That Brooklyn plumber is back, and once again he's brought his brother! Mario, the world’s greatest video game hero, has returned to the Mushroom Lands, only to discover that Bowser’s ruthless Koopa Children have taken over, oppressing the inhabitants into supporting his reign of terror.

Being the all-round good guy and complete hero that he is, Mario (and in two-player mode, his bro' Luigi) decide to set out on a quest to give each of the Koopa kids a good kicking, thus saving Mushroom World from a fate worse than travelling on British Rail on a regular basis.

Each Mushroom World is guarded by an evil Koopa child, and it’s Mario’s job to complete each level of the world until he reaches the Koopa Castle. In the castle, Mario is pitted against the Koopa Kid, and once he’s defeated the evil little blighter, it’s time to visit the next world packed with all manner of even more terrifying hazards!

The object is to reach the end of world eight where Bowser lies in wait, ready for the one-on-one final battle with Mario himself!

MARIO BROS BUILT IN!
A single-screen version of the classic Mario Bros game is available in Super Mario 3. We won't give away exactly how to do it, but suffice to say, you have be in two-player mode to get there. There’s also rumours of Wrecking Crew being another bonus game. The first MEAN MACHINES reader to find it and write in telling us how to do it will get a special prize!

Cool and sort of lean: Mario!

Get those coins, Mario!

RACCOON MARIO: Collection of a leaf turns Mario into this raccoon-like creature who is able to fly, thus avoiding many ground-based hazards!
Flip over any two cards and see if they match. You can only miss twice!

Raccoon Mario enters a Fairy House, and confronts a fairy.

Mario’s in Iceland!

FIERY MARIO: Mario is endowed with fireballs that singe all foes into oblivion - a pretty decent offensive weapon.

TANOOKI MARIO: Don the fuzzy brown suit and Mario instantly becomes Tanooki Mario - a being with all Raccoon-related powers and the ability to turn into a statue!

FROG MARIO: With the aid of the frog suit, Mario is able to leap and swim like a frog - essential for the aquatic levels.

HAMMER MARIO: Collect the Hammer Suit and Mario can throw hammers of his own. The suit also has fire-resisting qualities.

COMMENT

Super Mario III is simply the finest videogame I've ever played. It mightn't have graphics and sound anywhere near as good as many Megadrive and Super Famicom titles, but what it does have is utterly fabulous playability. Its perfectly graded difficulty level, massive depth, constant surprises, hard-to-find secrets, mega-rewarding gameplay and supreme challenge combine together to make it horribly, horribly addictive. I mean real Government Health warning stuff! Once you start playing you want to keep going, just to see what surprises are around the next corner! I ended up playing it all night! And when I wasn't playing the game, I was thinking about it! It's truly awesome stuff - the greatest game yet seen! And if you haven't got a Nintendo to play it on, you'd better start saving now...
TRAVELLING KOOPAS

Some of the Koopa Kids are dotted around the map and travel about, causing some aggro. Mario can rendezvous with these critters and beat them about a bit, thus gaining another useful item!

BONUS FUN, LAFFS AND JAPES

Should Mario meet up with one of the friendly Mushroom people, they give him a useful item. However, being the cunning sort of people that they are, they like nothing better than forcing Mario into taking part in a bizarre sub-game where he has to earn the object!

In this sub-game, Mario turns over two cards and hope to get a pair. This earns him the object. The tables aren't random. There are only eight, so you could actually "map" them, or wait for a future MEAN MACHINES tips section where we'll be revealing the lot!

Three chests stand in front of Mario. Which should he choose? You could get a great object for your troubles, or you might choose a completely pathetic item that's completely hopeless! The choice, as they say on Blind Date, is yours...

GET YOUR MAPS OUT

The map screen is where Mario chooses which level to visit next. You can go wherever you want, although your choice is limited because some levels are blocked off and items from certain levels have to be collected in order to move the hazard. For example, if there's a pile of rocks blocking your way, use the hammer to knock the obstacle away! Items are selected with the A button, and these can help you in your selected level.

Line up the three sections exactly to earn many bonus points and lives. There's definitely a knack to this, and once you've learnt it, you rake in those bonus lives like there's no tomorrow!
COMMENT

Finally! Mario II's been propping up the Nintendo charts for many months, and now Mario III's out I confidently expect it sell by the jumbo-jetful - and it deserves to! Mario is a truly brilliant game, combining a massive amount of depth with totally superb playability. Featuring many devious platform traps and puzzles that rely both on brains and reflexes, Mario is simply a truly classic game. The graphics, though quite simple, are incredibly varied and there are hundreds of excellent enemy sprites, each with their own behaviour pattern. The sound is superb too, with a special sound chip built into the cart to provide some excellent bongo drum samples! Having completed Mario IV, I expected this to be a doddle - not a bit of it! In some aspects it's even better than the Super Famicom game, and in the playability department it makes Sega's Sonic look poor by comparison. In my view, Mario III is THE game for the Nintendo and is worth every last penny!

BY: NINTENDO
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 5
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: PERFECT

1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 92%
Pretty spartan intro, but the in-game presentation is faultless.

GRAPHICS 95%
A massive variety of brilliant sprites and backdrops await the player.

SOUND 95%
Mega samples with remixed tunes and effects bagged from Mario II!

PLAYABILITY 98%
Completely brilliant, hyper-addictive gameplay!

LASTABILITY 96%
A massive game whose secrets take months to unravel!

OVERALL 98%
Mario is back in the greatest videogame yet seen! It's worth buying a Nintendo just to play it!