

H.I.T.

(Heroes In Training)

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Design

Summary:

H.I.T. is a side-on (2.5D) fighting game with a high focus on mobility and accessibility. The player will play as one of the cast of “Heroes in Training” in player vs player fights in order to achieve victory against their opponent. It has a compelling story with mature themes that will be told through a separate platform such as comics and animated shorts, as well as intriguing hints at characters' stories through voice lines and interactions in game.

Overview:

Unlike similar games in the fighting genre such as Tekken 7 (2015) and Street Fighter V (2016), H.I.T. will not take several hours to understand the basics. In order to achieve this, we will remove unnecessary or counterintuitive systems that people unfamiliar with fighting games may struggle to learn. Such components include dashing, blocking by moving away from the opponent and the game will include dedicated buttons for shielding and jumping.

Removing a dash function and having a dedicated block button allows for a far more mobile style of play, encouraging players to use a more engaging aggressive style of play and having the block be on a limited resource similar to “D.va” of Overwatch (2016) or Super Smash Bros Ultimate (2018) will only serve to further enhance this playstyle. This also opens the possibility of using unique movement abilities to balance characters, far more than any similar titles in the genre, seeing as all characters will require them to close the gap, this includes factors such as movement speed and aerial manoeuvrability with the ground being considerably less safe due to limited blocking resources.

Similar to other games of the genre; the player will be able to choose from a range of unique characters with varying playstyles. However, we will learn from the successes and trappings of past games by developing a multimedia narrative-based platform to engage the audience. In simplification, we will use a media platform alongside the game to tell stories using the characters from H.I.T. such as a comic series or animated shorts. Which given the proposed mature rating of the game and intricately developed game world could serve to fill a role in the market that's of high demand at the moment, with similar successes including Umbrella Academy (2019), Invincible (2021) and game successes like Overwatch (2016) with a large audience engaging primarily with their animated shorts and graphic novels.

Plot and Setting:

H.I.T. is set in a superhuman society, where a select few (~15-20%) are born with mutations called “charisms” that have given them inhuman superpowers. Those who are ‘gifted’ to be born this way are dubbed “Chosen” and most are encouraged from a young age to use their powers for good, to protect humanity from those who seek to harm it or worse; those who choose to use their ‘gifts’ for evil. Not all choose to follow this path and many just aren't cut out for it but those who do are known as heroes.

Chosen or not at the age of 18 any person is valid to try out for a H.I.T. (Heroes in Training) program and earn their hero licences over the course of 3 years. The game is focused on a powerful, talented, and somewhat dysfunctional generation starting their first year of the HIT program.

The game and story will contain mature themes (sex references, drug usage, violence, and strong language). However, will not necessarily be a dark story akin to many predecessors such as X-men (1963) and Umbrella Academy (2019). Also, it will be less focused on using mutations as an allegory for darker themes such as racism, as this is an overplayed trope in many superpowered society stories. Instead, they will represent a choice, a person can be born with powers but without a deep found desire they cannot become a hero. It's a commentary on how not all men are created equal, less so on the discrimination that we face but on the strength of will we all must have to face the weight of living and achieve our dreams.

Game Pillars:

The game pillars of H.I.T. are Accessibility, Agility, Individuality, and Interaction:

Accessibility:

- A key feature of the game is its accessibility. From new players to seasoned professionals, anyone should be able to pick up and play this game.
- This will be made possible with relatively simple to learn control scheme that leaves room for mastery.
- There is also the element of having platforms that run in tandem with the game. Yes, this is a marketing feature for the game and it's brand but it is also a way of granting accessibility. Unlike single-player story-based games, difficulty options in a 1v1 PvP fighting game aren't as easily or fairly implemented.
- Having multiple platforms allows a way for people that have become interested in and invested in the world and characters is a way for elderly players and players with mechanical disabilities to enjoy the game without needing to play.

Agility:

- The agility pillar of H.I.T. refers to it's focus on freedom of movement and pacing of fights.
- Similar to how movement-based shooters and tactical shooters fill separate gaps in the market, many of the mainstream fighting games (Street Fighter, Tekken, etc) have relatively restricted movement with a high focus on strategy and precision.
- H.I.T. aims to fill the gap in the market on the other side of the spectrum. With less focus on precision and more on speed, movement, and style.
- All characters should have unique and interesting movesets that allow for an accommodation of this playstyle.

Individuality:

- Playstyles are a big part of this pillar.
- While all characters should accommodate the overall fast-paced, flashy playstyle of the game they should all bring something unique to the table.
- By making every character distinct H.I.T. should be able to accommodate a wide range of individual playstyles.
- With the simplicity of the control scheme structure there should be less of an emphasis of an individual character having a certain playstyle but instead a character should be a unique set of tools for the player to impart their own playstyle upon

Interaction:

- The final pillar of H.I.T. is interaction. This refers to a number of features of the game.

- The interactions between the characters in-game in order to give lore hints and give depth to the world.
- The interaction between players, with a game that's main focus is PvP gameplay, it is important to foster a caring and fun community from step one. Controlling the ways in which players can communicate with one another is key to keeping the player base caring toward one another.
- The importance of communication cannot be stressed enough with games developing negative stigmas around them not due to gameplay, but the toxicity of the playerbase itself e.g., League of Legends (2009) and many first-person shooters.

Mechanics:

Attacks

- There will only be two types of attack in this game however they will vary based on what direction the player performs them and whether they are on the ground or in the air. This brings the total number of attacks each character has up to 16, excluding grabs and super combos.
- The two attacks consist of standard attacks that will vary in speed and reach depending on the character and special attacks which are far more unique to the individual characters. A special attack's purpose can range anywhere from mobility to block punishment to high damage and will only vary slightly in the air unlike standard attacks that will have completely different aerial forms.
- This two-attack button system makes it very intuitive for not only new players to the game but new players to the genre. Whilst still allowing for enough possibility for more advanced players to still enjoy the game at a higher level.
- The reason the total number of attacks is 16 and not 20 is because unlike other fighting games of the genre the player will not automatically face the opponent. Instead, they will only face the direction the player moves them more akin to fighting games like Super Smash Bros. The purpose for this is so players can utilise movement to engage or disengage, but also; so the player cannot spam neutral attacks to punish players that make the effort to manoeuvre behind them.
- A player wins when their opponent's health reaches zero.

Blocking

- As previously mentioned, blocking will be on a limited resource meter (Shield). While one is blocking, they become unable to move unless they roll out of a block at the cost of some shield (rolling does not grant i-frames) or dropping block and moving again.
- Having the block up will also slowly drain shield over time. The only way to regain lost shield is to not block and allow the meter to regenerate over time.
- Attacking an opponent who is blocking will cause a slight amount of knockback to them as well as costing them a chunk of the shield resource. However, if the opponent releases block at the moment the attack hits it will negate all shield damage and cause knockback to the attacking player. This system is called parrying and it makes for the perfect escape from being cornered; it is risky for the blocking player to pull off whilst not being too punishing for the attacking player either.
- Grabs completely negate blocks. Grabbing a blocking opponent does no shield damage and just damages the opponent's health.
- When you run out of shield resource, either by blocking for too long or having an opponent break it, the player will enter a dazed state. While a player is dazed their movements and

attack speed are greatly reduced and they will be unable to block until the shield resource completely refills.

Grabbing

- Grabs are a very short range, medium speed attack that are used primarily to punish blocking players. If a grab connects it will do a high level of damage as well as throwing the blocking opponent behind the player.
- Whilst grabs are less effective for cornering opponents, they are a safe way of punishing a blocking opponent. Avoiding the risk of being parried as well as doing damage to the opponent's health.
- Because players are stationary when blocking in this game, grabbing an opponent is far more intuitive than other 2.5D fighters like Street Fighter or Tekken.
- However, with its short range and attack speed, missing a grab is still a punishable possibility.

Movement & Passives

- As described before the player will not be given generic movement abilities like dashing or sprinting. Instead, all characters have a higher base movement speed and can use their special attacks to manoeuvre in the air on the ground depending on the character they picked.
- However, the movement speed of each character will vary slightly as well as things like hitbox size. This allows for trade-offs in higher damage characters being slower and easier to hit vice versa. A staple in most modern competitive level games.
- As well as varying attack speed and power, movement speed, hit box size and special attacks; each character will have a unique passive that will enhance their playstyle. For example, Lancelot (a character that carries a sword and shield) may have a passive that removes the gradual shield decay of blocking.

Combos:

- To remove the element of unfairness that comes with super-moves in games like Super Smash Bros., where a super move consists of pressing one button and automatically killing someone, H.I.T. will implement super combos.
- Super combos will work up a gauge over the course of a round from dealing damage in quick succession.
- Once the super combo gauge is filled the player will be able to use a super combo that is unique to their character - each character will only have one to be in fitting with both the individuality and accessibility pillars.
- Once the super combo is used the gauge is immediately completely drained regardless of if the attack lands or not.
- If a combo lands an epic cinematic will play that is unique to your chosen character.
- These combos will be difficult to pull off, slow and have relatively small hit boxes. On top of this the damage will be high but not incredibly so.
- The point of these combos is not to automatically win the game but to implement the 'rule of cool' and reward the players metaphorical style points for playing well.

Art

Artstyle:

Potential Artstyles:

- Cel-shaded (in fitting with the more comic book artstyle that super-heroes were popularised with)
- 2D, 3D hybrid (for a lack of better words the newer style of animation popularised by Into the Spider-Verse (2018) and Arcane (2021) that combines 2D and 3D elements in a stylish fashion)
- Hyper realism (to reflect the human side of the super humans that the game's narrative emphasises)
- 2D animation with 3D hitboxes (by laying 3D hitboxes atop 2D animation, it allows for more unique animation styles whilst still maintaining the same gameplay functionality)
 - Hand Drawn (similar to the smash hit Cuphead)
 - Eastern Style (employing techniques used in anime)
 - Cartoon (employing the techniques used to make superhero animations)

Maps:

Space:

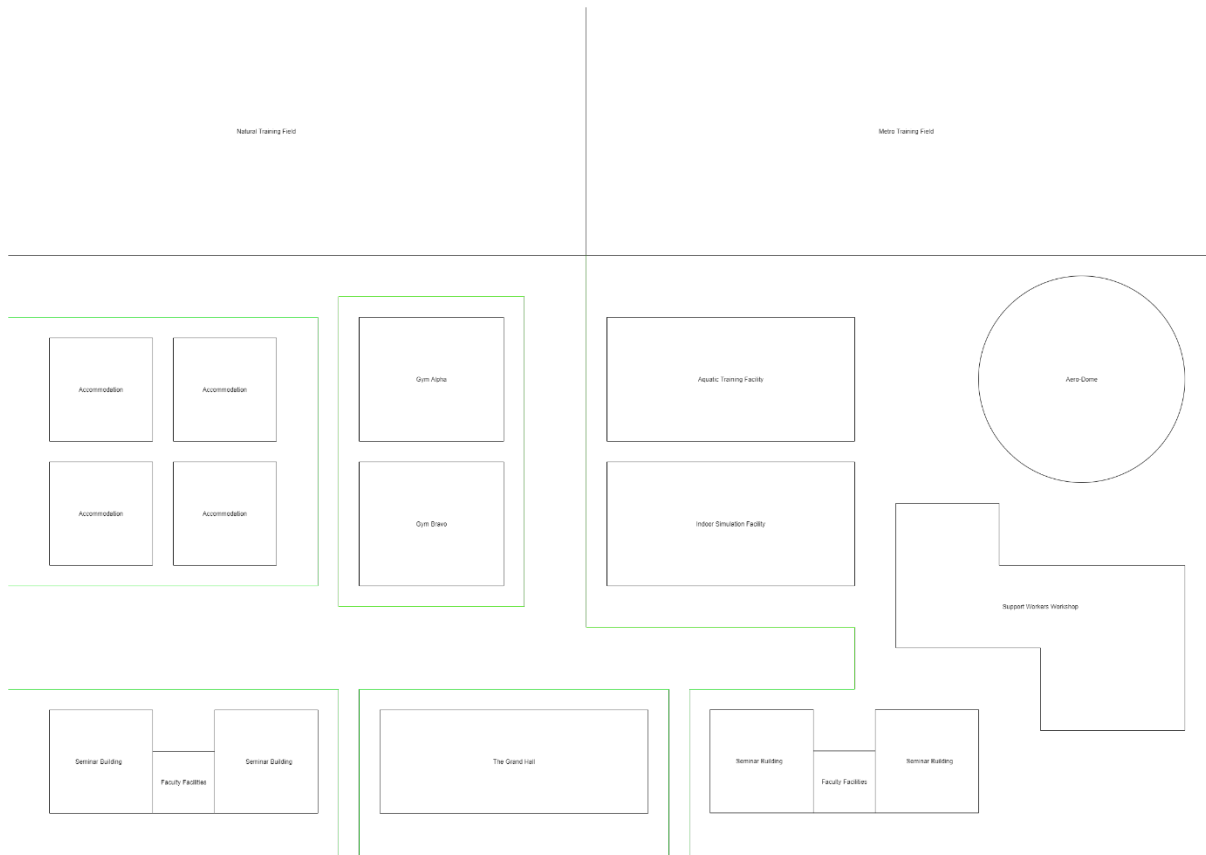


Figure 1 – UK H.I.T. training facility.

- Figure 1 is an example of how the space would be laid out.
- Taking inspiration from present day university campuses, this is a space designed to facilitate learning first and foremost.
- However, it also has to facilitate rigorous physical training for people of varying power sets and to train them in numerous rescue and combat scenarios.
- The variation of training facilities should make for multiple very interesting maps just from one narrative spot.

Existing examples:



Figure 2 - Original Times Square, Guilty Gear Strive, Arc System Works, 2021.

- Figure 2 is an example of what the Metro Training Field could look like.
- This facility is designed to simulate disaster management and combat training in a densely populated metropolitan area.



Figure 3 - Forgotten Waterfall, Street Fighter V, Capcom, 2016.

- Figure 3 is an example of what the Nature Training Field could look like.
- A training ground designed to test combat and disaster management in a natural environment with more environmental hazards and natural disaster potential.

Narrative

Environment:

The world that H.I.T. is set in is a one not too dissimilar from our own. A near distant future of earth where man has just passed the early stages of Charism's being an accepted part of society. Bar a few minor technological advancements the world mostly stagnated after solving the energy crisis, new diseases would replace the old curable ones and so on. It is neither dystopian nor utopian; it is how it always has been, in a constant state of unrest to inspire humanity to live on.

The biggest change between our times in fact is the Chosen becoming a part of the day to day. Many doctors, scientists, entrepreneurs and so on have been inspired by the change of man and one way or another have used it to grow. So, the old concrete jungles have been adapted to fit the society of a new type of mankind. But beyond this the environment is much the same as it is today.

Culture:

Chosen & Charisms:

Again, akin to our own world all areas have their own cultures; some are more accepting of a Chosen society, and some are less so. However, a vast majority have come to accept the existence of Chosen and have long since moved past it. There are still some that whilst not outright accepting them harbour no ill will towards the people but are frustrated by the notion that a portion of the money they earn goes toward adapting the world to suit them.

There are still a handful of religious zealots that believe Charisms to be the work of either the divine or the unholy. They preach that it is a test by God and mustn't be seduced by its power. However, for the most part this is just how they were nurtured to be and so upon meeting those who are Chosen many are disillusioned to this way of thinking and realise they are men and women just like them. So, for the most part there is little civil unrest on the existence of Charisms and Chosen.

Similar to how firearms have become an accepted part of living in America, with the key difference that there is no choice for humanity in the existence of Chosen and Charisms bar the unthinkable and somewhat impossible option of genocide. So, hero agencies were the world's most feasible and only working option to fight fire with fire. The middle ground of allowing the world governments to vet those seeking to use their powers for good with the H.I.T. program whilst not having to fund their work.

Hero Work:

Initially the world governments struggled to put together hero programs. However, it soon became apparent that they were all doomed to fail one way or another. Some tried to undergo the undertaking of hero agencies as we see them now, but none had the funding to organise such a large-scale operation. Others tried to form much smaller scale hit squads, however, this proved useless at fighting the fires that were appearing all over the globe and lacked any form of public support. This losing battle became known as "the chosen working crisis of 22".

So, a compromise was born from the struggle. The United Nations agreed to allow the private sector to fund and run hero agencies under the proviso that they would abide by the rules and regulations that had been set out. Once a deal had been struck it allowed the world governments to focus their

efforts on other matters such as developing secure facilities for holding Charism powered criminals and of course the H.I.T. program.

Similar to guilds, agencies will gather all types of contracts, big or small, under one roof. Heroes that work for the agency will then be able to claim these jobs (depending on if their reputation matches the required level). Certain jobs are bigger and higher paying, depending on how high paying a certain job is it may only be available to top heroes or groups of normal heroes.

Agencies will always pay in full for jobs completed within the given parameters but will take a small percentage as a finder's fee to keep the agency running. Due to this, many heroes will try to use an agency as a springboard early on in their career to get enough of a reputation to start their own, however, this is an option only really feasible to top heroes so many stick with agencies for their whole careers.

Hero agencies will often have support workers on staff 24/7. These workers will make repairs and alterations to support items and costumes, which is often needed after dangerous contracts. Support workers also require licenses to make alterations to support items and costumes. However, whilst not required to in the hero agreement, many H.I.T. courses also offer support courses too. This allows support workers in training and heroes in training to work in tandem and support workers in training can practise their craft on heroes that are not in immediate danger. Support workers will also use reputation gained from heroes wearing their work to go freelance, but most start out working for hero agencies.

Law:

If someone hopes to become a hero, they must first earn a license from a H.I.T. course. This allows the state to vet individuals before allowing a less regulated use of their powers. Beyond using one's Charism in the extreme case of self-defence, use of powers to harm another individual is strictly prohibited. In fact, because Charisms vary so greatly from one individual to the next unless someone acquires a "chosen work license" or hero license, they are not allowed to use their Charisms in public at all.

Because the United Nations agreed on a specific set of criteria for the H.I.T. course, acquiring a hero license allows a person to undertake hero work in any country and even grants them a hero work visa. After the UN met to discuss the chosen working crisis of 22, they signed the "hero agreement". Here is the simplified version of the hero agreement: each country must have one H.I.T. course, to work as a hero a person must acquire a hero license, heroes are only admitted to use non-lethal and non-excessive force, hero agencies that have signed a hero not following these policies will be punished alongside the offending hero and any criminals detained by heroes must be turned in to the authorities as soon as possible.

Timeline:

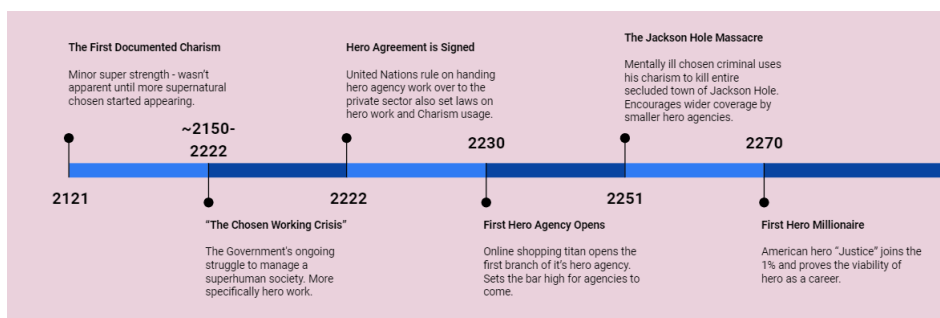


Figure 4 – Timeline, part 1.

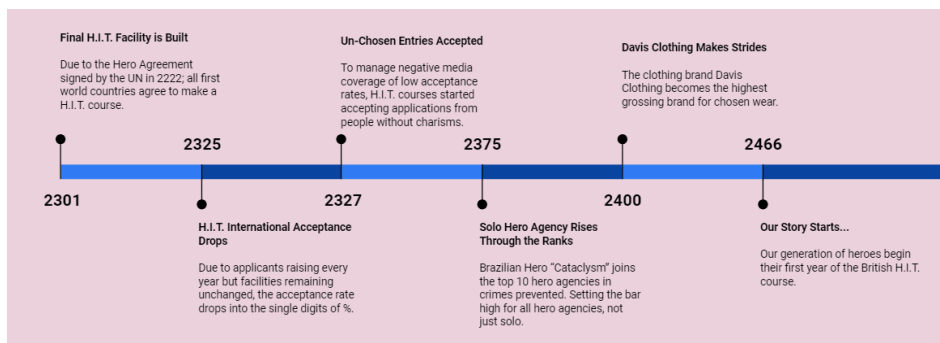


Figure 5 – Timeline, part 2.

Tone/Theme:

Tone:

- Hope
 - The player should not only feel hope for the bright shining future of the game but for their own future.
 - This will be reflected in dialogue between characters and their positive outlook despite current events.
- Tension
 - Though the world is similar to modern day there will be a spotlight on the looming threats everyone must face.
 - The relatability and similarity to modern day events will serve to strengthen that emotion.
- Joy
 - This is not just another mature superhuman society, it is a world in which the player can be rewarded for rooting for justice and equality.
 - The characters of the world may stumble or even fall but the end result should leave the participant with a smile.

Theme:

- The world is fractured and divided. Not by race or by power but by intentions.
- A division created by individuals who seek to live normal lives and those who seek to shatter that peace.
- In a superhuman society, heroes are looked to, to keep the peace and solve the unrest but are left holding the bag when those with ill intention succeed.
- In a world that lives on this philosophy a hero must have a fundamental desire to help those in need in order to survive.

Characters

Hero Profile 1:

Real Name: Jacob Presley

Hero Name: Vibe (The Carefree Hero)

Abilities: The ability to increase his strength and create powerful vibrations in time with music, also his voice can be a powerful sonic weapon if he sings along. Depending on how well he times his attacks, the power output can vary greatly. The drawback is he requires total focus on the song to maintain an effective power output, so he's equipped with headphones and speakers as support items.

Backstory: Jacob had a pretty normal upbringing, with two loving parents and never a need to worry. With a latent talent for academics, he lived a carefree life that he was grateful for. Seeing as "chosen" kids manifest their abilities fairly early on in life; his parents decided to embrace his powers in order to open his future to anything he wanted it to be.

There wasn't much that broke Jacob's care-free attitude, but his abilities did scare him. He knew they were connected to his emotions so things like stress and anger became a rapid downward spiral. However, when he would start to worry, and his smile would start to falter his mother would always put her favourite song on the record player and dance with him. She taught him that his gift wasn't anything to be scared of and that she'd do whatever she could to make sure that he never had a care in the world.

Unfortunately, when Jacob was 14 his mother passed away from lung cancer. On the day she died Jacob couldn't handle it and ran away from home with a radio in hand. As he arrived at the field his parents taught him to use his powers in, a song started to play... Later that same day his dad found him in that same place, unconscious; tears streaming down his face. So concerned for his son, he ran to Jacob's side, picking him up and walking him back to the car. Only as he got to the fence did it dawn on him why Jacob was unconscious, he'd overexerted himself, his father looked back to see what his son had done. All the way across the field there was a crack, where Jacob had split the earth in two.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *Switch tracks* (change the current song to throw opponent off your rhythm; at the cost of losing multiplier)
- Passive:
 - *Timing* (pressing your attacks and landing them in time with your current song will increase damage output and add to a damage multiplier. Multiplier is lost when damage is taken or too much time expires between attacks landed on time and is also capped)
- Super Combo:
 - *Bone orchestra* (Vibe's music goes silent along with all other sounds and a new melody is made by striking the opponent repeatedly)

Hero Profile 2:

Real Name: Chris Howard

Hero Name: Null (The Portal Hero)

Abilities: The ability to make portals but only on solid surfaces that he can see or is extremely familiar with. The portals cannot move living matter apart from himself (if someone were to touch one of his portals it would be like touching the surface the portal is on).

Backstory: Growing up Chris was pretty frail and was an outcast amongst his peers. He lived in a fairly backward town that had not yet come to accept a “chosen” society. Whether it be from jealousy or frustration that a portion of their tax money was being wasted on a H.I.T. program; the mob mentality was strong and meant that chosen born there would receive unfair treatment.

As the adults did, the children followed. So, a weak boy with powers that were only useful for running away made for the perfect target. Despite being able to redirect a bullet he couldn't do a thing to stop a child's fist. He was helpless and alone until a girl came along to save him. She was no stronger than he was, but she had the confidence of 50 people. She scared off the bullies and helped the frail boy.

It was friendship at first sight and the first Chris ever had. For years they grew together, she shared her dream with him saying she wanted to be a support specialist. It was her way of saving the world, even though she wasn't chosen by it she was determined to protect it. Chris admired her more than anything but admitted that he didn't have any goals like her.

When Chris was 11 the girl's parents decided to move away, leaving him alone again. As she was leaving, he stole his resolve and declared to her that he would do it too, he'd be a hero and find her again one day. A promise that he hasn't forgotten after all these years.

Move examples:

- Side Special:
 - *Tele-portal* (a portal appears on the ground below Null and another appears next to it that the player can move side to side. When released they jump through)
- Passive:
 - *Quick redraw* (when blocking Null completely redirects small projectiles back at the opponent with small portals on his body)
- Super Combo
 - *Recycled asteroid* (Null stuns his opponent and then sucks up the debris from the arena to with a portal connected to a satellite he has familiarised himself with, the small debris strikes his opponent like a meteorite)

Hero Profile 3:

Real Name: Jack Waterson

Hero Name: JJ (The Smiling Hero)

Abilities: His abilities are spring like legs and self-sufficient canisters in his chest that compress the air that he breathes into both; fire like bullets from the tips of his index fingers or use it as propulsion out of the back of his elbows to control his movement in the air.

Backstory: The first unchosen to be accepted to the H.I.T. program. As a young child he was a lovable happy boy whose personality shone as bright as the sun. His parents were important political figures who had little time for him. So, he shared his energy and supported those he cared for by becoming a cheerleader. At the age of 10 he was kidnapped on his way home and held for ransom to influence his parents, however the plan backfired, and his parents refused to lift a finger or spare a cent to save him from the villains holding him hostage.

Realising their efforts were a waste the kidnappers took the opportunity to turn Jack into a living weapon. Performing several life-threatening surgeries to mechanically enhance him into a killing machine. The villains saw him as disposable, performing several life-threatening surgeries; yet despite all odds he survived the next 2 years not once having his spirit broken until the day he used the powers given to him to escape.

Aimless and with no reason to return home he spent the next 6 months on the run living off what he could find, until he met the woman he would one day call master. She saved a boy who despite his condition, despite his situation, he was still smiling the warmest smile she had ever seen. She soon discovered his abilities and vowed to train him into a hero; one with a smile as bright as the sun.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *Spring loaded* (holding the neutral special charges JJ's spring like legs. Whilst they are charging the player can tilt left or right to control direction when they release. This move can be used to gain height or strike the opponent at high speed)
- Passive:
 - *Air canisters* (the tanks that store and compress his air have a separate meter that refills over time. Holding jump in the air allows JJ to temporarily hover whilst draining this resource)
- Super Combo:
 - *Cheerleader* (JJ performs a cheer for his specific opponent whilst striking them repeatedly)

Hero Profile 4:

Real Name: Finn Agaric

Hero Name: Flinch (The Berserker Hero)

Abilities: Whenever he's in pain or has taken damage, his body circulates a fast-acting chemical that is similar to adrenaline but has vastly more powerful properties, increasing his strength in response. Not only does he have this multiplier, but he also can recoil attacks back at a fraction of the power if he braces for it. The two abilities pair together to make a potent combination of strength.

Backstory: Finn wasn't born in a life of pain and so it took many years before he even realised, he was chosen. There were bullies in his school, but no one bats an eye when a kid fights back and shoves someone who was pushing him around; and if that kid happened to shove them a little hard well it could be written up as adrenaline or someone not realising their own strength. However, when that kid gets hit by a car and ends up stopping it with his bare hands, well... that's a different story entirely.

After the first day Finn found out he had powers he was absolutely ecstatic like most kids would be at his age. He had managed to stop a whole car; sure, he had a few broken bones but that was just because he was inexperienced right? With a little training he could get it under control in no time and he could become a hero like all of his idols. Yet it seemed that no matter how much he trained he couldn't awaken the power that he unleashed that day.

He begged his parents to pay for the chosen aptitude test (a series of rigorous tests use to find the exact nature of an individual's power; similar to modern disability tests but far more expensive due to the cost of equipment, the rate at which they were taken and the lack of government funding), but his parents just didn't have the money to pay for it. After a while Finn became more and more defeated, despite his training (both physical and martial) he knew that the likelihood of someone being accepted into a H.I.T. course without being "chosen" was close to zero.

Only when he was at his lowest did he think to replicate the exact circumstances of the instance to reproduce that power; beforehand he was sane enough to not get hit by a car for science, but he knew that it was the only way. This time he stopped the car with ease only injuring the very tip of his finger. In that moment he knew, he must injure himself to be strong.

In the years to come many scientists would try to sample and replicate the chemical his body secreted but never to any success. All the while hardening his desire to become a hero.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *Recoil* (temporarily tenses up losing all movement, if struck by an attack in this state he will recoil the attack back at his opponent for a percentage of the damage)
- Passive:
 - *Berserker* (the closer Flinch's health is to 0 the more powerful his attacks become)
- Super Combo:
 - *Feedback overdrive* (Flinch places his hand on his opponents chest, his body ripples as all of the kinetic energy stored in him is sent flying out his palm)

Hero Profile 5:

Real Name: William Davis

Hero Name: Goose (The Winged Hero)

Abilities: Just wings... that's it. Has to train almost daily to maintain muscle mass in order to fly, despite the highly efficient lightweight muscle in his wings.

Backstory: Will comes from a long line of winged men and women. The wing was a dominant charisma; so despite only roughly 20% of the population being chosen, a majority of his family also had wings (this led to Davis being one of the first and leading brands of clothing for chosen humans). However, with the amount of power required to lift a human being not one of them had achieved flight before.

Growing up Will learned that working hard did not necessarily mean results were guaranteed. Time after time he would learn this lesson in fact. In school he would study more than any other kid just to get a pass, he got shot down by more girls than he could count just because of the wings on his back and the list goes on.

Yet despite telling himself this over and over that lingering ember of hope refused to be extinguished. People would tell him repeatedly to work smart not hard, to not put so much pressure on himself because it would only serve to break him. They weren't wrong, he knew they weren't wrong and still no matter what he did he couldn't get himself to give up. He was determined beyond anything to prove that all his hard work wasn't for naught. He kept pushing, as hard as a human possibly could, trying after countless defeats that life could throw at him, pushing back against the unstoppable wave of fate.

Will trained every day and on his 16th birthday it all paid off. He did something no one else could, not even his own family were able to achieve. For the first time he flew. While it wasn't highly abnormal for a chosen to have a charisma that allowed for aerial manoeuvrability, this was a massive stride for William. Despite his grades, despite everything life would throw at him, this was the deciding factor for him. Even if he had to go to a different country, he would be a hero no matter what and he'd do it his way.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *Mantis shrimp strike* (Goose gets on all fours and strikes his opponent with his wings)
- Passive:
 - *Wingman* (Goose can jump multiple times in the air as he flaps his wings)
- Super Combo:
 - *Arch-angel Davis* (like arch-angel David, Goose becomes a visage of war as he flies into the sky unloading a barrage of pain onto his opponent)

Hero Profile 6:

Real Name: Arthur Anclagon

Hero Name: Lancelot (The Hero Knight)

Abilities: The ability to instantly master any martial weapon. With a weapon in hand, he becomes a near unbeatable force of nature, with the ability to use it in any style he chooses even if he's never seen or heard of the weapon before. Upon picking one up it becomes as easy as breathing to use it. He prefers a sword and shield above all (he thinks he's a knight).

Backstory: Arthur wasn't as fortunate as many. He didn't grow up in a warm, safe, loving home. Instead, he grew up with an abusive drunkard father and a mother that was just weak enough to make for the perfect sandbag on his father's long workdays, or when the home team lost the game, or when the beer supply ran low, or literally any time he damn well felt like it.

Arthur loved his mother more than anything, she was always there when he needed her. Whether it was a bad test score or bullies at school, she always knew exactly what to say, and when his father started to get loud and scary, she'd take him upstairs to hide. They would always get under the covers together and she would read him his favourite bedtime story, King Arthur, before going out to face his father again. Arthur loved that story and not just because they shared the same name but because it was about a poor little boy just like him that was chosen by the world for so much more, more than anything he wanted to be chosen by the world too, to be given the power to protect the people he cared about.

When the day came that his charisma awakened, he was ready. He stepped in front of his mother's unconscious body and screamed at the top of his lungs "NO MORE!" as he confronted his enraged father. That day a 10-year-old Arthur beat down his father armed with nothing more than a wooden spoon and a pot lid. When he was done, he made a decision his mother should have made years ago and called the police.

As the police dragged him away, he declared that he'd never forgive Arthur for this, that he'd be back for him when he got out. On that very day Arthur decided that he'd become a hero. So, he could be strong for the people that couldn't. One that could even rival King Arthur himself.

Move examples:

- Side Special:
 - *Shield Rush* (Lancelot charges forward with his shield in front him blocking damage in a small area of his body. Hitting the opponent does a small amount of damage and knocks them back)
- Passive:
 - *Bulwark* (Lancelot's shield does not decay over time)
- Super Combo:
 - *Kneel before your king* (Lancelot momentarily casts aside his sword and shield and proceeds to beat his opponent to their knees with a series of martial weapons)

Hero Profile 7:

Real Name: Georgia Foster

Hero Name: Medusa (The Venom Hero)

Abilities: She can send a paralytic venom to any part of her body including the dead cells on her body such as her hair and nails. By sending the venom to parts of her body that are malleable like her hair she can stiffen and slack it at will. To her enemies her fighting style almost makes it look like her hair is floating or has a mind of its own.

Backstory: Growing up Georgia was a poster child, she excelled in academia, was a model athlete, she had more time spent in extracurricular activities than any other student and was offered several modelling jobs based on her looks alone. However, she was still lacking a crucial part of the student experience; she lacked a friend. In fact, she tried as hard as she could just to make one, she joined every club she could and threw 100% of herself into everything she did and yet no one would extend that olive branch to her.

Without someone to tell her she was unable to realise that everything she did only took her further away from the goal she sought. People around her were scared of her, not for her power but her tenacious unbreakable spirit. One look and anyone could tell that she was unbeatable, it was merely human nature to stay away from certain defeat. Time was not kind to her, as the years passed, she started to become the monster people thought her to be, she no longer tried to socialise, and she developed a 1000 mile stare that felt like it could turn you to stone.

Just when it felt like all hope was lost, she happened to be walking home and passed by the scene of a hero saving hostages from a villain that was attempting to rob a bank. The hero was an incredibly scary looking man that looked more like a serial killer than a hero and yet you'd never be able to tell from the people he saved. All they could show was gratitude to this man risking his life to protect theirs.

Seeing this scene play out before her eyes, it sparked the embers of hope in her heart once again. She developed a fascination with heroes and before she knew it her whole life was tangled in the web of hero work; she knew exactly what she wanted to do when she left school. Georgia may have been forged in hellfire, but she refused to let it decide her fate. She'd be a hero, one with as many friends as a person could possibly have.

Move examples:

- Down Special:
 - *Unhallowed ground* (Medusa's hair whips the ground, giving it a temporary coat of venom that poisons enemies that walk on it)
- Passive:
 - *Medusa's venom* (any attacks that are poisonous will continue to do a small amount of damage over time for a short period after hitting)
- Super Combo:
 - *Gorgon's gaze* (Medusa strikes her opponent with a full dose of paralytic venom and let's her rage out on them until it wears off)

Hero Profile 8:

Real Name: Charlie Ross

Hero Name: Havoc (The Demolition Hero)

Abilities: The ability to produce varying types of explosives from bone and cartilage. A powerful ability that is only made more potent by her ingenuity when it comes to violence and destruction. Such as using small explosive charges to fire small bone shrapnel from the tips of her fingers for precision attacks.

Backstory: From a young age Charlie was an aggressive child. Or so it seemed to parents and teachers, she was always at the centre of fights, so it was easy enough to assume so and in a certain sense they weren't wrong. However, what the adults didn't see was Charlie trying to help people that couldn't stand up for themselves. She always tried to talk the bullies down but often it would result in violence when they couldn't think of a good reason for their actions, or they thought she was just a girl that couldn't stand up for herself.

As a result of her violent nature her parents decided to give her extra charism counselling. If the counsellor had been anyone else this might have given her parents exactly what they wanted; she would have given up her silly ideas of justice and become the perfect watered-down child. However, this wasn't the case, for her counsellor was an ex-hero; one that could tell right away exactly why she had been in the middle of so many physical incidents.

Her counsellor did the job her parents paid him to do but not what they wanted him to do. He actively encouraged this strong sense of justice she had but taught her the correct time and place to use it. He taught her ways to handle misguided bullies without getting violent, but also taught her how to use her charism for when the day called for it. He educated her on the laws regarding charism usage and everything else he knew about hero law.

By the time she left school she was a well-oiled machine of heroism. Applying to the HIT program was a cinch and she passed the entrance exam with flying colours. During her interview she did everything her tutor had told her and had the staff in awe until she vowed to wreak havoc on everyone that seeked to harm the weak. That choice of wording, that pure look of absolute certainty in her eyes, only then did it become clear that her real tests were yet to come.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *Cartlidge Cannon* (fires bone shards out the tips of her fingers)
- Passive:
 - *Armoury* (Havoc builds up a stockpile of bone grenades over the match)
- Super Combo:
 - *Chaos & Carnage* (Havoc surrounds her opponent with explosives, the knockback of each sending them onto the next. Finally landing on her "Patent Pending" BFG "Big F***in Grenade")

Hero Profile 9:

Real Name: Charlotte Falutin

Hero Name: Cookie (The Dog Hero)

Abilities: Is a dog...for now.

Backstory: Once a famous and powerful actress, Charlotte was the height of stardom. Obsessed with her image and more than willing to step on the backs of those in her way, this was just one of the many ways she'd use the people around her to climb her way to the top. Her career started out as a child actress so she was practically born into this way of living, she knew that she was destined for greatness, or at least she would have if it hadn't been for the tragic accident that occurred right before she turned 18. She died.

She was crossing the street, too focused with a work call to notice the truck driver that had fallen asleep at the wheel. After that it was over all too quickly, for her material body that is, you see Charlotte had a latent Charism that she'd never known about before this moment; an ability that allowed her to transfer her conscience over to another being. In the split second before the crash her instincts took over and forced her mind into the closest thing it could find; a border collie she would soon find out was named Cookie.

After the incident it took her some time to work out her situation and by the time, she was fully lucid her body had already been pronounced dead at the scene. She spoke to the authorities and whilst shocked at first, they soon realised the situation and started in the process of assisting her (Chosen society has been the norm for a while now so whilst incidents like this were abnormal, they were less shocking than you would expect). Once she'd been identified she used her considerable assets to put her body on ice until she was able to figure this situation out.

It became immediately clear to her that she would receive little to no public support to help her through this, and the media coverage on the tragedy was so miniscule you'd have thought they were reporting rush hour traffic. Much to her dismay people were mainly interested in her body during her acting career, so being a talking dog wouldn't cut it. She wouldn't be able to get her old life back without first getting out of this body and she wouldn't be able to get out of this body without mastering this new power.

In order to achieve her newfound goal, she used her remaining connections to pull some strings and get her on a H.I.T. course. A has-been telepathic dog, how could they possibly say no...

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *No bark* (uses her powerful jaw strength to bite her opponent)
- Passive:
 - *Quadruped* (she moves on all fours, dodging under certain attacks)
- Super Combo:
 - *Animal instincts* (losing her composure she lets her instincts take over, leaping on her opponent and viciously mauling them)

Hero Profile 10:

Real Name: Cassette Williams

Hero Name: BetaMax (The Fast-Forward Hero)

Abilities: The control over her own “time”. Time travel isn’t possible...yet, however, Cass is able to manipulate the rate at which her body perceives time. This just means that she’s able to move faster and perceive the world around her slower when she fast-forwards. There are drawbacks to using this power however, the first is that it doesn’t make her attacks any more powerful just quicker and the second is that it accelerates the aging process at the same rate, so her metabolism goes into overdrive when fast-forwarding and slowly damages her over time. She compensates for this by slowing down her time when she goes to sleep.

Backstory: Cass was the only one of the successful entries to the UK HIT program that required to make use of the HIT special requirement fund (a fund that supplemented the living cost and tuition fees of exceptional applicants with no available funding). Her parents were in abject poverty when they had her and named her after their favourite thing to do; listening to cassettes and dancing together (being unable to afford present luxuries and relying on undesirables from times past). Of course, she just goes by Cass to save the embarrassment.

Even now the job market is a massive uphill battle, the supply and demand for work leaves those without skills high and dry. However, in a society with things like “chosen work licences”, a man that can duplicate himself into ten but still work at the wage of one will completely outclass a man that can’t. Luckily for Cass, state provided education became mandatory in order to monitor the chosen youth whilst not discriminating against those without powers. Sure, being homeless put a massive target on her back but she really didn’t mind, she was just happy to have two loving parents that were trying their hardest to give her a chance at the life they didn’t have.

On weekends, Cass and her dad would scavenge for anything they could use to repair their makeshift home while her mum would go to food drives for meals during the week; sometimes even searching supermarket dumpsters if supplies were low. When they scavenged Cass would always keep an eye out for CDs and VHS tapes, modern devices like mobile phones were useless without access to a stable internet connection (despite this Cass still kept one that she’d charge at school). But with the few solar panels and a tape player her dad had scavenged and repaired they could watch tapes together every evening. Despite their situation, her dad would only ever complain about the picture quality of the VHS, remarking that the BetaMax was supposedly far superior; a fact he’d only read in an ancient magazine article while waiting for another job interview. It never failed to make her mother smirk, so when she finally had the opportunity to be a hero, she wanted to be the best there was and make lots of money for her parents to finally live the life they deserved.

Move examples:

- Neutral Special:
 - *With the press of a button* (activates/deactivates her Fast-forward ability)
- Passive:
 - *Fast-forward* (all of her attacks are faster but she loses health over time)
- Super Combo
 - *Playback* (fast-forwards through a flurry of attacks, retraces her steps and repeats her movements at normal speed)

Marketing

Research:

Similar titles:

Super Smash Bros. Ultimate (2018)

- Similarities:
 - Control scheme (aiming for a similar market they have a similar control scheme that simplifies existing fighting game controls in order to appeal to a wider market)
 - Mobility (the mobility and aerial control is emphasised in a similar way especially the latest instalment Ultimate)
- Differences:
 - Format (whilst the game does have competitive elements it is a party game first and foremost. It is designed with that in mind, and it sacrifices certain competitive elements to achieve that)
 - Objective (the base objective of the game is to knock your opponent off the stage so the combat system is designed around that and Crowd Control (CC) is a major factor when designing new characters)
 - Narrative (whilst the game brings a unique element to the table of crossing over several franchises, this makes it difficult for the developers to weave an intricate narrative or tell an interesting story, especially not one with mature themes)

Street Fighter V (2016)

- Similarities:
 - Combos (both games include some form of combo mechanic, however this game has a far more expansive version that whilst it's rewarding for seasoned veterans can feel alienating to new players, not just to fighting games but to the individual franchise)
 - Objective (the effective base objective of the game is to get your opponent's health to zero before your own)
- Differences:
 - Pacing and Mobility (the pacing and mobility are far different between the two games)
 - Market (in line with its core game pillars, H.I.T. is by definition target at a completely different demographic of gamers with more of a focus on accessibility)
 - Ease of use (different from demographic/market, the navigation system of this game has not been designed with anything other than in person fights. The online features and menu navigation is very poorly designed and is clear that it was implemented as an afterthought)

Commercial Viability:

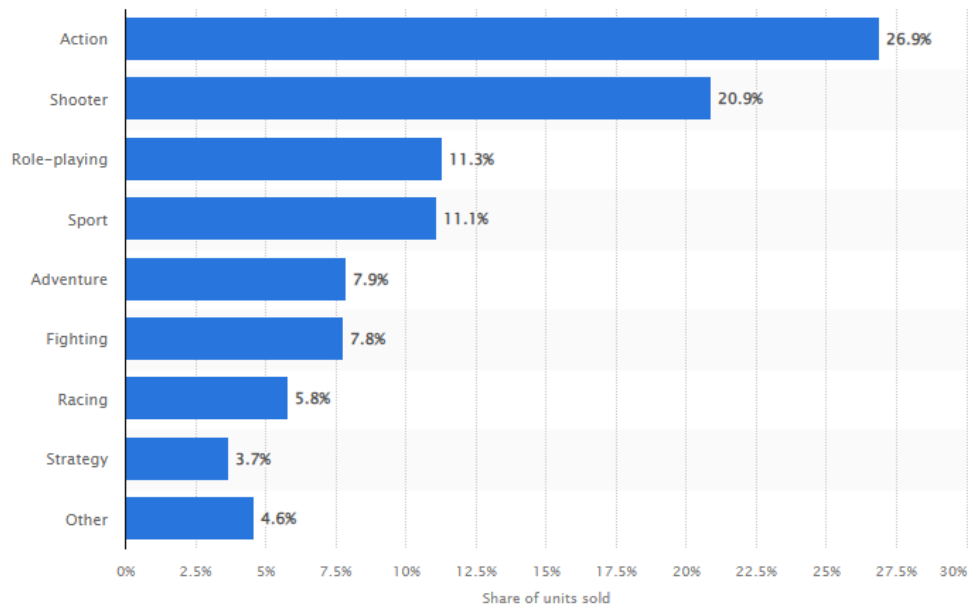


Figure 6 - Video game sales in the United States in 2018, by genre, Statista.

- As proven in Figure 6, Fighting games make up 7.8% of total games sold by genre.
- The demand for new fighting games is high enough to justify a new release of high polish game.



Figure 7 – Guilty Gear Strive copies sold, July 2021.

- Figure 7 shows the number of copies sold by Arc System Works in 1 month of the Guilty Gear Strive's (2021) release.
- With a similar narrative approach and design principles, this game is a very good representation of the potential market demand of a game like H.I.T.

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