

= Hot Potato (video game) =

Hot Potato ! is an action puzzle video game developed by Pukka Games and published by BAM ! Entertainment for the Game Boy Advance . It was released in Europe on June 29 , 2001 , and in North America on July 1 , 2001 .

In the game the player must simultaneously drive a bus and clear roads of alien potato beings . The beings are scattered across the street , and by shooting out rows of alien potatoes , they can be cleared from the player 's path . The player must clear a set number of aliens to proceed in the game . Hot Potato received mostly above average reviews from critics ; it received 66 @.@ 42 % and 74 % ratings on review aggregate websites GameRankings and Metacritic respectively .

= = Gameplay = =

The game tasks the player with navigating a bus through roads filled with alien potato beings . The player 's bus holds female members of the alien race , and the player can shoot the females from the front of the bus in order to clear the alien potatoes . The aliens come in two colors : red and blue . Aliens are cleared from the road when two like @-@ colored potatoes touch each other , but aliens begin to pile up in the road if two aliens hit each other that are not of the same color . The road is continuously scrolling downwards , forcing the player to make holes in the road wide enough to fit the bus through . The game can end prematurely if the player runs into too many aliens and loses all their lives .

Hot Potato features seven missions and seven score challenges . Mission mode requires the player to clear out a set number of an alien species . There are multiple alien species in the mode and the mission does not finish until the player gets rid of enough of a certain species chosen by the game from the road . Score challenge mode tasks the player with clearing away a certain number of aliens in order to reach a pre @-@ determined score . The game contains bonus levels which are longer than normal levels if the player is able to complete missions under a certain time period .

= = Development = =

Hot Potato was developed for over four years by game designer Dima Pavlovsky before development was picked up by Pukka Games . The game was designed to emulate the success of Tetris with an addictive and original puzzle design . Pukka included the humorous storyline about potato alien beings in the game mostly for laughs and to give the game " charm " . The game was first displayed at the 2001 E3 .

The game 's release at a \$ 39 @.@ 99 price in the United States was seen by some reviewers as being too expensive .

= = Reception = =

Hot Potato garnered above mostly positive reception from critics ; it received 66 @.@ 42 % and 74 % ratings on review aggregate websites GameRankings and Metacritic respectively . Eurogamer 's John Bye called the game " curiously amusing " and felt that kids would enjoy the game . IGN 's Craig Harris noted that the game was surprisingly fun to play , and that the game would appeal to a unique niche in the video game market . He criticized it for failing to introduce the player to the point of the game , forcing the player to figure out how to play on their own . Allgame 's Jay Semerad commented that the game provided a surprising amount of challenge , which increased the game 's replayability . GameSpot 's Frank Provo praised the game 's visuals and sound effects , noting that they added to the experience of the game . He felt that the game was not as addictive as some other contemporary puzzle games , but he praised the game nonetheless . Bob Tedeschi of The New York Times commented that Toys ' R ' Us had originally chosen to not distribute Hot Potato , but began to stock the game after it looked like a big seller .