate my killing blow." If the Fighter attempting to start the Gambit succeeds on the Tactics check, the turn ends immediately. If the opponent succeeds, he may then act normally, though the Fighter attempting to start the Gambit is considered to be on Full Defense.

Advancing a Gambit: Once a Gambit has been started successfully, the two Fighters can no longer be affected by any other combatants in the same combat. The Fighter who began the

Gambit does not earn AP until the Gambit has concluded. The Fighter who initiated the Gambit is called the Attacker, while his opponent is the Defender.

For the two characters involved, Initiative rolls are ignored for the duration of the Gambit. The Attacker is attempting to advance the Gambit, while the Defender is trying to either undo the Gambit or steal it. To advance the Gambit, the Attacker chooses Tactics, Ki, or any Non-Combat Skill for which he can provide an adequate narrative description (for example, Athletics or Fast Reflexes to move into position, Draw Ki to accumulate power, Smooth Talking to lull the opponent into false confidence, etc.). The Director can decide that a narration is insufficient, but the nature of shonen gambits should allow for a wide degree of leeway in this regard. The Attacker makes a skill check with the chosen skill. The Defender must also choose Tactics, Ki, or any Non-Combat Skill with an appropriate narrative description. Again, the Director should be open-minded about these narrations, but if one seems insufficient (or if it is obvious a player is really stretching just to use their good skills only), then the Defender must use the same skill as the Attacker.

If the Attacker is successful, the Gambit is increased by one Step. Neither the Attacker nor the Defender can ever use the same skill again for a check in the same Gambit; each check for each combatant must use a new skill.

Stealing a Gambit: If the Defender wins the contested skill check, he has two choices. He may automatically reduce the accumulated Steps of the Gambit by

one. If the Gambit had accumulated no Steps so far, both the Gambit and the turn immediately end. Otherwise, the Attacker may then attempt to continue the Gambit as usual. Alternatively, the Defender may attempt to steal the Gambit. In this case, the Defender spends FS equal to the Attacker's Power Level and attempts a contested Tactics check (even if one or both combatants have already used the Tactics Skill during this Gambit). If the Defender is unsuccessful, nothing happens and the combatants move to the next turn. If the Defender is successful, he steals the existing Gambit and keeps the same number of accumulated Steps that the Attacker had already earned, provided the player can provide an appropriate narrative description of what has just occurred.

Ending the Gambit: The Attacker can end a Gambit at any time after it has accumulated at least one Step. Instead of making a skill check to advance the Gambit, the attacker rolls a single d6. If the roll is less than or equal to the number of Steps accumulated, the Attacker automatically defeats the opponent by providing appropriate narration. If the Gambit is unsuccessful, the Attacker receives a number of Action Points equal to half the number of Steps accumulated, round down. After a failed Gambit, the accumulated Steps immediately drop to zero and the Attacker must wait one full turn before trying to initiate another Gambit. Furthermore, after a failed Gambit, the former Defender gains a +1 bonus on the initial Tactics roll to resist the Gambit. If multiple Gambits are attempted and fail in the same combat, this bonus is cumulative (i.e., after two failed Gambits, a 3rd attempt would give the Defender +2 to resist it).

Gambit Glory: A successful Gambit is worth significant Glory. The Fighter earns Glory equal to the opponent's starting Life Bar (which is half the Life Bar noted on the Power Level chart, as this is Dramatic Combat) and an additional amount of Glory equal to the number of accumulated Steps times the opponent's Power Level. This means a successful Gambit is worth between 16 and 98 Glory!

Finally, the Gambit system can also be used as a way to emulate very rare and highly specialized Super Moves that would never come into play by the simple expenditure of Super Energy or Action Points. It might also be used in games that de-emphasize traditional "Special Moves" to represent the powering up necessary to get off a very powerful secret technique.

PART 5 • SHONEN STORIES

This final section contains a listing of various tropes used in shonen stories, especially as they appear in shonen manga and anime. While it is by no means exhaustive, this listing can help both Directors and players remember how aspects of the narrative should be framed in order to maintain the desired tone for a shonen game.

It is also important to note that some of these tropes, while accurate to the shonen genre as a whole, are silly. Your group may want to avoid them unless the campaign is light-hearted in nature or if you want to deliberately poke fun at the genre.

Arc Structure: Shonen plots are typically divided into narrative arcs: big story events centered on a specific setting (like a newly-visited town or country) or theme (like a fighting tournament; see Tournament Arc, below). Every arc typically features a different group of villains more powerful and sinister than the last. Generally, shonen stories begin with shorter, more episodic arcs before an overall plot emerges. Eventually, story arcs become more interconnected and sometimes become long enough to be campaigns in their own right.

The Chessmaster: A series' ultimate villain (or at least the villain of a very long narrative arc) is sometimes a chessmaster. Such a villain tends to stay in the background and manipulate everyone and everything around him or her. If using such a villain, it is very

important for the Director to not overdo the chessmaster's antics, as villains who have orchestrated every important event in the storyline and are never fazed by anything because everything is always going exactly as planned both strain the credulity of even a shonen story and are also frustrating for players, who may come to feel like their actions don't matter.

“Damn, I didn't want to use it yet...“: Characters sometimes pull off entirely new powers and tricks during a difficult battle. That these powers have never been seen before is usually explained away by the fact the character has always known how to do them, but for various reasons had not decided to use them until now. This is an appropriate genre convention (for many genres besides shonen as well), but one must not overuse it as it can also be seen as a weak excuse to justify new and sometimes inappropriate powers. For NPCs, it can also be quite annoying if a villain keeps coming up with new powers to prolong a fight.

Filler: Shonen anime based on manga are often adaptations of manga stories that are not yet completed. As a single episode of an anime series covers far more material than a single chapter in a manga, it is only a matter of time before a studio is in danger of running out of material. For this reason, filler is often employed, which can range from the classic anime-exclusive story (which can give spotlight to characters that are otherwise glanced over in the manga) to various tricks to stretch the existing material to its narrative breaking point. This latter extreme has led to many jokes about certain anime series from the 1980's and 1990's taking forever;

such levels of filler should definitely be avoided in a campaign, unless everyone is having fun with it.

Filler Arc: This is an even larger version of the filler episode above. Instead of an episode, this is an entire story arc's worth of material that is nothing but filler. These are usually employed when the manga on which the anime series is based takes a temporary break, or when the flow of the manga's story doesn't allow for easy insertion of single filler episodes. This is often the source of whole anime-exclusive villain groups who never appear in the manga.

Friendship: In many shonen stories, friendship is the greatest power in the universe. The heroes' friendship towards each other and the supporting characters they meet is the main force that allows them to defeat the villains at the end of every arc. Even the most goofy protagonist becomes dead serious and determined if his friends are in danger.

Glutton: There is a tendency for shonen protagonists to be gluttons. They get hungry at an alarming rate, can only really think about food when they are hungry, get easily distracted by food, and eat at least twice as much as a normal person. This usually serves as comic relief, but it can have some justification, like when the protagonist uses a fighting style or has powers that quickly drain his energy reserves, requiring huge intakes of food to serve as “fuel.” Obviously, this trope is the basis for the Glutton Quirk.

Overspecialization: Even in a setting with only a single power source (see

below), it is very rare to meet two villains or supporting characters who use the exact same powers. Most characters specialize their use of a power source in extreme, creative, and sometimes crazy ways.

Power Sources: Big, flashy special moves have to come from somewhere, so all but the most realistic shonen stories feature some kind of power source to explain them, be it martial arts traditions, ninjutsu techniques, various schools of magic, or other, stranger sources of cosmic power. To allow for more consistency, a single shonen setting has either a single, flexible power source for all characters or a small number of different, but more focused, power sources. In the latter case, the most important heroes and villains tend to stand out by being able to master several different power sources. New arcs and the new villain groups that appear in them are a great way to introduce new power sources.

The use of power sources can fall prey to one of two story-telling traps. Both of these can be the result of the story's success with its readers or viewers, resulting in it running much longer than originally planned. While the Director and players have much more control over this, these issues may still come up. The traps are presented here as their own tropes:

Broken Power: This is what happens when the Retcon Arms Race goes too far (see below). Eventually, a power or power source is revealed that is so "broken" that it can do just about anything, usually serving as the unbreakable plot armor of the main villain. This is hard to do within the rules

of the game, but a similar result can be seen when the Director (or sometimes the players) develops a character specifically around "spot defenses." Such a character has Special Moves and Techniques to address every possible situation they've ever encountered, whether or not such powers actually feel like they form any cohesive whole for the character. This is best avoided.

Gotta Collect 'Em All: When the protagonist has a tendency to entirely master one whole power source per arc, things tend to get silly if the campaign runs on too long. As a variation of "spot defenses" above, characters should not gain mastery of too many different power sources, as it dilutes the very concept and its role in the setting.

Mr. Exposition: As part of the Overspecialization trope, many villains spend a good deal of a battle's start by explaining their powers to their opponent (or rather the audience), usually bragging about how their powers are superior. This can easily become a bit implausible or unrealistic if the exposition takes too long, or if it includes hints to the villain's weaknesses, but it is thoroughly within the conventions of the genre and can add a lot to establishing a shonen tone to the game.

Quirky With Hidden Depth: At first glance, many shonen characters seem to be entirely defined by one or two gimmicks or shticks that become obvious the minute the character gets any screen time. But even the comic relief character is eventually shown to have more depth to his personality and motives.

Retcon Arms Race: This is when a single power source becomes the basis

for more and more broken powers with each story arc. In game terms, this is seen when the effects of one power source are clearly superior (either in mechanical terms or even just story terms) than any other power source. When one source becomes so important or powerful, one begins to wonder why its users haven't already taken over the world decades ago. This should best be avoided.

Tournament Arc: This trope is a particular type of narrative arc. The longer a shonen manga seems to go on, the higher the chance that a tournament arc will occur. Some manga are entirely about tournament arcs, similar to the fighting game stories that are the focus of the core rules. As the name suggests, a tournament arc is all about a fighting tournament, giving the heroes plenty of opportunity to meet and fight a colorful array of opponents that aren't all "villains." This kind of story can offer a nice change of pace, but events during the tournament should still have connections with the overall plot, like having the prize be very valuable for both the heroes and villains. And just like in fighting game tournaments, the people behind the tournament tend to have a much darker agenda...

Villain Group: Villains in shonen stories can range from a one-shot gang of bandits up to a mighty faction who clashes with the heroes over multiple arcs. The key to memorable villain groups is to give each of them a distinct theme. However, even with their own theme, there tend to be some inevitable similarities to the heroes. For example, at least some of the members of the villain group tend to mimic a member of the heroes' group so they can take on

the role of the hero's rival for the story arc. So, for example, a sword master typically ends up fighting other weapon users, while the unarmed martial artist will test his skills against other unarmed martial artists.

Willpower Beats Logic: This is a more general version of the Friendship trope above. Shonen heroes and villains alike tend to pull off phenomenal tasks thought to be impossible by previous generations, seemingly because their willpower allows them to overcome any challenge.



Frangy