

## = The Simpsons Wrestling =

The Simpsons Wrestling is a fighting video game based on the animated television series The Simpsons and is based on the professional wrestling genre . The game was made for the PlayStation console , was developed by Big Ape Productions , published by Electronic Arts in Europe and Activision in North America and distributed by Fox Interactive . It was released in Europe on March 22 , 2001 , and in North America on April 12 , 2001 .

There are 20 characters in the game , all of whom are voiced by the same actors that provide their voices in the show , and each character executes his or her own exclusive moves and gestures and power moves in the wrestling ring . The matches take place in detailed 3D locations from Springfield . A round in the game ends when one wrestler pins his opponent for a three count . Two victorious rounds wins a match . Unlike in traditional wrestling rules , the opponent may be pinned belly @-@ down .

## = = Gameplay = =

The game is loosely based on professional wrestling games , but more closely resembles a beat-'em up . The game can be played in two modes : a tournament style single @-@ player game or a grudge match where two players can interact . The matches take place in ten different detailed 3D locations from Springfield , such as the Simpsons ' house , the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant , the Kwik @-@ E @-@ Mart , and Moe 's Tavern . Letters float around in the wrestling ring , and if a wrestler collects enough of them , they can taunt and temporarily become invincible . A round ends when one wrestler pins their opponent for a three count . Two rounds are needed to win a match .

Each time a successful attack is performed on a player , their health meter depletes . Players with low health stay stunned for longer when knocked down . A player can increase their health by picking up food items that randomly appear in the ring . Running and attacks drain stamina . If a player does not have enough stamina to perform a certain move , it becomes unavailable until they recover . Stamina is regained through not pressing the actions buttons or picking up certain items . Attacks which require more stamina are generally more effective . The stun meter only appears when the opponent is knocked down . It depletes gradually , but the stunned player cannot move until the Stun meter is completely drained . A player can reduce the stun meter faster by pressing the action buttons , or by receiving certain attacks . If a player is low on health , the stun meter will normally be higher , making pin attempts harder to resist . Once a player 's health is completely depleted , it will only take one hit to stun them . Certain attacks to a stunned opponent will actually reset the stun meter .

During matches , wrestlers have a health meter that drains as they perform special moves , and gradually refills when they are not attacking . Different moves use up different amounts of energy , and certain characters can win any match by repeatedly using a particularly damaging move that does not require much energy . Several different power @-@ ups are also available in the game , including a donut that increases speed , bowling pins that can be used as clubs , and bubble gum that slows players down .

In addition to health items , the letters A , N , U and T appear randomly in the ring . If either player collects enough to spell the word " TAUNT " , they can then perform a taunt . The taunt will completely drain the opponent 's stamina , making them unable to attack for a limited time .

## = = Characters = =

The game features 20 characters from the show , all of whom are voiced by the same actors that provide their voices in The Simpsons . The player begins with only 8 of the 12 main characters to begin with . Others can be made playable by unlocking them , or unlocking a certain game mode .

Homer - Homer is the most balanced character in the game , but relies particularly on brawling .

Bart - Bart is a faster character who uses toys ( skateboard , catapult ) to make up for his lack of strength .

Lisa - Lisa is another smaller character who uses her speed to make quick strikes on opponents . Her saxophone attack can hit an opponent anywhere within the ring .

Marge - Marge has good reach but lacks strength . She uses household items as weapons . She can even use Maggie to limit an opponent 's movement .

Barney - Barney is one of the stronger characters , but lacks speed and stamina . His attacks are based on beer ( including throwing beer glasses ) .

Krusty - Krusty is a balanced character who uses a combination of brawling and typical clown paraphernalia .

Apu - Apu is a brawler with moderate strength , but has good speed and stamina .

Groundskeeper Willie - Willie uses gardening equipment to either keep opponents at a distance or to limit their movement .

Bumblebee Man - ( Unlockable ) Bumblebee Man is a balanced brawler .

Moe - ( Unlockable ) Moe is one of the faster characters who relies on fighting dirty . To that end , he carries a lot of makeshift weapons .

Ned Flanders - ( Unlockable ) Ned Flanders is a weak character with very strong special attacks . His prayer attack is the most damaging in the game as it causes high damage , stuns instantly and hits repeatedly anywhere in the ring . He also fully recovers when pinned , so opponents must beat him twice just to win one singular round .

Professor Frink - ( Unlockable ) Frink is a hard to control character who relies on gadgets to wear down opponents .

Mr. Burns - ( Boss Character ) Waylon Smithers fights on Mr. Burn 's behalf while Burns stands outside of the ring . Their strongest attack involves Mr. Burns throwing explosives into the ring that do not affect Smithers . They are only playable in the Mr. Burn 's Office level .

Kang and Kodos - ( Boss Character ) Kang battles on behalf of this team while Kodos supports by throwing random items into the ring . They are only available in the Spaceship level .

Itchy - Itchy is a cartoon mouse with a lot of dangerous booby traps and weapons . He is only available in his own stage and can only battle Scratchy .

Scratchy - Scratchy is the long @-@ suffering victim of Itchy . However , his moves and attributes are comparable to Itchy 's . He is only available in his own stage , meaning that he can only battle Itchy .

The voice of Kent Brockman can be heard occasionally during matches as a commentator . Various characters make cameos as background images . Each character executes their own exclusive moves and gestures .

= = Development = =

Big Ape Productions developed The Simpsons Wrestling . At the Electronic Entertainment Expo in 2000 , Fox Interactive announced its plans to produce and publish the game for the PlayStation console . Karly Young , director of Fox Interactive , said that the company had received an " overwhelming " response to their previous Simpsons games , so they wanted to give the fans " another dose of Bart and Homer ? this time for PlayStation gamers " .

The following months , Fox Interactive looked to partner with somebody who could help publish the game . Activision , who knew the possible casual gamer interest in The Simpsons , announced on March 12 , 2001 that it had signed a deal with Fox Interactive that would allow it to publish The Simpsons Wrestling in North America . Kathy Vrabeck , executive vice president of Activision , commented that " The Simpsons is a property that enjoys phenomenal success across several entertainment mediums , including interactive entertainment . The acquisition of this game reinforces our strategy of delivering products based on powerful , recognizable brands . "

= = Reception = =

The Simpsons Wrestling received negative reviews from critics . It received an aggregated score of 41 @. @ 21 % on GameRankings and 32 / 100 on Metacritic . They criticized the game for having

simplistic , unbalanced gameplay and bad graphics , but praised the game 's audio track .

Doug Perry of IGN described The Simpsons Wrestling as one of the " ugliest " games he had ever seen . He thought the graphics were " choppy " looking , and the character outlines looked " broken up " . Game Informer 's Andrew Reiner criticized the game 's design by saying that he did not think it held any wrestling qualities at all , and that the characters looked " awful " . He said that instead of " grappling " or performing " devastating slams " , you have to " slap your opponent silly " by mashing the buttons redundantly . GameZone , however , called the graphics " quite good , though a little clipped at times by the pace of the combat " . Perry also thought there was little wrestling in the game , instead it is " all about smashing buttons and not having any skill whatsoever " . Reiner said that the game was a major disappointment and is " one of the worst PS games to date " .

In contrast to the game 's negative response , GameZone said that even though the game does not feature continuous play , " the action flows well once into an event " . GameZone 's review praised the game 's audio track , and thought it was " fun " because the comedy is straight from the television show , and the characters will " bring a smile to your face " . Reiner also commented positively on the soundtrack and that the game may not be the best wrestling game available , " but it delivers what the cover advertises " . GameSpot 's Frank Provo said that " wit " and " charm " are the two most redeeming features of The Simpsons Wrestling , and in spite of the game 's weak gameplay , it has " plenty of laughs in store " that devoted fans of the The Simpsons will enjoy . The BBC 's David Gibbon wrote that the end result of the track is one that will not " fail to impress fans " .