# = Lego Racers ( video game ) =

Lego Racers is a racing video game developed by High Voltage Software and published by Lego Media . The game was initially released on July 31 , 1999 for Microsoft Windows , and was later released on October 31 , 1999 for the Nintendo 64 , on December 17 , 1999 for the PlayStation and on December 29 , 2000 for the Game Boy Color .

Set in the fictional " Legoland " universe , the single @-@ player mode follows various minifigure characters competing in a racing competition created by a fictional racing champion called Rocket Racer . Players control a minifigure , allowing them to drive a variety of cars built out of Lego and race them against other minifigure characters . Items can be used by the player to hinder other racers ' progress , and the player can create their own cars and characters with unlocked Lego bricks and use them to race . A local multiplayer mode also allows multiple players to race against each other .

Originally conceived by High Voltage founder Kerry Ganofsky , creative expertise from The Lego Group assisted High Voltage in the game 's development after Lego Media agreed to begin production . It received a mix of high and low scoring reviews from critics , who were divided on the game 's graphics , construction system , driving gameplay and other design aspects . A sequel to the game developed by ATD called Lego Racers 2 was released in 2001 .

## = = Gameplay = =

Lego Racers is a racing game played from a third person perspective . Set in the fictional Legoland universe , the game depicts Rocket Racer , the " greatest racing champion " in Legoland . After becoming bored from beating everyone at racing , he decides to create a racing contest , and finds the best racers in the history of Legoland using a dimensional warp machine created by his friend , Veronica Voltage , a genius scientist and mechanic . The player takes on the hosts and co @-@ racers in an attempt to beat Rocket Racer and become the " Greatest Lego Racer of All Time " , completing the game .

Players assume the role of either one of several pre @-@ built or custom @-@ built minifigures and compete against other minifigure characters in races set across different tracks in the Legoland universe , using a variety of cars built out of Lego . At the beginning of each race , the player can perform a " Turbo Start " , which allows the player to start the race at full speed . Throughout races , the player can also perform power slides and " Super Slides " , which allow the player 's car to turn around corners more sharply .

Each of the game 's tracks contain power up bricks , which can be collected by the player and used to gain an advantage over other racers . The power ups are divided into four categories : Projectile , Hazard , Shield and Turbo , with each providing a different use to the player . The player can also collect up to three " power plus " bricks , which increase the capability of any power ups collected . Race tracks also contain various shortcuts that can be opened by the player interacting with the environment , sometimes needing to be triggered by power ups . These shortcuts give players alternate routes through tracks , allowing them to complete races quicker . During a race , the in @-@ game HUD displays the player 's position , lap number , " lap timers " , and a " Power Up Icon " if the player is carrying any power up or power plus bricks . The player can also choose between viewing the " Speedometer " , the " Course Map " or the " Close @-@ up Map " .

The game contains three single @-@ player modes : " Circuit Race " , " Single Race " and " Time Race " , as well as one multiplayer mode , " Versus Race " . The Circuit Race mode follows the game 's main plot , and allows players to race through circuits made up of multiple tracks , gaining points based on where they place . In a circuit , the player must earn enough points to move on to the next race , and will win if they finish with the most points . Placing third or above in a circuit unlocks the next circuit for the player . The Single Race mode allows the player to race on a single track unlocked from the Circuit Race mode . The Time Race mode places the player in a race against Veronica Voltage driving a ghost car with the aim of beating her best time around a track chosen by the player . Versus Race allows two players to race against each other in a split screen

view without non @-@ player character minifigures on the track .

Throughout the game , the player can unlock various brick sets and character pieces by completing certain tasks , such as coming first in a Circuit Race . The game 's " Build Menu " allows the player to build custom cars , minifigures and driving licenses of their own design using unlocked bricks and character parts . Minifigures can be customized with different hat , hair , head , body and leg parts , and given a name entered by the player on the minifigure 's driving license . A picture of the player 's minifigure is also placed on their driving license , and their facial expression can be changed by the player . The player can create a custom car using a combination of different chassis and car sets . The player can rotate , move and place bricks from these sets directly on to the chassis . Placement of the bricks changes the car 's balance and weight , which affects its overall performance . The " Mix " and " Quick Build " option creates minifigures and cars from randomly selected parts , respectively .

= = Development = =

The concept for Lego Racers was initially created by High Voltage Software founder Kerry Ganofsky , with the idea of players being able to build and race cars created with Lego bricks . After a year of development , Lego Media began production of the game , hiring Ganofsky 's company to develop it . Lego Media and other facilities within The Lego Group collaborated with High Voltage Software during the production of the game .

A large number of character models , documents and pictures from different Lego System characters and models were sent to the developers , who eventually chose to use the Castle , Space , Adventurers and Pirates themes in the game . High Voltage Software chose the characters they liked best from these themes and created character studies for them to " capture the mood of each persona " . Certain characters were focused on as " champs " in the game , while others were featured as racers . The developers also created two original characters , Rocket Racer and Veronica Voltage .

High Voltage Software spent over a year creating Lego Racers ' car building mechanics . The game 's lead programmer , Dwight Luetscher , created a formula that was used by the game 's artists to create individual Lego elements in the game . The pieces available to the player were selected from hundreds of Lego elements by the developers , chosen first by aesthetics , and then analysed to see if they would fit into Luetscher 's formula . The developers chose to affect the attributes of the player 's car , such as handling , acceleration and top speed , through how many bricks are placed on the chassis , as this is simpler to understand for the game 's main age demographic .

Due to the high number of Lego sets and pieces in the game , a custom mesh code was created to " weld " the geometry in place and optimize the cars polygon count , creating one solid mesh for each car created by the player . Every element in the game , including bricks and character pieces , had different levels of detail created for use in menu screens and cut scenes , where the models had to be a higher quality due to the player seeing them up close . The developers planned a feature where bricks would break apart from the car upon crashing , but this presented " too many problems to make it a real possibility " . Lego Racers was available to play before release by journalists at E3 1999 .

= = Reception = =

Lego Racers received a range of review scores , with the Microsoft Windows , Nintendo 64 and PlayStation releases getting a mix of high and low scoring reviews . On aggregate website GameRankings , it received an average score of 75 % based on 11 reviews for the PC version , 63 % based on 3 reviews for the PlayStation version , and 66 % based on 8 reviews for the Nintendo 64 version .

The game 's graphics were generally praised by critics . GameSpot 's Andrew Park stated that virtually everything in the PC version " looks bright , colorful and clean " when playing in 3D @-@ accelerated mode , but called its texturing minimal . GameSpot 's Ben Stahl also called the N64

version 's track design " innovative and cute " , as well as saying the tracks and backgrounds have a " somewhat real look " that makes it easier to tell where the player should be driving . IGN 's reviewer for the PC version praised the game 's background animations , stating that they not only " add to the atmosphere of the game , but also affect the way it plays " . However , some reviewers criticised the game 's performance , with IGN 's Sam Bishop stating that the PlayStation version 's load times between levels are horrendous and Next Generation 's Chris Charla calling the N64 version 's framerate " nauseatingly slow " . Conversely , IGN 's Winnie Imperio called the N64 version 's framerate " consistent , if not entirely smooth " .

Lego Racers ' gameplay received a mixed reaction from critics . Charla called creating and testing cars a lot of fun , especially because the way a car is built has " a major effect on how it controls " , and IGN 's reviewer for the PC version found that unlocking new bricks in the circuit mode for use in car customization is addictive . However , Stahl called the game 's construction system unfriendly , stating that the player is " better off just sticking with one of the default vehicles " . Imperio said that handling the cars is " surprisingly tight " , calling the N64 control scheme intuitive . Conversely , Charla found that most of the cars feel top @-@ heavy , and stated that the racing is awful . IGN 's reviewer for the PC version praised the power up system , calling it pretty cool , as well as stating that the Power Plus bricks add " a new strategy to the game " , but Stahl called the system " terribly lame " . Reviewers also criticised the game 's multiplayer features , with IGN 's PC reviewer calling the split screen mode simple , and an Electronic Gaming Monthly reviewer stating that the " lack of multiplayer options " hurts Lego Racers ' replay value .

Other aspects of Lego Racers ' design also received mixed opinions from critics . One of Electronic Gaming Monthly 's reviewers called the game 's race tracks " short , unimaginative and devoid of good shortcuts " . Imperio called the track design " simplistic and often not very difficult " , but " still well designed and a lot of fun to race through " . Park called the game 's music cheery and upbeat , while Stahl called it " barely acceptable " , stating that it " gets irritating rather quickly " , as well as calling the game 's sound effects " decidedly poor " . Bishop said that the sound effects " lack crispness " , citing their low sample rate as a reason , as well as calling the game 's music " flat " .

== Sequels ==

After the release of Lego Racers , a sequel , Lego Racers 2 , was developed by Attention to Detail Limited and released in 2001 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 2 and the Game Boy Advance . In the game , Rocket Racer has retired from racing after the disappointment of losing the final race in Lego Racers , but after traveling to the planet Xalax and winning a race against its inhabitants , he once again becomes the greatest Lego racer in the galaxy . The player must travel through five different worlds in order to race against Rocket Racer , and once again take the title from him . The game received a range of positive and negative reviews from critics . Attention to Detail then developed an indirect sequel , Drome Racers , based on the Lego Racers line of Technic kits . It was released in 2002 for Microsoft Windows and PlayStation 2 , and in 2003 for the Game Boy Advance , GameCube and Xbox . It received a range of positive and negative reviews . A game titled Lego Racers : The Video Game was confirmed on some Lego sets in 2009 , but no further information has been released since .