

OU Teambuilding Compilation

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Up to date as of: 01/16/2016

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TEAMBUILDING GUIDE

(BY: UBERPYRO)

1 Introduction

Hello everybody, my name is UberPyro, and this is my guide to teambuilding. I have been playing for quite a while, having started competitively in BW2. I started out knowing nothing about competitive Pokémon, and slowly learned the game from the ladder. I made this guide because I see that question show up all the time in the chat: “Can someone help me teambuild?” Instead of working alongside every new player that comes my way, I figured it was a good idea to put it all down, so I can state my knowledge once, and then give it for all to share. So without further ado, let’s a-do.

Teambuilding is simple in concept: It’s when someone builds a team, goes through the teambuilding process, and takes into consideration a particular metagame (such as OU). The builder starts with a center—something to build around. The Pokémon that follow help support the center. Then, there are the last few Pokémon, which are like the missing pieces to a puzzle. Finally, the builder tweaks the team. Battling versus a variety of teams is absolutely necessary to work out all the kinks. Some Pokémon will have to be replaced, sometimes a large group at a time to shift around the threat coverage and to fit in all the utility moves.

2 Why Teambuild?

Sure, you can head on over to the RMT section and steal a good team. However, there are plenty of compelling reasons to build your own.

- You need teams, and what better than your own! If someone snatches someone else’s team, they might not understand it fully because they haven’t gone through exactly how it works. Even if you are new to Pokémon, and want to become better as fast as possible, it’s still better to use your own team, because you can understand everything that’s on it, and you can grow from there.
- It makes you a better battler, and understand the game on a deeper level. Teambuilding and battling go hand and hand. Getting better at one means getting better at the other. Understanding teambuilding leads to understanding concepts such as momentum, and by working through how plays work before the battle starts can lead to better on-the-fly critical thinking.
- It’s fun! Creating Pokémon teams can be fun just like battling with them. Making a serious Pokémon team might take a large sum of time and effort, but many people find the process for doing so fun, and it is also rewarding when finished. Additionally, building with friends is something to take into consideration—they can make building more fun, and two heads is better than one.

3 Getting Ready

Before you start teambuilding, you have to be prepared. First, here's what you need to understand:

There is no perfect team. Not even close, as ORAS is a very diverse metagame. There are so many threats in OU that it is impossible to cover every single one. What is true is that some teams will be prepared for more threats than others, especially when constructed from the hands of an experienced teambuilder. However, threat coverage isn't the end-all truth for how good a team is, because there are other factors such as the function of the team. Lastly, how many threats teams cover overall is controlled by the diversity of the metagame. A broader and more diverse metagame means that there are more Pokémon to counter, making good threat coverage harder, and a tighter and more centralized metagame renders fewer viable Pokémon, making good threat coverage easier to attain. Here's what you need:

- **Pokémon Showdown** (or a similar simulator)—Of course, we need the site to build it on. If you don't have access to a computer, and if you get antsy like me when you get an idea, paper works fine, too.
- **Viability Rankings**—In this thread, the community rates how viable Pokémon are in the metagame. There are hundreds of Pokémon in this game, and as a result, some are significantly better than others—this is why we have tiers. Since this is “competitive” Pokémon, and the ultimate object here is to win, it is ideal to use the most effective Pokémon possible...when possible. Don't scroll down the list, scoop off the first 6 Pokémon, and call it quits. There's a very important reason for that—more on it later.
- **Usage Stats** (updates monthly)—These are the statistics for how often a Pokémon is used on a team. It suggests (but does not indicate!) viability, and most importantly, it represents the metagame. This list tells what the most common threats are, and what needs to be prepared for when teambuilding. It also tells what the opponents are NOT prepared for, and helps suggest when to introduce a lower-tier threat. Lastly, while threat coverage is most important, generic type coverage is important as well. More on that later as well. Important note: If the stats are outdated, then increase the month number in the URL until you get an error. The one before that is correct.
- **Damage Calculator**—Handy for when teambuilding as it shows what ohkos, 2hkos, etc.. It demonstrates if your wall actually counters a certain Pokémon after rocks, or if your sweeper is walled by a certain Pokémon, etc., so you can adjust accordingly based off how well a Pokémon covers a threat.
- **Smogdex**—If you don't have much experience with a Pokémon, and you need to know what the best moves to run for a set are, then you can look up the Smogon analysis of that Pokémon.
- And if you're new to the game, the **Pokémon Dictionary**. If you need clarification on some of the terms I'm using—metagame, momentum, playstyles, etc.—you can look them up here. Unfortunately, it hasn't been updated since BW. Also, you need to know the exact definitions of checks and counters for this guide, which can be found in the smog article here.

There are a few other sources that deserve some honorable mentions: Marriland's Teambuilder, which allows you to check the defensive type synergy of a team; The OU checks compendium, and the OU Role compendium.

4 The Objective

Every team should try to accomplish something in battle, whether that is eliminating checks of a sweeper or inhibiting the strategy of the opponent. Every Pokémon on the team should then contribute to this objective in some way or another. The most basic objective for a team is to prepare a single sweeper (usually a Pokémon with a boosting move) to sweep (KO the remaining Pokémon), but still have back up win conditions (wincons) in case of a bad match up or something goes wrong. Another type of objective is to have a core of Pokémon, or an established group of Pokémon that have exceptional synergy. The core serves as a strong starting point for a team because the Pokémon work very well together to begin with. However, the core must have a purpose. In the case of an offensive core, it is usually for breaking up the opponent's team, or in some cases securing a win, and in the case of a defensive core, it is to help wall (inhibit the strategy of) the opposing team. Lastly, an objective can be conceptual, which means that the objective does not revolve around any individual Pokémon, but rather the team as a whole. However, conceptual teams do tend to have a poster child Pokémon or core. Examples of conceptual objectives are to stall and to voltturn. To stall by walling all of the opponent's Pokémon requires the team's Pokémon to come in on, or counter, specific Pokémon of the opponent's, so it is a team effort. Similarly, a full voltturn offense team makes use of several U-Turn and Volt Switch users to pivot in and out, weakening the opponent's Pokémon. To recap, there are three main categories for a team objective: to prepare a sweeper to sweep, to support a core, and to conform to a concept. The objective of the team usually determines the playstyle of the team, i.e. whether it is offense, balance, stall, etc.. Then, the rest of the team has to be built appropriately, supporting the center of the team and contributing to the overall objective.

5 Filling in the Rest

When choosing Pokémon, there are A LOT of factors to consider. Here, each one will be enumerated and explained.

5.1 Roles

Primarily, Pokémon will be chosen to fulfill a desired role, or have a "job" on the team. The Pokémon contributes to the overall objective through performing its role. Examples of some roles as seen on basic frameworks are sweepers, stallbreakers, walls, pivots, SR, defog, etc. however when building a team roles could be more specific, like a Keldeo lure or a Bisharp + Zard X counter. The Pokémon's role also determines its set, so theoretically anyone following this process should never wonder what set to run on their Pokémon, because the Pokémon takes on the role, and not the other way around (coverage options, on the other hand, may not be so obvious).

5.2 Viability versus Role and Synergy

Remember when I said to use the viability rankings thread but not to scoop off the first 6 Pokémon? And then I said that I would explain why later. Now is later. The viability rankings list, as you can imagine, lists the Pokémon in the metagame and ranks them based off their effectiveness in the metagame. This means that Pokémon of higher ranks (like S, A+, A, and A-) should be used whenever applicable. Viability is not the end all truth for how good a Pokémon is on your team. It's only part of the equation. How good a candidate a Pokémon is on your team is determined by both its viability in the metagame, and what it does for your team. For example, rain teams can be effective, but some rain-associated Pokémon cannot be found within the higher ranks. This is because, individually, those rain Pokémon do not perform well in the metagame, but when put together, along with a few higher-ranked partners, some magic happens, and they do perform well. The teambuilder must balance Viability with role. Now, similarly, the teambuilder also has to take into consideration synergy. In this case, synergy is how well the Pokémon work together. Mega Sableye and Weavile are both great Pokémon, but they probably will not be found on the same team, because only the offensive playstyles will call for a Weavile and only the more defensive playstyles will use Mega Sableye. No, it is necessary for Pokémon to talk to each other. Mega Sableye has trouble blocking Tank Chomp's SR due to its DTail, therefore Togekiss can be used to block Tank Chomp's hazards instead, and additionally function as a backup defogger. Therefore, the Pokémon Mega Sableye + Togekiss are much better on a team than Mega Sableye + Weavile, even though Togekiss is way down there on the viability rankings list, and has less viability in the metagame individually. This captures the essence of why a team consisting of the first 6 Pokémon, or composed entirely of S and A+ ranks, would not work, at least to full effectiveness. There would be a lack of synergy, and lack of purpose.

5.3 Usage Coverage versus Type Coverage

The usage stats can be interesting to interpret. It represents the OU metagame by how often each Pokémon is used. When adapting a team to counter the metagame, the usage stats is what to refer to, because it lists what is actually being used, regardless of how good the actual Pokémon are, because all that matters when tailoring a team to a metagame is responding to what is going to show up the most number of times, to give the team the best chances for a favorable matchup. However, teams generally should not be designed to be 100% antimeta, and entirely focused around countering specific Pokémon. It is also important to have good general type coverage, offensive or defensive on the respective playstyle, however this is most noticeable from a defensive perspective. As a team is designed to be more threat-based, it tends to have wider gaps in type coverage. As a consequence, the team is more susceptible to a low usage threat. The threat based team does not have a proper response to the low usage threat due to the hole in the defensive type coverage, which might be, let's say, the low usage threat's STAB combo. The low usage threat then does severe damage to the opposing team, despite its likely low viability, as a result of the matchup. On the other hand, a defensive team could be designed to be more type-based, and would therefore respond much better to random low usage threats, but may have trouble with the powerhouses at the top of the metagame. From an offensive point of view, the advantage comes in from having a Pokémon with its usage opposite of how the defender prepared. As a note, low usage surprise Pokémon should be determined with the help of the usage statistics, as it also shows what is down in usage, and therefore what people are not preparing for. Actual Pokémon teams generally have a mix of high usage and low usage threats, generally leaning on the high usage size do to the overall consistency of the upper tier Pokémon. Overall, Metagame and Type coverage is something that the teambuilder has to balance.

6 Playstyle by Playstyle

We now have the necessary background to go over how to build each playstyle. Here, we will start with the big three (offense, balance, and stall) and then moving onto some of the others that have erupted in the current metagame.

6.1 Offense

Offense is a playstyle that capitalizes on offensive synergy and momentum (explained later on), characterized by fast—often frail—hard hitting Pokémon. This playstyle prioritizes executing its own strategy rather than reacting to the opponent. In other words, it applies constant pressure. The most common objective that offense has is to secure a sweep (or “clean,” when without setup) with a wincon. In most games, that wincon will be the dedicated sweeper, or center, of the team, possibly alone or part of a core. However, other wincons are necessary as mentioned earlier. In general, a sweep is secured by removing all the checks of a wincon. Offensive teams accomplish this through a variety of ways, such as through pressuring in the targeted Pokémon, employing lures, and using trappers. For example, an offensive team may contain both a Keldeo and a Mega Lopunny. Lopunny needs Latios at 70% and Latias at 60% to secure the OHKO. However, neither Latios nor Latias are going to switch directly in on Mega Lopunny’s attacks. In fact, they would not get weakened by Mega Lopunny directly at all, without it fainting in return. Therefore, Keldeo can save the day, and put one of those Pokémon in return range, as one step in the right direction of opening up a bunny sweep. While there are a lot that are similar among offensive teams, they are almost always divided up into more specific playstyles, namely Hyper Offense (HO) and Bulky Offense (BO).

6.2 Hyper Offense

Outline: 2-4 Sweepers, 1-3 Breakers (nonboosters), 0-1 Stallbreakers (stall is usually already handled pretty well by the set up sweepers), 1 SR setter, 0-1 Hazard removers (most go without, however using SR weak Pokémon such as Mega Charizard X/Y, Talonflame, or Volcarona makes it necessary).

Hyper Offense is characterized by its numerous set-up sweepers, its systematic sacking, and its broad use and effectiveness in the metagame. Generally in HO, checked Pokémon are sacked rather than having the player switch out, and the reason for that is because absolute constant pressure is necessary for the playstyle to work. HO teams should be designed around this. Defensive synergy is irrelevant on a HO team, and the selected Pokémon are generally too frail to withstand super effective attacks. Most importantly however, the team must be designed so that the check to one sweeper is what another can set up on. It plays linearly. Whenever a sweeper comes in, it pressures in specific Pokémon, and the next sweeper in line sets up on those Pokémon. For example, lets say a team has SD Bisharp. Keldeo checks SD Bisharp. The next Pokémon in line could be BD Azumaril, DD Gyarados or DD Dragonite, because they all set up on Keldeo, especially if it is locked into secret sword. Lastly, low usage threats, trappers, and lures are all good to incorporate into a Hyper Offensive team.

6.3 Bulky Offense

Outline: 1 Sweeper, 2-3 Breakers, 1 Stallbreaker, 1 SR setter, 0-1 Hazard removers (more common than HO, but not necessary)

Bulky offense is the polar opposite to HO, specifically in the way it plays. It does not signify that all the Pokémon are literally slow, bulky attackers like Azumarril. Rather, it implies that Pokémon are switched out rather than sacked, as the team packs checks to the metagame that can sponge a resisted hit, and counter in return. A great example of a BO Pokémon (that would still be used in other playstyles) is Keldeo. It is moderately fast and hits hard, but most importantly, it has some great resistances, and can come in on the likes of Bisharp, and on random resisted moves in general. BO teams should be built with both offensive and defensive synergy in mind, so that the Pokémon cover and pressure the opponent's Pokémon, but also so that they could defensively react to the opponent's Pokémon. Start with the objective (being the sweeper), and expand offensively and defensively from that point.

6.4 Balance

Outline: 0-1 Sweepers, 1-2 Breakers, 1 Stallbreaker, 2-3 Pivots or Walls, 1 SR setter, 1 Hazard Remover (due to all the pivoting)

Balance is a playstyle focused around defensive synergy, momentum, and overall pivoting. It consists of a mix of offensive and defensive Pokémon, but exactly how stally the team is can be decided upon by the teambuilder. When building a balanced team, it is usually best to start with a breaker. Now, since pivoting is the name of the game when playing with Balance, choose a pivot that counters the checks to the breaker chosen. Got that? Whatever first breaker was chosen, ask what beats it, and then choose a pivot that counters those Pokémon. Now, whenever that pivot comes into battle, do not just fire off a random attack or use a recovery move unless it is necessary. Double switch off into a breaker, since it can actually do damage. This means that the next Pokémon to add is going to be another breaker, and this breaker should come in on what wants to switch in on the pivot that was just out. For example, if the user's pivot is Amoonguss, then something like Heatran is expected to come in. The next breaker should be something that defeats that Pokémon, say, Mega Lopunny. A stallbreaker is going to want to fit in the same way that the (offense) breakers do. Choose a stallbreaker that does not set up, so that it can be pivoted in directly much like the other breakers, and let it come in on what a pivot lures in. Now, when playing with the team, remember to switch out the breaker whenever it is checked, bring in the appropriate pivot, and the double switch out to the next breaker in line. That is the essence of how a balanced team works.

6.5 Stall

Outline: 5-6 Walls (pretty much everything is a wall and something else), 1 Stallbreaker (usually defensive with taunt or bulky SD, but it does not have to be), 1 SR setter, 2 Hazard Removal (usually Mega Sableye + Starmie or Togekiss or two defoggers/spinners that collectively cover the metagame).

Stall is the playstyle with the objective of inhibiting the opponent's strategy. That is a euphemism for using bulky walls, passive damage, and recovery moves to break down the opponent over time. When building stall, start with a defensive core or Pokémon that covers a wide range of Pokémon by themselves, and then patch in the gaps. Stall is the most antimeta and metagame specific playstyle—it generally has a large focus on responding to what is used most of the time, to give it the best chances for a good matchup, which is crucial for winning a stall match. This means when building stall, try to cover as many threats as possible. Focus mainly on stallbreakers, but do not overlook common (offense) breakers, such as Weavile and Talonflame, as they are easy to miss out on!

6.6 Semi-Stall

Outline: 4-5 Walls, 1 Stallbreaker (usually set up or offensive), 0-1 Sweepers, 0-1 Breakers, 1 SR setter, 1-2 Hazard Removers.

Semi Stall contains numerous walls similar to Stall, but also one or two offensive Pokémon to reduce passivity. In other words, the opponent cannot set up or do whatever they want to like they can versus a full stall team because of the offensive presence of the sweeper or breaker, which then threatens to check or revenge kill the opposing Pokémon. This causes semi-stall to be less matchup based than full stall because of its ability to play around strategies, but less consistent versus a good matchup (but still more consistent than any more offensive team). Also, semi-stall teams generally have a couple of set-up Pokémon to help finish the match. There are a couple of different ways to build a semi stall team. An approach similar to building stall could be taken, starting with a few Pokémon with strong synergy that cover a large portion of the metagame, and using offensive pressure to fill in the gaps. Alternatively, a method that is loosely reminiscent of offense could be used, taking into consideration what checks a bulky sweeper, and then adding Pokémon to weaken those threats with moves like Toxic and Will-O-Wisp.

6.7 VoltTurn Offense

Outline: 1 Fast U-Turn user, 1 Fast Volt Switch user, 1 hard-hitting U-Turn user, 1 hard-hitting Volt Switch user, 1 SR Setter, 1 Hazard Remover (remember there can be bending of the outline).

VoltTurn (VT) teams are BO-esque teams that consist of multiple U-turn and Volt Switch users. They use the pivot moves to deal chip damage, gain/maintain momentum, and essentially make the opponent's head spin. While VoltTurn teams often have defensive roots, it is crucial that the core VoltTurn users all have a strong offensive presence, as the opposing Pokémon must feel appropriately threatened out, otherwise the opponent is more apt to stay in and play mindgames. When building VoltTurn, start with a VoltTurn user of interest, and complement it with another VoltTurn user of the opposite move. The two fast VoltTurn users perform well versus fast (and frail) offensive Pokémon, and the two slower VoltTurn users act well versus anything slower than them. This means when facing balance, the whole VoltTurn system is put to work, depending what Pokémon the opponent sends/leaves in as a respond. Also, VoltTurn teams have issues with ground types. Lures such as Grass Knot Thundurus, and similar plans, are good to pack so that the Volt Switch users cannot lose their momentum, which really causes the whole team to stop working.

6.8 Rain

Outline: Politoed, a Physical Water Type, a Special Water Type, a Steel Type, an Electric or Dragon Type, and a Lead, Pivot, or Miscellaneous (credits to the guide here for the basis of this section).

Rain teams are rather formulaic in their construction. There is not a lot to wiggle room compared to the broader playstyles, however there is still plenty for creativity. Politoad is necessary here because it is the only OU legal Pokémon with Drizzle, and Drizzle is irreplaceably useful for setting rain because it does not require taking a turn to use Rain Dance. The physical Water Type is generally Kabutops or Mega Swampert, and the special Water Type is generally Kingdra. These Pokémon capitalize on the combination of double speed from Swift Swim and the 50% damage increase on their stab water moves to break down and sweep opposing teams. Steel types are useful for their plentiful resistances and damage absorption. Electric Types can be used to take advantage of perfect accuracy Thunder, and Electric and Dragon types are used to help respond to Thundurus. Lastly, a rocks lead is generally used if that is not already covered by the steel type. Pokémon such as Azelf can set up both rocks and use Rain Dance, saving Politoad for later. If SR has already been covered, then Tornadus-T is a great Pokémon to use because it gains momentum and can leverage a perfect accuracy hurricane.

6.9 Trick Room

Outline: 3 TR setters (with some SR users mixed in there), 3 TR abusers.

Trick Room (TR) receives an honorable mention here despite its gimmicky status because it has potential to fare well when built correctly. Now, TR can be built in two different styles, one more reminiscent of HO and the other BO. Here, TR will be explained in the style akin to HO, because I find it to be more consistent. When building a TR team, start by choosing TR setters that collectively can set up on a variety of threats. These TR setters should be built like suicide leads, packing TR, possibly SR, and if possible, a move like Explosion or Destiny Bond. Three examples of TR HO setters would be Smeargle, Diancie, and Bronzong. Next, three slow heavy hitters are chosen. For these Pokémon, it is actually better to have some level of redundancy, or to be checked by multiple Pokémon in common, so that they can weaken each other's counters.

7 Miscellaneous Strategies

Here are some free-floating considerations when teambuilding. Some of these are integral with battling, setting up plays before the battle even starts. Other simply make the team more effective.

7.1 Momentum Strategies

7.1.1 Battle Flow

As a necessary background before heading into the momentum strategies: In a Pokémon game without any use of double switching, there is a natural pattern that occurs. When the user checks the opponent, the opponent switches out to check the user, then the user switches the turn after to check the opponent again, and this repeats until things faint. Whenever a player switches or sacks a Pokémon, and checks a Pokémon that was checking them, that is called “gaining momentum.” In the battle previously described, momentum is observed to have this back and forth flow. In the following, double switching and pivots will be seen to manipulate this flow.

7.1.2 Offensive Momentum

Although offensive momentum (or offensive pivoting) is a battling strategy, it is one of those techniques that the teambuilder must be mindful of when creating a team as to set up plays proactively. It is a strategy often employed on offense where the opponent is forced to switch out, and the user predicts this, switching into a check that defeats the opponent’s switch in. Often the Pokémon that is maneuvered in can put in more work than the one that was in beforehand. Also, this strategy “maintains momentum,” because the user checks the opponent before and after the play. This strategy can be incorporated in a team by considering what Pokémon a breaker loses to, and then using a breaker or sweeper that defeats those checks, generally a heavier hitter.

7.1.3 Defensive Pivoting

This is another technique that the teambuilder must be mindful of as to set up plays before they happen. Defensive pivoting is a strategy mostly seen on balance where the opponent is checking the user’s active Pokémon (In other words, the opponent has the advantage), so the user goes to a counter to the opponent’s check, and then double switches, predicting the opponent’s next action. Essentially, this strategy gains momentum, by transferring the advantage from the opponent to the user. This strategy can be incorporated into a team by considering what Pokémon check a breaker, and choosing a counter to those checks. A further step can be taken to then say, what Pokémon are likely to then come in on this pivot, and therefore what second breaker should I include that beats these checks. Lastly, Pokémon with the ability Regenerator make the best defensive pivots (Slowbro, Tornadus-T, Amoonguss, Tangrowth, and Slowking are the big ones).

7.2 Coverage Strategies

7.2.1 Offensive Redundancy

When battling, it is necessary to weaken opposing checks to open an opportunity for a wincon to sweep. However, this can be difficult to accomplish, because bringing a check in on an opposing Pokémon that needs to be KOed results in the opponent simply switching. One way around this is to use offensive redundancy. This is when offensive Pokémon have check (and coverage) that overlaps, resulting in the same Pokémon from the opposing team to be the response for both. This causes the Pokémon to be weakened by the first redundancy Pokémon, or however many there are, so that the last can break through the weakened responding Pokémon and win the game. For example, BirdSpam involves Talonflame and Pinsir using their flying type moves, so that if one weakens a check, then the other can sweep. Another strategy is rain. Similarly, they use water type moves to weaken the opponent's water type resists. A somewhat different strategy is to repeatedly pivot the same breaker in. For example, Latios can be pivoted in and use Draco Meteor, and although a steel type might be able to take one or two, that Pokémon cannot take them repeatedly over the course of the battle (and I know there are fairies and such but this is an example). Lastly, redundancy is the major technique behind HO in general. HO, containing several set-up sweepers, use the first couple of set-up sweepers to weaken walls, and the last one needed to break through and win.

7.2.2 Defensive Redundancy

Defensive redundancy is not as significant as its offensive counterpart, however it still deserves to be mentioned. Defensive redundancy is when a couple of walls counter the same Pokémon, and have overlapping coverage. This means that if one wall dies from a cause that the staller was not expecting or could not control, then the opponent does not autowin with whatever was previously walled.

7.2.3 Offensive Synergy

Offensive synergy is often considered on offensive teams. It is when teammates cover a broad range of threats (or Pokémon types), as well as each other's checks. This can be applied to a team by considering what Pokémon a breaker or sweeper on your team loses to, and then choosing a check to that Pokémon.

7.2.4 Defensive Synergy

Defensive synergy is used on balance and stall teams. It is when Pokémon are able to come in on a wide range of threats or move types. It is more so move types on balance and BO teams, and more so threat coverage on stall teams, because on Balance and BO, Pokémon switch in on arbitrary moves of Pokémon they do not counter, and on stall, it is important to focus on countering the metagame. Defensive synergy can be included on a team by considering what moves or threats that Pokémon on my team are weak to, and then choosing a Pokémon that resists those moves or counters that threat.

7.2.5 Cores

Cores are actually extreme cases of synergy, and they can be used for a lot more than just a center for a team. In fact, multiple cores can often be observed from teams built by experienced players. While cores are useful, do not force one onto a team. Maybe a Pokémon has one really good partner, but if it does not contribute to the team objective, then it is often counterproductive to use it. Secondly, not any two Pokémon can form a core. Cores are generally established groups of Pokémon that have very good synergy. Frequently, a user may discover a strong synergy between two Pokémon in how they help each other out, however usually it is just that—synergy—and not quite a core. The majority of cores contain Pokémon that help each other out offensively or defensively. However, Pokémon can work well together in ways more than just threat and type coverage. This means that there are numerous different types of cores.

7.2.6 VoltTurn Core

A good example of a core unassociated with type coverage is a VoltTurn core. U-Turn and Volt Switch users individually can use their respective pivot move to deal damage and switch out. However, when the two are used together, a kind of magic happens. They tend to work best when both the U-Turn user and Volt Switch user are strong enough to force out the opponent so that the opponent is discouraged from staying in on the attack. To top things off, many VoltTurn teams happen to have strong defensive synergy (Scizor + Rotom-Wash, Lando-T + Mega Manectric), which renders them popular choices on bulky offense and balance.

7.2.7 Regenerator Core

Regenerator cores are another example of a core disregarding coverage. As the name might suggest, they consist of multiple Pokémon with the ability Regenerator. Although they function great individually, when they are both on the same team, the user is given the option to switch between the two regenerator users, allowing them to heal up (often coming in on a resisted attack) and play mindgames with the opponent.

8 Battling-Separate Strategies

The opponent cannot prepare for or react to the strategies that follow, thus they are separate from the battle strategies.

8.1 Lures

Lure Pokémon can unexpectedly eliminate a key opposing Pokémon of the opponent's team. For example, a team containing an SD Bisharp might want to run Power Herb Solar Beam Heatran to defeat Pokémon like Keldeo on the switch. Lures are very effective strategies, however keep in mind of the cost of having a lure moveset is that the lure Pokémon checks a lot less Pokémon than it does with the normal moveset, so it may lose to Pokémon it should beat. Additionally, methods such as looking up replays or scouting can be used by the opponent to identify lures and avoid them.

8.2 Trapping

Trapping is using a Pokémon with a trapping ability, or pursuit, to prevent a Pokémon from switching out and defeating it. It is a very effective way of eliminating a check for a sweeper because it is very hard to stop—whenever the check is brought out, it is in extreme danger of being caught by the trapper. Trappers can be made more effective with the use of pivots with the intention of luring certain Pokémon in. For example, what are the number one most often switch-ins to Rotom-W? Latias and Latios. Therefore, a good strategy could be to have Rotom-W Volt Switch off of the Lati twin, and then go to something like Pursuit Weavile, which is a Pokémon that can run pursuit while still being an effective attacker. Trapping is a very effective strategy due to its reliability. On the flip side, trappers often are bad teamplayers, and lack a strong offensive/defensive presence.

8.3 Low-Usage Threats

Unearthing a low-usage threat against the right match up can leave the opponent unable to respond correctly. See the section on Usage Coverage versus Type Coverage.

9 Tweaking the Team

Often when finishing the team, it is challenging to choose the last Pokémon because it has to cover up as many of the remaining threats to the team as possible. To the frustration of many builders, that perfect final Pokémon that would make the team work frequently does not exist. Therefore, it is necessary to go back, and alter what has already been built. On the other hand, sometimes a team has been finished, but when used in battle, several significant weaknesses of the team are revealed, and it must be patched up. In fact, battling with a team versus multiple playstyles is recommended before bringing it to any serious matches to work out the kinks.

The most frequent tweak that is made to a team is a change of coverage. For example, if a team is weak to Hippowdon, then a Thundurus may opt to run Grass Knot over a different coverage move so that the team is not as weak to Hippowdon anymore. While move changes are easy because they do not require a lot of reworking, they can only solve the surface issues of the team, and in many situations, it is necessary to go deeper.

Substituting a similar Pokémon for another is a much more powerful action when tweaking a team because it allows the team to have a much more solid for a threat that it is weak towards. Changing a move on a Pokémon generally allows it to beat the threat on the switch, however if the team has no other answer to the threat, and it is a high-usage threat, then it is a serious problem for the team and that is when replacing a Pokémon is a good idea. Replacing Pokémon does not only have to shift coverage, it could also redistribute things like utility moves. Maybe the current team needs both SR and defog, but there is only one slot left and Skarmory does not make any sense. In that case, it would be necessary to replace another Pokémon with an SR user or defogger so that all the utility moves can be fit in comfortably. That is, if there are any Pokémon that can be afforded to be substituted with an SR user. Sometimes, changing a single Pokémon is not enough, and it is necessary to shift the coverage and moves of multiple team members.

Yes, sometimes replacing a single Pokémon will not solve the issue. Therefore, it is necessary to replace multiple Pokémon with similar coverage to shift around the synergy and make room to cover the threat that is bothering the team or to make room for an important utility move. This is most easily explained as an example. For instance, take a Stall team containing the Pokémon Quagsire, Amoonguss, and Defensive Altaria. The team needs rocks. Therefore, Quagsire could be replaced with Hippowdon, because they have similar defensive coverage in they both respond to Bisharp and Mega Charizard X. However, this makes the team weak to Belly Drum Azumarril, since Amoonguss, the go-to switchin, will die if it comes in on the BD. So then Amoonguss could be replaced with Mega Venusaur to solve the BD azu troubles. However Mega Venusaur kicks out the Mega Altaria. Let's find something that can replace Mega Altaria's roles. Dragonite seems like a good option because it can do some of the things that M Alt did (counter Zard Y, do damage) and so can Mega Venusaur (counter Crawdaunt and Thundurus, among other things). Of course, Mega Venusaur and Dragonite cannot mimic everything that Mega Altaria brought to the team, however they can reproduce everything that it did that was necessary for the team.

Lastly, all tweaks do not necessarily have to be coverage-based. For example, a very good tweak is one that allows the team to achieve its objective more effectively. As I had stated in my Viability versus Role section, metagame coverage is not the end-all truth when it comes to how effective a team is. How well the team can achieve its purpose is a huge factor of that.

10 Conclusion

There is more to teambuilding than what can be put into words, and my meaning there is twofold: to truly learn how to teambuild takes practice, and this guide is getting too long. The best way to get better at teambuilding is ironically to battle. As I said earlier, teambuilding and battling go hand and hand. All the tools are laid out here, however to truly understand them, they must be experienced in battle. So, for all you future teambuilders, it is best to build your own team, regardless of how good or bad it is, to get out there, and to battle with it. Learn from your mistakes.

I hope that some of you out there found my guide to be helpful. Thanks for reading!

11 The Community

This guide is, after all, a part of the community. Let me guys know if you have any corrections to make, any sections you want to write, or any suggestion of any kind! I realize that this monstrous wall of text may prove inaccessible to some people, so maybe we can do something about it. Pictures would be nice. Also, a grammar check or correctness check could be used. Make sure that before you do anything, you notify me on PS! or Smogon beforehand, so that I can coordinate everything surrounding this guide. Thanks!

12 Resource Links

- Pokemon Showdown: <http://pokemonshowdown.com/>
- Viability Rankings: <http://www.smogon.com/forums/threads/oras-ou-viability-ranking-thread-v4-see-post-278-page-12.3553516/>
- Usage Stats: <http://www.smogon.com/stats/2015-12/ou-1825.txt>
- Damage Calculator: <https://pokemonshowdown.com/damagecalc/>
- SmogDex: <http://www.smogon.com/dex/xy/pokemon/>
- Pokemon Dictionary: http://www.smogon.com/bw/articles/bw_pokemon_dictionary
- Marriland Teambuilder: <http://www.azuriland.com/tools/team-builder>
- OU Checks Compendium: <http://www.smogon.com/forums/threads/ou-checks-compendium.3545711/>
- OU Role Compendium: <http://www.smogon.com/forums/threads/oras-ou-role-compendium-v2.3541745/>

OFFENSE TEAMBUILDING GUIDE

(BY: WECAMEASROMANS)

1 Introduction

So, this is a guide on how to build offense. Teambuilding, especially in ORAS, is considered challenging by many because of the wide variety of Pokemon you have to make sure to cover on your team. Offense is a playstyle where, instead of making sure you have every single major threat covered, you want to overwhelm your opponent's team and make them react to your Pokemon, not the other way around. Offense is all about maintaining pressure right from the start and your teams you hope to build with the assistance after reading this guide should seek to fulfill that goal. This guide goes over, step by step, the thought processes that you should take to help you get the most out of your potential team. This guide includes a whole bunch of concrete examples that I hope you all find helpful.

2 Step One: How do I start?

Probably the most essential, yet most difficult part of teambuilding is simply deciding on how to start. From all the viable pokemon in ORAS OU and the countless of strategies you can utilize, sometimes just deciding how you're going to begin building your team can prove to be difficult. This section goes over multiple ways you can brainstorm on where to begin building and lists many helpful Pokemon/duos/cores you can use or substitute with other concepts of your own choosing.

2.1 Picking a Single Pokemon You Want to Base Your Team Around

You decide you want to build an offense team! Sweet, now the first step you can take in many possible routes is simply clicking the teambuilder tab on Pokemon Showdown! and scrolling through the list of numerous Pokemon and hopefully pick out one Pokemon that sparks up an idea for you and you want to base the rest of your build off of. Maybe you have already decided on a Pokemon you want to utilize and are just determined to support this Pokemon in the best way possible!

Think about metagame trends when deciding on a starting point! Typically, you want to pick out a Pokemon that works good in the current metagame. Even better, maybe this Pokemon is severely underused/underrated and is very antimeta, which makes your opponent unprepared for this threat allowing you to capitalize and pick up a win in most cases. Being knowledgeable about the metagame and current trends and making sure your team is able to beat the majority of the threats in the tier is extremely beneficial.

I'll list several Pokemon here that are good ideas you can build a starting foundation from:



For instance, one common trend in the metagame is that people are spamming Hippowdon/Garchomp/Landorus-T as their bulky physical tanks and their SRer. Ground types are very prominent in OU, so you can decide to take advantage of this and maybe base your team around Manaphy/Kyurem-b to put pressure right from the start.



Another metagame trend is that people utilize Skarmory/Rotom-W a lot when picking out a ground immunity, so you can take advantage of this trend by starting out with a Swords Dance + Gravity/Smack Down Landorus-T to very quickly overwhelm these ground "immune" Pokemon.



Similarly, you can choose to utilize Mamoswine, which is a *huge* threat to teams packing Garchomp/Hippo as their primary physical wall, Volt-turn cores consisting of Raikou/MegaManectric + Tornadus-T, and is in general an incredibly hard hitter.



Offensive Starmie is a good pick as well. It proves to be a big pain for offensive teams to deal against with its great speed tier and type coverage hitting the majority of the tier super effectively. It even has rapid spin if you decide you want that right from the beginning.



Perhaps the most popular way to start with a Pokemon you want to base your team around is simply picking out a Mega that you really want to utilize. After all, Megas are powerful, but they're unique in that you can only have one Mega on your team. And so, picking out a Mega and having the rest of your team support this Mega can be a great approach.

2.2 Starting with a Duo or Core to Base Your Team Around

Instead of picking out just a single Pokemon you want to start with, you can also pick out two or three Pokemon that have good offensive or defensive synergy together. By offensive synergy, I mean having one Pokemon being able to weaken the opposing team's counters/checks, and then the other Pokemon being able to clean up once said check is weakened sufficiently. By defensive synergy, I mean having a Pokemon that can come in on attacks that the other wouldn't be able to take, or Pokemon that can cover up each other's weaknesses well.

Lures can be very effective! A common mentality that many new players have usually goes something like this: "I will start off with Thundurus and Hawlucha, because Hawlucha is weak to Skarmory and Slowbro, which Thundurus beats, and Thundurus is weak to Chansey and Mega Venusaur, which Hawlucha beats." However, this is a very flawed way of thinking because Skarm/Slowbro are never staying in on Thundy the same way Chansey/Venu are never staying in on a Hawlucha.

Lures can be used to surprisingly take out, or severely weaken, a key aspect of your opponent's team that allows one of your Pokemon to clean up once this check/counter is weakened. Some examples of good duos/cores that I thought of on the spot are listed below:



One of the most popular ways to deal with Mega Lopunny on standard offense teams is to slap a defensive Landorus-T/Tank Garchomp to tank its attacks. A good way to lure Garchomp/Landorus-T is SD Talonflame, with Natural Gift Ice, which then allows Lopunny to destroy the remainder of the opposing offense team.



Hidden power fire Kyurem-B paired with Mega Diancie is also very effective. Some of the most common ways to wall Diancie are with Ferrothorn and Mega Scizor, which Kube baits and kills with HP Fire. Other than those, Mega Diancie is also walled by Jirachi and checked by Mega Metagross. Kube can weaken these two since it 2hkoes SpDef Jirachi on the switch with Earth Power and can Ice Beam Metagross on the switch, and if it hasn't evolved yet can outspeed and kill Metagross with Earth Power the turn afterwards, making Diancie's job much simpler.



Keldeo and Mega Metagross are a good example of two Pokémon who have good defensive synergy. Keldeo resists Dark and Fire attacks which Metagross fears, while Mega Metagross patches up Keldeo's weaknesses to Flying, Grass, and Psychic. However, Keldeo and Mega Metagross both have a severe Talonflame weakness, and a problem dealing with bulky waters such as Slowbro, which Thundurus can threaten out. The ice and rock weakness Thundurus has are patched up by both Metagross and Keldeo.



Dark spam! Spam powerful dark attacks until the dark resists on the opposing team are weakened, such as Keldeo, and then break through with the other. These Pokémon can also take advantage of the Pokémon the other struggles with, such as Mega Gyarados setting up on Hippowdon, breaking through Tank Chomp with Ice Fang, while Bisharp can set up on support mons that Mega Gyara dislikes such as Ferrothorn, and can weaken would be Mega Gyarados counters such as Mega Venusaur and Azumarill with a +2 Iron Head.

Basing your team around a certain hazard setter, such as Garchomp for instance, is 9 out of 10 times not a very good approach because you want your hazard setter to be able to support the Pokémon your team is centered on. If you center your team around your hazard setter, there really isn't anything to base the rest of your team off of.

3 Step Two: How can I support my Pokemon or duo/core?

Now, after you have decided on what to build your team around, the next step you can take is to simply support your Pokemon. What would make this Pokemon's role significantly easier? What does this specific Pokemon have trouble with? You can't simply look at this from a linear perspective. What this means is, instead of just looking at a simple type effectiveness chart, look at the viability rankings, featured RMT teams, etc, anything that gives you insight on the metagame. You want to be able to support your starting Pokemon with taking the current metagame trends into account.

3.1 What Pokemon and/or playstyles does my starting Pokemon struggle with? What does it excel against?

In order to build a successful team, you want to make sure you have a line of defense against all playstyles. So if your first Pokemon you decided to put on your team is a very hard hitter and can do massive damage from walls from the get go, but is sort of slow by ORAS standards, it would probably benefit you to add a Pokemon that can deal with opposing offensive teams next. If the situation is reversed, then you obviously try and look for the opposite type of Pokemon. Let's take a look at some more examples.



So say you decide to base your team around Manaphy and pick that as your first Pokemon. Manaphy is one of the best Pokemon in this metagame and has the ability to boost to tremendous levels in only a few turns, which allows it to easily dismantle common stall and balanced cores. It also has very solid bulk and defensive typing to set up on a plethora of walls. What does it struggle against? It only has an average 100 base speed, which isn't exactly impressive for an offensive Pokemon. This makes Manaphy struggle a bit more vs offensive teams, since the majority of Pokemon on those team usually outspeed and 2HKO Manaphy, which makes it incredibly difficult for Manaphy to set up and sweep. Knowing this, what would be good ways to support Manaphy?



All of the above are good partners to support Manaphy. Obviously, these aren't even close to the only ones, these are just some I thought of on the spot. If you haven't noticed already, nearly all of them are incredibly threatening to opposing offense builds.

Let's examine Thundurus first. In addition to being a nightmare for offense to deal with because of its insane movepool and trolly speed tier, Thundurus can slow down faster threats with Thunder Wave which allows Manaphy to clean up late game without fear of being revenge killed. In addition, Thundurus can even act as a lure, using HP Flying to take down Mega Venusaur, one of Manaphy's main checks, as well as Knock off to beat Chansey, Latios, Latias, all of which Manaphy despises. In return, Manaphy can set up on common checks to Thundurus such as Hippowdon and specially defensive Heatran.

Sand offense, consisting of Tyranitar and Excadrill, is also a great way to support Manaphy since Excadrill in sand is one of the most difficult threats for offense to deal with. If you think some more however, you start to realize that the usefulness of sand offense doesn't end there. One of the main things Manaphy struggles with is fast electric types, such as Raikou. These are easily checked by Ttar/Exca. Tyranitar can also pursuit the Lati twins which are commonly used to check Manaphy. It can even bait Ferrothorn with Fire Blast so Manaphy can sweep later. In return, the common checks to sand Exca (Landorus-t, Garchomp, bulky waters, Hippowdon) are easy set up bait for Manaphy.

Talonflame is another example of a good partner for Manaphy, although it might not seem that way at first because it shares an Electric weakness with Manaphy. Talonflame is also a big threat for offensive teams, with the strongest priority in the game especially if given a SD boost. This allows it to easily clean up faster, frailer teams. Talonflame can easily bait fast electrics for Mana with Jolly SD Flareblitz (such as Scarf Magnezone for instance), takes care of Grass types (Ferro, Venu, Serp), while Manaphy sets up and beats Tflame counters such as defensive grounds, defensive waters, Ttar, Heatran.

Scarf Kyurem-b also supports Manaphy effectively. This is because it can lure the Lati twins, and even Keldeo, by outspeeding and KOing them. It also allows you to beat grasses such as MVenue and Serp that check Mana. You can also lure and 2hko Chansey with Outrage as well since most Chansey don't expect that on Kube. TG RD Manaphy can take advantage of steel types that try to check Scarf Kube, such as Jirachi and Mega Scizor.



Let's look at another example. Say you decide to build your team around a Mega, and you finally settle on Mega Alakazam since its an offensive monster, outspeeding the entirety of OU besides some scarfers and hitting hard with its towering 175 base SpAtk. It also can act as your back up weapon against weather teams because of its neat Trace ability. What holds Mega Zam back in OU? Just a quick glance at its typing and stats reveals a horrendous HP + Defense stat, meaning it gets blown back by priority, or Scarfed physical attackers such as Landorus-T. It is also walled by common defensive Pokemon such as Clefable, Chansey, Mega Sableye, & Mega Scizor. What are some ways we can support Mega Alakazam knowing this?



Garchomp is one of the best Mega Alakazam supporters in the tier. The defensive rocky helmet SR setter set gives you both a switch in, and a way to indirectly damage and weaken common priority and scarfed physical attacks aimed at MZam. These include Bisharp, Talonflame, fake outs from Lopunny and Medicham, Mega Scizor, and scarfed U-Turns from Landorus-T. Having the ability to set up SR is a great added bonus that you don't have to worry later.

Heatran is another Pokemon that pairs well with Mega Zam and can support it well. Similar to Garchomp, it also can set up SR so you don't have to be worried about that in the future. Besides that, Heatran is a great partner to Mega Zam because it can take on the majority of the mons that Mega Zam struggles against. These include Sableye, Clefable, Scizor, Jirachi, Talonflame, Spdef Skarm, and Chansey. Specifically, if it's the trapping Magma Storm set, it can lure, trap, and kill Chansey which significantly benefits Mega Zam. And although you really shouldn't directly switch Mega Zam into attacks because of its frailty, you can play smart and double switch to MZam on your opponent's common Heatran switch ins such as Keldeo and Tyranitar.

Azumarill serves as yet another approach you can take to support MZam. It acts as an additional Rain/Sand answer if somehow Alakazam didn't mega evolve yet. It also takes care of Chansey and Mega Sableye, and can be an effective Ferrothorn lure with CB Superpower. The CB variants also outspeed and 2HKO Clefable which is another annoyance that can stomach MZam's attacks. In return, you can double Mega Zam in on your opponent's common Azu switch ins such as Amoongus, Tentacruel, Rotom-W, and Mega Venusaur, and get a kill nearly every single time.

4 Step Three: What is my team weak to?

If you followed the above two steps, you should hopefully end up with approximately 3-4 Pokemon on your team so far and 2-3 more slots remaining. Now what? After having decided members on one half your team already, you should be able to pick out and glance at what your current members are weak to, and pick the remaining half of your team accordingly. If none of your Pokemon so far have Stealth Rock, you want to make sure you include a Rocker on the final part of your team to further support your team. However, because you are building an offense team, you always want to make sure that the members you pick do not slow you down or lose momentum. You want to stick with other offensive Pokemon, and/or pivots, to make sure you're exerting constant pressure on your opponent. When glancing at the weaknesses of your current members, you can think of both type effectiveness or just opposing Pokemon in general.



We can start out with a standard offensive core from above consisting of Thundurus, Keldeo, & Mega Metagross. It was already explained why these are excellent partners in the previous portion so in this section we'll just go over in detail what this first half of your team is weak to and what are some Pokemon that can serve as some excellent teammates in the remaining slots. So what exactly is this weak to? Excadrill in sand is one glaring weakness, as it outspeeds and OHKOes both Mega Metagross and Thundurus, and can do upwards of 90% to Keldeo. This core is also pretty weak to Talonflame, as it destroys both Keldeo and MMgross while outspeeding and KOing Thundy with a Jolly +2 Flare Blitz. It also struggles with common defensive cores such as Hippowdon + Slowbro, or Hippowdon + Starmie, etc. Rain is also a big issue, as Swampert can easily dispatch Thundy & MMgross and only needs a little prior damage to KO Keld. You also have no SR. Knowing all this, the following can all be good partners to finish this team off (obviously your choices are not just limited to these! Try to think of even more given your weaknesses and what you want to cover!).

Good teammates: 



So you make a team centered around Mega Medicham. You decide you want to pair it up with pursuit Bisharp to trap all the annoying fat Psychics that wall MMedi, such as Mew. Bisharp and Medi also form a tough priority duo, with Fake Out, Bullet Punch, and Sucker Punch for revenge killing and weakening purposes. You decide to add a Klefki for spikes support to enhance these hard hitters while also gaining useful prankster twave support. Latias is added for a Keld switch in, as it easily beats the other 3, Zard-Y switch in, electric check, and healing wish support. It seems pretty solid so far. What does this struggle with? Well for starters, it's absolutely ravaged by Tflame, both offensive and defensive variants. Mega Sableye can also be problematic as it hard walls MMedi, checks Bisharp, and blocks Klefki from statusing and setting up hazards. A secondary Keldeo switch in would be preferred as well since if it's paired with Pursuit support, Latias goes down and the rest of your team dies. You also have no SR. So what are some good options for the remaining two slots?

Good teammates:



You decide you want to make a double bunny offense team! You even decide to add a little twist to it: you realize that everyone is spamming Tank Garchomp to counter Lopunny, so you put Baton Pass on it so you can BP to CB Azu on Garchomp switch ins and nab a kill with Play Rough. You even decide to give Lopunny PuP + BP, so if its able to get an attack boost Azu is even more dangerous and can spam boosted aqua jets. Now, both bunnies hate Skarmory, and they also hate Slowbro. Azumarill also wants Ferro + MScizor out of the way while Lop wants Clef gone and Hippo weakened so you decide to add a Choice Specs Magnezone to support them. Seeing as how you're destroyed by SD Jolly Flare Blitz Tflame, opposing Lopunnies, and Metagross, you decide to do what most OU players do and put a Tank Garchomp on your team which also lets you have a SR setter. What is this unfinished team weak to so far? Getting walled to death by Mega Venusaur is an obvious one. Most bulky grasses barring Ferro actually are a bit of a problem. Getting destroyed by Raikou/Mega Manectric is another, and besides Azumarill who really doesn't want to get burned, you also have no Keldeo switch ins. Shed Shell Skarm obviously is an issue as well. What can be possible candidates for the remaining two slots?

Good teammates: (offensive with Psychic) (Roost + Thunderbolt)

5 Final Checkpoint

If you were able to do all the previous steps, your team should be complete by now, and you should feel a sense of satisfaction of having finished building your team. Before storming off to battle with it though in a tour game or ladder game or whatever, it behooves you to take one final glance at your team and see if there are any glaring flaws. Obviously, no team is perfect, as this is ORAS and we're talking about an abundance of threats here, but you want to try and make sure your team is well guarded against the whole list of common, standard Pokemon. Specifically, looking through this list and making sure you have passed each checkpoint will prove to benefit you in the long run. This list seems long, but keep in mind that many Pokemon can fulfill multiple of these checkpoints at once, such as Azumarill being a sand check, rain check, Lopunny check, Keld switch in, Weavile switch in, Lati check, Zard-X check, Tank Chomp killer, Mega Sableye check, all in one slot.



Fast electric check: (Tyranitar, Excadrill, Goodra, Mega Venu, Kyurem-b, Latias, Latios, Scarfed grounds, etc)



Weavile check: (sand rush exca, talonflame, keld, azu, bullet punch MMedi, bullet punch MMgross, MScizor, etc)



Bisharp check: (Keld, Lopunny, Mega Diancie, Mega Altaria, Garchomp, Breloom, etc)



Lati check (switch in required): (Tyranitar, Excadrill, Bisharp, Klefki, MScizor, MMGross, MGarde, Weavile, Azu, Heatran, etc)



Rain check: (Rotom-W, MVenue, Azu, Tyranitar, Thundurus, Klefki, MMgross, Zard-Y, Breloom, MZam, MGarde, etc)



Sand check: (Landorus-T, Garchomp, Breloom, Bisharp, Politoed, Rotom-W, Azu, MZam, MGarde, etc)



Lopunny check: (Breloom, Azu, MMeta, Talonflame, MAero, Garchomp, Landorus-T, MZam, MVenue, etc)



Talonflame check: (Landorus-T, Rotom-W, fast electrics, Garchomp, Tyranitar, MAero, Exca in sand, MDiancie, etc)



Tornadus-T check: (fast electrics, sand, kabutops (in rain), Weavile, Mamo, Kyurem-b, MDiancie, Talonflame, Azu, MAero, MGross, etc)



Keldeo check (switch in required): (Talonflame, Latis, MVenue, fast electrics, Azu, Celebi, Tornadus-t, Alakazam, MMGross, MDiancie, Starmie, MAero, etc)



Azumarill check: (fast electrics, Rotom-W, Breloom, MMeta, Kyurem-b, MVenue, MScizor, etc)



Zard-X check: (tyranitar, excadrill, Azumarill, Landorus-t, Heatran, Mega Alt, Prankster t-wave users, etc)



Mega Alt check: (Sand exca, Weavile, Mamo, Msciz, MMgross, MVenue, Talonflame, etc)



Mega Sab lure & check: (Manaphy, Zard-Y, Zard-X, MGarde, Specs Sylveon, MDiancie, MAlt, Azu, Lopunny, Talonflame, Keldeo, etc)



Clefable killer: (MMeta, Bisharp, Exca, Iron head kube, iron tail Dnite, MScizor, Tflame, Zard-X, Modest Zard-Y, Specs Magnezone, etc)



Tank Chomp killer (*multiple necessary if using Lop/Tflame/Gross/other Tank Chomp bait*):
(Kyurem-b, Lati, fast electrics, Manaphy, Azu, Keld, Weavile, Mamo, Starmie, MAlt, MDiancie, MGarde, etc)

And that's all folks! Hopefully after reading all this, you're now ready to build some offensive teams of your own. Be sure to avoid picking passive Pokemon even though they may appear to support your team well, such as Hippowdon, because even though they seem to fit in well, they instantly make you lose momentum which is a huge factor for offense teams. Offense in ORAS is definitely challenging to build especially given so many threats you have to take into account for, but with the right knowledge and experience, constructing a good offense all by yourself can definitely be rewarding!

BALANCE TEAMBUILDING GUIDE

(BY: UBERPYRO)

1 Introduction

Balance is the playstyle based around pivoting. It consists of both defensive pivots and offensive attacking Pokemon (I call them “breakers”), and it uses these pivots to put the breaker in battle without taking damage. Over time, the breakers will weaken their own counters and the checks of your sweeper (if one is on your team). Balance is a playstyle that faces competition from the more extreme playstyles: HO and Stall, in terms of effectiveness, and may demand more prediction in comparison. Nevertheless, it is a very effective playstyle in the OU metagame.

2 Step One: Choose an initial breaker, stallbreaker, or sweeper



Some balanced teams, depending on the exact style of the teambuilder, will be centered around a set-up sweeper. These teams will contain breakers, which will be pivoted in repeatedly to weaken the checks of the sweeper, enabling a sweep. Other balanced teams will not include a sweeper, and have merely breakers and stallbreakers providing offensive presence. In this case, these Pokemon will weaken their own counters in much the same fashion: through repeated pivoting.

2.1 If you choose a sweeper:

If you chose a sweeper, then choose a breaker that pressures in Pokemon that check the sweeper. Let me break that down for you. First, ask: What can revenge kill my sweeper after even after it has boosted? Then, ask: What do those Pokemon love to switch in on? Unless the counter has recovery options, the damage that the breaker does to its counter will add up over many attacks and open up a sweep for the sweeper. Pokemon that do have a recovery move or something along the lines of Regenerator that check the sweeper may have to be dealt with differently.

3 Step Two: Choose an applicable pivot



and walls with many resists.

Whenever the breaker comes in and weakens the counter, the breaker will be forced out by the counter the following turn. This means that a solid switch-in to this Pokemon is necessary for the team to work, and the pivot that does this will be the most important pivot of the team. Remember, pivots do not need Regenerator to be effective, although those make the best ones. Also, pivots most certainly do not need a “pivot move” like U-Turn or Volt Switch, as double switching should be used otherwise and, in most cases, is less expected than U-Turn or Volt Switch. So, ask: What counters the breaker? The pivot that responds to the most frequent counters will be the main pivot of the team (you could use the usage stats to help with this).

4 Step Three: Add a stallbreaker (or a normal breaker, if one was included in Step One)



If you do not have a stallbreaker by this step, now is the time to include one. Stallbreakers on balanced teams should not require set-up moves and function in the same manner as the normal breakers. This means that Pokemon holding the items Choice Band or Choice Specs, or heavy-hitting stallbreaking mega Pokemon, often make for the best candidates. Stallbreakers are very important team players. They should ideally be pivoted in whenever they can (usually on whatever is slower than them), especially on sweeper-less teams, because they put the opponent in an awkward position, and the opponent usually does not have an appropriate switch-in, which means that the stallbreaker will severely weaken or knock out a Pokemon. Sometimes the best stallbreaker is the one that is performing the best in the current metagame (as most good stallbreakers require a turn of set-up causing the selection to be small), sometimes the best stallbreaker is the one that pressures in the checks to a counter, and sometimes it is the one that checks Pokemon that like to come in on the previous pivot. This part is optional, but for the second breaker/stallbreaker added, you could ask: What Pokemon are likely to come in on my main pivot? And then, “What breaker/stallbreaker checks those Pokemon?” In other words, the second attacker can double switch in on the expected switch in of the pivot. This means the Pokemon are sent out: Attacker 1, Pivot 1, Attacker 2, in that order.

5 Step Four: Add a second pivot

Regardless of if the second attacker comes in on the first pivot, the second attacker still needs a complementary pivot. Much like the first pivot, the second pivot should cover the counters of the second attacker, and synergize well with the pivot already in place.

6 Step Five: Utility moves and patching up coverage

Most balanced teams will require hazard removal do to the focus on pivoting. Just about all balanced teams should include an SR setter. Make sure that a team meets these as needed. Also, if the team is weak to any common threats, now is the time to patch those weaknesses. Usually I prefer the final couple of Pokemon to be defensive, and I do not go beyond 3 offensive Pokemon on a balanced team.

7 Conclusion

Thank you everyone for reading, and I hope you all take away something for building balanced teams from this guide!