= Mario Party 4 =

 Mario Party 4 (Japanese : ???????4 , Hepburn : Mario P?t? F?) is a party video game for the GameCube , developed by Hudson Soft and published by Nintendo . Mario Party 4 is the fourth installment in a series of board game style , and was the first game in the series to be released for GameCube . It was released in North America on October 21 , 2002 , in Japan on November 8 , 2002 , and in Europe and Australia on November 29 , 2002 . It is the fourth game in the Mario Party series . Mario Party 4 is followed by Mario Party 5 .
 Mario Party 4 features eight playable characters : Mario , Luigi , Princess Peach , Yoshi , Wario , Donkey Kong , Princess Daisy and Waluigi from the Mario series , who can be directed as characters on six themed game boards in the game . The objective of the game is to earn as many stars as possible , which are obtained by purchase from a single predefined space on the game board . Each character 's movement is determined by a roll of a die , with a roll from each player forming a single turn . Each turn in Mario Party 4 is followed by a minigame in which characters compete for coins they can use to purchase items and stars . It is the final game in the Mario Party series to include Donkey Kong as a playable character until Mario Party 10 for the Wii U.
 Mario Party 4 received above @-@ average reviews from the media , although there were several complaints regarding a lack of originality and slow pacing during games . The game won the Family Game of The Year award at the Interactive Achievement Awards of 2003 .

 = = Gameplay = =

 Mario Party 4 is based on an interactive board game played by four characters from the Mario series , which are controlled either by the player or the game 's Artificial Intelligence (AI) . The game features eight playable characters , although they do not have any different gameplay attributes from each other (save for favouring certain items when controlled by the AI) . Players can arrange their characters into opposing pairs , or play independently in a battle royale . As with most board games , each participant takes turns in rolling a dice block (1 to 10) to determine the number of spaces moved on the board . A minigame follows each round of four turns , which yields a coin prize for the winner . A set number of these are required to purchase a star , with the victor being the character with the most stars at the end of the game . The length of a game can vary as the predetermined number of minigames is adjustable in multiples of five . Stars are usually attained by purchase at the specific space on the board where it is set , with the star location changing to another space after every acquisition . Three extra stars can be obtained if " Bonus mode " is switched on , with a star each awarded to the player with the most minigames won , most coins collected , and most happening spaces visited . This mode also contains hidden blocks , which will grant either coins or a star when located and hit .
 Mario Party 4 features six boards , five of which take their name from a secondary Mario character , such as Goomba . The boards are themed to correspond with their titular character , and contain specialised features to reflect this such as the roulette wheel in the casino @-@ based " Goomba 's Greedy Gala " . The on @-@ board characters follow a set route , although this becomes optional when arriving at a junction . The boards also contain multiple " Events " , which are generic stations placed on every board . These include " Lottery Shops " , where money is gambled on item prizes , and " Boo Houses " , where Boo is paid to steal either coins or a star from an opponent . The majority of spaces on the boards are denoted by either blue or red circles , with blue granting coins and red deducting them . Alternative spaces are also available , such as " happening spaces " , which trigger an event exclusive to the current board . " Mushroom Spaces " grant the user either a " Mega " or " Mini " Mushroom ? " Mega Mushrooms " extend the movement range while " Mini Mushrooms " curtail it . Additionally , giant characters will bypass " Events " and stars while reduced characters can access special areas on the board via pipes . Multiple other items can be bought from on @-@ board shops , such as " Swap Cards " , which exchanges items between two players .

 The minigames in Mario Party 4 are short , unrelated events with a specified objective that the

players must attempt to meet to earn coins as a reward . Minigames are unlocked during the main " Party Mode " , although they can be played outside of the game board context in " Minigame Mode " . This allows the player to either freely play minigames ; select which minigames they want , and control conditions for victory in a match , such as the " 3 @-@ win @-@ match " ; or play 2 vs. 2 minigames to claim a space on a tic @-@ tac @-@ toe board . Minigames are split into seven categories : " 4 @-@ player " , " 1 vs 3 " , " 2 vs 2 " , " Battle " , " Bowser " , " Story " , and " etc . " . The first three occur randomly after each set of turns during a party , while " Battle " can only be triggered by landing on the corresponding space on the board . Unlike regular minigames , the players must contribute their money and then compete to reclaim it or earn more by winning the minigame . There are also rarer groups of minigames , such as the Bowser minigames requiring the loser to forfeit items or coins and the minimini games , which can only be accessed by characters reduced by the " Mini Mushroom " . A set of minigames that cannot be played during normal conditions are located in the " Extra room " , featuring Thwomp and Whomp .

The game features a loose plot in that the player must progress through " Story mode " to earn presents from the eponymous characters of the pertaining boards . These are presents that had been brought to the player 's birthday party in the game , which must be completed by earning the most stars in a board game and subsequently defeating the present giver in a special one @-@ on @-@ one Story minigame . This is all contained within the " Party Cube " , which grants the wishes of its users ; the story 's climax comes in the form of Bowser , who wishes to disrupt the party with his own board , hosted by Koopa Kid .

= = Development = =

Mario Party 4 , like all games in the Mario Party series , except for Mario Party 9 and Mario Party : Island Tour , was developed by Hudson Soft and published by Nintendo . It is the last Mario Party game to have Donkey Kong as a playable character (until Mario Party 10) and to have Wario wearing his classic long @-@ sleeve shirt . It is also the first Mario Party game to have Yoshi 's main voice replacing his classic " record @-@ scratching " voice from the first three Mario Party games , and the first to have default teams . It is also the first Mario game to feature Princess Peach and Princess Daisy 's current main dresses , including Daisy 's short orange hair , with her current gold crown , and Caucasian skin color . It is also the only Mario Party game to have Bowser as a playable character , though only in a hidden minigame .

The game was first announced in a 2002 Nintendo press conference in Tokyo , with the announcements made by Shigeru Miyamoto and Satoru Iwata . It was targeted as part of the 2002 roster of Nintendo games , which they rated as their " biggest year " for software at the time . Nintendo presented a playable demonstration of the game at E3 2002 , featuring a limited set of minigames . The game featured voice acting from Charles Martinet (Mario , Luigi , Wario , Waluigi and Donkey Kong) , Jen Taylor (Peach , Daisy and Toad) , and Kazumi Totaka (Yoshi) , all three of whom worked on previous games in the Mario franchise .

= = Reception = =

Mario Party 4 received " average " reviews according to the review aggregation website Metacritic . In Japan , Famitsu gave it a score of 30 out of 40 .

GameSpot 's Ryan Davis praised the game 's minigame format , although he noted that " players who have already exhausted themselves on previous Mario Party titles may not find enough here to draw them back again " . Eurogamer 's Tom Bramwell acknowledged the variety and thematic features of the boards , but thought they were too large , resulting in a " glacial pace " when coupled with the on @-@ board animations . Despite this , IGN praised the boards for the thematic features on each one , which helped to " ease the tediousness " . The game 's controls were lauded for their compatibility with the minigames and simplicity , with most minigames requiring simple actions and button presses .

The game 's multiplayer was praised by reviewers , especially in comparison to the single @-@

player " Story Mode " . The multiplayer element was noted for appealing to a diverse demographic for its party game qualities and being an " ' everybody ' title " . Conversely , " Story mode " was criticised for exacerbating issues relating to pace , which was already remarked as having " snail 's pace " . Additionally , the Artificial Intelligence involved was bemoaned for contributing an imbalance in the game , with the random availability of quality items giving players an unfair advantage . The " reversal of fortune " space , which initiates a minigame by which the victor would receive another player 's stars or coins , was criticised for similar reasons , as it potentially penalises players who do well in the game . The minigames were mainly met with a positive reaction , with critics praising their simplicity . The grouping feature in the minigames were also welcomed for contributing a new dynamic of gameplay , although Bramwell commented that " It might seem a little odd to gang up with your competitors in some cases " .

Most reviewers noted the game 's graphical improvement from its predecessors , with the minigames ' visual style in particular receiving praise . Although IGN remarked that the game was graphically a " huge improvement since we last saw the franchise " , they proceeded to comment that " It 's a mixed bag of good and bad " . GameSpot complained that the character animations appear " a bit lifeless " and that the boards were not aesthetically pleasing . The game 's audio was met with an ambivalent reaction , with critics enjoying the music but complaining about the " annoying " character catchphrases . While not memorable , the music was lauded for fitting the game 's whimsical nature . Mario Party 4 won the " Family Game of The Year " award at the 2003 Interactive Achievement Awards . The game sold 1 @.@ 1 million units from its release to December 27 , 2007 in North America .