Teaching Gameplay Mechanics
Different Ways

• Beginning tutorial
• Gradual teaching
• Rulebook
• UI-centered
• Help Button
• Autodidactic
• Menu Access
Beginning Tutorial

- shows and tells all controls needed before gameplay actually starts
- best for new gamers, younger children
- cons: annoying when replaying, players forget what they learned
- Example
You got the **Iron Boots**!
These boots are so heavy you can hardly walk, but the wind can't blow you around when you wear them!
**Gradual Teaching**

- each level
  - get a new item
  - learn a new move
  - think differently (with portals)
- used often in games with a linear progression, better to not learn everything at once
- incentive: can only get special items/goals using new trick (treasure chests in Zelda)
**Rulebook**

**Heaven’s Misery**
- B

**Elk Strike**
- B

**Tornade Low Heel**
- K

**Angel Crucify**
- or or or A

**Inverse Shield Rush**
- A

**Angelic Meteor**
- B

**Plasma Blade**
- or or or K

**Angel’s Strike**
- During Angel Step B

**Luminous Seraph**
- During Angel Step A,A,A + B + K

**Trinity Strike**
- 

**Combo 1**
- B ~ B

**Combo 2**
- B, A (counter) ~ B

**Combo 3**
- B ~ B ~ A ~ B

**Combo 4**
- B A + B + K ~ B A K

**Combo 5**
- K ~ A + B + K

**Soul Calibur V**
Rulebook

• a list, accessed in menu or book, out of the way
• require hours of experience to master
• allows for more complex button combinations
• incentive: deals more damage, looks cooler
• used often in fighting games
UI-CENTERED
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- no controller/buttons everything displayable via UI
- easy to get into and understand, for inexperienced users
- cluttered HUD
- used often in computer games, especially freemium games
Help Button

My analysis suggests you should take the tablet to the altar in Skyloft.
Help Button

- Player can call for help if they get stuck
- Unobtrusive, always there when the player needs it
- Cons: not always helpful
Autodidactic
Autodidactic

- player has to figure out what to do on their own
- typically for open-world games: Minecraft
- other games as well: Metroid
- Cons: player may be completely lost, some might have a hint pop up after so long to solve this
Menu Access
Menu Access

• Incorporate tutorials out of the game
• Such as in start game, Say Viget
• Or have to use mechanics to access the menu
• Doesn’t work for every game (e.g. Zelda too many items)
**Take Away**

- **Bad practices:**
  - Force players to do the tutorial, even when replaying
  - Too much information (UI or words)
  - Break suspension of disbelief (game characters know about buttons)
  - Best to have the tutorial optional and incorporate in an unobtrusive way, separate from the actual game