

= Battletoads (video game) =

Battletoads is a platform video game developed by Rare and published by Tradewest . It is the first installment of the Battletoads series and was originally released on 1 June 1991 for the Nintendo Entertainment System . It was subsequently ported to numerous other platforms , including the Mega Drive , Amiga , Game Boy and Game Gear . In the game , two space mutant warriors known as the Battletoads , Rash and Zitz , embark on a mission to defeat the evil Dark Queen on her planet and to rescue their kidnapped friends ; Pimple and Princess Angelica .

The game was developed in response to the interest in the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles franchise . A Master System port of the game was developed but never released . It has received mostly positive reviews upon release , with critics praising the graphics and variations of gameplay , however many critics were divided over the difficulty . It won six awards from the 1991 Nintendo Power Awards , and has since been renowned as one of the most difficult video games ever created . It was later included in Rare 's 2015 Xbox One retrospective compilation , Rare Replay .

= = Gameplay = =

The game is a platform scrolling beat ' em up video game with varying elements of racing , climbing and vehicular @-@ based combat . Players start with three lives each time the game is started , and get replenished every time the player continues after players get defeated . The game contains no saving system or password features . While the levels of Battletoads vary greatly in gameplay style , the game is generally presented as " beat @-@ em @-@ up " in which players progress by defeating enemies while avoiding the hazards in the environment . The players can finish off enemies in different ways , such as punching or kicking with an enlarged fist or boot , head @-@ butting with huge ram horns , or by transforming into a wrecking ball .

Side @-@ scrolling stages are generally presented as having an isometric perspective , while platforming stages that feature vertical progression are presented isometrically , which allows the player @-@ characters to crouch . Several levels in the game feature sections in the form of an obstacle course , where the players must dodge a series of obstacles with speed increasing as the level progresses . Other types of level include two " tower climb " levels , a descent to a chasm while hanging from a rope , an underwater level , a maze chase riding a unicycle @-@ based vehicle , a climbing and jumping " snake maze " , and a race level in which the players has to fall as quickly as possible through countless platforms to reach the bottom of a tower before an opponent does . Hidden in four of the levels are " mega warp " points , which , when found , allow the players to automatically advance by two levels .

= = Plot = =

Professor T. Bird and the three Battletoads , Rash , Zitz , and Pimple , are escorting Princess Angelica to her home planet using their spacecraft , the Vulture . Pimple and Angelica decide to take a leisurely trip on Pimple 's flying car . They are ambushed and captured by the Dark Queen 's ship , the Gargantua . Pimple sends out a distress signal to the Vulture , alerting Professor T. Bird , Rash , and Zitz that himself and Angelica had been captured . Learning that the Gargantua is hidden beneath the surface of a nearby planet called Ragnarok 's World , Professor T. Bird flies Rash and Zitz there in the Vulture to rescue them .

Between levels , the toads receive briefing comments from Professor T. Bird , along with teasing from the Dark Queen . During the game 's 13 levels , the Battletoads are faced with Dark Queen 's minions Big Blag , Robo Manus and Major Slaughter as bosses , ultimately facing the Dark Queen herself at the top of the Dark Tower , the game 's final level . Once the Queen is defeated , she claims it will not be the last they would see from her , later turning into some sort of tornado and flying into space , " retreating into the shadowy margins of the galaxy to recoup her losses " . With Pimple and Princess Angelica rescued , the four are brought back into the Vulture and the game ends .

= = Development = =

The game was developed by Rare and published by Tradewest . Rare founders Tim and Chris Stamper created the series in response to the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles craze of the early 1990s . To create a contrast to the popular media franchise and other " beat ' em ups " of the time , Rare added extra mechanics in the game to help separate it from these genres , such as racing stages and climbing courses . According to Rare artist Kev Bayliss , the characters of Battletoads were conceived in order to " produce merchandise " on a mass scale , in similar vein Tim Burton 's Batman reboot . The game underwent changes through early stages of development , and at one point was originally titled Amphibianz . Bayliss originally designed Battletoads as a Disney @-@ themed video game , however as the game gradually became more graphic , Bayliss took extra liberties to " tone down " violence and restrict all usage of weapons in the game , whilst creating a sense of uniqueness for the characters .

= = Release = =

Battletoads has been ported for various consoles upon its original June 1991 release for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) . The original game was localised for Japan a few months after the first North American release , with several gameplay tweaks resulting in a marginally easier experience . It was ported by Mindscape to the Amiga home computers in 1992 , by Arc System Works to the Sega Mega Drive and Sega Game Gear both on 13 July 1993 , by Rare to the Game Boy later in 1993 , and by Mindscape to the Amiga CD32 in 1994 . Ports for PC DOS and the Atari ST were planned by Mindscape but never released .

European CEO of Virgin Interactive , Tim Chaney , purchased rights for Battletoads from Tradewest after the game found popularity in the United States , and planned a Master System release for in 1993 , however it never materialised . Due to the extreme nature of the original NES Battletoads difficulty , almost all future ports went to measures to tone it down to varying degrees , seeking to make the game more accessible to casual players . The Mega Drive version of Battletoads features " toned down " difficulty , as well as providing higher definition and more colourful graphics as opposed to the NES version .

The Game Gear port features downscaled graphics , with the removal of three levels and the two @-@ player mode . Despite the original Game Boy version having the same box art and title as the NES release , Battletoads for the Game Boy is a standalone game of the series and features different levels and mechanics from the original .

During E3 2015 it was announced that the NES version of Battletoads would be coming to the Xbox One as part of Rare Replay , a retrospective collection of 30 emulated classic games from Rare . Rare Replay was released on 4 August 2015 . Several bugs featured in the original release were fixed in the updated Rare Replay version .

= = Reception = =

The game received mostly positive reviews from critics upon release . The Mega Drive version received an aggregate score of 73 % from GameRankings . Reviewers of Mean Machines praised the graphics , with one reviewer stating that the cartoon @-@ style cutscenes adds to the " greatness " of the game 's presentation . Another reviewer summarised that the graphics were colourful and well @-@ animated , although he considered the sprites to be " too small " . Frank O 'Connor of Computer and Video Games (CVG) thought the graphics were the best aspect of the game , heralding them as " packed " with colour , smooth scrolling and " humorous " animation . Paul Rand , another reviewer of CVG similarly praised the graphics and presentation , asserting them both of " excellent " quality . Bryan Lajoie of Quebec Gamer praised the graphics , stating them to be among the most graphically advanced NES games , in particular the animation . In a retrospective review for the Mega Drive version , Shawn Sackenheim of AllGame stated that

Battletoads was a " graphical leap " for the NES , although he considered it " dated " for the technically superior Mega Drive .

O'Connor praised the overall gameplay , stating that while it borrowed " style and ideas " from other games , the combination of various styles " works a treat " and proved challenging . Rand heralded the gameplay as addictive . Reviewers of Mean Machines were divided over gameplay ; one reviewer was initially sceptical over the prospect of " another NES platformer " , although he praised the emphasis on beat ' em up action over conventional platforming . Another reviewer of Mean Machines praised the gameplay as fast , addictive and challenging , summarising that the wide variety of levels are enough to prevent the player from " getting bored easily " . Lajoie was mixed over the gameplay , admitting that whilst accepting it as a difficult game , the overall experience required " a lot of patience " and determination in order to progress . In a negative retrospective review , Spike ranked the game 's ending as the sixth biggest letdown in video game history .

== Awards ==

Battletoads was nominated for the 1991 Nintendo Power Awards in nine categories , winning the first place in the categories : Graphics and Sound (NES) , Theme and Fun (NES) , Best Play Control (NES) and Best Multi @-@ Player or Simultaneous (NES) , it was also given the title of the Overall Best Game for NES of 1990 . In 1997 , Nintendo Power ranked the NES version as the 89th best game on any Nintendo platform . In 2010 , UGO included it on their " Top 25 games that need sequels " also featuring the Arctic Cavern levels on the list of " coolest ice levels " . Topless Robot ranked Battletoads as the number one " least terrible Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles rip @-@ off " in 2008 , also naming it as one of ten best beat- ' em @-@ ups of all time in 2010 and as one of ten video games that should have gotten toys in 2011 . In 2012 , it was also listed among ten " classic video games that deserve an HD remake " by Yahoo ! News . GamesRadar ranked it the 18th best NES game ever made , stating that " it was a fun game but its most notable element was its difficulty " . Jeremy Dunham of IGN listed Battletoads as the 40th best NES game of all time .

== Difficulty ==

Battletoads has been noted by critics for its extreme difficulty . The game has even been included on numerous occasions among the hardest games ever made , including the number one spot as determined by GameTrailers . A reviewer of Destructoid stated that despite the game 's " brutal and unbalanced " difficulty , it was often remembered as one of the most " beloved titles " of the eight @-@ bit generation . In 2012 , Yahoo ! Games stated that that the game was still widely recognised as one of the most difficult games ever made , particularly noting the ability for players to accidentally harm their partner in two @-@ player mode .

== Legacy ==

The game 's initial success led to Rare developing various sequels which would later become part of the Battletoads franchise . A spin @-@ off for the Game Boy , titled Battletoads , was first released in November 1991 . Two direct sequels , Battletoads in Battlemaniacs and Battletoads & Double Dragon , were both released for various consoles in 1993 , with the latter being placed number 76 on IGN 's " Top 100 NES Games of All Time " list . Battletoads Arcade was released in 1994 to mediocre sales , and was the last instalment of the series . A TV pilot was also produced by Canadian DIC Entertainment , that originally aired in syndication in the United States on the weekend of Thanksgiving , 1992 . The TV series , titled Battletoads , was conceived as an attempt to capitalise on the popularity of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles , however it was never picked up as a full series .