

LINKING METAL GEAR ACID TO OTHER PSPs AND YOUR PS2

Metal Gear Acid's Link Mode is one of the most interesting features unlocked during play. Players of the Japanese version of this title are probably familiar with the MGS3 Link; this is available after completing *Metal Gear Acid* and connects the game with *Metal Gear Solid 3*. New to the US version of *Metal Gear Acid*, however, is Link Battle Mode! This supplement to the *Metal Gear Acid Official Strategy Guide* explains how to access these systems, what they provide, and some strategies for playing against other fans of *Metal Gear Acid*.

MGS3 LINK

Using your USB cable, you can easily connect your PSP to a PlayStation 2. Connect these devices and start *Metal Gear Solid 3*. A screen appears that allows you to load a saved game or start a new *Metal Gear Solid 3* game; either option starts you with both an EZ Gun and the Stealth Camouflage. Save your game and disconnect the PSP.

On the flipside, you can acquire codes for free cards in *Metal Gear Acid* by putting the pressure on some of the enemies in *Metal Gear Solid 3*. If you don't have *Metal Gear Solid 3*, these codes are provided in the "Research and Development" chapter of our *Metal Gear Acid Official Strategy Guide*. Read carefully through the text and tables in that chapter to find them.

LINK BATTLE MODE

After completing Stage 06 of *Metal Gear Acid*, Link Battle Mode becomes available. After saving, stay at the Intermission and enter the Options Menu. You can select Link Battle Mode from there. Turn on the wireless connection of your PSP before you do this.

Once accessed, the PSP starts to search for nearby players. To be detected, they must have *Metal Gear Acid*, have their wireless connections open, and be in Link Battle Mode. Until a partner is found, the system continues to scan for players, so you don't need to worry about the timing of the whole thing.

Select the person you wish to engage once he or she is detected, and the battle soon begins!

WHAT IS LINK BATTLE MODE LIKE?

This mode is a blend of strategy flavors. Your goal is to defeat your human opponents while collecting golden disks from the neutral enemies in the area. This mixes elements of deathmatch, capture the flag, and so forth, but it all comes together with the same feel as the rest of *Metal Gear Acid*. The huge boon is that you face both the AI and a human opponent, capable of countering many of the tricks that you've come to rely on.

Your assets are your current decks, Snake, and Teliko. Everyone has fully upgraded hit points, so fast kills are difficult to perform.

Your human opponent has the same potential, though people only play with the deck size that they are limited to with their current save. Thus, some players won't have extremely large decks. The computer has an infinite number of guards that spawn and move to engage any and all human-controlled characters.

Your goal is to defeat both of your enemy's characters twice over! The first series of knockdowns is only enough to reset your enemy characters' health and return them to their side of the map. Or, for a more strategic victory, defeat the neutral enemies and collect three golden disks from them. Once you have these in hand, either of your characters can leave the level and win by touching the correct exit in one of the four corners. The trick is that all four corners glow as soon as the disks are collected (you have to guess which one is the right choice).

Besides pure enjoyment, you are rewarded if you emerge victorious from these battles, and the mission points are impressive. Getting over 30,000 points is possible even for a beginner; this mode is a great way to farm points for the card shop if you have friends who want to play with any regularity. The player that loses ends up without any goodies, but people tend to pick up the right skills and strategy quickly enough to make the fights reasonably fair.

HOW TO WIN

The best plan is one that you decide on early in the battle and stick with the whole way! Are you more interested in defeating your enemies or going for the golden disks? Choose your preferred mode of play and use tactics that further that path.

OPTION 1: DESTROY YOUR OPPONENT

If direct combat is your preferred path to victory, you need a fair supply of weapons and Cost Reducers. Keep your pair of characters close together for mutual support, and look for combination attacks that offer synergistic advantages.

For instance, one character laying into an enemy with a Famas attack (or two), can deal damage while adding Cost to the opponent. This is especially bad if the foe is then subjected to a Grenade toss; do this when he or she doesn't have time to move away before the explosion occurs! That precludes your need to detonate the Grenade with a manual attack.

To help pinpoint your enemies' locations, scan the map and look for golden disks to appear. The items drop as neutral (computer-controlled) enemies are killed. Though your foes may be out of visual range, the golden disks are visible at great range. Thus, you know one of your opponent's characters is nearby because a neutral guard had to be killed for the disk to drop, and you know that your characters didn't do it.

Some of the maps have upper walkways, which are very useful for aggressive players. Patrolling these gives you the ability to inflict more damage by firing down on targets. Shooting at a person from above *and* behind leads to tremendous damage. For these maps, have one character on the lower section draw out targets, while the upper member deals heavy damage.

Though your goal is to directly knock your enemies out of battle twice, the golden disks are still important. Your enemy stands a fair chance of winning if you simply let him or her collect the disks as they fall. As you position your characters for attacks, be sure to get any of the disks as targets of opportunity.

The neutral guards attack anyone they see, but you aren't focused on killing them; instead, use them as best you can to damage your foes. Run away from the neutral attackers, and try to get your opponent's characters caught in the pursuit! The computer is quite willing to switch targets, and having the AI soldiers attack your enemy is quite preferable.

FIRE, FIRE!

If any of your characters is set on fire during these fights, be sure to run next to everyone possible during your next action. This sets your opponent's characters on fire, reducing the tactical advantage of using such weapons. Combine this with a movement to get behind said character and deal extra damage that round while setting them alight.



When your opponent fights with both of his or her characters in one area, it is very important to focus damage during a short period. The reason for this is the ease of restoring health to wounded characters; the vast majority of opponents you face will throw some Rations/Bandages into their decks. Because of this, a simple movement could take a character from the verge of unconsciousness to full health.

To combat healing enemies, save up for rounds with damage bursts. Get behind an enemy and use a Cost Reducer to end the turn with no accrued Cost. Then, with the next turn, use all actions and your best weaponry to inflict as much harm as possible! Add Cost to your foe if you can, because that gives your secondary character even more time to layer on their attacks.

Bypassing enemy reactions is extremely important, especially against someone who likes to stack his or her decks with Evades, Body Armor, and reactive weapons. The M63 is the weapon of choice for this process. Or, if you know your opponent well enough to count on him using reactive play, bring a massive stash of Grenades, Nikita Missiles, and other area-of-effect weapons. These prevent or limit the usefulness of reactive cards!

Always keep a card ready to bring an ally back from unconsciousness! Your adversary can deal tremendous damage to your team by knocking out a character and avoiding the other (if his goal is to collect disks). If you can't bring a person back, he or she stays unconscious—only when both characters are knocked out do you receive a second chance. That means a disk collector's prime goal is to take down one of your people and leave the second alive, giving him time to do as he pleases.

OPTION 2: MASTER THE DISKS

At its easiest, this goal can be fairly straightforward. Get out into the center of the map, where you have the best chance to find neutral enemies. Kill soldiers as quickly as possible, and move on top of their disks to collect them. Afterward, race for the corners and find out which one is the real exit!

Yet, your enemy has *many* ways to thwart you. One of the most tragic occurs when he or she steals a disk that falls from a soldier that you just killed. If you slay an enemy with the last action of your character, it is entirely possible for your foe to spend his turn racing over to your location, even from extremely far away (he may have a few movement cards saved for such an event).

To combat disk stealing, kill soldiers when you character has an action remaining to collect the disk *or* you are certain that your secondary character will get a turn before your enemies do. Obviously, this isn't an absolute rule, but trying to make kills at the right time helps to prevent stolen disks.

Next, hone your deck after playing a few matches. Disk collection can be mastered through many styles of play. Aggressive types can load up on weaponry and slaughter both guards and active characters while dominating the center of the map. For this, use Cost Reducers, direct-damage weaponry, and keep a few Rations around.

For the fast win, though, it takes a brave soul. Use a higher percentage of movement cards and Cost Reducers, lower the health items, and keep only enough weapons to handle the neutral targets; they have weak health and won't stand up to much of a beating. Using this deck, your task is to reach the soldiers very quickly, kill three for the disks, and *run!* With high movement and Cost Reduction, you have a great chance of finding the exit while your opponent bites his nails in frustration. This method is a win-or-lose-early style—if you fail to snag those disks early in the match, your more heavily-armed foe will likely gain the center, push back your characters, and win through outright combat or attrition.

A balanced style for victory is to bring fair weaponry and many delaying cards, and then focus early turns on the first enemy character you find. Have both of your people converge on said target and bring him or her down. After that, have one of your characters intercept your enemy's second character, who must approach to revive the fallen comrade. After spotting the incoming medic, use all means possible to delay the character: add to their Cost, stun him, and so forth. Meanwhile, your alternate character can focus on neutral soldiers. Your foe will eventually get his ally back, but at a Cost that is often worse than if he had lost both characters and run back to the front lines.

ALL IN THE DARK

Vision is limited during these engagements, making all tactical decisions more important and tenuous. Bringing cards to improve sight under these conditions is effective for getting an early advantage. The sooner you see your enemies, the easier it is to figure out what strategy they are using, and then counter it.

Also, a character configuration that works fairly well combines extended sight in the darkness, a Scope, and high-power weapons, such as the PSG1. Snipe opponents at great range while holding onto a high-end movement card. Once your foe figures out where to look for your sniper, move quickly and attack from a new position.

