**Jailing in MK11 AKA how to stop spamming down 1 and make it do work**

As I’ve been working with a few of you folks on concepts around frame data and punishes in MK11, I’d like to introduce another important concept that’s based on frame advantage, which is why I always include the frames of a character’s down 1 on the guides I make: jailing.

**First, what are frame traps?**

Jailing is a concept unique to MK11 that is related to frame trapping, but is not identical. A classical frame trap is a situation where you are recovering from a given move fast enough that the next button you press will hit before any option your opponent has becomes active; they are “trapped” by the frame data, and will be counterhit if they press a button rather than blocking. For instance, in Street Fighter V, Ryu’s crouching medium punch is +4 on hit. His standing medium punch has a 5 frame startup. The fastest move in the game has a 3 frame startup, but there is only 1 frame of time between when my opponent comes out of blockstun and when my standing medium punch hits. If I hit with crouching medium punch, and then press standing medium punch, any button my opponent presses (with the exception of special moves that are invulnerable from frame 1) will be caught in the frame trap, getting me a counterhit.

**How is jailing different?**

Jailing relies on similar frame advantage, but rather than trapping or continuing a combo, it causes a forced stand state, meaning that followup high attacks with a fast enough start up cannot be ducked (but can be blocked).

**Why is this useful?**

As many of you have recognized, down 2 tends to be a very strong tool at low levels of MK11 play. As many character’s most useful strings start with high attacks, crouching, listening for an attack animation, then pressing 2 as the first button in the string whiffs over your head can be a valid tactic. Similarly, advancing mid attacks that prevent that type of punish are extremely useful. However, that doesn’t answer the question of “how do I safely pressure with the strings that set up my big, juicy combo without getting ducked?” That’s where Jailing comes in.

**How do I jail someone?**

After hitting an opponent with down 1, every character is at significant hit advantage (usually 10-13 frames of advantage). This is enough of an advantage to connect with your opponent using a fast starting high attack while they are still stuck in the forced stand state, as the stand persists for the entirety of that frame advantage. When executed properly, this will force your opponent to block any attack (high, mid, or low) that follows with sufficient speed. Note that low attacks CAN still be blocked despite the forced stand by using the standard crouching block input, but high attacks cannot be ducked. Using this to set up strings with a high starter is an essential part of safe, structured offense at closer range in MK11.

**MK11 is weird**

A quick note: In most other games, this type of frame data, where a second attack starts up fast enough to hit while your opponent is in hitstun, will cause a combo; however, MK11’s combo system doesn’t follow the same rules, therefore the presence of a “jail” situation rather than an extended combo.