Everywhere At Once

By BluEG

Preface:

I'd like to begin with an apology…well, rather a confession to my fellow Luigi mains. I have, for the most part, given up on this character, but do not misinterpret that as seeing him as inviable. On the contrary, the viability I see in Luigi is reason that I can't continue on. The excellence, precision, and ingenuity required to play this character to the level that I envision is far beyond my physical capabilities, but I'd like to take a moment to share that vision with you all.

Slightly less than 2 weeks after posting this guide I will be leaving to hike the Appalachian Trail. I have a lot of thinking to do on whether I will continue to play this game competitively or if I will continue to play Luigi. Maybe my decision will change but we shall see.

I: Controlling Space

I see SSBM as a game of potentials. At any moment I control an amount of space dictated by the speed of my character and the hitboxs at my disposal. If I can place a hitbox in a portion of the stage, I 'control' that portion. If my opponent's hurtbox intersects with the portions that I control, I can hit them. So what does this mean?
Imagine a ball, raised in your hand. In your palm it lies in wait, storing potential energy, waiting to be dropped. These hitboxs are my potential energy. If I see a vulnerable opponent in the space that I control tap into that potential.

Luigi's speed of movement using wavedashes, wavelands, and jumps, coupled with Luigi's fast and powerful aerials, smash attacks, and tilts, effectively gives Luigi the largest control of space out of any character in the cast.

> ### Luigi is EVERYWHERE at once. (potentially)

I firmly believe with practice and with extreme precision, Luigi can be played in an optimal manner that stacks up to the highest tiered characters in the game.

II: Movement

Ground movement for most characters is relegated to the following:

- Dash
- Walk
- Wavedash
- Pivot

The direction that you face and the mix of movement options create infinitely many permutations and sequences that you can use to navigate the stage, trick your opponent, and dance around their space. Luigi's properties as a character give him a movement options unavailable to the rest of the cast. Well, let me rephrase that. They ARE available to other characters, but they become so exaggerated on Luigi that only then do they become notably useful and open the door to yet another technique that IS exclusive to Luigi.

Ground movement options for Luigi include:

- Dash
- Walk
- Full-WD
- Mid-WD
- Short-WD
- Pivot

I've lumped the WD lengths into three major groups, but really, any distance in between is fair game. "But wait, BluEG, can't other characters adjust their WD lengths too?" Yes. They can, but Luigi's Full-WD is so long that the differences of length and speed you can achieve are so great that they are fundamentally different options. So already, Luigi's ground movement options are double than that of most characters, but there is another technique that his long wavedash enables. At any point while Luigi is sliding in his WD, he can input a pivot to stop instantly in place. Not only can he stop at any point, he can stop AND place a hitbox-without continuing to slide. With all these options, Luigi can achieve an extreme amount of control of where he is and where he can be on the stage.

> ***To master Luigi, you must master his movement.***

Let's imagine FD, but ignore the art that makes up the stage, and ignore the Luigi character model. Instead, let's imagine FD as a horizontal line, and Luigi as a Circle in the center. The orange stops represent the limit to our wavedash and the arrows represent the ledge. Forgive me if the lines are not proportional to the actual size of FD, as I am drawing from memory.

Picture Luigi as a slider along this line. With careful and exact precision through WD lengths and pivots, Luigi has the potential to quickly slide to and stop at any position between the orange lines. In other words, he has the potential to control every pixel of space along this line. Think about that for a second…the amount of space he occupies at any given moment is ASTOUNDING.

Learning to move to every possible position with speed and precision is a great task, but it can be done, and it is a key to the mastery of Luigi.

While Luigi's movement excels on the ground, the same is not true of the air. The speed and control of the ground is immediately lost as soon as he takes to the skies, but don't take this as a condemnation of jumping. Luigi's aerials are some of his most powerful tools, so we will find ourselves in the air quite often to take advantage of them. The key thing to focus on is a quick transition between the air and the ground. By fastfalling and wavelanding (pivoting as needed), Luigi can quickly assume his role on the ground after using an aerial attack. The common technique of performing two aerials in one short-hop PREVENTS this transition. I cannot stress this point enough; double aerials are a relic of a slower Meta. They are not a bad option by any means, but they take away from Luigi's strength in speed and movement.

Even while airborne, Luigi STILL controls all this space because of his waveland.

Platforms add an extremely diverse and complex element to Luigi's movement in relation to wavelanding and transitioning between the ground and air game. Mastering movement on platforms is crucial to the Luigi I envision, but the topic goes beyond the scope of what I'd like to talk about. Simply note that wavelanding between each of the platforms and the ground only does more to add to the vast amount of space that Luigi already occupies.

One last caveat I'd like to touch upon before moving on from the subject of movement is that Luigi slides…a lot. He slides in shield, after wavedashing, walking, and quite frankly at random times.

If you are sliding, you are not in control.

We must minimize the times that we slide to retain control of Luigi. If we wavedash, use an attack, and continue to slide, this is NOT optimal. Stopping (pivot) in place to properly space the attack *is* however.

III. Ledgegame

The ledge for Luigi is an interesting place. According to most Melee doctrine, the ledge is an unsafe position, and the positions leading up the ledge are similarly unsafe. Typically, a player wants to control center stage, but Luigi's properties add an element to the ledge that transforms it from a position of pressure into a viable and useful offensive tool. Please note that if you are not frame perfect at ledge-dashing (wavedashing off of a ledge) this entire section is inapplicable.

Because of its importance, I want to start off by explaining how to learn the timing and motion to perform a perfect ledgedash.

You will suicide A LOT as you perfect Ledgedashing. DO NOT get discouraged.

The components of a ledgedash are:

- Grab ledge
- Let go of ledge
- Jump
- Airdodge horizontally

The first component seems out of place, but it is actually extremely important in the sense of the way you grab the ledge. You MUST learn how to sweet spot with double-jump and Up-B. Also, as you approach the ledge with a wavedash, you must input a fastfall right after leaving the edge of the stage to quickly grab the ledge. Grabbing the ledge quickly and efficiently is imperative to making ledgedashes seamless and smooth.

As a side note, there is a technique that you may recognize Abate perform in which he uses an attack right at the edge of the stage and then grabs ledge. While I don't personally do this exact tactic, Abate has proven its usefulness. Essentially, while sliding into the ledge with an attack, Luigi's momentum carries over and you can fastfall to the ledge immediately when the attack's animation is finished.

The last three inputs occur almost simultaneously and must be input at the exact moment that Luigi can let go of the ledge in order to maximize the invincibility frames available.

To let go, you hardly need to press down or away. I recommend you stall on the ledge, jumping in place and regrabbing repeatedly until you bring the pressure required to an absolute minimum. This makes it easier for you to move the joystick to a horizontal position before pressing L/R.

How do we know the correct time to let go?

There are three cues we can use to determine this.

- Visual: You can use either of these visual cues. After the frame they appear, Luigi can let go
  - There is a little bubble that appears at the edge
  - Luigi's legs kick back a little bit
- Auditory: Luigi makes a "Heahhh" sound. After the clip plays, Luigi can let go
- Sensory: The controller rumbles after grabbing ledge. Let go when the rumble is over.

All three are viable ways to learn the timing, but one is superior to the others. In a tournament setting, we want to watch our opponent, so that knocks out visual. Also, tournaments are loud places, or we want to listen to music as we play, knocking out the auditory cue. That leaves us with the rumble. If you don't already play with rumble, I HIGHLY recommend you do, it only adds a sense for us to use in perfecting timings not only for ledgedashing, but for dashdances and wavedashes as well.

Now that I've covered the mechanics of ledgedashing, what does it actually allow Luigi to do? Let's return to our picture of FD from the previous section.

The ledge actually represents either end of our slider; however, while most character's offensive options on the ledge are limited to aerials, Luigi actually STILL controls the space up the orange line with any ground attack. Not only that, up to the new green line, Luigi is INVINCIBLE! No more Marth hitting you with Fsmash, Luigi literally slides right through any attack your opponent tries to land in front the green line. A lot like the transition from the air to the ground, Luigi can quickly transition from the ledge into an extremely potent ground-based threat both when he retreats in the neutral game and when he recovers after being knocked offstage.

IV. The Dance

Let us consider not only the space that Luigi controls, but ALSO the space that our opponent controls. The shape and range of this space changes as the characters move across the stage and interact with each other, but there is one fundamental fact I'd like to highlight upon.

> ***Luigi almost ALWAYS controls more space than his opponent.***

How do I use that knowledge to my advantage? Well, I can safely land an attack on an opponent who is vulnerable and in the space that I control. If I control more space than my opponent, I can almost guarantee that this situation will occur more often for me that it does for him! Essentially, I know that if I am out of range of my opponent's options, I will never get hit, but since Luigi's range is so large, I can orchestrate situations in which I am *just* out of range of my opponent, but they are in range of me.

An optimal Luigi 'dances' at the edge of his opponents range using his diverse array of movement options-and much like a coiled snake, he waits for an opportune moment to strike.

V. Follow-ups

Luigi can follow-up (nearly) any hit on reaction. Because the amount of space Luigi potentially controls is so large, any attack you land will usually send your opponent into another portion of the stage that you can occupy. This lends itself to Luigi's incredibly organic (and sometimes simple) combo game. There are some obvious follow-ups that we use often like Uptilt/DownSmash to Dair, Jab to Grab, Up-Air to Chop, but I do not want to focus on mastering these preprogrammed autocombos. To master Luigi we must learn complete control over the space we occupy and craft a move-set selection and playstyle that allows us to maximize that space in order to follow-up EVERYTHING.

Like I previously stated, these pictures are not proportional, do not take them at face value, I am only using them to illustrate a concept.
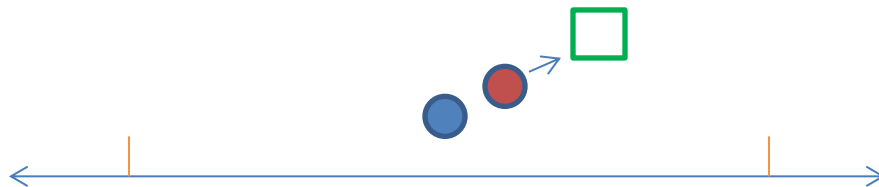

This picture represents a mid-weight character at roughly 50% after being hit by the first frame of Luigi's SH-UpAir. The arrow is their trajectory and the green box is roughly the place they will be after their hitstun expires. After every successful hit, I make a quick calculation in my head, "Do I control the space my opponent is heading? Will my opponent be out of hitstun before I reach that space? If I have multiple options that control that space, is there an otpion that will lead to an easier follow-up if I use one over the other?" The goal of the puzzle is to craft a sequence of attacks that make for longest and most successful punish possible. To do this, often we should use an attack that keeps the opponent close and sends them into space we control.

Let's say that my mind has assessed that this is a situation that I can land a followup. Let's start by figuring out what position Luigi needs to be in.
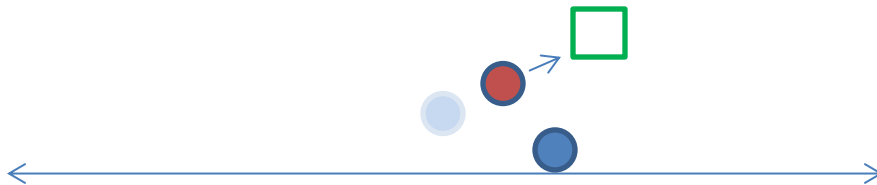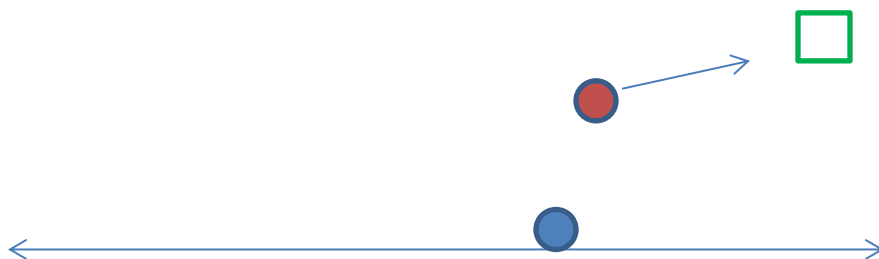
First we need to get to this position with a FF and waveland. From here we can input a jump and perform an aerial to control the space in the green box. We can full hop and:
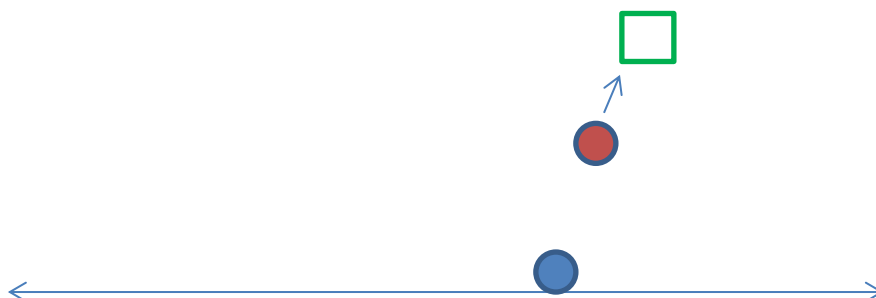
- UpAir
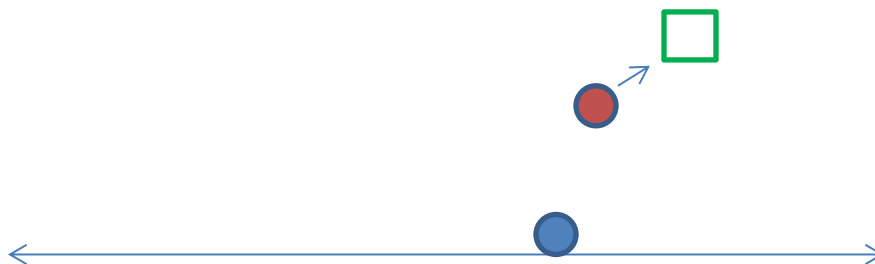
- Fair

- Rising->Nair (soft hit)

An up-air is a decent choice in this situation, however variation of DI works against us and the opponent will likely be sent out of our space. A Fair hits the opponent too far away for a follow-up (But it does send them far towards the edge of the stage).

The best option seems to be a rising Nair, after which you can double jump and Fair/Dair, finishing the combo and sending your opponent offstage.

Let's consider the same situation, however, this time we will not be able to get a guaranteed follow-up.
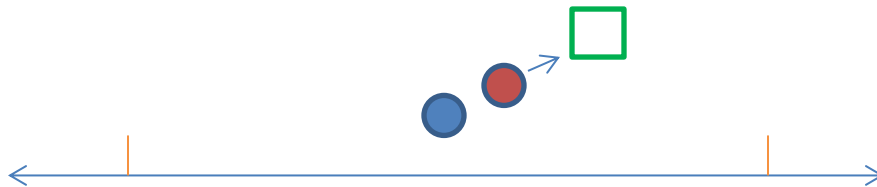
Even in situations that a follow-up is impossible, Luigi's speed and range give the illusion that there is one.

Because of this illusion, an opponent will often work to avoid the impossible follow-up (An aerial in the green box). The likely thing that will happen, is that your opponent will double jump away. So we're left with something that looks more like this:
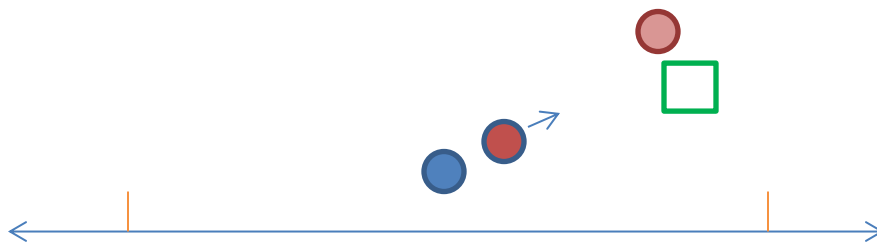
After they double jump, they will begin to fall, so we actually want to control the space in the new green box. We can repeat the same process as before to figure out the best course of action.

This will not work if you are not 'everywhere at once'. Use Luigi's range to your advantage. Make your opponent FEAR your range.

VI. Techchasing

I believe that Luigi can techchase 100% on reaction with practice. The key concept is positioning Luigi at the apex of the tech and inputting the correct follow-up. The follow-up will usually be a down-smash, up-tilt, or grab depending on your opponent's percent.

Let's go back to our example from the previous section, but this time the opponent is a fastfaller, and they will have to tech before escaping hitstun.
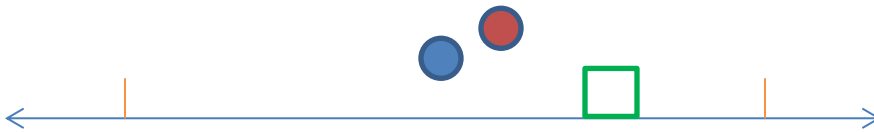
Now the green box represents the place on the stage that the opponent will begin their tech. To techchase by reaction, we most move and stop at that position or as close to that position as we can BEFORE our opponent begins their tech. An optimal Luigi would waveland and pivot or dashdance at that spot. Now here is where things get interesting…this movement is inherently deceptive. While we have placed ourselves in a position that puts every tech option into space that we control, most players will see the Waveland to the right as a commitment to that option-they think you'll be covering the option to tech away! So with that in mind, most opponents will tech into the stage instead.

Reaction speed greatly increases when reacting to an expected event.

Note trends that you observe in relation to your opponents actions when you input certain movements and techniques. Use them to your advantage to aid your mind in reacting to favorable situations.

VII. Everywhere At Once

This essentially concludes the main points I'd like to talk about. I'm not here to give you specifics. I'm not here to tell you to Up-tilt here or Down-smash there. I AM here to challenge you.

Master Luigi in the way that I cannot, explore the space that he occupies, and the speed at which he moves. Literally embody the idea that Luigi can attack everywhere, move everywhere, and control everywhere at the blink of an eye. He is a dormant volcano, a vast storage of potential waiting to be tapped. Will YOU be the Luigi to crack the code and erupt onto the competitive scene? Will YOU be to Luigi as Amsa is to Yoshi? I challenge you. It won't be easy, but I tell you, it can be done, and I hope that by reading this you can gain some insight and see the light at the end of the tunnel.

-BluEG