

The Super Mario Bros. Movie

The Super Mario Bros. Movie is a 2023 American animated adventure comedy film based on Nintendo's *Mario* video game franchise. Produced by Universal Pictures, Illumination, and Nintendo, and distributed by Universal, it was directed by Aaron Horvath and Michael Jelenic and written by Matthew Fogel. The ensemble voice cast includes Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy, Charlie Day, Jack Black, Keegan-Michael Key, Seth Rogen, and Fred Armisen. The film features an origin story for the brothers Mario and Luigi, Italian-American plumbers who are separated after being transported to a fantasy world and become entangled in a battle between the Mushroom Kingdom, led by Princess Peach, and the Koopas, led by Bowser.

After the critical and commercial failure of the live-action film *Super Mario Bros.* (1993), Nintendo became reluctant to license its intellectual properties for film adaptations. *Mario* creator Shigeru Miyamoto became interested in developing another film during the development of the Virtual Console service. Through Nintendo's work with Universal Parks & Resorts to create Super Nintendo World, he met with Illumination CEO Chris Meledandri. By 2016, they were discussing a *Mario* film and, in January 2018, Nintendo announced that it would produce it with Illumination and Universal. Production was underway by 2020, and the cast was announced in September 2021.

The Super Mario Bros. Movie premiered at Regal LA Live in Los Angeles on April 1, 2023, and was released in the United States on April 5. Although it received mixed reviews from critics, the film grossed \$1.36 billion worldwide and broke multiple box-office records, including the biggest worldwide opening weekend for an animated film, the highest grossing film based on a video game, and the first film based on a video game to gross over \$1 billion. It also became the second-highest-grossing film of 2023, the third-highest-grossing animated film, and the highest-grossing film produced by Illumination. At the 81st Golden Globe Awards, the film received three nominations: Best Animated Feature Film, Best Original Song, and Cinematic Box Office Achievement, a category newly introduced at the same ceremony.^[6] A sequel is set to be released on April 3, 2026.

Plot

The Super Mario Bros. Movie



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<div><div></div><div>Aaron Horvath</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Michael Jelenic</div></div>
Written by	<div><div></div><div>Matthew Fogel</div></div>
Based on	<div><div></div><div><i>Mario</i> by Nintendo^[a]</div></div>
Produced by	<div><div></div><div>Chris Meledandri</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Shigeru Miyamoto</div></div>
Starring	<div><div></div><div>Chris Pratt</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Anya Taylor-Joy</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Charlie Day</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Jack Black</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Keegan-Michael Key</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Seth Rogen</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Fred Armisen</div></div>
Edited by	<div><div></div><div>Eric Osmond</div></div>
Music by	<div><div></div><div>Brian Tyler^[b]</div></div>

Italian-American brothers Mario and Luigi have recently opened a plumbing business in Brooklyn, to the derision of their ex-employer Spike and the disapproval of their father. After seeing a significant water main leak on the news, Mario and Luigi go underground to fix it but are sucked into a Warp Pipe and separated.

Mario lands in the Mushroom Kingdom, ruled by Princess Peach, while Luigi arrives in the Dark Lands, ruled by the evil Koopa king Bowser. Bowser seeks to marry Peach and will destroy the Mushroom Kingdom using a Super Star if she refuses. He imprisons Luigi to threaten Mario, whom he sees as competition for Peach's love. Mario meets Toad, who takes him to Peach. Peach plans to ally with the primate Kongs to help repel Bowser and allows Mario and Toad to travel with her. She also tells Mario that she ended up in the Mushroom Kingdom as a baby, where the Toads took her in and eventually made her their leader. In the Jungle Kingdom, King Cranky Kong agrees to help if Mario defeats his son, Donkey Kong, in a fight. Despite Donkey Kong's immense strength, Mario defeats him using a Cat Suit.

Mario, Peach, Toad, and the Kongs use karts to drive back to the Mushroom Kingdom, but Bowser's army ambushes them on Rainbow Road. When a blue-shelled Koopa General destroys part of the road in a kamikaze attack, Mario and Donkey Kong plummet to the ocean while the other Kongs are captured. Peach and Toad return to the Mushroom Kingdom and urge the citizens to evacuate. Bowser arrives aboard his flying castle and proposes to Peach, who reluctantly accepts after Bowser's advisor Kamek restrains Toad. Mario and Donkey Kong, having been eaten by an eel-like Maw-Ray, learn they both want the respect of their fathers. They escape the Maw-Ray by riding a rocket from Donkey Kong's kart and hurry to Bowser and Peach's wedding.

At the wedding ceremony, Bowser intends to execute all of his prisoners in lava in Peach's honor. Toad smuggles an Ice Flower into Peach's bouquet, which she uses to freeze Bowser. Mario and Donkey Kong arrive and free the prisoners, with Mario using a Tanooki Suit to save Luigi. Bowser frees himself and summons a "Bomber" Bill to destroy the Mushroom Kingdom, but Mario knocks it off course and directs it into the Warp Pipe, where it detonates, creating a vacuum that sucks Bowser's castle and its current occupants into Brooklyn. Mario attempts to grab the Star but is attacked by the enraged Bowser, who also swiftly defeats Peach, Toad, and Donkey Kong. Mario sees his business's commercial on a TV and is motivated to face Bowser, who almost incinerates him. Luigi saves Mario, and they both grab the Super Star. Becoming temporarily invincible, they defeat the Koopas, destroy Bowser's castle, and incapacitate Bowser. Peach then shrinks Bowser with a Blue Mushroom and imprisons him. Mario and Luigi are hailed as heroes by Brooklyn's populace, including their parents and Spike. Afterward, the brothers move to a house in the Mushroom Kingdom and begin a day of plumbing work together.

Production companies	<u>Universal Pictures</u> <u>Illumination</u> Nintendo
Distributed by	Universal Pictures
Release dates	April 1, 2023 (<u>L.A. Live</u>) April 5, 2023 (United States)
Running time	92 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States ^[2]
Language	English
Budget	\$100 million ^[3]
Box office	\$1.362 billion ^{[4][5]}

Voice cast

- Chris Pratt as Mario,^[7] a struggling Italian-American plumber from Brooklyn, New York, who is accidentally transported to the world of the Mushroom Kingdom and embarks on a quest to save his brother.^[8]

- Anya Taylor-Joy as Princess Peach, the ruler of the Mushroom Kingdom, who entered the world of the Mushroom Kingdom as an infant and was raised by the Toads.^{[8][9][10]}
- Charlie Day as Luigi, Mario's timid younger brother and fellow plumber, who is captured by Bowser and his army.^{[8][9]}
- Jack Black as Bowser, a tortoise-like monster and the King of the Koopas, who rules the Dark Lands, steals a powerful Super Star, and plots to conquer the Mushroom Kingdom by marrying Peach.^[8]
- Keegan-Michael Key as Toad, a Mushroom Kingdom resident whose species is also named Toad, who aspires to go on his first real adventure.^[8]
- Seth Rogen as Donkey Kong, an anthropomorphic gorilla and heir to the throne of the Jungle Kingdom.^[8]
- Fred Armisen as Cranky Kong, the ruler of the Jungle Kingdom, and Donkey Kong's father.^[8]
- Sebastian Maniscalco as Spike, Mario and Luigi's antagonistic former boss from a company called Wrecking Crew.^[8]
- Kevin Michael Richardson as Kamek, a Koopa sorcerer and Bowser's advisor and informant.^[8]

Additionally, Charles Martinet (who voiced both Mario and Luigi in the *Mario* games from 1991 to 2023) voices the brothers' father; and Giuseppe, a Brooklyn citizen who resembles Mario's original appearance in *Donkey Kong* and speaks in his in-game voice.^[7] Jessica DiCicco voices the brothers' mother, the plumbing commercial woman, Mayor Pauline, a yellow Toad, Luigi's bully, and baby Peach.^{[11][12]} Rino Romano and John DiMaggio voice the brothers' uncles, Tony and Arthur, respectively. Khary Payton voices the Penguin King, the ruler of the Snow Kingdom descended upon by Bowser's army;^[13] while Eric Bauza voices Diddy Kong and the Toad General. Juliet Jelenic, daughter of co-director Michael Jelenic, voices Lumalee, a nihilistic blue Luma held prisoner by Bowser.^[13] Scott Menville voices the Koopa General, the winged, blue-shelled leader of Bowser's army, a red Toad, as well as a Koopa Troopa who is turned into a Dry Bones.^{[14][15][16]}

Production

Development

After the critical and commercial failure of the 1993 *Super Mario Bros.* film adaptation, the Japanese video game company Nintendo became wary of licensing its properties for film adaptations.^[17] According to Shigeru Miyamoto, the creator of Mario, the idea for a new *Mario* film came from bringing their older games to the Virtual Console and other services. Such transitions took time for the company, and Miyamoto recognized that "our content business would be able to develop even further if we were able to combine our long-beloved software with that of video assets, and utilize them together for extended periods".^[18] Miyamoto knew that the process of making a film was far different from that of making a video game, and wanted a film expert to lead the effort.^[19]

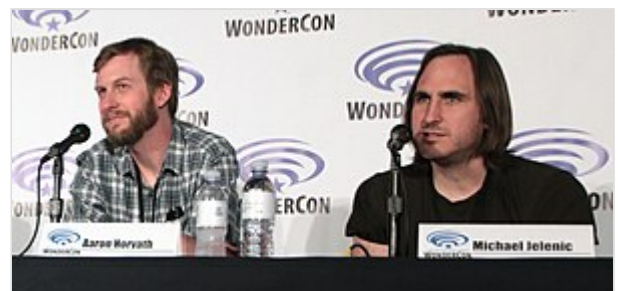
Following the November 2014 hack of Sony Pictures, emails between producer Avi Arad, studio chief Amy Pascal, TriStar Pictures head Tom Rothman, and Sony Pictures Animation president of production Michelle Raimo Kouyate were released, revealing that Sony had been attempting to secure the film rights to the *Mario* franchise for several years. Arad visited Nintendo in Tokyo in February and July 2014 in an attempt to secure a deal. In October, Arad emailed Pascal and said he had closed the deal with Nintendo. Pascal suggested recruiting Sony Pictures Animation's *Hotel Transylvania* director Genndy Tartakovsky to help

develop the project, while Kouyate said she could "think of 3–4 movies right out of the gate" and hoped to build a "*Mario* empire".^[17] However, after the emails leaked, Arad denied that a deal had been made, stating that negotiations had only begun. *BuzzFeed News* noted that the emails did not take into account potential conflicts with Sony Pictures' corporate sibling Sony Interactive Entertainment, one of Nintendo's chief competitors.^[17]

Through Nintendo's work with Universal Parks & Resorts to create *Mario*-based attractions, later resulting in Super Nintendo World, Miyamoto met Chris Meledandri, founder of Universal Pictures' Illumination animation division. Miyamoto found Meledandri's creative process similar to his own and felt he would be the proper lead for a *Mario* film. They had started more earnest discussions by 2016, knowing that if they felt it would not work that they could easily walk away.^[19] In November 2017, reports emerged that Nintendo was collaborating with Universal and Illumination to make an animated *Mario* film.^[20] Then-Nintendo president Tatsumi Kimishima clarified that a deal had not been finalized, but that an announcement would come soon. Kimishima hoped that if the deal were successful, a 2020 release date would be possible.^[21]

In January 2018, Nintendo announced that the film would progress with Miyamoto and Meledandri co-producing.^[22] Meledandri said the film was a "priority" for Illumination and that it would most likely come out in 2022. He added that Miyamoto would be "front and center" during production.^[23] In January 2020, Nintendo president Shuntaro Furukawa stated that the film was "moving along smoothly" with an expected 2022 release date. Furukawa also said Nintendo would own the rights to the film, and both Nintendo and Universal would fund the production.^[24]

In August 2021, it emerged that *Teen Titans Go!* creators Aaron Horvath and Michael Jelenic were directing the film after the discovery of an Illumination animator's LinkedIn profile that included the film in their list.^[25] Following the full casting announcement, Horvath and Jelenic were confirmed to be directing, with Matthew Fogel attached as the screenwriter after previously scribing Illumination's *Minions: The Rise of Gru* (2022).^[26] According to Khary Payton, who has collaborated with Horvath and Jelenic on various projects at Warner Bros. Animation, the duo flew to Illumination Studios Paris a month after the release of their first feature film, *Teen Titans Go! To the Movies*, in September 2018.^[27]



Directors Aaron Horvath (left) and Michael Jelenic (right)

In September 2022, it was announced by New York Comic Con that the film's teaser trailer would be released on October 6, 2022;^[28] the teaser formally revealed the film's title, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*. Shortly thereafter, Ed Skudder, who previously worked with Horvath on *Unikitty!*, confirmed that he worked as head of story on the film.^[29]

Writing

Jelenic and Horvath wanted their work on the film to be the opposite of the "irreverent" *Teen Titans Go!*, aiming to develop a faithful adaptation of the games, which they both felt had not been done before, as well as something "more cinematic" and "more emotional" than *Teen Titans Go!*.^[30] "When people probably

first heard our names attached to the movie, they expected we'd do the *Teen Titans Go!* treatment to Mario", said Jelenic. "But every project we come to, we make new choices depending on who the audience is and what we're going for".^[30] Horvath asserted that Nintendo involved themselves with every aspect of the production, "from story to visual development to the animation".^[31]

The duo wanted the film to serve as an "origin story" for Mario and Luigi, opting to portray them as "blue-collar guys" by focusing on their previous backgrounds as Italian-American plumbers from New York City in early games (specifically Brooklyn, as in older American media).^[31] They also wanted to reflect how gamers win in the games by not giving up in spite of making mistakes, turning that into a character trait for the film's portrayal of Mario.^[32] The duo chose to interchange Princess Peach's and Luigi's roles from the games, with Peach helping Mario rescue a kidnapped Luigi, because they felt having them in their original roles was "too straightforward".^[33] The duo drew inspiration from *Super Mario 3D World* (2013) and its portrayal of Peach as a playable character, stating they wanted to focus on her role as the Mushroom Kingdom's monarch and "how strong that person would need to be to protect [the Toads]".^[34] For Bowser, they "decided to make that character scary, but the other side of Bowser is somebody who's vulnerable and funny".^[30]

Casting



Top: Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy, and Charlie Day provide the voices for Mario, Princess Peach, and Luigi.^[7]

Middle: Jack Black, Keegan-Michael Key, and Seth Rogen voice Bowser, Toad, and Donkey Kong.^[7]

Bottom: Fred Armisen, Sebastian Maniscalco, and Kevin Michael Richardson voice Cranky Kong, Spike, and Kamek, while Charles Martinet cameos as the brothers' father and a citizen of Brooklyn named Giuseppe.^[7]

In February 2021, Mario voice actor Charles Martinet said the possibility of reprising his role in the film would be a "marvelous thing" and that if he were asked to voice Mario he would "go in and play with great joy and happiness".^[35] In August 2021, Sebastian Maniscalco revealed he was voicing Spike, Mario and Luigi's boss from the game *Wrecking Crew* (1985).^[36]

During a September 2021 Nintendo Direct presentation, Shigeru Miyamoto announced that Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy, Charlie Day, Jack Black, Keegan-Michael Key, Seth Rogen, Kevin Michael Richardson, Fred Armisen, and Maniscalco would headline the voice cast and that Martinet would be featured in "surprise cameos".^[7] The announcement was met with a mixed reaction from fans; while some welcomed the idea of celebrity actors voicing the characters, others questioned and criticized the choices, in particular Pratt as Mario instead of Martinet (who had voiced the character since 1991) or an Italian actor.^[37] Martinet voices the brothers' father as well as a citizen of Brooklyn named Giuseppe, the latter using Mario's game voice.^[38] Additionally, voice acting veterans Rino Romano, John DiMaggio, and Jessica DiCicco voiced Mario and Luigi's uncles Tony and Arthur, and mother, respectively, as the intention was to cast actors of Italian ancestry for the brothers' family.^[39]

Meledandri said Pratt would not be voicing Mario in a thick Italian accent as Martinet had traditionally done.^[40] Voice actor Khary Payton described Pratt's original voice during production as a "New York, Italian guy" and a "cousin to the Sopranos",^[41] but the accent was scrapped for sounding too similar to the character Tony Soprano.^{[42][43]} Voice actress Tara Strong criticized Pratt's casting and expressed a preference for Martinet to voice Mario instead, lamenting what she described to be Hollywood's disregard for professional voice actors.^[44] In response to criticism of Pratt's casting, Horvath stated, "For us, it made total sense. He's really good at playing a blue-collar hero with a ton of heart. For the way that Mario is characterized in our film, he's perfect for it."^[45] For his part, Pratt acknowledged the character's "passionate fanbase" and that Mario's traditional voice was "the soundtrack to [fans'] youth. You don't want someone to come along and cynically kind of destroy it as a cash grab with a movie. I fully understand that. You do not want that to happen." Regarding his own vocal performance, he encouraged audiences to "come watch the movie. Go watch the movie [...] and then we can talk."^[46]

Charlie Day originally voiced Luigi with a New York accent similar to the film *Goodfellas* (1990) during production. The accent was scrapped when directors told him it sounded too similar to the gangster film, to which Day responded to the change with, "Alright! I think you're wrong, but fine!"^{[42][43]} Plot details were kept secret from the actors during recording, according to Day, who noted he had to record his dialogue in many different ways, after which the directors selected the version they believed would be best suited for the film.^[47]

Upon the trailer's release, both Payton and Eric Bauza confirmed their parts in the film; Payton voices the Penguin King and Bauza voices the Toad General.^[48] During the COVID-19 pandemic, Payton recorded his lines in a closet at his home, though he was unsure if he would appear in the final cut.^[41]

In response to backlash for voicing Donkey Kong in his normal speaking voice, Rogen explained: "I was very clear that I don't do voices" and "If you want me to be in this movie, then it's going to sound like me and that's it. That was the beginning and end of that conversation." He added further, "I think in the film and in the game, all you seem to know about Donkey Kong is that he throws barrels and does not like Mario very much. And that's what I ran with."^[49]

Animation and design

The film was animated by Illumination Studios Paris in Paris, France.^[50] Production was underway by September 2020, with animation ending in October 2022.^{[51][52]} Post-production work wrapped by March 2023.^[53] Jelenic said that Illumination updated their lighting and rendering technology for the film, with Meledandri claiming that it "pushed the technical and artistic capabilities of [the] studio to new heights".^[53]

Jelenic and Horvath wanted the animation to juggle stylized animation with realism, with Horvath claiming that "there are moments of cartoony fun, but [...] we wanted it to feel like a big adventure film and that there are stakes and maybe you believe that these characters can die, so they're not super-squashy and super-stretchy, and we used consistent volume on the characters to make them feel a little more grounded".^[30] For the go-karts featured in the film, the directors worked with a vehicle design artist and artists at Nintendo to create go-karts that fit their portrayal in the film while drawing inspiration from their portrayal in the Mario Kart games.^[53]

In an interview with GameSpot, Horvath said that he and Jelenic took a "blockbuster approach" when making *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*: "To me, this is a movie that's been like 40 years in the making, you know, and I've always considered Mario more of an action game. The characters look comedic, but the story is always high stakes, you gotta save the princess or save the world or whatever in the game. So we wanted to reflect that action sensibility." The two brought in artists they knew from television and worked closely with them to craft the film's action sequences. Skudder in particular was crucial in making the action, especially the Rainbow Road sequence. According to Jelenic and Horvath, Skudder spent months working on the sequence, which they also described as the film's most technically challenging. The road itself was a visual effect, and every shot of it had to go through the visual effects department, which was time-consuming and expensive.^[54]

Donkey Kong's design was changed for the first time since the video game Donkey Kong Country (1994). For his new design, artists incorporated elements of both his modern design and his original design from his debut appearance in Donkey Kong (1981).^[55] For Mario's family, Horvath and Jelenic were given early designs of Mario by Nintendo as references; they ended up using slightly altered versions of those designs in the film.^[56]

Music

During an October 2022 Nintendo Direct presentation, Meledandri confirmed that Brian Tyler was set to compose the film's score. Tyler worked closely with longtime Mario composer Koji Kondo to incorporate themes from the games.^[57] He described the composition as "big", featuring an orchestra, choir and bands, as well as "Italian instruments, accordions, live drums, mandolins [...] whistling human voices", and "eight-bit [sounds]".^[58] Recording sessions began on October 17, 2022, at the Eastwood Scoring Stage at Warner Bros.^[52] Mixing took place at Skywalker Sound, where Kondo and Miyamoto responded positively to a 15-minute suite of new themes Tyler had written.^[58] The film's music references leitmotifs from Super Mario Bros. 3, Super Mario 64 and Super Mario 3D Land, among other Mario games.^[59]

Songs from Jack Black and Keegan-Michael Key were improvised for the film.^[60] Black Hydra composed the music for its official trailer, "Super Mushroom", based on the Super Mario Bros. theme. The instrumental was released on November 30, 2022, on YouTube.^[61]

In a March 2023 video, Seth Rogen shared that Donkey Kong was introduced in the film accompanied by the title theme music from Donkey Kong 64, "DK Rap", composed by Grant Kirkhope.^[62] In contrast to the licensed songs used in the film, Kirkhope did not receive credit for "DK Rap" in the film's end credits,

an oversight the composer found disappointing.^{[63][64]}

Jack Black co-wrote the song "Peaches", wherein Bowser professes his love for Princess Peach, alongside the directors, editor Eric Osmond, and song producer John Spiker. Having Bowser perform a love song was Black's idea.^[65] "Peaches" was released on April 7, 2023, with a music video directed by Cole Bennett. According to Black, it was filmed in a few hours.^[66] On its release, "Peaches" was #61 on the iTunes streaming chart.^{[67][68]} It later appeared on the Billboard Hot 100, debuting at #83 and peaking at #56.^[69]

Marketing



A bus advertising the film in London

On October 6, the teaser trailer was released live in a Nintendo Direct presentation. In a short questions and answers period following the trailer reveal at New York Comic Con, Jack Black stated that "Bowser has a musical side" in the film, teasing a theme for the character.^[70] The teaser trailer received over three million views in 24 hours.^[71] Journalists generally praised the trailer's visuals and tone, as well as Black and Key's performances as Bowser and Toad. However, Pratt's performance as Mario was described as lacking in emotion and sounding too similar to his normal speaking voice.^{[72][73]} Vic Hood from *TechRadar* noted a slight New York accent in Mario's lines, calling it a possible throwback to Mario's depictions in American media such as *The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!* and the 1993 film,^[74] before Charles Martinet debuted as the character's official voice actor in *Mario's Game Gallery* where he spoke full dialogue for extended periods of time.^{[75][76]} In a newsletter from *The Guardian*, the response to Pratt's voice was likened to the backlash against the first trailer of *Sonic the Hedgehog*.^[77]

On November 29, the first official trailer was shown in a Nintendo Direct. Public reactions were still largely favorable, though online discourse continued to center on Pratt's performance as Mario.^[78]

On December 8, the first clip of the film, showing Toad guiding Mario through the Mushroom Kingdom and to the entrance to Peach's Castle, was revealed at The Game Awards 2022.^[79] *The Verge*'s Ash Parrish commented, "Despite the skepticism surrounding Chris Pratt's performance as Mario, the movie's visuals—and I cannot stress enough, only the visuals—look incredible".^[80]

On January 29, 2023, a preview clip of the film was released during the NFC Championship Game.^[81] Some entertainment news sites pointed out the addition of Rogen's "iconic laugh" heard as Donkey Kong in the clip.^[82] Emma Roth from *The Verge* commented, "I'm pleasantly surprised at how well his voice (and laugh) suits the character", while Luke Plunkett from *Kotaku* commented, "Seth Rogen has been hired to... just be Seth Rogen".^{[81][83]}

On February 12, 2023, a commercial for the film was released during Super Bowl LVII, featuring a rendition of the title theme from *The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!*. A corresponding website which was featured in the trailer was also released, which advertises the Super Mario Bros. Plumbing Service from the film as if it were, according to Plunkett, "...a struggling small business servicing the Brooklyn and Queens areas".^{[84][85]}

Release

Theatrical

The Super Mario Bros. Movie held its world premiere at Regal LA Live in Los Angeles, California on April 1, 2023, with the cast and crew in attendance.^{[86][87]} It was released theatrically in the United States on April 5, 2023, and later in Japan on April 28, in both regular formats and in IMAX 2D and 3D.^{[88][89]} The film was previously scheduled to be released on December 21, 2022^[90] and April 7, 2023, the former of which was taken over by DreamWorks Animation's *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* in response to the film's delay to the later date.^[91] On February 28, 2023, it was announced that the film would be released two days earlier, on its current date, to more than 60 markets while maintaining the April 28 date for Japan and stating that additional markets are to follow during April and May.^[92] It released in 65-plus countries on dates ranging from April 5 to 7. It was released on April 26 in South Korea and on May 26 in Poland.^[4]

Home media

The Super Mario Bros. Movie was released on digital download on May 16, 2023,^{[93][94]} and was officially released on 4K Ultra-HD Blu-ray, Blu-ray, and DVD on June 13 in the US, with some early sales starting on June 6.^[95] The film was released on these formats in the UK on July 24.^{[96][97][98]}

The film was made available to stream on NBCUniversal's Peacock streaming service on August 3, 2023.^[99] As part of their 18-month deal with Netflix, the film streamed on Peacock for the first four months of the pay-TV window, before moving to Netflix on for the next ten beginning on December 3,^[100] and returning to Peacock for the remaining four beginning in October 2024.^{[101][102][103][104]}

Internet leak

On April 30, 2023, a pirated copy of the film was leaked onto Twitter, and was viewed by at least 9 million users in roughly 7 hours, before being removed by moderators. The incident has raised concerns about Twitter's anti-piracy ability, staff reductions, and potential abuse of its private tools, as it was only made possible by a feature that allowed Twitter Blue subscribers to upload high-quality videos of up to one hour in length.^{[105][106]}

Reception

Box office

As of January 14, 2024, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* has grossed \$574.9 million in the United States and Canada, and \$787.1 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$1.36 billion.^{[4][5]} It became the highest-grossing film based on a video game after just one week of release.^[107] It also became the first film

based on a video game as such to gross \$1 billion worldwide,^[108] becoming the highest-grossing film of 2023 at the time.^[109] Although surpassed in September by *Barbie*,^[110] it remains the highest-grossing animated film of the year.^[111] In May 2023, it overtook *Minions* to become the highest-grossing film released by Illumination.^[112] *Deadline Hollywood* calculated the film's net profit as \$559 million, accounting for production budgets, marketing, talent participations and other costs; box office grosses, television and streaming, and home media revenues placed it first on their list of 2023's "Most Valuable Blockbusters".^[113]

Domestic

In the United States and Canada, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* was released alongside *Air*, and was initially projected to gross roughly \$125 million from 4,025 theaters in its five-day opening weekend. It was also expected to gross roughly \$100 million internationally.^[114] After making \$31.7 million on its first day and \$26.5 million on its second, five-day estimates were raised to \$141 million. Projections were re-adjusted yet again to \$191 million after the film made \$55 million on Friday. The film went on to debut to \$146.4 million during the traditional three-day weekend and \$204.6 million over the five-day frame,^[115] surpassing the \$72.1 million opening of *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* to become the top opening weekend for a video game adaptation, as well as surpassing its \$190.8 million lifetime gross to become the top-grossing video game adaptation ever.^[116] It was the third-highest Easter opening weekend of all time, behind *Furious 7* and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*.^[117] The film not only surpassed *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* for the biggest five-day Wednesday opening of any film, but also surpassed *Minions* for Illumination's largest opening weekend ever.^[118] Additionally, the film surpassed *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania* for 2023's biggest opening weekend.^[119] Overall, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* generated the third-highest domestic opening weekend for any animated film, after *The Lion King* and *Incredibles 2*.^[120] It over-performed in other territories, making \$173 million for a global opening weekend of \$375 million, surpassing *Frozen II*'s record.^[117] Furthermore, it surpassed *Warcraft* to have the highest worldwide opening weekend for any video game adaptation.^[115]

The film made \$92.5 million in its second weekend and \$59.9 million in its third, both the highest ever for an animated film, surpassing *Frozen II* and *Incredibles 2*, respectively.^{[121][122]} The film continued to dominate the box office in its fourth weekend, grossing \$40 million, surpassing *Incredibles 2* for the fourth-best weekend, and crossing the global \$1 billion mark on April 30.^[123] It became the fifth film of the pandemic era to cross this mark, just after *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, *Top Gun: Maverick*, *Jurassic World Dominion*, and *Avatar: The Way of Water*, as well as the first animated film to do so since *Frozen II* in 2019.^[124] In its fifth weekend, the film declined 54%, grossing \$18.6 million, finishing in second place to *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, and also became the 19th film to surpass \$500 million at the US and Canadian box office.^[125]

Other territories

Outside of the US and Canada, the film grossed \$172.8 million in its first weekend. It had the biggest opening ever for an animated film in 10 markets and the biggest video-game adaptation opening ever in 44 markets.^[126] In its second weekend, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* grossed \$102.5 million from 71 markets, for a drop of just 22%.^[127] In its third weekend, the film made \$70.7 million from 78 markets, representing a drop of 38%.^[128] The film went on to earn another \$68.3 million from 80 territories in the fourth weekend, including a \$14.3 million opening weekend in Japan, the biggest opening ever for an animated studio title in the country. As of January 14, 2024, the highest-grossing territories were Japan

(\$101.4 million), Mexico (\$85.4 million), the United Kingdom (\$67.9 million), France (\$62.8 million), Germany (\$56.2 million) and Australia (\$34.6 million).^{[129][130]} In Mexico, it is also the highest-grossing film of all time.^[131]

Critical response

The Super Mario Bros. Movie received mixed reviews from critics.^{[132][133][134][135]} On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 59% of 280 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.8/10. The website's consensus reads: "While it's nowhere near as thrilling as turtle tipping your way to 128 lives, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* is a colorful—albeit thinly plotted—animated adventure that has about as many Nintendos as Nintendon'ts."^[136] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 46 out of 100, based on 53 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[137] Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "A" on an A+ to F scale, while 94% of those polled by PostTrak gave it a positive score, with 82% saying that they would recommend it.^[117] Miyamoto felt that the critics who gave the film low ratings contributed to the film's success and creating the buzz around it.^[138]

Ross Bonaime of Collider gave a positive review, writing, "Obviously, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* is in many ways a feature-length advertisement for Nintendo as a brand. However, Jelenic, Horvath, and [F]ogel make this feel more like a labor of love, as they've been given the keys to the (Mushroom) kingdom, and are allowed to go all-in with what any fan would want to see in a film like this. In many ways, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* reminds of Wreck-It Ralph and the glee that came from seeing these characters on screen."^[139] Writing for the *Datebook* section of The San Francisco Chronicle, Zaki Hasan said he enjoyed the visuals but felt the film's strong adherence to and copious references to the games left it lacking in narrative, and that it tried too hard to avoid the failures of the 1993 film, calling it "a blandly efficient piece of brand management".^[140]

IGN's Tom Jorgensen gave a generally positive review. He praised the film's energy, its musical score despite the inclusion of "shoehorned" pop songs, and its visuals for setting a "very high bar". He also commended the use of callbacks but criticized some character arcs for being underdeveloped. Jorgensen had slight criticism towards Pratt and Day's attempt at New York accents for Mario and Luigi as "certainly not going to be taking home any commendations from the good people of Brooklyn" and stated, "There's definitely been a flattening of the more cartoonish qualities". However, he applauded the actors for embodying each character's heroism and for a grounded delivery that "balances well with the fantastical trappings of the Mushroom Kingdom". Jorgensen commended Black's performance as Bowser for being "standout" and fitting to the character.^[141]

Kyle Anderson of Nerdist celebrated the animation for its game accuracy and called Illumination "the perfect choice to make Mario movies" but opined that "those expecting something akin to *The Lego Movie* might be left a bit cold" due to lack of a plot outside the main beats given the film's short run time.^[142] Soren Andersen of The Seattle Times commented that, while the film succeeded in appealing to the *Mario* fanbase by creating the feeling of being inside a video game, he found the characters to be lacking in personality and criticized their voice performances, remarking: "...everyone expresses themselves at the tops of their voices, sound and fury signifying not a whole lot".^[143] Brian Tallerico of Roger Ebert, a self-described lifelong fan, wrote that the vocal performances were "uniformly mediocre", and that the film is Illumination's "most soulless to date" and "doesn't reflect the franchise's creativity in the slightest".^[144] The

Los Angeles Times' Katie Walsh applauded the film for its humor and "eye-popping" animation. She praised Black's performance as Bowser but criticized both Pratt and Day's lead performances of Mario and Luigi as "so unremarkable that it could have been anyone at all".^[145]

Calum Marsh writing for The New York Times criticized Pratt's performance as "grating" and "unctuous" while describing the overall film as "bland, witless and flagrantly pandering".^[146] Kristy Puchko from Mashable commended the fan service and music but was critical of the writing, the characters, and Pratt's lack of accent, commenting "whatever voice Pratt is doing isn't Brooklyn, and it isn't anything particularly specific, consistent, or exciting".^[147] Screen Rant's Molly Freeman praised the film for being a "love letter" to fans but criticized it for offering little else. She described most of the voice cast as "fun" with Black's Bowser being a standout, while noting that Pratt's performance was "not so bad as to be distracting, but not strong enough to be at all interesting either", which she said was an analogy for the film as a whole.^[148] Josh Spiegel from SlashFilm considered the film's portrayal of Princess Peach not in need of rescuing as "unquestionably a good thing" but also "the most subversive decision of a film from 25 years ago, not from

2023". He further criticized the film for an "exceedingly straightforward narrative", characters lacking complexity, and Pratt's performance as Mario as being "blandly heroic", concluding that "This movie exists, and that's about as high as it aspires".^[149]

Accolades

Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Recipient(s)	Result	Ref.
<u>Golden Trailer Awards</u>	<u>June 29, 2023</u>	Most Innovative Advertising for a Feature Film	"Giant Peach" (Inside Job)	Nominated	^[150] ^[151]
<u>MTV Millennial Awards</u>	<u>August 4, 2023</u>	MIAWudio of the Year	"Peaches"	Nominated	^[152] ^[153]
		Killer Series or Movie	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Won	
<u>Hollywood Music in Media Awards</u>	<u>November 15, 2023</u>	<u>Best Original Score – Animated Film</u>	<u>Brian Tyler</u>	Nominated	^[154]
		<u>Best Original Song – Animated Film</u>	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")	Nominated	
<u>Hollywood Professional Association Awards</u>	<u>November 28, 2023</u>	Outstanding Color Grading – Animated Theatrical Feature	Jason Hanel (Company 3)	Nominated	^[155]
<u>The Game Awards</u>	<u>December 7, 2023</u>	Best Adaptation	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	^[156]
<u>Washington D.C. Area Film Critics Association Awards</u>	<u>December 10, 2023</u>	Best Voice Performance	<u>Jack Black</u>	Nominated	^[157]
<u>Georgia Film Critics Association Awards</u>	<u>January 5, 2024</u>	Best Original Song	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")	Nominated	^[158]
<u>Astra Film Awards</u>	<u>January 6, 2024</u>	Best Voice-Over Performance	<u>Jack Black</u>	Nominated	^[159]
		Best Original Song	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")	Nominated	
<u>Golden Globe Awards</u>	<u>January 7, 2024</u>	<u>Best Original Song</u>	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")	Nominated	^[160]
		<u>Best Animated Feature Film</u>	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	
		Cinematic and Box Office Achievement	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	
<u>Critics' Choice Movie Awards</u>	<u>January 14, 2024</u>	Best Song	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and</u>	Nominated	^[161]

			<u>Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")		
<u>Saturn Awards</u>	<u>February 4, 2024</u>	<u>Best Animated Film</u>	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	[162]
<u>Movieguide Awards</u>	<u>February 9, 2024</u>	<u>Best Movie for Families</u>	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Won	[163][164]
<u>SCL Awards</u>	<u>February 13, 2024</u>	<u>Outstanding Original Song for a Comedy or Musical</u>	<u>Jack Black, John Spiker, Eric Osmond, Michael Jelenic, and Aaron Horvath</u> ("Peaches")	Nominated	[165]
<u>Annie Awards</u>	<u>February 17, 2024</u>	<u>Best Voice Acting - Feature</u>	<u>Jack Black</u>	Nominated	[166]
<u>People's Choice Awards</u>	<u>February 18, 2024</u>	<u>The Movie of the Year</u>	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	[167]
<u>Visual Effects Society Awards</u>	<u>February 21, 2024</u>	<u>Outstanding Effects Simulations in an Animated Feature</u>	<u>Simon Pate, Christophe Vazquez, Milo Riccarand</u>	Nominated	[168]
<u>Producers Guild of America Awards</u>	<u>February 25, 2024</u>	<u>Outstanding Producer of Animated Theatrical Motion Pictures</u>	<u>Chris Meledandri, Shigeru Miyamoto</u>	Nominated	[169]
<u>Astra Film Creative Arts Awards</u>	<u>February 26, 2024</u>	<u>Best Publicity Campaign</u>	<i>The Super Mario Bros. Movie</i>	Nominated	[159]

Future

Sequel

In May 2021, Furukawa said that Nintendo was interested in producing more animated films based on its intellectual properties if the *Mario Bros.* film was successful.^[170] In a *Variety* cover story before the film's release, producer Meledandri was asked about potential sequels, or projects adapted from other Nintendo properties, and answered, "Our focus right now is entirely on bringing the film out to the audience, and at this time, we're not prepared to talk about what's coming in the future".^[171] On April 21, 2023, following the film's box office success, Nintendo stated that there would be more films based on their properties, though they did not directly confirm a sequel to *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*.^[172] In June 2023, Pratt stated that while news on the sequel would come "soon", development on the project had been put on hold due to the 2023 Writers Guild of America strike, saying that it would only resume once "the writers [felt] comfortable moving forward".^{[173][174]} In November, it was revealed that Universal was making plans to build a larger franchise around the film while also confirming a sequel.^{[175][176]} In December, Black expressed interest in the sequel being a musical titled *Bowser's Revenge*.^[177] On March 10, 2024, as part of Mario Day celebrations, Miyamoto and Meledandri officially announced "a new *Super Mario Bros.*

movie", along with a release date of April 3, 2026 in the United States and more dates between April for other territories.^[178] On May 10, 2024, actor Danny DeVito expressed his interest in possibly playing Wario in the sequel.^[179]

Possible spin-offs

In February 2022, Day expressed interest in reprising his role as Luigi in a *Luigi's Mansion* film^[180] and reiterated his interest in March 2023.^[181] In April 2023, Rogen expressed interest in *Donkey Kong Country* forming the basis of future works, stating it created "a lot of opportunity" for a spin-off film.^{[182][183]} That same month, Taylor-Joy expressed interest in a possibility of a spin-off film revolving around Princess Peach.^[184]

See also

- List of films based on video games

Notes

- Super Mario Bros.* was developed by Nintendo R&D4, published by Nintendo, directed and produced by Shigeru Miyamoto, and designed and illustrated by Miyamoto and Takashi Tezuka.
- Original Nintendo themes by Koji Kondo

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External links

- [Official website \(<https://thesupermariobros.movie/home>\)](https://thesupermariobros.movie/home) 
 - *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6718170/>) at IMDb
 - *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (<https://www.boxofficemojo.com/title/tt6718170/>) at Box Office Mojo
 - *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_super_mario_bros_movie) at Rotten Tomatoes
 - *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (<https://www.metacritic.com/movie/the-super-mario-bros-movie>) at Metacritic
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