

One day the kingdom of the peaceful mushroom people was invaded by the Koopa, a tribe of turtles famous for their black magic. The quiet, peace-loving Mushroom People were turned into mere stones, bricks and even field horse-hair plants, and the Mushroom Kingdom fell into ruin.

The only one who can undo the magic spell on the Mushroom People and return them to their normal selves is the Princess Toadstool, the daughter of the Mushroom King. Unfortunately, she is presently in the hands of the great Koopa turtle king.

Mario, the hero of this story (maybe) hears about the Mushroom People's plight and sets out on a quest to free the Mushroom Princess from the evil Koopa and restore the fallen kingdom of the Mushroom People.

You are Mario! It's up to you to save the Mushroom People from the black magic of the Koopa!

[| Mario Bros Review](#) | [| STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher Boyd Montgomery
cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

[Introduction](#)[Game Information](#)[Story Line](#)[Technology](#)[Game Design](#)[Success](#)[References](#)

Introduction

Successful companies all have one thing in common- a widely known brand. The video game industry is no different in this respect from any other.

Nintendo found a big name brand in a little Italian hero Mario, and his brother Luigi. These two characters starred in the little known Mario Brothers before Super Mario Brothers took the world by storm. Since then there have been countless sequels to the original hit on the Nintendo Entertainment System (8-bit), Super Nintendo (16-bit), and Nintendo 64 (64-bit). While the sequels have introduced new characters and new worlds, the original Super Mario Brothers still remains a classic.

Super Mario Brothers is by far the best-known console video game of all time. It has captured the attention of millions worldwide and single handedly turned Nintendo into a household name. For these reasons and more, this game will be reviewed in this website.

| [Next Page](#) | [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery
cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

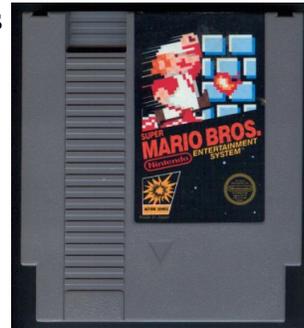
[Introduction](#)[Game Information](#)[Story Line](#)[Technology](#)[Game Design](#)[Success](#)[References](#)

Game Information

Super Mario Brothers is an original Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) game released in 1985. Packaged with nearly all Nintendo Entertainment Systems for years, this game found its way into the majority of American households that owned a NES.

Super Mario Brothers was created by Sigeru Miyamoto. Miyamoto created Mario, the main character, for his first game and first big Nintendo coin-op hit, "Donkey Kong." In "Super Mario Brothers" Miyamoto added a brother Luigi for Mario and created the first popular side-scrolling video game.

Super Mario Brothers, Miyamoto's first hit for the NES (known as Famicom in Japan) came as his first creation while running R&D 4 at Nintendo (Sheff 49). An artist and a daydreamer, Miyamoto designed and scripted "Super Mario Brothers," "Zelda," and countless other games that have been enjoyed by millions.



Super Mario Brothers cartiridge for the NES

| [Next Page](#) | [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery

cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

[Introduction](#)[Game Information](#)[Story Line](#)[Technology](#)[Game Design](#)[Success](#)[References](#)

Story Line

Like all well-known games, Super Mario Brothers has a well-known story line. In fact, Super Mario Brothers has a very generic story line-unforgettable for its repetition in the industry.

As per usual, the game player in Super Mario Brothers is the hero of the story. The player must battle evil forces and minions in order to rescue the girl and save the world. Today there are hundreds of titles with similar premises: Mega Man, Sonic the Hedgehog, Link (from "The Legend of Zelda"), and nearly every hero in any role-playing game has the whole fate of some world on his/her shoulders. Life hangs on the success of the hero controlled by the game player.

In the case of Super Mario Brothers, the fate of the Mushroom Kingdom is in the hands of Mario and Luigi. The evil forces of the Koopa, turtles capable of black magic, have invaded the Mushroom Kingdom and turned many of the peaceful inhabitants into bricks and stones. In addition to this, the king of the Koopas, Bowser Koopa, has kidnapped Princess Toadstool, the only person capable of undoing the Koopa's mighty spells. Mario and Luigi therefore must free the princess in order to restore the Mushroom Kingdom. As Mario (or Luigi), the game player must advance from world to world and beat the different mini-bosses in order to eventually meet Bowser Koopa and fight for the princess.



Mario's winning moment!

[Next Page](#) | [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery

cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

Introduction

Game Information

Story Line

Technology

Game Design

Success

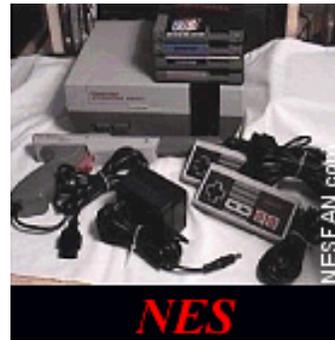
References



Technology

Super Mario Brothers may have amazed millions of people in its day, but it did not do so through amazing gameplay, or even particularly new and exciting graphics; instead, Super Mario Brothers enraptured players with its creativity and subtle humor.

The Nintendo Entertainment System was a breakthrough when released, mainly because of its affordable price, not its amazing capabilities. For under \$100, one could purchase the system, two controllers and at least one game, Super Mario Brothers. Later packages included Duck Hunt, a light gun, a track and field game, and the Power Pad. The NES boasted a powerful, but not amazing, 8-bit processor and considerably more RAM than any other system at the time. The NES's 2KB of RAM gave it approximately 8 times more than Atari's system at the time (Sheff 33). Unfortunately, the NES controllers left a lot to be desired. Consisting of only four buttons and a directional pad in a small, rectangular shape, these controllers were not exactly on the cutting edge of technology. Fortunately they could be cheaply replaced with bigger



The Nintendo Entertainment System packaged with Duck Hunt

and better gamepads that had extra functions.

Being an older NES game, Super Mario Brothers cannot boast many of the advances made in NES game design. Super Mario Brothers was created before advances in game cartridge design allowed for storing high scores, saving games, or simply storing larger quantities of data. The production of Super Mario Brothers was very limited because it used new technology at the time. Some ways that the designers worked around their upper limitations included immense repetition. Many worlds within the game are identical. World 1-3 and 5-3 are exact replicas in every way except that 5-3 has random bullets firing across the screen while 1-3 does not. All the other objects: enemies, coins, and bricks are identically placed in the two worlds. This clearly saved design and cartridge resources in the programming of the game. Another area where one can see the limitations of NES technology in 1985 is in the music of Super Mario Brothers. While many individual sounds exist for collecting coins, jumping, etc, there are only a few different background tunes. There are tunes for being above ground in a world, underground in a world, in the clouds, underwater, in castles, and at a level's end. If Mario or Luigi collects a star, the music changes to signify this. Also, when time begins to run short the tempo of the current music increases. Clearly repetition was heavily used in the production of this game.

Super Mario Brothers seems to have been restrained by the technology available for producing NES games. Discussion of the Artificial Intelligence written into this game supports this thought. Super Mario Brothers is not a difficult game to figure out. The enemies are simple at best. At worst they are plainly stupid. Goombas (little brown mushroom-like enemies) simply walk in one direction and do not stop. They either walk off the screen, or sometimes into a pit. It is certainly not very realistic to watch enemies ignore their foe, Mario. Fortunately at least one enemy, the Red Koopa Troopa (red turtle) demonstrates some realistic behavior. It does not fall off of cliffs. Instead it paces back and forth blindly. But like all the other enemies, the Red Koopa Troopas do not demonstrate any intelligence.

There are many tricks in the game that may have been hidden better had the game been programmed with more "intelligence." For instance, when Mario jumps onto the flagpole at the end of a level he is sometimes greeted with fireworks. These fireworks occur whenever the final time on the clock happens to have a 6 or 3 in the ones digit of the number. This simple way of determining whether or not a player should receive fireworks and the associated bonus points is easily repeated over and over. A more difficult algorithm may have been appropriate here.

Another feature that demonstrates Super Mario Brother's simple design is two-player mode. While not entirely necessary, and most likely added simply to allow the game to be marketed for two players, Super Mario Brothers does not boast a very interesting two-player set up. Basically, two players take turns playing their own game. After one player dies, the other gets a turn. The games do not overlap like future Super Mario games do.

The technology available to the developers of Super Mario Brothers was clearly limited; however, what emerged out of this technology is quite amazing.

Christopher B Montgomery

cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

Introduction

Game Information

Story Line

Technology

Game Design

Success

References



Game Design

No one can argue that Super Mario Brothers is a complex game. It simply isn't. It was designed at a time when many people were still playing "Pong" and other extremely simple video games. However, for its time, Super Mario Brothers was captivating.

The purpose of Super Mario Brothers is very clear-Mario must save the princess. To do this he must beat level after level until he finally defeats Bowser Koopa. The sheer number of levels provides hours of new exploration if Mario manages to survive. More often than not it takes multiple attempts to beat entire worlds. Until Mario defeats Bowser there is no reason to not keep playing. Super Mario Brothers is a fun game, challenging enough to make a player competitive, but not so hard that it discourages a player from repeatedly trying to win. The difficulty of Super



Mario fighting for Princess Toadstool

Mario Brothers could not be set any better. Playing the game rewards the player with steadily improving results until the game has been beaten.

Even after Mario defeats Bowser, there are plenty of reasons to continue playing Super Mario Brothers. Throughout the game there are hidden beanstalks, extra lives, and special rooms that can still be found. Oftentimes players use warp zones to skip levels in order to more quickly beat the game. After winning, the players can go back to the worlds skipped and play and explore them. This replay value is what has made Super Mario Brothers a classic video game.

The only aspect of the game that can really be criticized is its simplicity. While playing Super Mario Brothers often does increase one's performance, it does so mostly in terms of hand-eye coordination. Super Mario Brothers is not a tricky game that requires repetitive play to understand. Instead, playing the game more and more simply teaches the player the best ways to maneuver around objects and enemies and when to jump to clear pits. Memorizing aspects of the game makes players better, not understanding.

| [Next Page](#) | [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery
cmonty@stanford.edu
Last Updated 2/16/01

Introduction

Game Information

Story Line

Technology

Game Design

Success

References



Success of Super Mario Brothers

There is no real way to quantify the success of Super Mario Brothers. For most video games, sales determine success. Unfortunately, since Super Mario Brothers came packaged with the Nintendo Entertainment System, sales figures are not an accurate judge of the success of the game. There is no way to determine which buyers would have bought the game had it not been packaged with the system.

While sales data may not be available, plenty of information seems to show Super Mario Brothers was a huge success. Very rarely do companies take characters from unsuccessful games and successfully build an entire company on the character. In America, Nintendo is synonymous with Mario. This is largely because Mario appears in so many of the games created by Nintendo. Super Mario Brothers has five direct sequels across platforms: Super Mario Brother 2, Super Mario Brothers 3, Super Mario Land, Super Mario World, and Super Mario 64. Besides these games, Mario, Luigi, and his ever broadening range of friends have appeared in countless other Nintendo games including Mario Cart, Mario Paint, Mario Golf, and Mario Party. The list goes on and on. The most popular of all of the Mario games is by far Super Mario Brothers 3. This much-anticipated Mario adventure sold over 11 million copies, making it the best selling video game of all time (Shiff 5).

Besides becoming the brand for an amazingly successful company, Mario also has gained success in the way in which it has become the standard side-scrolling video game. Being the first side-scrolling game that was a big hit, it is no surprise than other games would be compared to it. While in recent years technology has improved to the point where comparing games to Super Mario Brothers is a little pointless, there was a period of many years where Super Mario Brothers was the definitive video game of its type. Arguably, this still hasn't changed. Ask anyone to name an 8-bit side scrolling video game and 99% of the time Super Mario Brothers will be the game named. If that does not demonstrate the amazing success of the game then nothing will.



Though no longer commonly played, Super Mario Brothers can still be

recognized as one of the first video games that truly enticed a large number of people to invest in the video game industry. Much can be attributed to Super Mario Brothers, and its creator Sigeru Miyamoto.

| [References](#) | [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery

cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01

[Introduction](#)

[Game Information](#)

[Story Line](#)

[Technology](#)

[Game Design](#)

[Success](#)

[References](#)



References

[Super Mario Brothers Headquarters](#)

Sheff, David. Game Over Press Start to Continue: The Maturing of Mario. Wilton: GamePress, 1999.

[NESFan](#)

| [Mario Bros Review](#) | [STS145 Home](#) |

Christopher B Montgomery

cmonty@stanford.edu

Last Updated 2/16/01



[What's New?](#)



[Reference](#)

[About Mario](#)

[News](#)

[Game List](#)

[Enemy List](#)

[Item List](#)

[Move List](#)

[Screen Shots](#)

[Pictures](#)

[Strat. Guides](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Storyline](#)

[Characters](#)

[Cartoons](#)

[Comics/Books](#)



[Fan Stuff](#)

[Fan Fiction](#)

[Trivia](#)

[Poll](#)

[Game Ideas](#)

[Memories](#)

[Q&A](#)

[Mailbag](#)

[Store](#)

[Chat Room](#)

[Message Board](#)

[Other Stuff](#)

[Mario 101](#)

[Ranting](#)

[Sprite Sheets](#)

[Links](#)

[Products](#)



Heads - You Win!
Stop the coin. See what you get!

Want to help us out? Please visit our sponsors.

Ad With Us

CLICK HERE

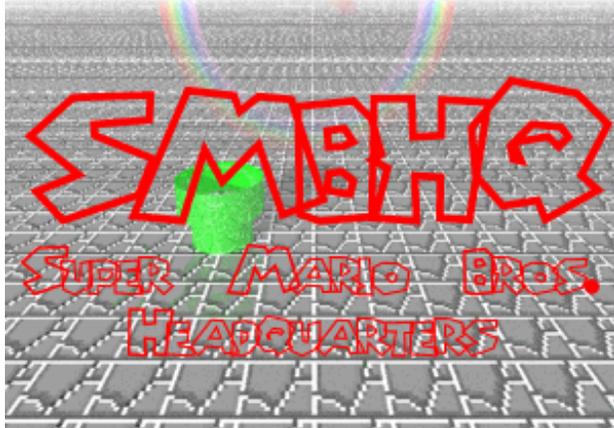
SITE METER
687318

Last Update
2/12/01

WHAT'S NEW NAV FRAME

TRIVIA
FAN FICTION
POLL
GAME IDEAS
MAILBAG
STORE
CHAT
MSG BOARD
LISTS
GUIDES
REVIEWS
STORY
CHARACTERS

Best viewed at 800x600, 16 bit color



Hot link:
[Contest!](#)

RANTING
SPRITES
MARIO 101
LINKS
PRODUCTS
MYSTERIES
SSB MATCH
PURITY TEST
NEWS
CARTOONS
COMICS
ABOUT MARIO
GRAPHICS

powered by
[FreeFind](#)

Help Wanted!	Vote for Us-- SML Top Sites
About the Staff	Take the SMBHQ visitors survey



FEATURES

- [Home](#)
- [Codes](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Top Ten](#)
- [Contest](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [RemiNEScing](#)
- [Game Guides](#)
- [Player Profiles](#)
- [Instruction Manuals](#)

INTERACT

- [Polls](#)
- [E-mail Us](#)
- [Coloring Book](#)
- ["Nessy" Awards](#)
- [Message Forums](#)
- [Dragon Warrior Online Adventure](#)

ARCHIVE

- [Links](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Wallpaper](#)
- [Rarity List](#)
- [Peripherals](#)
- [System Specs](#)
- [System History](#)
- [Past Poll Results](#)
- [Mission Statement](#)

Warning



Your Internet Connection Is Not Optimized.
Download InternetBOOST 2001 Now!

OK

Fat Johnny Updates His Expose', 3rd Graders Everywhere Protest!

Wednesday, February 21, 2001 - 8:05 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Did you think you'd have to wait an entire week for an update to the "10 Most Pathetic NES Characters of All Time" article? Not while Fat Johnny's on the job! Assembling content from various boxes of cereal and dozens of bags of corn chips, Fat Johnny now brings you the skinny on sap # 9 in his fearless and daring expose'. Don't delay, act today!

New Reader Reviews

Monday, February 19, 2001 - 5:45 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

John Donahue has sent in reviews for '[Tecmo Super Bowl](#)' and the ever controversial '[Zelda II: The Adventure of Link](#)'. Enjoy!

"The 10 Most Pathetic NES Characters Of All Time"

Sunday, February 18, 2001 - 10:45 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Sure everyone knows about the more popular NES characters.... Icons such as Link, Mario, Samus Aran, & Ryu Hayabusa (just to name a few) have all had more than their fair share of the spotlight, while other, lesser known characters have gone greatly ignored.

Not to be one afraid of digging up the dirt on anyone, our very own Fat Johnny has went to work and found out the goods on 10 of the more hapless NES characters in his new expose': "The 10 Most Pathetic NES Characters Of All Time".

You can catch the first installment [HERE](#)



A Reader Reviews RBI, "Dog Hunt"

Thursday, February 15, 2001 - 4:15 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

"TecmoVols" has once again "stepped up to the plate" (what a clever use of words that is!) and submitted a reader review for the baseball classic '[R.B.I. Baseball](#)'. Be sure and scope that out.

Also, the twisted folks over at [i-mockery.com](#) have cooked up another little Flash game similar to their popular "[Kill the old man from Zelda!](#)" game. The object of your aggression this time? The irritating dog from 'Duck Hunt'. If you've been wanting to get your revenge on that laughing dog for years, now's yer chance.

Thanks to Roger Barr for giving us the hook-up on this cool game!

New Poll

Wednesday, February 14, 2001 - 12:25 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Happy Valentines Day everyone! I hope this day of nationally recognized love finds you well and puts you in that romantic mood. I know it's done wonders for me today. In fact, it's softened me up so much that I've ceased my tyrannical reign of superiority long

enough to update the "Polls" page! 😊 So have a couple of conversation hearts on me, and then go do your duty by "rocking the vote"!

Hurts So Good

Tuesday, February 13, 2001 - 1:15 p.m. - [Fat Johnny](#)

Before "Double Dragon", before "River City Ransom", before "Street Fighter", there was... "Urban Champion"!

DETAILS

"RemiNEScing" Updated; "Reader Reviews" Guidelines

Monday, February 12, 2001 - 8:10 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The "RemiNEScing" page has been updated with 3 new tales:

- "My Vague Memories"
- "NES"
- "The Mega Fun of the NES"

* * * * *

In other news..... Even though we greatly appreciate the reviews sent in by our readers, unfortunately we can't use the vast majority of them. For every 20 "Reader Reviews" we receive, 19 of them can't be used. The vast majority of these reviews are discarded because they are only a couple of sentences in length, or because they are for a game that is not listed on the "Reviews" page. To ensure that your review gets online, please be sure that your review fits within the submission guidelines.

A Different Type Of "Play Station"

Thursday, February 8, 2001 - 3:25 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The problem with running a website dedicated to something such as a long-gone videogame system, is that there is never any news to write about. Aside from commenting on NES games that are being re-issued on handheld systems, or discussing rumours about certain vintage game dealers ceasing the sale of NES hardware & software, it's slim pickin's as far as news goes. However, every now and then something will catch you by surprise.....



DETAILS

Fire!

Monday, February 5, 2001 - 7:08 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The manual for the ultra-geeky Konami LaserScope has been added to the [Instruction Manuals](#) page.

Too Much Tecmo?

Monday, February 5, 2001 - 4:55 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Die-hard '[Tecmo Super Bowl](#)' fan "TecmoVols" has sent in a reader review for his football game du jour. Enjoy.

DETAILS

"It's Got A Good Beat And It's Easy To Dance To!"

Thursday, February 1, 2001 - 1:30 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Well kiddies, the time has come once again for an update to the 'Top Ten'. Did SMB3 happen to knock Link out of the # 1 spot? Believe it or not, no.

DETAILS

And The Winner Is.....

Wednesday, January 31, 2001 - 2:40 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Congratulations to Mark Martinez of Salt Lake City, Utah on winning the contest for the Captain Comic gamepak!

The new contest is now in effect, so [check it out!](#)

Qix Manual Added

Tuesday, January 30, 2001 - 3:10 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The instruction manual for 'Qix' has been added to the [Instruction Manuals](#) page thanks to a submission by Dennis Gruchala. Thanks Dennis!

"You Possess The Wonderful Miracle Power Inside You!"

Sunday, January 28, 2001 - 10:05 p.m. - [Fat Johnny](#)

He's got a funny name and his own game! It's Astyanax!

(Man, with rhymes like that, I could be another '[Dolemite](#)'...)

DETAILS

Another New Manual

Friday, January 26, 2001 - 3:05 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The instruction manual for 'Burai Fighter' has been added to the [Instruction Manuals](#) page thanks to another contribution from Dennis Gruchala. Thanks again Dennis!

New Manual, New Guide

Wednesday, January 24, 2001 - 1:20 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The instruction manual for 'Strider' has been added thanks to a contribution from Dennis Gruchala, and the game guide for 'Mystery Quest' has been added thanks to a contribution from James Tompkins, aka "DDCecil". "Mad propz" goes out to both of these guys!

Kill The Old Man.....Sunday, January 21, 2001 - 9:45 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Do you have a problem with the old man from Zelda? Are you tired of the way he's always telling you to go accomplish some goal before he hands over the good stuff? If so and you'd like to get some revenge on the old dude, [check this out](#).

Thanks to Roger Barr for dropping us a line about this interesting little game.

"Hard Man"... huh huh uh huh...Sunday, January 21, 2001 - 1:45 a.m. - [Fat Johnny](#)

A boy and his dog set out one fateful day to fight 8 of the meanest, toughest S.O.B.'s that the world has to offer. Is this the latest plotline for one of those sad direct-to-video movies? No! It's my review of 'Mega Man' 3!

**DETAILS****RemiNEScing Update**Friday, January 19, 2001 - 2:10 p.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

The 'RemiNEScing' page has been updated with "[Super Mario Bros. 3 Takes 8](#)" and "[The Rise and Fall of the N-Box](#)".

The Legend Continues...Sunday, January 14, 2001 - 4:00 p.m. - [Chrono](#)

Can "The Adventure of Link" stand out in the shadow of its predecessor or will the shadow overcome the second installment of Nintendo's marquis series?

**DETAILS****New Manual**Monday, January 8, 2001 - 11:38 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

Thanks to scans sent in by our good friend Adam Lamontagne, the manual for "**H.E.S. Total Funpak**" has been added to the '[Instruction Manuals](#)' page. Thanks Adam!

Castlevania ReviewedSunday, January 7, 2001 - 7:08 p.m. - [Legacy](#)

Well, I reviewed the other two Castlevania titles in reverse order, so I might as well continue and finish up the series by reviewing the first one, last.

DETAILS

New Guide

Sunday, January 7, 2001 - 12:35 a.m. - [JoAnkhamun](#)

James Tompkins aka "DDCecil" has submitted the Game Guide for "Air Fortress".
Thanks James!

DETAILS

Designed and Maintained by [Joey Connelly](#)

Best viewed with [Internet Explorer 4.0+](#) or [Netscape Navigator 4.0+](#).

[Copyright](#) © 1999-2001 NESfan.com. All Rights Reserved. ([Terms of Use](#)) ([Privacy Statement](#))