



Figures to the Max!

By

dj Date Masamune



Disclaimers

- Please excuse my s****y photography skills
- Feel free to ask questions/comment at any point
 - Especially any pics of figures I have in the BG
- I have handouts & business cards with my contact info.
 - Blog & resources will be available online
 - Feel free to get one at any point of the panel



How/Where to Begin



Date & Yukimura (Sengoku Basara)
Nendoroids



Kawaoru Nagisa
(Evangelion
Rebirth) Sega
Premium



Bride Saber (fate/Extra
CCC) Jamma

- Talk to friends!
 - That's how I got started
- Get figures from series you like
 - Easier to curtail your spending habits if you have specific characters you want
 - However, kami-sama forbid if you like OP, Type-Moon, Vocaloid, Jo Jo, Queen's Blade, etc.
 - **THEY WILL BREAK YOU ☹**
- Browse around an import site
 - AmiAmi, HLJ, or Hobby Search
 - Follow their FB page/blog site
- At first, would stick to import specific sites
 - Amazon & eBay present more pitfalls than anything else



Other Beginner Tips

- The bigger the figure, the more it costs (*usually*)
 - Isn't always necessarily true for the opposite
- On eBay: if everywhere else has a 1/7 or 1/8 scale figure listed as being ~\$120 & this *China based seller* has it listed for \$60 + free shipping, it's a bootleg
 - Amazon has this issue too but not as rampant
- For pre-orders, stick to import sites
 - Don't get a "pre-order" item from eBay
 - Still have to pay that \$\$\$ upfront



Con't

- On import sites, usually have month/year figure will come out
 - Figures don't always come out in that month
- Waiting out won't necessarily get you a better price on a figure
 - Worst case, they sell out & they don't make a new batch
 - Any remaining figures are super expensive
- Pre-ordering can get you the cheaper price
 - But not always...Gilgamesh >.>



Con't

- Nendoroids & Revoltechs can be good start-up figures since they typically are cheaper than the other product lines



Currency

- Currency
 - Move decimal point 2 places to the left (give approx. value in US \$)
 - ¥4500 = ~\$45.00
- Due to constantly fluctuating currency markets, item price can also fluctuate
 - So delaying paying for an item will affect how much you pay in the end for better/worse



Where to Buy



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Import Specific Sites

- Hobby Link Japan
- Hobby Search
- AmiAmi
- Big Bad Toy Store
- Toy Arena
- Play-Asia
- Rakuten: Global Market
 - Buncha others but you only need 2-3 sites



What I Use

- As far as import specific sites
 - Hobby Link Japan
 - Hobby Search
 - AmiAmi



Pro & Cons

- For the sites I frequent the most...
 - AmiAmi
 - Pros
 - Cons
 - Hobby Link Japan
 - Pros
 - Cons
 - Hobby Search
 - Pros
 - Cons



In General...

- All sites have their pros, cons, & exclusive items, so it helps to have several that you frequent



Buying American

- To cut down on shipping costs
 - Also, shipping time
- Places that sell figures
 - Anime Stuff Store
 - Anime Wild
 - Image Anime
- Usually can find Image Anime & Anime Stuff Store @ conventions
- Ultimately, makes it easier to return items
 - Granted, you lose out on preordering



Amazon & eBay

- Can give you far better prices than any import site
 - If not a preorder, get most
- Guaranteed shipping costs upfront
- Better systems to deal with any possible issues
 - More or less
- Can find hard-to-get figures for not that much
- Can make it easier to network sellers to get certain hard-to-find figures for you
 - eBay
- Don't have to worry about fluctuating currency markets



In General...

For both:

- Read the *entire* listing
 - The listing description, info. on the seller, seller rating, percentile of positive feedback, how much feedback they have, where they are located/shipping from, return policy (restocking fees/how long do you have to return it), *everything*
- Do this especially for eBay since it's the worse for having bootlegs
 - Amazon's better but they still have the same problem



Con't

- Pictures help
 - If you have a growing suspicion, pics of the box it shipped in, the item box, & the item itself
 - Makes for a stronger case if things escalate to that point
- While both eBay & Amazon can yield better prices, have to be way more vigilant than buying on HLJ, Hobby Search, AmiAmi, etc.
 - Why I recommend starting with an import site first



Product Lines, Makers, Sculptors, Oh My



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Examples of Each

- **Product Line**
 - Brave-Act, Figma, S.H. Figuarts, Revoltech Yamaguchi, Real Action Heroes, Movie Masterpiece, Nendoroid, Beach Queens, Ultra Detail Figure, etc.
- **Maker/Manufacturer**
 - Sentinel, MegaHouse, Bandai, Kaiyodo, FREEing, WAVE, Square-Enix, Banpresto, AmiAmi, Good Smile Racing, Gift, MAX Factory, Medicom Toy, etc.
- **Sculptor**
 - Koei Matsumoto, PULCHRA, Yuuki Ishiyama, Takayuki Shiragami, Touru Saegusa, Hajime Kouzuki, etc.

*Not the only ones



- Usually, the product line can help you attain a general idea of the price range
 - Can give you a better general price range more so than anything else
- Of course, still ultimately a crapshoot depending on supply & demand



Average Price Range

For product lines:

- Higher end
 - Real Action Heroes, Movie Masterpiece
- 'Gray Area'/Craspsshoot/Middle Ground
 - Beach Queens, *BRAVE-ACT
- Lower end (\$50 & under)
 - Revoltech Yamaguchi, Nendoroid, S.H. Figuarts, Figma, Ultra Detail Figure
- Again, nothing's set in stone, just on average



- Seriously, sometimes it's a total crapshoot with product lines & their prices

- Figma:
- Cost \$112.23



Clearly not my
photography
>.>



- Figma:
 - Cost \$38.38



- Again, it's a matter of supply & demand



Tracking *Figures & Other Mail Stuff*



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Tracking

- Track yo' shiz!
- For smartphones
 - Android
 - Package Buddy
 - iPhone
 - Slice by lifehacker
- Let's you know if they misdelivered the item, item being retained, being held by the post office, etc.
- Honestly, makes it easier to have a case against a seller on eBay when they don't included shipping



Shipping in General

- Usually, shipping for any of the import sites I frequent is around \$15-35
 - Of course, depends on how much is being shipped & the weight
- EMS & FedEx take the least amount of time whereas SAL can take 2+ weeks
- Oftentimes, things can take long to ship, namely for SAL
 - EMS & FedEx, you can order Monday & have the item(s) by the end of the week



Con't

- When in doubt, contact customer support
- With import sites, won't know how much shipping's going to be until after the fact
 - Already made the order
 - Which is why AmiAmi can be a pain to use



Displaying & Storing Figures



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Shelving, Display Case, Book Case, etc.

- Depending on your living situations, one can be far better than the others
 - I wouldn't do shelving for an apartment/renting
- Display cases are good b/c they typically come with a light & will keep out the dust
- Book cases are good b/c figures can help you fill in empty space
 - ...that is, assuming you don't also collect art books
>.>



More On Displaying

- All of these things can be built by hand
 - In which case, Home Depot & Lowes are your friends
- Or can be bought relatively cheaply
 - If you don't mind the risk, can even try Craig's List
 - Ikea, Target, Wal-Mart, etc.
- Instead of these options, can also put things on various furnishings throughout your abode



Area Conditions

- Cool dry area
 - Or figures can “sweat”
- Not in direct sunlight
- Out of harm’s way
- Not in a super crowded/hard to access room
 - i.e., hoarders situation
- In a light traffic area
 - God forbid you have a lot of ppl. running in & out the room
 - Or thieving relatives, roommates, friends, etc.



Cleaning



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- Q-tips
- Air blower lens cleaner
 - Available on Amazon for ~\$7
- Be careful, b/c if you manhandle some figures they'll break just to spite you



Fixing Figures



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2 Options

- Super glue
- Epoxy
- Depending on the material & thickness could try melting the pieces back together
 - *Lolz, don't do that, that's just silly* 😂



Constant Reminders

- Panel available on my blog (link on handouts)
- I have business cards & other handouts upfront
 - Feel free to take one before you go
- E-mail me feedback/critiques, complaints, flaming, game suggestions, & pics/vids
 - The.codarl.ii@gmail.com



Packing & Moving Figures



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- Packing them up
 - Original box vs. regular packing box
- Keeping original box vs. throwing it away
- Why you might want to curtail how much you buy
 - Moving is a nightmare, fragile things make it infinitely worse X/
 - Why action pose 1/7 scale & bigger type figures can be a pain in the butt
 - & Gundams ~.~



Why all of these are going to be a pain in the arse to move



Get some of these...



<-Also helps to line the inside of the box with foam sheets

...layer it with these.



Staying Up-to-Date with Figure Releases



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- Figure collecting blogs
 - Collection DX
 - My Figure Collection
 - Neko Magic
 - Etc.
- Always can subscribe to the newsletter of sites you frequent
 - HLJ, Hobby Search, AmiAmi, Play-Asia, etc.
- Ultimately, the Tokyo Wonder Festival showcases all the newest figures & ones to come
 - *The best source for finding out the latest figure*
 - Usually one of the import sites will have an article every time a show occurs w/ pics of all the latest figures



- Sites like AmiAmi & Hobby Link have regular blogs & videos regularly going over the latest figure collecting news
- Also check out reviews of figures





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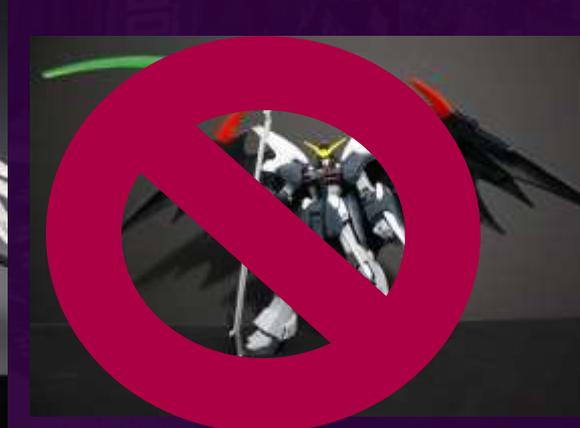
GUNDAMS! (& ZOIDS)

I had more but >.>

Ones Stolen/Thrown Away



Ones Stolen/Thrown Away



Specific Sites to Buy

- GundamPlanet.com
- GundamStoreandMore.com
- Hobbywave.com
- Of course...
 - Amazon.com
 - Ebay.com



Con't

- Can usually get Zoids (& any other mecha) from the same places
 - But their ballz expensive no matter where you go X/
 - When in doubt, Amazon
- Also can buy light stands, detailers, parts, etc. from the same sites



In General...

- Can be better to buy from Gundam/mecha specific sites
 - Will offer items specifically for these products (extra parts, etc.)
- These sites are plentiful besides just import sites
- If you're only interested in Gundams, makes it easier to stay up-to-date with them
 - Have a site you like, subscribe to their newsletter



Pro Tips



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- *Always* research about a figurine before you buy it
 - So you know what it looks like & you don't wind up unknowingly buying a bootleg
- You should generally avoid buying figures before you know what they look like
 - Why I often avoid buying figures @ fan-ran conventions



~~• Don't waste your time in the Dealer's Room at cons~~
DRs are a crapshoot X/

• Either...

- Overpriced or bootleg, take your pick
 - Think of it this way: *no* refunds & if the item's fake & you realize it post-con, tough s**t
 - Or you can get their business card & buy from them later

• Or...

- Is a relatively good price that's the cheapest you may be able to find it
 - Like (Perfect Grade) Gundams & some Nendoroids



- If you do venture to buy a figure from the DR, & it is a bootleg (*mofo told ya' so -_-*)
 - Report it to con security & try to get your \$\$\$ back from the dealer



- If you live on campus, have it shipped to your permanent address
 - Especially if you don't trust your roommates/living situation ~.~
 - In general, you don't want that many figures moonlighting in your dorm room
 - Even if it is a single
- If you're buying from a site for the first time, make sure it at least offers Paypal as an option
 - Better than no protection at all
 - Internet condoms XD



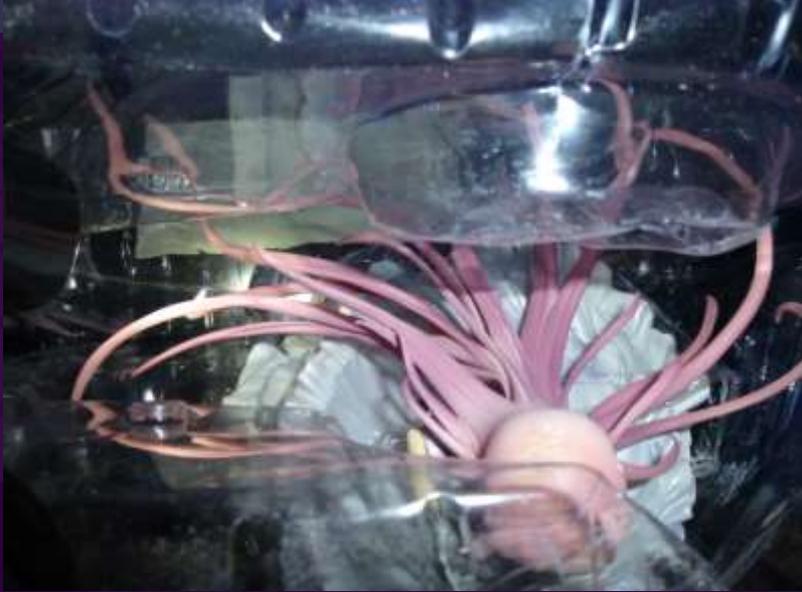
- On eBay, ~~don't~~ *never* buy from China based sellers
 - Their idea of shipping something is to put a trash bag inside another trash bag & slap a shipping label on it (trash-ception) *or* it's a bootleg, take your pick
- Usually costs more to ship it back than it did to buy it in the case of returning it
 - Although eBay has better policies now to deal with shipping issues than when I ran into this nightmare
- Depending on your situation, invest in a PO Box
 - Granted, not every site delivers to a PO Box







8 CODAL



8 CODAL



- Seller told me *after* the fact that the item was most likely going to arrive broken }-|
 - Freakin' lessons learned...
 - Only minor scratches in the paint job & a broken hair piece, but you don't drop \$140+ to have problems
- In general, if you can't get the item, getting your \$\$\$ back is just as good

Ultimate Madoka 1/7



- If you're struggling to find space to display figures, STAHP
 - God forbid if you have a slip/fall incident in a room like this:



- Keep yo' s**t together; there really is no street cred for having way too many figures than what you can afford
- On a similar note, living beyond your means
 - If you can't afford that \$200+ figure, so be it, don't skip out on rent for a figure that can wait
 - Usually, it will be there 1 month, 1 yr., etc. when you actually have the \$\$\$



Miscellaneous



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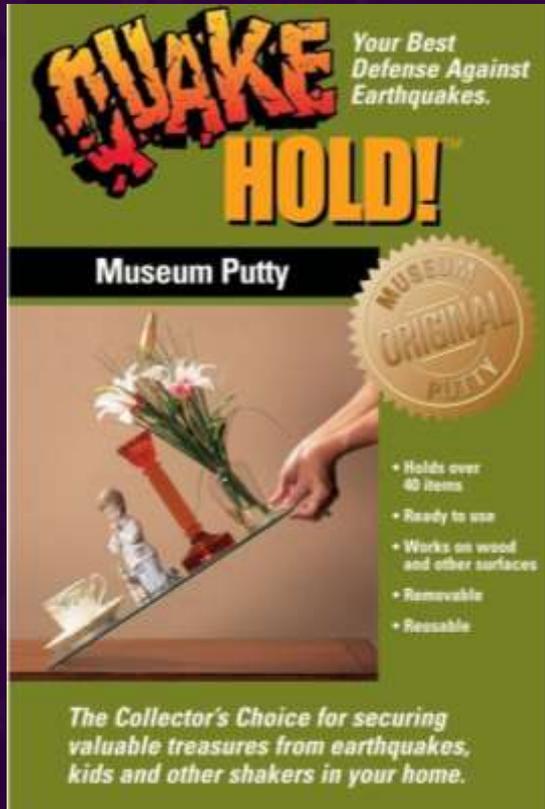


Bride Saber (fate/Extra
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- Release date
- Series/characters
- Item code
- Buying used
 - AmiAmi sells used figures
 - Can get some off eBay
- Big figures vs. smaller figures
 - More detail vs. easier to fit in places
- Figure poses
 - Action, standing/sitting, etc.
- Etsy & Artist's Alley figures
- Proxy buying
- Generic stands
 - Amazon & import sites



- Backorder, pre-order, tentative preorder, sold out, special releases
- Quake glue



Around \$4-\$10 on Amazon



- If you need till next paycheck to pay for an item
 - Reply to the payment request & see if you can get some more time



- Make a spreadsheet that lists out all the preorders you've made

- *(Like this)*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
1				Pre-Order \$\$\$ Management									
2													
3	Item	Site	Date to Be Released	Cost (¥)	Cost (\$)	Approx. Shipping	Total			Overall Total for Month			
4	Crimson Spell, Vol. 3	Amazon	8-Apr-14		\$10.25		\$10.25			January	N/A		
5	Jojo's Bizarre Adventure: All-Star Battle - PlayStation 3	Amazon	29-Apr-14		\$49.99		\$49.99			February	N/A		
6	Metal Gear RAY	HLJ	APR Release	¥6,720.00	\$68.00	\$15.00	\$83.00			March	N/A		
7	Figma Caska of the Shinsengumi	HLJ	APR Release	¥3,695.00		\$15.00	\$15.00			April	\$158.24		
8	Figma Eren SnK: Limited edition	Amazon	6-May-14		\$49.99		\$49.99			May	\$110.99		
9	Xblaze Code:Embryo - PlayStation 3	Amazon	May Release	¥4,571.00	\$46.00	\$15.00	\$61.00			June	\$326.97		
10	SnK: Limited edition Xblaze Code:Embryo - PlayStation 3	Amazon	3-Jun-14		\$62.98		\$62.98			July	\$260.00		
11	REX Black ver.	HLJ	24-Jun-14		\$39.99		\$39.99			August			
12	Racing Miku 2013 & Beach Queens Illya	HLJ	June Release	¥6,360.00	\$66.00	\$15.00	\$81.00			September	\$220.99		
13	Senbonzakura Hatsune Miku & Wagaya no Liliana-san	AmiAmi	Late June 2014	¥11,790.00	\$118.00	\$25.00	\$143.00			October	\$89.00		
14	Dangan Ronpa 2 Beach Queens Caster & Saber	AmiAmi	Late July 2014	¥22,860.00	\$230.00	\$30.00	\$260.00			November			
15	BEACH QUEENS Kill la Kill; Ryuko Matoi	Amazon	2-Sep-14		\$39.99		\$39.99			December			
16	BEACH QUEENS Kill la Kill; Ryuko Matoi	HLJ	September Release	¥9,000.00	\$91.00	\$25.00	\$116.00						
17	BEACH QUEENS Kill la Kill; Ryuko Matoi	AmiAmi	Late September 2014	¥4,980.00	\$50.00	\$15.00	\$65.00						



- May want to do something like this in general for managing finances, but that's on you

- Did it in Excel

*Again, you don't want to go in debt for some figures

	A	B	C
55			
56	Original Amount		2/21/2014
57			
58			
59	Amount to Be Paid	Place	
60	\$22.64	Amazon	
61	\$43.00	Primarily scarves	
62	\$41.90	eBay	
63	\$64.00	Verizon	
64	\$50.00	Discover	
65			
66			
67			
68			
69			
70			
71			
72		Total =	
73			
74	Original Amount		2/21/2014
75			
76			
77	Amount to Be Paid	Place	
78	\$60.00	Discover	
79	\$297.62	AmiAmi	
80	\$34.58	Verizon	
81	\$35.37	eBay	
82	\$7.00	Etsy	
83	\$18.00	Fund food	
84			
85			
86			
87			
88			
89			
90		Total =	



Pitfalls, Issues, & 1st World Problems



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- Shipping issues

- Damaged in shipping, taking forever to deliver, missed it's scheduled delivery date, etc.

- The item being damaged

- Either during shipping, appears mishandled, or you're just a klutz

- Keeping the original box vs. throwing it away

- You're going to need just as much space storing the figure box as the figures themselves



- Bootleg item
 - Contact seller, open a case, try to get a full refund, potentially need to contact your bank, etc.
 - Always contact the seller first
- Don't buy from China...but you can buy from Hong Kong(?)
 - This amuses me to no end
 - For noobs, just don't buy from anywhere in China
- Sometimes figures are just poorly made



- Cancellations (pre-orders)

- In general, try to avoid it
- Best practice: if you're on shaky grounds financially/you don't know what your finances are going to be around the time the item's released, *don't pre-order it*
 - Most sites have strict policies with (not) cancelling pre-orders (at least once they're available), just don't pre-order it
- Sites like AmiAmi have sticks up the butt about this; why sometimes it's just better to wait
- Most import sites will have issues with cancelling after the order is ready to be paid
 - Esp. If done frequently



- Try asking for an extension
 - Did this w/ HLJ, was allowed to pay my next paycheck
 - Same w/ Hobby Search
- I wouldn't do this w/ my first few purchases, but as you build up more of a report w/ them



Si tengo el tiempo...

What I Own, On their way, Pre-ordered, & 'Wish List' Figures



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Handouts & Junk

- Help yourself to my business cards & handouts with appropriate links
 - Includes link to my blog, my e-mail address, & list of resources
- If you have any questions, comments, feedback, etc., contact me however
 - E-mail form on my blog, e-mail, comment on a relating blog post, smoke signals, carrier pigeons, whatever tickles your fancy
- If you really enjoyed this panel, would super appreciate if you mention so at any of the feedback sessions or on the forums post-con
 - It's not like I care or anything >.>



Other Panels

- ~~How to Con: Staying in a Hotel~~
 - ~~Fri. (4/25/14) Live 2, 1-2p~~
- ~~Figures to the Max!~~
 - ~~Fri. (4/25/14) Live 1, 2-3p~~
- Sit Down, STFU, & Play This J-RPG (Deluxe Edition)
 - Sat. (4/26/14) Live 5, 12-2p
- The Sengoku Era, Basara, You, & Awesomeness
 - Sat. (4/26/13) Live 5, 2:15-3:15p
- Yaoi & Bara Tropes & Trends 3-Bigger, Longer, Harder MOTTO!! (18+)
 - Sat. (4/26/13) Live 2, midnight-1:30a





Thanks for Coming~!

Have a great con >.<