

# GAMER GUIDE

DRAGONBALL  
SPARKING ZERO  
EDITION



the need to know you didn't know you needed

# WHAT IS IT?



The latest addition to the Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi series, Dragon Ball: Sparking! Zero is the 4th instalment of the franchise, and the first to use the Sparking! title outside of Japan for its global release. A fighting game based on the Japanese anime and manga Dragon Ball, Sparking! Zero was developed by Spike Chunsoft and published by Bandai Namco Entertainment in October 2024 for PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X/S, and PC.



Boasting an impressive roster of 182 playable characters, from the classic main characters to new faces in the Dragon Ball universe, Sparking! Zero is the first Budokai Tenkaichi game to feature content from Dragon Ball Super and Dragon Ball Daima. Enhanced by Naohiro Shintani's signature animation style from Dragon Ball: Super Broly, Sparking! Zero also introduces destructible stages, further amplifying the series' immersive, high-energy combat experience.

# BREAKDOWN THE BASICS

## Mechanics



## Modes

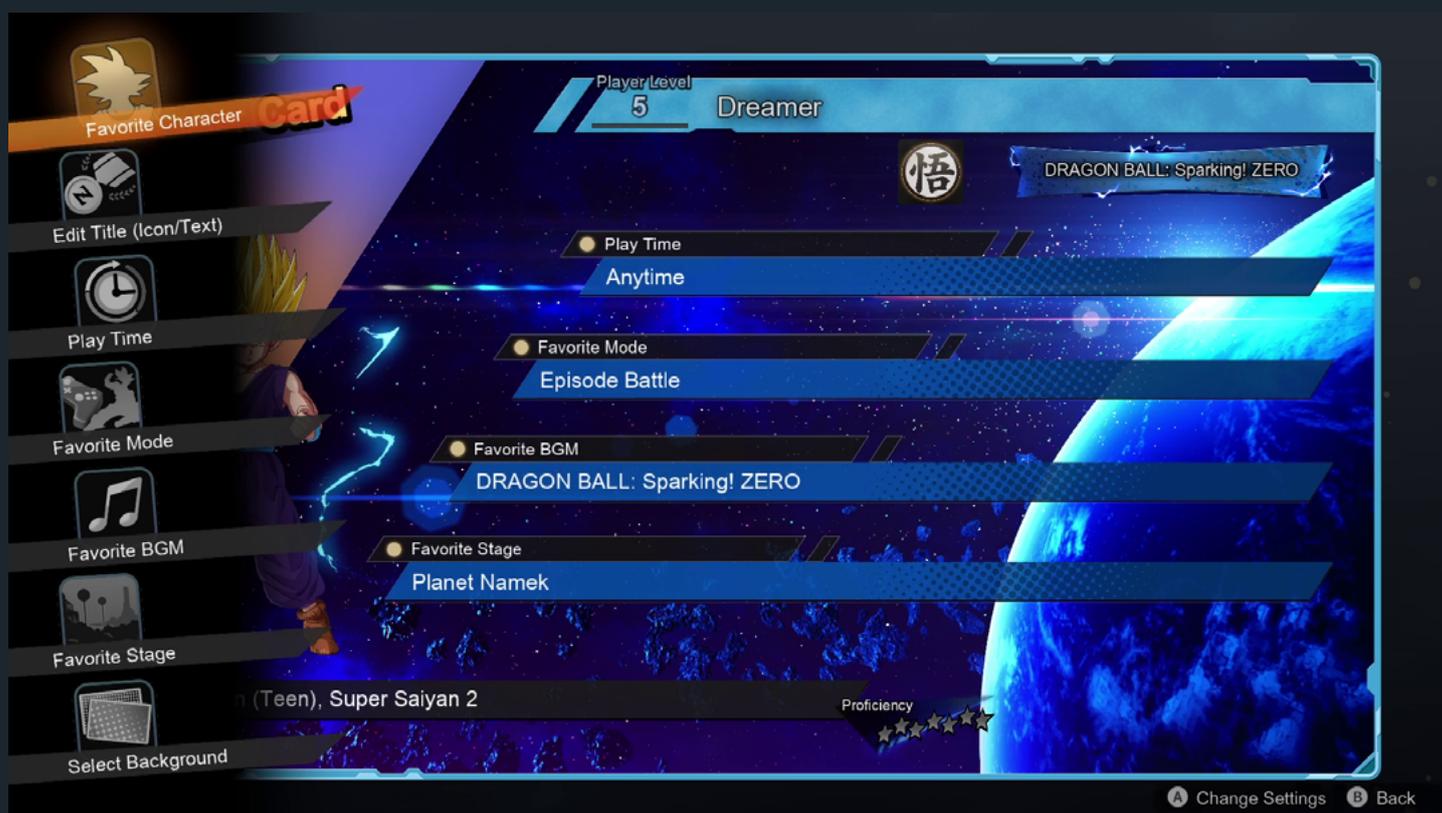
**Episode Battle:** In this single-player mode players can control main characters from Dragon Ball Z and Dragon Ball Super, such as Goku, Vegeta, and Frieza, in story-based battles with intro cutscenes. Some cutscenes are presented in first-person to enhance immersion, and certain stages allow players to make choices that alter the original storyline. Additional characters, like Krillin and Android 17, appear temporarily in certain battles.

**Custom Battle Mode** allows players to create and engage in unique battles with original scenes. It includes Bonus Battles, featuring special scenarios with varied victory conditions and mid-battle event cutscenes. In Edit Mode, players can customise every aspect of a battle, from character selection and stats to camera angles, effects, dialogue, and even background music. These creations can be uploaded for others to experience, but players must first complete their own battles to share them. Bonus Battles can also serve as templates for further customisation.

**Battle Mode:** This mode offers players the chance to compete online in various tournament formats and victory conditions to prove their skills and become a champion. Ranked Matches feature customisable matchmaking options with balanced character cost restrictions, allowing players to face ideal opponents and climb leaderboards. For local multiplayer fun, players can battle friends in split-screen mode, available exclusively in the Hyperbolic Time Chamber.

**Tournament Mode:** In this mode, players can compete in tournaments by either joining or creating one online to challenge rivals from around the world or playing offline against AI opponents. There are a number of tournaments to choose from including:

- World Tournament
- Cell Games
- Other World Tournament
- Tournament of Destroyers
- Tournament of Power
- Yamcha Games





## Characters

With its impressive and diverse roster, the game offers endless ways to engage in epic battles. Each character boasts unique stats that can be influenced by customisation, transformations, or their current form or fusion. Key stats are:

- **Special Attack:** Enhances the power of Blasts and Ultimate Blasts.
- **HP:** Boosts the character's total health pool.
- **Combo:** Increases damage output from combo attacks.
- **Ki:** Improves the strength of Ki Blasts and accelerates Ki charging.
- **Attack:** Amplifies the impact of smash moves and melee strikes.

Based on their stats, characters fall into different categories:

- **Strength:** These characters emphasise raw power, excelling in melee and Blast damage. Despite being slower, their strikes deal heavy damage, and some are resistant to stagger from weaker attacks.
- **Speed:** Speed-focused characters deliver relentless, fast-paced combos, making them hard to catch. Though their attacks are lighter, their agility lets them dominate battles.
- **Ki-Blast:** Masters of ranged combat, these characters excel in maintaining distance with rapid and efficient Ki-based attacks.
- **Giant:** Towering characters with immense strength and a wide attack range. They are immune to certain throws and blasts but are slower and less precise against smaller opponents.
- **Androids:** Androids recharge Ki automatically or through melee attacks instead of manually. Some can absorb Ki attacks to boost their gauge.

The game authentically captures elements from the series, including accessories, abilities, and cosmetics, some of which may influence the characters' gameplay:

- Swords: Iconic swordsmen use their weapons in combos, rushes, and energy-infused attacks, faithfully recreating their signature moves.
- Super Aura: Certain characters radiate powerful, always-visible Ki auras, visually showcasing their immense energy.
- Scouter: Equipping a Scouter boosts your opponent-tracking range, but damage during battle can destroy it, limiting visibility.
- Ground Characters: Unlike others, these characters cannot fly, but they excel in ground-based combat and movement.

There are a wide range of customisation options allowing you to change every character in the game to match your style.

- Outfits: You can change the character's outfit based on your unlocked costumes, and while the outfits are only cosmetic and do not impact the character's stats, they can sometimes change the move set when equipped.
- Accessories: Equip some specific characters with their anime accessories, to reproduce their famous moves or partially change their look.
- Type: This defines the additional characteristics/abilities based on the character type you selected.
- Ability Items: You can enhance characters' abilities through capsules customisations.





## Combat

The combat stays true to the anime with dynamic visuals and iconic combat moves like beam clashes, rush attacks, and ultimate planet-destroying techniques. The reactive battle arenas allow for transformations and powerful moves to reshape the environment, leaving behind epic destruction.

There are 2 control schemes:

- Standard: Optimised for modern gameplay.
- Classic: A nostalgic throwback to the beloved Budokai Tenkaichi controls.

The 3 basics to learn how to be a peak Z fighter are movement, offensive attacks, and defensive attacks. Mastering movement is the first step, offering various ways to navigate the battlefield and outmanoeuvre opponents:

- Step/Short Dash: Quick directional movement, use Step for close-range and Short Dash for evasion at a distance.
- Dragon Dash: High-speed movement, consuming Ki and ideal for closing distances or setting up attacks.
- Z-Burst Dash: Enhanced dash to move behind opponents, consuming more Ki.
- Quick Ascend/Descend: Vertical movements using Ki for tactical positioning.



Take control of the battle with various combos, attacks, and follow-ups:

- Rush Chain Actions: Enables the delivery of long combos and the longer the combo is, the more damage will be dealt to your opponent.
- Smash Attacks: A build-up attack that will blow your opponent away when they hit and are more powerful the longer you charge them up. A Power Smash is stronger than a normal Smash Attack and will knock your opponent farther back.
- Lift Strike: A Lift Strike will send your opponent flying.
- Grand Slash: A Grand Slash directs your attack downwards.

### Speed Move Combos

- Vanishing Assault: Appear and attack your opponent from behind.
- Step-in Rush: Perform a Rush Attack moving in from a step.
- Burst Meteor: Used after a Z-Burst Dash as a follow-up that will slam your opponent down.

### Follow-Up Combos

- Dragon Dash Attack: Used during a Dragon Dash to knock back your opponent.
- Dragon Homing: Used to chase down a blown-away opponent.
- Vanishing Attack: Performs a follow-up attack after Vanishing Assault
- Lightning Attack: When a follow-up is possible, use the Lightning Attack to send your opponent back to the ground
- Throw/Ground Throw: Whether they're on their feet, in the air or they've already been downed, grab your opponent and throw them. A lot of characters in the game have a unique grab attack.



Stay flexible by mastering strong defensive tactics:

- Guards: Block with directional adjustments to protect against varied attacks. Just be aware of Guard Breaks.
- Recovery: Use Ground/Wall Recovery or Dragon Dash Recovery to recover swiftly.

Counters

- Super Perception: Counter strikes using your Ki, effective against Rush and some Blasts.
- Z-Counters: Timely counter during Vanishing Assault exchanges.
- Revenge & Super Counters: Precise counters for powerful retaliations.

Evasion

- High-Speed Evasion: Dodge attacks at the last moment for counter opportunities.
- Step-in Sway: Combine Step and Guard to evade and reposition.

Beyond the standard combos and attacks, players can execute various special manoeuvres that highlight the unique abilities of different characters.

- Transformations: Activate transformations mid-battle to enhance stats and abilities.
- Fusion: Fuse 2 team characters to create a single, stronger character. This transformation is permanent for the match and only be used when 2 characters who can fuse are in your team.
- Switch: Seamlessly swap team members during combat to continue attacks or adapt strategies.
- Sparking! Mode: Charge your Ki beyond the max to enter Sparking! Mode, which enhances abilities, enables endless Ki Blasts, and unlocks powerful moves like Violent Rush and Hyper Smash.



### Quick Time Events (QTEs)

When certain moves are performed at the same time by both players, a dynamic QTE sequence will start. The winner can take advantage in the battle by dealing additional damage and sending his opponent away.

- **Speed Impact:** Clashing Dragon Dashes trigger a 2-stage event:
  - Single Strike: Match the onscreen inputs to win.
  - Rapid Strike: Outperform your opponent for extra damage.
- **Power Impact:** Simultaneous Throws create a strength-based mini-game. Match inputs to dominate the gauge.
- **Crash Impact:** Simultaneous Steps result in a back-and-forth exchange. The winner inflicts damage or counters the attack.
- **Blast Impact:** Colliding energy Blasts initiate a battle of power. Tap quickly to charge your attack and overwhelm your opponent.



## Environment



### Battle Arenas

Dragon Ball: Sparking! Zero releases with 12 different arenas, a fairly small offering compared to previous entries that came with 23 arenas. However, some of the arenas also come with variants in weather and time of day for a little bit of variety. The arenas are:

- Planet Namek
- Open Field
- Rocky Land
- City
- World Tournament
- Tournament of Power Arena
- Hyperbolic Time Chamber
- Land of the Kais
- Islands
- Cell Games Arena
- City Ruins
- Destroyed Planet Namek

# TIPS & TRICKS



## Learn the Z-Burst Dash

In a game that has an abundance of long-range attacks, you may struggle with closing the distance to perform your melee combos. The fastest way to get around this is using the Z-Burst Dash and to instantly zip in behind your opponent and set yourself up to start a combo.

## Use your character's unique skills

All characters in Sparking! Zero possess unique skills that might be easy to overlook, but offer a variety of buffs from healing, damage boosts, and even instant Sparking! activation. Get familiar with their skills and pair them with Special Attacks for maximum impact.

## Control your Ki

The more Ki you have, the more counters you can perform and special attacks you can land. Look for every opportunity to charge your Ki, especially when your opponent is knocked back or grounded and they can't interrupt the charging process.



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# CONCLUSION

Despite concerns surrounding the tiny selection of battle arenas and other notable missing franchise content, *Dragon Ball: Sparking! Zero* has emerged as a great success. There's enough unlockable content, alternative story paths, and great visual effects to satisfy any *Dragon Ball* fan, and the tricky but fun combat mechanics make for an engaging experience once they're mastered.