

= Mario & Luigi : Partners in Time =

Mario & Luigi : Partners in Time , known in Japan as Mario & Luigi RPG 2 × 2 (??? & ???RPG2 × 2 , Mario ando Ru?ji Aru P? J? Ts? bai Ts?) , is a role @-@ playing video game developed by AlphaDream and published by Nintendo for the Nintendo DS handheld game console in 2005 . It is the second game in the Mario & Luigi series , and is the sequel to Mario & Luigi : Superstar Saga for the Game Boy Advance . The game was followed by Mario & Luigi : Bowser 's Inside Story , released in 2009 .

Although the sequel to Superstar Saga , the game 's plot is unrelated to that of its predecessor with an emphasis on the time @-@ traveling theme , which involves the protagonists traveling between the past and present of the Mushroom Kingdom . The adventure follows Mario , Luigi , Baby Mario , and Baby Luigi as they search for Princess Peach , who has been abducted by an alien species known as the Shroobs . The gameplay centers on the co @-@ operation between the quartet , who must use their specific qualities and skills to solve puzzles to progress through and features multiple role @-@ playing game elements , but with a turn @-@ based battle system focused on timing accuracy . The game is considerably darker in tone than its predecessor , especially in its plot and themes .

Partners in Time was positively received by the media , gaining an aggregate score of 86 @.@ 80 % from Game Rankings and an 87 from Metacritic . Like its predecessor , the game was praised by critics for its characterization and comical style , as well as its use of the DS 's dual screen and the rumble feature .

= = Gameplay = =

The gameplay of Partners in Time , with an emphasis on role @-@ playing games elements and co @-@ operative puzzle solving , is similar to that of its predecessor , although gameplay differences exist between the games . For the majority of Partners in Time , the overworld of the game is presented on the DS 's touchscreen , while a map is present on the top screen , showing relevant information such as the location of each character and save albums . Additionally , the perspective changes when battling or accessing the inventory , and when the quartet is separated into two pairs , in which a pair is visible on each screen .

= = = Overworld = = =

The player is able to control the four main protagonists ? Mario , Luigi , Baby Mario , and Baby Luigi ? either as a quartet or alternatively in separate pairs . The player can choose to separate the adults from the babies , which is usually required when entrances or holes in the overworld are too small to be accessed by the adult characters . Such instances form multiple puzzles in the game , in which items or switches can be only be accessed by use of the babies ' specific qualities . The pairs can also perform special moves while they are separated , which are gained as the player progresses through the game . Each action attained is assigned to a specific button on the DS for a character , which is present on the screen ; pressing the corresponding button results in the action . These actions , such as the " Spin Jump " that allows the older brothers to twirl through the air , are required to advance through the game and solve the various puzzles .

The game retains many of the RPG aspects present in its predecessor , including the interaction with non @-@ player characters , which is required to advance the plot and gameplay . Each character 's progress is measured by experience points , which are needed to " level up " , a process by which battle @-@ related statistical fields such as speed and power are boosted . As in Superstar Saga , there is also a currency used to purchase items and status @-@ enhancing equipment known as badges and clothes .

= = = Battle = = =

The battle system is similar to its predecessor's, with the effectiveness of an attack dependent on the timing accuracy of separate actions. The battles still consist of turn @-@ based attacks executed by Mario and Luigi, although these are compounded by the babies' actions during an attack. The Bros. moves ? moves performed by Mario and Luigi collectively ? have been replaced by Bros. Items, which are finite attacks that are gained in the overworld. Similar to the Bros. moves, these are more damaging attacks that can be performed by all four characters collectively. Only the adults receive damage, even though the babies will become vulnerable once their respective partners have been eliminated from battle. The elimination of babies will also affect battle as some Bros. Items will become disabled, and the party will not be able to defend itself with hammers, which are wielded exclusively by the babies.

= = Plot = =

Unlike Superstar Saga, Partners in Time is not set in the Beanbean Kingdom, but the traditional Mushroom Kingdom featured in most games of the Mario series. The setting features a mixture of locations, from those that appeared in previous Mario games, such as Bowser's Castle, to original locations such as Koopaseum. Mario and Luigi can travel into the past via "time holes", which is how the concept of baby characters is introduced.

= = = Story = = =

The game begins as Professor E. Gadd completes his newest invention of a time machine powered by a gem called the Cobalt Star, which is presented at Peach's Castle. Peach enters the time machine into the past, but fails to return, only leaving a member of an alien species known only as the Shroobs within the damaged time machine. The Mushroom Kingdom of the past had actually been invaded by the Shroobs, with Peach being kidnapped and held hostage at her castle. After defeating the monster, a time hole opens, leaving a passageway into the past. While searching for Peach, Mario and Luigi locate their younger selves, and agree to locate the crystal shards, which are remnants of the Cobalt Star which had been shattered during Peach's journey. Unwittingly, the brothers collect all of the shards, while being pestered by Baby Bowser (Bowser in the past) who wants the Cobalt Star. At the end, they restore the Cobalt Star only to unleash the Elder Princess Shroob, who serves as the game's final boss character. The story ends when she is defeated, Peach is rescued, and the past returns to normal.

= = = Characters = = =

Partners in Time features both original characters and those that were introduced before the game. Professor E. Gadd provides the player with advice throughout the game, while Toadsworth teaches the player new moves and skills to progress through the adventure. Although the older Peach is kidnapped, Baby Peach is retrieved from the past into the present by Toadsworth, where she is nurtured by both the old and young renditions of him. Baby Bowser appeared near the beginning of the game in the past to kidnap Baby Peach, although his plans were halted by an encounter with the Mario bros. and a subsequent attack from the Shroobs. Baby Bowser harasses the quartet frequently during their journey by stealing their Cobalt Star shards, and later attacking the group with his older self. Kamek the Magikoopa, Petey Piranha and Fawful, an antagonist from Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga, appear in the game as well.

The Shroobs, introduced in Partners in Time, are fungal like creatures who are the main antagonists of the game. The Shroobs derive from the "Shroob planet" and are ruled by Princess Shroob, who is the primary antagonist. After invading the Mushroom Kingdom, both she and her twin sister, Elder Princess Shroob, are defeated. Different species of Shroobs (with designs based on existing Mario franchise characters and enemies) are present throughout the game as both minor enemies and boss characters. AlphaDream also introduced Stuffwell, a talking briefcase who gives the player advice regarding items and accessories, which he stores.

= = Development = =

Nintendo revealed *Partners in Time* at E3 2005 , where a playable demonstration of the game was available . The demos consisted of three levels , each accompanied with a tutorial to guide the player . Each level had a different objective and represented the characters ' abilities in the game , such as the use of the hammer . Between the game 's unveiling at E3 and its release , Nintendo of America revealed details of the game relating to *Partners in Time* 's plot and gameplay , as well as the fact that it would be compatible with the " Rumble Pak " feature . AlphaDream , developers of *Superstar Saga* , developed this game , with experienced contributors to the Mario series such as Koji Kondo and Charles Martinet working on sound support and voice acting , respectively . The music was composed by Yoko Shimomura , who also scored *Superstar Saga* . *Partners in Time* was first released in North America on November 28 , 2005 .

= = Reception = =

Partners in Time received positive reviews , with reviewers lauding the game 's use of characters and plot . IGN 's Craig Harris commended the game 's comic style , stating " much of the charm from Mario & Luigi comes from the focus on humor that 's bizarre and out there " . Despite this , GameSpot 's Ricardo Torres stated that " The self @-@ referential humor that gave the original game its bite isn 't as prevalent " . Nintendo World Report 's Jonathan Metts praised the game for returning to the traditional Mushroom Kingdom setting , claiming it led to more distinctive character and plot elements . While appreciating *Partners in Time* 's use of humour , RPGamer 's Derek Cavin criticised the game 's plot , describing it as " a basic story that doesn 't develop as much as it could have " . The game 's characterisation in particular was well received , with Eurogamer commending Stuffwell , who was compared to Fawful , a character in *Superstar Saga* .

Critics welcomed *Partners in Time* 's use of the dual screen , as well as the rumble pak feature . GameSpot criticised the momentary use of the touchscreen , labeling it as " tacked on " ; Eurogamer 's John Walker , also critical of this , felt that the game was better without utilising the DS 's touchscreen . Reviewers complained about the game 's controls , expressing difficulty with coordinating the four characters , with problems arising specifically in enemy encounters with characters that were not being controlled . The alterations to the battle system received a mixed response ? GameSpot praised the more complicated and " richer " boss fights , while Nintendo World Report criticised the added complexity , stating " the growth in enemy resilience outpaces your growth in strength , so battles get longer and longer " . IGN noted that " *Partners in Time* 's quest starts out a little too easy " , although they acknowledged that the game became increasingly difficult as it progressed .

Partners in Time 's visuals and presentation were well received , with Eurogamer describing it as " utterly lovely " . GameSpot appreciated the " added flair " in animation gained by the DS , although the perspective made such things as hitting blocks and countering attack " trickier than it should be " . Torres proceeded to criticise the game 's soundtrack , labeling it as the " weakest link " , although other critics lauded the game 's audio . On its first week of release in Japan , Mario & Luigi : *Partners in Time* sold 132 @, @ 726 units . As of July 25 , 2007 , Mario & Luigi : *Partners in Time* has sold 1 @. @ 39 million copies worldwide . In addition , the game has received the Editors ' Choice Award at IGN . The game was ranked 50th in Official Nintendo Magazine 's " 100 Greatest Nintendo Games " feature .

= = Sequels = =

A sequel to *Partners in Time* was announced at the Nintendo Conference on October 2 , 2008 , titled *Bowser 's Inside Story* . It was released in Japan in February 2009 , North America in September 2009 and in Europe and Australia in October 2009 . *Dream Team* was released in Europe , Australia , Japan in July 2013 and in North America in August 2013 . *Paper Jam* , a

crossover with the Paper Mario series , was released in December 2015 in Japan , Europe and Australia and in January 2016 in North America .