

= Dr. Mario =

Dr. Mario (Japanese : ドクターマリオ , Hepburn : Dokuta Mario , often stylized as D ? . Mario) is a 1990 Mario arcade @-@ style action puzzle video game designed by Gunpei Yokoi and produced by Takahiro Harada . Nintendo developed and published the game for the Nintendo Entertainment System and Game Boy consoles . The game 's soundtrack was composed by Hirokazu Tanaka .

The game focuses on the player character Mario , who assumes the role of a doctor and is tasked with eradicating deadly viruses . In this falling block puzzle game , the player 's objective is to destroy the viruses populating the on @-@ screen playing field by using colored capsules that are dropped into the field . The player manipulates the capsules as they fall so that they are aligned with viruses of matching colors , which removes them from play . The player progresses through the game by eliminating all the viruses on the screen in each level .

Dr. Mario received positive reception , appearing on several " Best Nintendo Games of All Time " lists . The game has been ported , remade , or has had a sequel on every Nintendo home console since the NES as well as most portable consoles , including a re @-@ release in 2004 on the Game Boy Advance as part of the Classic NES Series . Modified versions of Dr. Mario exist as minigames in WarioWare , Inc . : Mega Microgames ! , Brain Age 2 : More Training in Minutes a Day ! , and Brain Age : Concentration Training .

= = Gameplay = =

Dr. Mario is a falling block tile @-@ matching video game , in which Mario assumes the role of a doctor , dropping two @-@ colored medical capsules into a medicine bottle representing the playing field . This area is populated by viruses of three colors : red , yellow , and blue . In a manner and style considered similar to Tetris , the player manipulates each capsule as it falls , moving it left or right and rotating it such that it is positioned alongside the viruses and any existing capsules . When four or more capsule halves or viruses of matching color are aligned in vertical or horizontal configurations , they are removed from play . The main objective is to complete levels , which is accomplished by eliminating all viruses from the playing field . A game over occurs if capsules fill up the playing field in a way that obstructs the bottle 's narrow neck .

Players can select the degree of starting difficulty any time a new game is started . The initial level chosen is a value between zero and twenty that determines the number of viruses to clear , and the three game speed options change how fast the capsules fall in the bottle . The player 's score is based solely on the elimination of viruses , not on the time taken to complete the level or the number of capsules used . If players complete the highest difficulty level , they can continue playing to accumulate a higher score , but the number of viruses to clear remains the same . Additional points are awarded when multiple viruses are eliminated at once , but no additional points are awarded for initiating chain reactions , in which the elimination of one set of objects triggers the elimination of another set . The game speed is also a factor in how the game calculates scoring ; higher speed levels yield more points .

Dr. Mario offers a multiplayer gaming mode in which two players compete against each other in separate playing fields . In this mode , the player 's goal is to clear their own playing field of viruses before the other player does . Eliminating multiple viruses or initiating chain reactions can cause additional capsules to fall onto the opponent 's playing field . A player wins a single game upon eliminating all the viruses or if the other playing field fills up . The first player to win three games wins overall .

= = Development and releases = =

Dr. Mario was designed by Gunpei Yokoi , creator of the Game Boy and Game & Watch handheld systems , and produced by Takahiro Harada , who also acted as producer of the Metroid series . The game 's music , later re @-@ used and arranged in games such as Super Smash Bros. Melee , was composed by Hirokazu Tanaka , who later became president of Creatures Inc . , an affiliate of

Nintendo that owns one @-@ third of the copyright regarding the Pokémon franchise .

== Re @-@ releases ==

Dr. Mario spawned a number of remakes and ports that were released on various Nintendo consoles . The original version 's multiplayer portion was ported to two Nintendo arcade systems in 1990 : the Nintendo Vs . System (under the title Vs . Dr. Mario) and the PlayChoice @-@ 10 .

An enhanced remake of Dr. Mario was paired with Tetris in the Super Nintendo Entertainment System compilation game Tetris & Dr. Mario , released on 30 December 1994 . This version of Dr. Mario was re @-@ released in Japan on 30 March 1997 , as a downloadable title for the Super Famicom 's Satellaview peripheral , under the name Dr. Mario BS Version (Dr.???BS? , Dokut? Mario B? Esu Ban) . It was re @-@ released again in Japan as a downloadable game for the Super Famicom 's and Game Boy 's Nintendo Power cartridges .

The NES version was ported twice to the Game Boy Advance : first in 2004 as one of thirty games in the Classic NES Series (known as the Famicom Mini Series in Japan) , then bundled with a version of the Puzzle League series in 2005 under the title Dr. Mario & Puzzle League , this time with updated graphics and new music to choose from . On 20 May 2003 , Nintendo released the " Nintendo GameCube Preview Disc " for the Nintendo GameCube , which allows players to download the NES version of Dr. Mario to their Game Boy Advance consoles using the Nintendo GameCube ? Game Boy Advance link cable .

The original Game Boy version was made available on the Nintendo 3DS Virtual Console in 2011 and 2012 . The NES version was released on the Wii U Virtual Console in 2014 .

== Reception ==

Dr. Mario and its re @-@ releases received generally positive reviews , although some parents were critical of its premise due to its inclusion of medicine in a children 's game . One notably negative review , by ACE , scored the Game Boy version 510 / 1000 . It criticized the game 's uninspiring graphics and repetitive play . The review also said the game " reeks of plagiarism " , stating it is worse than the original games it is modeled after .

Reviewing the NES version , Allgame praised it , stating that on its release , " when puzzle games were flooding the market , Dr. Mario stands out as one of the best , combining a smooth learning curve , playful graphics and memorable tunes " and " fundamental concepts may be simple , but the addictive gameplay becomes progressively more complex as the speed increases and additional viruses are added . "

GamePro gave the Tetris & Dr. Mario compilation a rave review . They praised the Mixed Match mode and the SNES enhanced graphics and sounds , and concluded " Sharp controls and absorbing action are what make these two classics even better as a pair than they were alone . " Next Generation , in contrast , said the compilation was only significant for being the first appearance of Tetris on the SNES , summarizing that " Yeah , it 's great , but chances are you own a copy of one or both of these games already . " They did , however , praise Nintendo for having the " cajones " to package their Tetris @-@ inspired game with Tetris itself .

Dr. Mario was rated the 134th best game released on a Nintendo system in Nintendo Power 's Top 200 Games list , by ScrewAttack as the seventh best Mario game of all time , and by IGN as the 51st best NES game of all time . IGN also rated the game 's soundtrack , composed by Hirokazu Tanaka , as seventh in its list of the top ten greatest 8 @-@ Bit soundtracks . GamesRadar ranked it the 13th best NES game ever made . The staff called it " one of the most celebrated of the [puzzle] genre . " Game Informer 's Ben Reeves called it the seventh best Game Boy game .

The Game Boy Advance re @-@ release as part of the Classic NES series holds a rating of 66 % on Metacritic based on 10 reviews . Most reviews pointed out the game 's addictiveness and praise the addition of wireless multiplayer , but some questioned the relevance of the game 's re @-@ release as a standalone title . Eurogamer said the game was " still as playable , addictive and maddening as it was back in 1990 " but criticized Nintendo for re @-@ releasing classic games as

standalone titles in the Classic NES Series instead of as a compilation , like Atari 's Atari Anthology or Midway 's Midway Arcade Treasures . Craig Harris , in his review for IGN , sarcastically expressed unease over the game 's use of medicine . He enjoyed the addictive gameplay , but criticized the black @-@ and @-@ white manual which made it difficult to understand the color @-@ based gameplay mechanics . While 1UP.com noted that the game 's " color @-@ matching action is more engrossing than Mario Bros. ' turtle @-@ punching platform hopping " , the reviewer strongly questioned whether this re @-@ release is worth its sale price by itself when a version of Dr. Mario was included in another Game Boy Advance game , WarioWare , Inc . : Mega Microgames ! .

= = = Legacy = = =

Following the commercial success of this game , Nintendo released several follow @-@ up titles in the Dr. Mario series . Dr. Mario 64 , released in 2001 for the Nintendo 64 , features Wario and several Wario Land 3 characters , and offers numerous game modes , including a story @-@ focused single @-@ player mode . The game also supports simultaneous multiplayer for up to four players at once . Dr. Mario 64 was subsequently released in Japan in the compilation game Nintendo Puzzle Collection on the Nintendo GameCube . Dr. Mario Online Rx , released in 2008 on WiiWare , offers online multiplayer via Nintendo Wi @-@ Fi Connection . Dr. Mario Express , released in 2009 for the Nintendo DSi , does not support multiplayer gameplay . Dr. Luigi , released in 2013 , features Luigi as a playable character and has all the modes in Dr. Mario Online Rx , as well as a new mode with L @-@ shaped capsules . The latest installment , Dr. Mario : Miracle Cure , was released 2015 and introduced power @-@ ups to the series .

The character of Dr. Mario appears as an unlockable playable character in the 2001 fighting game Super Smash Bros. Melee , where he attacks by throwing capsules known as " Megavitamins " . There are two ways to unlock Dr. Mario as a playable character , either by completing Classic , Adventure or All @-@ Star mode with Mario (using no continues) or by completing 100 melee battles . The game 's sequel , Super Smash Bros. Brawl , does not feature Dr. Mario as a playable character , but it includes the Melee remix of Dr. Mario 's " Fever " background music theme and a version of the " Chill " theme music arranged by Masaaki Iwasaki , who had previously composed for Magical Drop as part of the Data East Sound Team . Dr. Mario characters also appear in the game as collectible stickers . Dr. Mario would later return as an unlockable playable character in Super Smash Bros. for Nintendo 3DS and Wii U.

A version of the game called Dr. Wario , which replaces Mario with Wario , is included as an unlockable minigame in WarioWare , Inc . : Mega Microgames ! . A simplified version of Dr. Mario also appears in Brain Age 2 : More Training in Minutes a Day ! as a minigame called " Virus Buster " , which is played by using the system 's touch screen to drag the capsules around the playing field .

The viruses appear as enemies in Mario & Luigi : Superstar Saga and Mario & Luigi : Dream Team . In that game , they change colors every time they are attacked , and they are all defeated when they are all the same color , in a similar fashion to how they are defeated by the same color of the capsules in Dr. Mario .

The characters of Dr. Mario and the viruses appeared in print media numerous times : Valiant published a volume of Nintendo Comics System 's entitled The Doctor Is In ... Over His Head , Dr. Mario also makes a brief appearance in the first volume of Super Mario @-@ Kun , and the viruses also appear at the end of Super Mario Adventures .