

# Super Mario Bros. 2 FAQ/Walkthrough

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SUPER MARIO BROTHERS 2

For NES and SNES (Super Mario All-Stars)

FAQ/Walkthrough by William Walker

Version 1.0

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If you want to e-mail me with questions, additions or comments, I am available at j-d-walker@worldnet.att.net . Please try to write pertinent, sensible e-mails, or you may not get a reply.

## 1. Introduction

Finally I have time to sit down and write another FAQ, but I had done the whole Sonic the Hedgehog series, so I thought it was time to change gears a little bit. I wanted to get back to some of my old Nintendo games and in particular update my Zelda FAQs which badly need updating, but before I did that, I thought I'd tackle a very old classic, Super Mario Brothers 2.

Super Mario Brothers 2 is the oddball of the Mario Brothers series. This is because the original Super Mario Brothers 2, which was released in Japan, was very similar to Super Mario Brothers 1, but much harder. That game is the Lost Levels in Super Mario All-Stars, the game for SNES that allows you to play the three original SMB games, plus Lost Levels, with new graphics. So much harder that Nintendo figured it was too hard for American gamers, so they rapidly reconfigured another game called Doki Doki Panic to have some Super Mario Brothers elements, and released it as SMB2. So the story goes as I have read.

I'm not sure whether this story is true or not, but I do have a soft spot in my heart for Super Mario Brothers 2. It is a cool game that is pretty hard but not so hard you throw down your controller in disgust, and it has lots of nice touches. Warps, the ability to pick up and throw your enemies, cool bosses, even a hidden world you can enter in every level of the game all serve to make this game a goodie. It was the game that pioneered a lot of the dirty little hidden secrets that other games copied. It is a quintessential NES game in every respect. The ability to choose your character in each level and the variety and challenge of the levels make this a game for the ages. So with no further ado, on with the FAQ itself!

## 2. Basic Information

Super Mario Brothers 2 has 7 worlds with 3 levels each (except world 7 which has just 2). The levels are designated by the traditional world-level number (IOW, 2-3 is world 2, level 3). The levels are divided into areas; these will be designated in the walkthrough by capital letters following the name of the level, so 2-3C is 2-3, third area. Not every area counts, though. I left some areas untitled to avoid confusion. The following areas will NOT have a letter attached to them: secret rooms, jars, 1-screen areas, and areas at the beginning of a level with no enemies. A great many levels in the game begin in a cave which you exit into the main level, and since nobody considers these significant areas, I thought it was useless to assign them letters. Basically, most places that scroll from left to right, have a letter designation.

Here are the controls for SMB2 (all characters):

Left and right - Walk left and right, toggle characters at character selection screen  
Up - Climb up vine, chain or ladder, enter door if standing in front of one  
Down - Climb down vine, chain or ladder, duck, enter jar if standing on one  
A - Jump. If you duck for a few seconds, your character will begin to flash. You will continue to flash for a few seconds if you stand up and walk, oddly enough. When flashing, you can jump extra high; this is called a "power squat jump" (term borrowed from tipbook) and is the only way to get to certain places. This is not to be confused with a "duck jump", which is when you jump when squatting, but not flashing; you will jump in your crouched state and can fit in narrow places this way. In the bonus round, this button causes the spinners to stop.  
B - Pick up a power-up if you are standing on it. The power-ups in this game are in the form of red grass. Stand on them and press B to hold them in your hands. Some enemies can also be picked up, by standing on them and pressing B. If you are carrying something, press B to throw it.  
You can only carry one object at a time.  
B + left or right - Run (same as in all Mario games)  
Start - Pause/unpause game, select character at character selection screen

In All-Stars, the controls are similar. The B button is jump and the Y button is pick up/run. The A and X buttons have similar functions but I don't know which is which.

To move between areas, you need to climb up or down a vine, chain or ladder or enter a door. Some doors are locked and require you to be holding a key. Locked doors only must be opened once; after that, they function like regular doors. The last area of each level is usually a boss area. You face the exact same boss at the end of every -1 and -2 area, Birdo. Details on fighting him are in the walkthrough, since although you fight him generally the same way, each fight with him is different. -3 areas always have a different, stronger boss to fight, and sometimes Birdo as well.

The hit/health system of SMB2 is quite simple. Get hit once and you shrink into a small, equally capable but less imposing version of your character. Get hit again and you bite the dust. Fall off the screen and it is adios, amigos. When you die you return to the beginning of the area (that's a relief), not the level. Run out of lives, however, and your game is over, unless you have a continue. You get 2 or 3 continues in the original game (I'm not sure how many; I haven't played the original in years) and infinite in the All-Stars (Yay!) Continuing does send you to the beginning of the level, though. You begin All-Stars with 6 lives; I don't know how many lives you begin the original with. Note that when your character is small he or she still occupies the same space; forgetting this fact has led to a lot of needless deaths among SMB2 players, even advanced ones.

### 3. Characters

You choose what character you wish to play as at the start of each level. Here there is a big difference between the All-Stars version and the original. In the original, once you pick a character you're stuck with them until the next level, so if you pick a character and find that they can't complete the level because they have a handicap or just aren't talented enough (every character can complete every level, though some are quite hard for some characters to beat) you're basically screwed. You can change characters after you continue... but who the heck wants that? So if you're playing the original game, CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHARACTER for your level. Information on the best character for each level is in the walkthrough. All-Stars players will not have this problem because you can change characters after each time you die. The characters in the game are:

Mario - The title character, main character of the game, the pudgy plumber in whose dream the whole game takes place. Mario is a horrible character, unfortunately. He has no special talents, which ranks him below all the other characters in usefulness. If you use him at all, use him only on easy levels to help master your basic skills.

Luigi - A really interesting character Mario's brother is. Since SMB1 he has somehow managed to become so light (perhaps he went on South Beach?) that when he jumps, he miraculously floats in the air, a bit like Ryu in Ninja Gaiden 3, except with his legs zipping back and forth like a helicopter rotor. Defying the laws of physics has pros and cons, however. The pros are that he can jump really far and stay aloft for a long time if that's what you want. The cons are that he is almost impossible to land accurately on something because he floats so long. Unfortunately, the

fact that Birdo, the boss in almost every level of the game, requires you to jump accurately on a moving target makes Luigi very hard to use effectively. He is great in levels without Birdo or where you don't need to fight him the usual way. Be careful when choosing Luigi; you can easily get yourself in a sticky situation with his jumping ability (NES players, you know this warning is for you). Luigi can also jump higher than anyone else, allowing him to reach certain hard-to-reach places, but for distance, he can't beat Peach.

Toad - Mario's buddy is a better character than the man himself. His special skill is picking things up; his short little arms can haul a power-up or enemy over his head in about half the time as anybody else. This makes him good when you need to pick up things quickly, such as in the desert levels where you're digging through sand. His major weakness is his inability to jump very well - he's no worse than anybody else, but unfortunately, that isn't very good, and jumping accurately is 80% of this game. Which leads me to...

Princess Toadstool - The princess, far from being a damsel in distress, makes the boys look like fools when it comes to this game. I guess it's her just desserts for just needing to be rescued in most SMB games, but that aside, she is an awesome character. She too can defy the laws of physics, however, she can hover in the air for about two seconds, simply by holding the jump button down. This gives her super maneuverability and makes her the only one able to reach certain places only a super jumper can reach. When I first played this game, I used her in every single level. You'd be wise to as well. The character advice I give for each level is for players who have some experience, want a challenge, and get tired of the same old girl in a dress. If you are a beginner play as Peach all the time, except in easy levels when you want a change of pace. She will get you through this game to the bitter end.

#### 4. Power-ups

As already mentioned, most of these appear as clumps of grass. There's no way to tell what a clump of grass holds until you pick it up.

Rotten vegetables (turnips, pumpkins, etc.) - The most common "power-up" in the game, all you can do with these is toss them at foes to defeat them. You can defeat an enemy with just about any object that can be thrown, including another enemy. A well-thrown object can take out several enemies in a row.

Magic Potion - SEE NEXT SECTION

POW - Sometimes a power-up, sometimes in plain sight, pick this up and drop it to defeat all enemies on the screen that are on the ground!

Turtle shell - Drop this and it rolls, mowing down enemies.

Time bomb - Four seconds after you pick this up, it explodes, sending all enemies next to it to kingdom come and also destroying any weak blocks it happens to be near. Be careful not to

be  
standing in front of one when it blows!!!  
Bob-omb - Not found until 5-1, annoyingly common afterwards, this is something that you really don't want. It explodes one second after you thrust it out of the ground, blasting your head off unless you're able to throw it away in time. Not to be confused with Bob-ombs that are not in the ground, although they explode too.  
1-UP - Rare and very valuable, worth an extra life! These are the only way, apart from bonus rounds, to get extra lives in this game! Can only be collected once.  
Stopwatch - Very rare and somewhat random in its appearance, this freezes all enemies for 8 seconds.  
Mushroom Blocks - Common, especially later in the game, these don't look much like mushrooms (thankfully) but are awesome tools and weapons, and can be stacked up!  
Cherries - These are NOT found in the ground, but are instead found in the air, from time to time.  
Grab 5 to make Starman appear!  
Starman - When you collect 5 cherries, Starman will appear at the bottom of the screen and slowly zig-zag his way up, making him annoyingly hard to get. If you do happen to collect him you will be invincible to enemies (but not pits) for 8 seconds! This isn't that helpful, though, so if you miss Starman, usually it's OK.  
Key - Found usually in jars or secret rooms, these are always needed to proceed onward. They are also not in grass but just lying around. Once you grab one, though, get ready to run! Every key in the game is guarded by a Phanto (see enemies section) who will stop at nothing to kill all those who touch his keys!  
Heart - The only thing other than mushrooms that can restore your health, these sometimes float up from the bottom of the screen. They do tend to appear in certain places but are totally spontaneous, or are triggered by something that I don't know about. They restore one unit of life.  
Many a player has wished they would show up more often when in trouble!

## 5. Sub-Space: Information, Perks and Pitfalls

Sub-Space (name garnered from tipbook) is a hidden world you can enter at least once in every level and usually twice. To enter sub-space you must use the magic potions you will occasionally pull out of the ground. Drop one somewhere and it will cause a door to appear. Enter the door to be in a black and blue version of the screen you are in for 6 seconds. Sub-space is just like the regular level except 1) it has no enemies, 2) you cannot leave the screen you are in or enter preexisting doors, and 3) the screen you are in will be backwards (right side on the left and vice versa). If you re-enter the door or six seconds elapse, sub-space will disappear and you'll be back in the regular game. If you are somewhere other than the door when time runs out you will still re-appear at the door, so remember that. You cannot enter most jars in sub-space except a few.

Any jar that you enter in sub-space will warp you to another world!!!

The great things about sub-space are mushrooms and coins. If you enter sub-space in the correct screen (read on to find out the correct screens) there will be a mushroom there. To collect it stand on it and press B. Mushrooms will restore your health totally AND increase the size of your health bar by one for the remainder of the level, up to a maximum of 4 (there are never more than two mushrooms in a level). Some are quite hard to get later in the game, and not really worth getting. Coins are another goodie only in sub-space. Basically, ANY power-up in sub-space that is on the screen when you enter it will be a coin if you get it in sub-space, and will still be in the regular game. Every coin you get gives you a chance to play the bonus round at the end of the level (see next section). Sometimes you will need to choose between a mushroom or more coins. It is best to take these on a case by case basis and they will be discussed in the walkthrough.

Here are a few special hints regarding sub-space for elite players (or anybody who wants to max out their lives). Obviously if there are several clumps of grass in a row it pays to grab the potion first, since any ones you grab before the potion cannot be collected as coins. This makes for some nasty guesswork... but not with a handy-dandy walkthrough sitting right next to you, of course. Also, VERY important: potions can be recollected, by simply leaving the screen and coming back. This means that it is possible to cash in TWICE at a place with lots of coins, though not with mushrooms (they can only be collected once per game). The big catch: coins can only be collected twice per level. If you enter sub-space and COLLECT COINS twice, all future coins will turn into rotten turnips!

Other pitfalls of sub-space:

-Make your door in the right place! It is cool to see what some screens look like backward and with weird lighting, but it is not productive. Only do it where there are coins or you know there is a mushroom!

-Don't make a quest out of getting mushrooms. Some are just too hard to get and some are not worth the sacrifice in coins you must make to get them. The tipbook tends to overemphasize getting mushrooms.

-NEVER put a potion in any of the following places (you won't be able to enter sub-space): in front of a preexisting door, in a jar, on a surface that will disappear (e.g, be blown up), in quicksand, or in a pit.

-NEVER leave the screen you are in after you make a door - it will go bye-bye.

-In your eagerness to get at the goodies in the hidden world don't accidentally press up and go

right back through the door you came in. That happens to even good players.

-Act swiftly but not rashly in sub-space. Always get mushrooms first if there is one, and don't

expect to grab every coin.

-You can collect cherries in sub-space, and can re-collect them in the regular world (allowing you

to get extra cherries) but if Starman appears in sub-space, you're out of luck.

-You can die in sub-space. Please, don't fall in a pit.

-Occasionally mushrooms will fall from the sky. DON'T get beaned on the head by them.

## 6. Bonus Round

This comes at the end of every level in which you collected coins. Every coin you collected gives

you one try. This is your only way (besides 1-UPS, which are far and few between) to get extra

lives! The bonus round is kind of weird. There will be three spinners. Press A to stop them

whenever you wish. If the first one is a cherry (one of five possibilities) you get a 1-UP. If it's

anything else, you get nothing. If the first two are cherries, you get 2-UP, and if all three are

cherries (move over Lady Luck) you get 5-UP (only 3-UP in All-Stars). If all three spinners are

the same (non-cherry) thing you get a 1-UP too (2-UP in All-Stars, for some reason).

## 7. Enemies

All these guys are, unfortunately, out to get you. Most only hurt you if you touch them laterally or

from below. Some can be picked up if you stand on them and press B and used as weapons, and if

they hit another enemy, both enemies will die, but if you miss the enemy you are holding will

revive and come at you again! However, this only happens with land enemies, that can walk on

land. Other enemies just fly off the screen. It is possible to "ride" enemies, as well.

Here are the

enemies (in no particular order):

SHYGUY - This cute little creature walks quite slowly. He is your basic fodder; just pick him up

and throw him around. If he hits you, well... I hope there were extenuating circumstances. The

red ones (bleu ones in All-Stars) stick to one surface and walk back and forth while the pink ones

just walk toward you.

TWEETER - A small aspiring Bowser, this dude is a little more annoying because he hops up and

down as he walks, but he's nothing to fear once you can jump accurately.

NINJI - A blue or black blob with eyes, Ninja either jumps in place or runs at you, but he sure

jumps a lot. Don't underestimate how nasty his quick movements can be.

SNIFIT - Some of these guys are stationary, some walk, but all shoot bullets at you through their

circular mouths. Rather cute but deadly, these can be a real pain, especially when they are found

guarding vines, ladders or chains.

FLURRY - This little Humpty Dumpty guy is FAST!!! To make matters worse, he is only found in the ice levels, where you're slipping and sliding like mad. This creep is a royal PITA

and it is

not recommended that you attempt to jump on and hurl him unless you're really bold.

COBRAT - A snake who has learned to stand upright, most Cobrats reside in jars and periodically

hop up and spit bullets at you, while a less common brood will charge at you. It's rather funny to

see your character holding one of the above their head upside down, especially when you're small.

POKEY - Another desert enemy, Pokey is a gargantuan cactus who slides toward you with a smile on his face. He has four sections; once you throw off the top section he's much easier to

handle, but it's usually better to just leave him well enough alone and not totally destroy him.

BEEZO - A common but ANNOYING enemy, Beezo looks like a mini-devil, with an ugly face and a pitchfork. His attack involves diving diagonally down and then, either at your level or a

preset point, moving horizontally at you. You need to move fast when these guys attack! To make matters worse, they usually attack in huge swarms. Some just fly horizontally, like missiles.

HOOPSTER - The dude on the vine who climbs up and down beanstalks and causes mayhem. More than any other enemy he is useful to "ride" by standing on him as he acts like an elevator.

Just don't climb under or into him.

TROUTER - The fish dude who pops up out of bodies of water, Troutier is pretty easy to dodge,

just don't go too fast. In one (outrageously hard) level, you need to ride him and use him like a

stepping stone as he hops up and down the waterfalls like spawning salmon. Otherwise just don't

bother with him - he's too hard to pick up and often doing so will result in you falling to a watery

grave.

PIDGET - This bat-like guy flies around on a flying carpet. Although he can swoop at you, he is

more helpful than harmful. Jump on him, throw him off his ride and use it to fly around on! You

can only use it for 10 seconds before it disappears, though.

BOB-OMB - Some of these are found in the ground while others just walk or are dropped from Albatrosses. They all have one thing in common: after a few seconds they stop, flash and blow up.

Don't stand near them and DON'T pick them up! They can blow up other stuff though, like other

enemies, but are very hard to put to good use.

OSTRO - Very rare, this plucky ostrich charges you skipping along, usually with a Shyguy on his

back. Once you throw off the Shyguy it is hilarious to see him held above your head!

The following enemies cannot be picked up, and most hurt you if you touch them anywhere.

Most

of these are the guys who cause controllers to get broken in half, so beware!

EVIL JARS - Fairly rare, these spit out enemies such as Shyguy and Bob-ombs, and cannot be

destroyed, except by a bomb or Bob-omb.

AUTOBOMB - Only found in one place in the game, Autobomb is pretty tough, because he moves very fast, shoots fireballs, and has a Shyguy on top of him. Once the pilot is thrown off he

can still move but standing on him won't hurt you (in fact it's kind of fun). He cannot be picked up

but can be disabled by a throw of another enemy.



ALBATROSS - Although they can hurt you, they're not much of an enemy. They just fly high in the sky and can be ridden, in fact, riding one of these is great fun! The catch: they have a habit of dropping Bob-ombs on you.

SPARK - I just HATE this guy! Found underground usually, all Spark does is rotate around a surface at a varying rate of speed. Some move over a wide area while others only a small surface.

They have a habit of sneaking up behind you when you aren't looking!

PORCUPO - A rare and not-often remembered enemy, Porcupo is analogous to Spiny in SMB1 and SMB3. His spiky back prevents you from jumping on him but he is slow, dim-witted, and can be defeated easily.

PANSER - Another critter who has lead to many a swear word being muttered or yelled at the top of your lungs, Panser is a flower that spits fireballs in pairs. The fireballs are usually launched

in an arc but occasionally go straight up. They are very hard to dodge and the launcher can only

be destroyed by toting an object under the arc of fire and thwacking it. Don't take them out unless

you have to; when you do, be very careful!

PHANTO - This guy is EVIL. He looks like a jack-o-lantern with a demonic face. He will be quite peaceful and placid until you grab his beloved key which, unfortunately, you have to in order

to continue on. Then he will get mad and come after you, which is bad, because he has awesome

powers! He will fly very fast, home in on you, and there is no place he cannot reach. The only way

to escape from him is to get through the locked door he is trying to prevent you from reaching.

Until then you'll need to do some pretty fancy ducking, jumping and swerving to avoid him getting a bite out of you. You can get him off your back temporarily by dropping the key; but as

soon as you pick it up again, he will be back on you. HE CANNOT BE KILLED.

BOSESSES - See walkthrough for tips on how to beat these guys!

## 8. Walkthrough

\*\*\* WORLD 1 \*\*\*

\*1-1\*

Character: Anybody is fine. Mario is a decent choice since this level is a training level and if you

use him, you won't get into trouble (that's only if you want to use him at all, if for instance you're

trying to divide your characters up 5-5-5-5). Luigi will have problems fighting Birdo, so unless

you're proficient at fighting Birdo with Luigi (which is quite difficult, but can be done) don't use

him. Toad can get a few extra coins.

You begin this long dream (or nightmare, depending on how you see it) by falling from the sky

through a door. Fall down past some ledges and go through the door to enter 1-1B, the "main

area". You'll encounter Shyguys and Tweeters here. Get used to upending them and chucking them at their fellows, and pull up any clumps of grass you find (although most are just vegetables). Near the beginning you'll find a vine. Climb up to the ledge with four clumps of

grass. The far right one is a potion. Make a door anywhere on the ledge. Enter sub-space and collect a mushroom and three coins.

Continue right until you come to a log bridge. Cross it and you'll find a waterfall you need to cross. Two logs will float down it periodically; use these to cross the waterfall. Mario or Toad will have to be on top of their jumping abilities. Luigi and Peach, however, can just sail straight across. After this be sure to grab that power-up on top of the hill - it's a free 1-UP! Proceed right until you find a door. Enter it and you'll be underground. Go left and climb the vine to the screen above. Then go right to a door. If you go left, you can find a shortcut to the exit. It is very hard to access and Mario or Toad will very likely fall into the waterfall and die. This shortcut also skips valuable goodies, so don't take it! Exit the cave to the right and go right to eight clumps of grass. The first one is a potion. Make a door where all seven other clumps of grass are on the screen (between them). Enter sub-space, grab the mushroom and as many coins as you can! Only Toad can get them all; this makes Toad useful in places where you have to collect a lot of coins quickly. Remember that on average, 4 coins = 1 extra life. (If you want, you can pass up the coins in the first sub-space and collect these twice - see 1-2 for how to do this).

Climb the vine on the right to enter 1-1D (1-1C is the cave). 1-1D is a test of your climbing skills. You'll first climb up some ledges with Ninja and whatnot, then some vines with a few Hoopsters. The jumping is not too hard even for a weak jumping character and will give you good practice. At the top of this section is a vine that leads to 1-1E. Here you'll battle Birdo for the first time.

Birdo can be a problem for any player. The key aspects of fighting him are patience and jumping accuracy. He will walk back and forth, sometimes stopping to spit eggs at you. You need to jump on the eggs he throws, pick them up, and bean him with them. Pretty simple, but later Birdos will get much, much harder, so enjoy the smooth sailing when you can. This one spits only one egg at a time, but you'll have to be careful to avoid the pit in the battle area. Be careful not to throw an egg when Birdo is about to spit another one at you; this will cause both eggs to fly off the screen instead of hitting Birdo. In future battles, just to give you a heads up, Birdo will spit more eggs faster, and there will sometimes be other stuff for you to hit him with. In all your battles with Birdo, the magic number is 3; after 3 eggs to the noggin, Birdo will hit the sack and cough up a crystal ball. Pick that up and run over to the large hawk head behind Birdo. Stand in front of it and it will eat you (!) This will complete the stage. Play the bonus round and it's onward to...

\*1-2\*

Character: Toad. He can garner you 18 coins here; I'll say no more.

This level begins with you facing a seemingly impassible chasm. Your only hope of crossing it lies in the guy flying back and forth to your top left, Pidget. Eventually he will swoop down and try to hit you; be ready for him and jump on him when he does. Once on his head pick him up and throw him away, and ride his carpet right. Be careful, some Beezos will attack you. Fly right and diagonally down and they should miss. Don't get flustered. Once you see the other side jump off the magic carpet and pick up the first clump of grass. It's a potion. Drop it in between the two jars and grab a mushroom, but DON'T GET ANY COINS!!! You'll see why later. Drop down the left jar and you'll be in a mini-level inside. Usually these mini-levels have a power-up and an enemy. Just grab the power-up - a 1-UP - and get out. Then go down the right jar. You'll find a key and three evil-looking faces. They are harmless until you pick up that key, then the top one will come to life and come after you. This is your first encounter with Phanto; it isn't that hard to escape from him but you'll get a taste of what's in store for you. Climb out of that jar fast and once out, run right, jumping over the Ninjis. If you're fast enough and don't drop the key, you can dive in the locked door before Phanto can turn around and take a bite out of you.

Inside the locked door is a more lengthily cave trek. First jump over some pits and defeat the Snifit. A rock wall will block your progress. Pick up the nearby clumps of grass to get bombs; set them next to the wall to blow it to smithereens. Be careful, on the other side is a Snifit who will be newly exposed once you blow down the wall. Try not to tangle with him and just climb up the ladder. There will be four clumps of grass. One is a potion. Use that to make a door somewhere where the rocks to the right and the space beyond them are on the screen. Two of the other power-ups are bombs; the last one is a turnip. Use the bombs to blow up two of the rocks to the right. Then and only then, enter sub-space. Drop down and grab your mushroom. Once back in 1-2, walk right to find two nasty Ninjis. Try to defeat one with the other or jump over them, and use a power squat jump to ascend the wall to the right. Exit the cave.

Back in 1-2A, to your right will be a large field of grass. Yep, these are the 18 coins I promised you. Walk to the left on the green ledge above you. Watch out for the Ninji and the Snifit. Take the potion and drop it where all 9 clumps of grass are visible. Enter sub-space and start harvesting money. Only Toad can get them all, and even he has to be quick. After your return from sub-space enter the door to 1-1B and come back. The potion is there again! Don't you love it

when

money just regenerates? After gobbling up a second harvest, cruise on over to the right, and the door to 1-2C. Beat up Birdo like you did in 1-1; he's just the same still. Hop in the hawk's stomach (I think that bird is a hawk, but I'm not sure) where you will try your hand at the slots!

Unless you're really unlucky you should get at least 3 1-UPS here, which will help you in the challenges ahead. The next level will be the toughest one yet!

\*1-3\*

Character: Luigi is great if you want to use him, since there is no Birdo in this level. Otherwise the

usual: Mario or Toad if you want a challenge (Toad's arm strength is only rarely a help, and his jumping impotence hurts you in almost every level), Peach if you want an easier time.

This is the first "dungeon" level, synonymous with aimless wandering, painful encounters with

Sparks, maddening boss fights, and cartridges thrown out the door to many players. But it doesn't

have to be that way with some tips. This level begins much like 1-2 and 1-2. 1-3A is actually

rather easy, and fun. Start by just jumping over the pits. When you find two power-ups, the

second one is a potion. Grab it but DON'T use it immediately, even though there is a mushroom

here. I feel that it is better to get coins later, with another potion, but it's your choice. If you

follow my advice tote the potion to the right, over more pits with Trouters, until you find three

logs floating down a waterfall like 1-1. Hop across them and get on the high green ledge with five

clumps of grass. Luigi and Peach can make it with a power squat jump from the far left ledge.

Once here, NOW enter sub-space and enjoy a nice dividend of a mushroom and five coins.

Now go to the right, over another waterfall. You'll come to five more clumps of grass. The potion is the left one on the ground. Use it immediately and slurp up four more coins. It is

possible to enter the door to the right and come back, and make your way all the way back to the

bridge, and get the mushroom as well, but it's quite difficult. IMPORTANT: You can also take

this potion to the right, past the Ninjis and Tweeters, past the door, to that seemingly useless jar

you can't go down. Any jar you can't go down by itself should raise an eyebrow. If you enter sub-

space and in sub-space enter the jar, you will warp to World 4!

For all of you who DIDN'T warp, enter the more obvious door and you'll be in the dungeon. This

dungeon trek is nothing compared to what's to come, but it should give you at least an idea. First

climb the chain (you can go down also but don't - you'll see why later) and you'll meet Spark.

You'll meet him many more times before you're done. This one isn't a problem but the next one is.

Besides having to avoid contact with him as he whizzes around his block, you also will need to take a mushroom block up to the ledge below to make it up with a power squat jump (except Luigi, who can make it from the ledge itself). Climb up one of the two chains to the right and avoid more Sparks. Enter the door to find a key. Yes, you are now going to meet Phanto again. Long time no see, and this time he'll be a bit harder to slip away from.

Take a deep breath and grab the key (power squat jump up there -avoid Sparky). Immediately go back through the door and run to the right. This part involves getting down as fast as you can. If you get ahead of Phanto remember he is still coming, and won't let you escape with that key for anything. Run right, drop down, and drop down again, past the chains. Sprint down back to where you started (don't go so fast you bump into something else, like a Spark). Then go down to the ledge below (if an enemy's in your way, jump over him - NEVER drop that key; once you've touched it Phanto will not forgive you). Run left, right and drop down past some chains. The fact that you can't grab them because you're holding something is actually a help. Drop down to the right, thumb your nose at Phanto and enter the locked door.

1-1C is pretty easy. Just make your way right being very careful of Sparks. This is basically a Spark 101 section, helping you get down how to avoid the buggers. POWs or thrown objects can kill them. Go slowly and carefully. After the Sparks, go through the hellway blocked by Ninjis (they are a pain) to find a crystal ball. No Birdo guarding it, so take it while you can and get in that hawk's mouth (hopefully Ninjis won't come up from behind you as you do this) and you'll enter 1-1D (alas, that hawk's mouth is NOT always the end of the stage) where you'll meet...

BOSS FIGHT: Mouser. Run right, ignore the Spark, and use bombs to blow down the wall separating you from your first boss. Mouser follows a simple rule: when you're a gargantuan rodent, carry a bomb - in his case, a whole lot of them. Contact with Mouser is deadly; rather you must throw his bombs back at him. He will run back and forth along the platform only, throwing bombs. The bombs land at various points depending on where they are thrown. Try to pick them up by jumping or letting them land on you, NOT the normal way. This saves time and prevents you from getting blown up by another bomb. If you pick up a bomb, usually by the time it's in your hand it's about to explode. Throw the bomb onto Mouser's platform and bear in mind that you shouldn't position it where he IS, but where he WILL be. If you miss it's no matter; Mouser will toss bombs until the cows come home, or he takes three blasts and heads off to Davy Jones' Locker. A white door will magically appear; hop in and get a blast of the desert sun. Congratulations - \*World 1 Complete\*

\*\*\* WORLD 2 \*\*\*

\*2-1\*

Character: Toad is great for all the desert levels, because you'll need to dig through copious quantities of sand, and the little fellow can do so rather quickly. Other than that, nothing special.

A few things to bear in mind as you enter the world of deserts stretching as far as the eye can see.

One, quicksand WILL be quite common here, but it isn't that troublesome. Most just slowly pulls you down and poses no real threat unless you decide to go use the bathroom when standing in it.

Occasionally there is "real" quicksand which sucks you down like a vacuum cleaner, and that is

quite dangerous and should be avoided. If you fall in it you need to drum on the jump button like

crazy to escape. Also, there will be quite a few jars here. All will have Cobrats in them who will

periodically spit out bullets. By all means haul them out of their holes and chuck them at whatever, but don't enter the jars. All of them just contain a turtle shell guarded by a Snifit or

something else - not worth getting. Occasionally a good item will be sneakily placed down one of

these jars; read on to find out where, but don't go down any jars you don't have to. Also be

careful of the three desert devils: Cobrat (walking type), Pokey the cactus with the cute face, and

Panser of the hot breath of pain.

2-1 opens with you in front of a pyramid in the middle of a sea of sand. Run to the right avoiding

a series of monotonous enemies, until you find a series of four clumps of grass on a mound. The

far left one is a potion; use it straight away and you'll find the only mushroom in the level. Take

the three coins too, hop in a jar to reset the grass, and cash in otra vez. Dash to the right and you

will meet a Panser on a hill. Either bonk him with a Shyguys or slip under his flames; just go

quickly but carefully; you don't want to mess around these guys. Further right is a door in a

pyramid leading to 2-1B.

2-1B introduces you to the art of digging, which is great exercise, if I do say so myself. Basically

stand on any block of sand and press B and you'll pull it up, turning it to dust (where does it all

go, I wonder?) You need to dig down, preferably in a column to avoid taking too long (if you

spend about half an our on one of these screens it is possible to clear out all the sand). Complicating things are a series of pesky Shyguys who have an annoying habit of dropping on

your head when you least expect it. Avoid this by zig-zagging; dig down about six levels, then

move to the opposite side of the screen, and continue. Keep an eye on the Shyguys and take it

easy. If you get enough cherries, Starman will show up and you can knock them out. DON'T

pick  
them up - in this sandy tomb, they will immediately revive when thrown and you'll get a  
face full  
of pain. After a long but easygoing (compared to what's to come) dig you'll find a ladder.  
Climb  
down to find a door. Inside is...

Birdo is back, guarding another crystal ball with his relentless streams of babies. This  
time it will  
be a little tougher because there are several pits in the fighting area, limiting your  
field of  
movement and forcing you to fight in close quarters. This is what Birdo is like for most  
of the rest  
of the game, so buckle down and get the timing of jumping on one of the bugger's eggs down  
pat.  
He still only spits one egg at a time, but alas, in 2-2 that's going to change too. Fight  
where you  
have the most space and don't get knocked into a pit! Bash the annoying bird with three  
eggs and  
once he's done, hop in the hawk's gaping maw and it's onto more desert, this time with  
more of  
the desert crew in action.

\*2-2\*

Character: Toad again is good; a good jumper will also be very useful here. Pretty much  
anybody  
except Mario has something to say for them, but beginners should choose Luigi of the  
Princess.  
Luigi is fine since although there is a Birdo here, you don't need to defeat him with eggs  
(this will  
frequently be the case in the future, so bear it in mind).

Okay, 2-1 was basically a warm-up, but now the desert starts to heat up (no pun intended)  
as you  
face nastier desert enemies in much greater numbers. Okay, charge out of the desert cave  
on the  
other side of the hawk's head and into the sunlight, then proceed right carefully to avoid  
getting a  
thwack from one of the many Cobrats. The first power-up you see will be a potion; throw it  
in  
between the two clumps of grass to the right for both a mushroom and a helpful breather  
from the  
Cobrat crossfire. Oh, I should have mentioned this before: enemies regenerate. Bear that  
in mind.  
Once out of sub-space, proceed right past more Cobrats in jars. You'll come to some sand  
that  
moves faster than the stuff you've seen; this is the 'quick' quicksand, and boy is it  
quick! If you  
fall in you'll need to do some fancy banging to get out; you can try jumping across using  
the  
bones as a stepping stone, but that's tricky because there's more quicksand (the 'slow'  
kind) to  
the left.

Once past this nasty place you find a door. You probably don't feel like handling another  
Cobrat  
army just yet, so duck in to find yourself in a cave. The clump of grass on the far bottom  
right is a  
1-UP!!! Grab it and one of the other three power-ups - all are bombs. Now quickly squat

next to the wall, and do a power squat jump to get over. Stand two spaces right of the weak wall, drop the bomb next to it, and get out of the way. You'll need to do this all in 4 seconds; it will take practice. Don't let the bomb explode in your hand unless you want a black face. If you do manage to destroy the weak wall (and you can retry as often as you want by exiting and re-entering the door) you'll find a room with blocks stacked up and five clumps of grass. The top center one is the potion; grab it being careful of the enemies. Use it right away and swallow up another mushroom and four coins. If you didn't collect the two coins before, you can come back here a second time and pilfer four more (you'll waste more time but get two extra coins for your efforts).

Once back in the desert you'll need to proceed right past a series of six jars, each with one of the annoying ball-mouthed serpents in them. Take it slow and knock out each Cobrat with the previous one. DON'T enter a jar to escape - that will cause all the Cobrats to re-appear. Halfway through the jars, you'll meet Pokey. Don't panic and toss a Cobrat at his lowest part; a direct hit will crumple him in one shot. Otherwise you'll have to dismantle the rest of him yourself. He CAN move through other matter, so beware. After this sprint right under two hot-breathed but slow Pansers and you won't get scathed. Climb down the beanstalk into the cooler but no less perilous underworld.

2-2C is another digging area, this time a little trickier, with less space and a few Snifits along with the Shyguys, although with those same super cherries. Zig-zag, don't pick up nothing and when you get to a fork, go to the right. The left path is a dead end. Walkthroughs are wonderful things, aren't they? At the bottom of the right column (guarded by a nasty Snifit) is the final door.

Hop in and face the egghead again. This time, Birdo will have a much harder pattern, but the programmers had mercy on you; this battle is actually very easy. Birdo's new pattern involves spitting eggs AND fireballs (which just plain hurt you) in batches of three, much faster. If you need to use eggs to beat Birdo (as you will in the future) it's only safe to use the third egg (if it's an egg) and jump over the rest. The other two tend to leave you holding an egg but with another egg smashing into your all-too-soft head. Birdo spits fireballs usually 1/4 to 1/3 of the time. This battle, though, also introduces mushroom blocks, those helpful things that can be used to make a ladder or knock an obnoxious enemy out cold. Here, you simply need to carefully tote each of the three blocks on the floor up to Birdo. Do so by doing a running leap over the pit to the right and power-squatting over the wall. Be sure all your blocks connect; if you miss you'll need to



hop into

Birdo's face to re-use them, which can get rather hairy. Don't worry about having a mushroom

block hit an egg and missing; that's only an issue with eggs. By the way, eggs that hit something

and drop off the screen CAN still hurt you; don't touch them. Bash Birdo's noggin with three

well-thrown mushroom blocks and hop in hawky once again to go to the final level of World 2...

\*2-3\*

Character: Toad is highly recommended both because he can dig through the sand pit here like a

workhorse, and because he can haul in a cache of coins. Luigi is OK because there's no Birdo

here, but he'll have serious problems escaping from Phanto and reaching the secret room. Peach

is, as always, an excellent choice.

Climb up the ladder to the scorching sand once again. 2-3 has Beezos, whom you should be getting a good handle on by now. Start by getting the potion to your right (first clump) and take it

left to a small hill with one power-up. Get the mushroom but NOT the coin. Cruise on over to the

right until you see a door above you, too high to reach. This is hard: you need to jump on one of

the many Beezos who will come flying at you now, and use him as a stepping stone. It requires a

Beezo of exactly the right altitude - wait for one to come along, jump on its head, and then

immediately jump up to the door. If you are not careful, it is easy to get licked, so only do this if

you are sure you know what you're doing (although the rewards justify any means of getting in

there). Inside the door is a bonus room containing nine power-ups, all of them garbage EXCEPT... the fourth from the right (far left of the right-hand side) which is... Joy!

Rapture! A

potion! Use it, grab the mushroom straight away (you really don't want to miss that) and as many

coins as you can (up to a maximum of eight!) Then simply exit and re-enter the room to make the

coins return, and get even richer. This should give you a nice boost of extra lives at the end of the

stage; believe me, they will come in useful soon!

After this proceed right (if you can't make it to the secret room the next best thing is to get the

four coins next to the potion outside - be sure to cash in twice) past more Beezos. If you get

enough cherries Starman will show up and make your life easier. Dodge and jump the flying devils

and after the Beezo barrage is over, you'll meet a Cobrat and Pokey. After that is a pyramid

which leads to the end of World 2. Enter 2-3B but here, there's no sand - at least, not yet. Drop

down either side until you find some. Your heart fills with apprehension as you see the locked

door - you should know what that means - but don't worry; this isn't as bad as it's going to get in

the next encounter, 3-3. Dig down into the sand using the same tactics - zig-zag or get Starman to avoid getting a head full of a stupid Shyguy. When you come to a parting of the ways either path will take you to the door.

Inside that door is the key. Power squat yourself up to it (watch out for Spark) and take it when you're ready. Dash back into the door. Now you've got to get yourself back up to the locked door avoiding both Phanto and Shyguys. Phanto will come after you by flying straight at you; jump constantly and jump toward him; this should cause him to fly under your feet. Avoid Shyguys - try to jump over Phanto in a clear section or fairly clear if you can. Invincibility would be great, but it's preposterous to try to wait for a Staerman to take his time rising up from the floor while you dodge the enraged key-guardian. Once you're back at the top get in that locked door before Phanto can put the clamps on you. 2-3C is the last section of World 2. It involves a little bit of sand, then some desert obstacles like Cobrats in jars, but in a cave. The crystal ball, like 1-3, will be in plain sight. Take it and hop in the hawk's gullet to face...

BOSS FIGHT: Tryclide. Tryclide is mutant Cobrat (or maybe 3 Siamese Cobrats - in All-Stars, he looks a little sick) who can breathe fire at all those foolish enough to enter his lair. He won't move, just sit on his perch, grin and exhale. To handle his fiery gyrations you should build a wall of mushroom blocks out of the six you have at your disposal. Take three and position them on the top ledge directly opposite Tryclide, three high. This will block most of his flames. Take the other three mushroom blocks, one at a time (use power-squat jumps to get up if necessary) and hurl them at the hothead. There's a Tweeter in the room and I'm not sure why he's there since he never does much of anything except maybe distract you. Three blocks and Tryclide will be no more. Enter the magic door (at least it's a change from a hawk's mouth) and it's off to (surprise!)

World 3. \*World 2 Complete\*

\*\*\* WORLD 3 \*\*\*

\*3-1\*

Character: I'd love to say Toad because he can get more coins here than in any other level in the game, but unfortunately, Peach is also the only one who can access a secret shortcut (Luigi might be able to too, but with more difficulty). So, Peach gets the nod. All-Stars players can play as Toad to get the coins, then commit suicide and go again as Peach, but that gambles that the few extra coins you can get are worth the loss of a life.

In this level of sky and falling water, you'll begin on a high plateau. Run right to a

door (jump over the waterfall) to go to 3-1A. Here you'll be standing in front of an enormous waterfall (this thing's so big it takes up the whole screen!) Luckily, the water's spray is so thick you can climb up on platforms of spray (okay, they're just clouds, but it's cooler if they're spray, OK?) However, this level holds a big secret. Drop DOWN the enormous tide of water and you'll fall, not to your death, but down a long way... stay in the middle of the screen and you'll land on an island with a door. Be careful getting in; it's trickier than it seems. Once you're in you'll find an enormous sea of grass (perhaps this is some boss' secret garden?) You can probably figure out that if there's a potion here, it'll make you richer than Bill Gates... sixth clump from the right. Pull it up, drop it, and plunder as much money as you can. On another note, that jar to the right next to the exit door has a purpose - enter it in sub-space to find a warp to World 5.

Having gotten so rich you are having difficulty lugging all your coins around, hop out the exit door and you'll be back at the start? What now? Do it again, of course! You can get up to 20 (!) coins in this level, which amounts to about 5 extra lives - and soon you will need them, so stock up! Having uncovered that major secret, time for the rest of the level. Climb up on the waterfall spray until you reach... a Pidget. This one's a little harder to get the jump on, but use the same tactics. Once you're a master of the flying carpet hold up and move diagonally into the center of the screen. Beezos will try to knock you off your ride but as long as you keep climbing, they will be too slow. Eventually you'll see a vine. Ride up to it, grab it and climb up to 3-1B. Time for your super-secret shortcut; stand on the far left edge of the cloud as the Princess and do a power squat jump. Glide over to the left. Due to Peach's awesome dress, or whatever it is that lets her hover, you will make it to a door that leads you to...

3-1C, the boss room. You'll be entering through the back door, which means you've got to blast down a wall and do another power squat jump to reach the bird. Birdo looks rather angry - his boss, Wart, isn't thrilled that you've made it this far - and in his rage he will spit eggs and flames (this fellow needs anger management) at you at a furious rate. You will later actually have to jump on his eggs and throw them at him while avoiding oncoming garbage, which is quite hairy indeed, but here you have another option; there are two mushroom blocks behind Birdo. You can jump and glide over him and chuck these at him, being very careful of his endless barrage. Unfortunately, there's just 2, so you'll need to either use an egg (if you use an egg, ALWAYS use the third in a batch of three, or the next object will knock you cold) or re-grab a mushroom block for the final hit. Don't fight to the left of Birdo - you don't have enough space. This

will be harder  
than you're used to, but if you're fast and a little lucky, I think you can handle it.  
Power squat  
blast up to the hawk's maw and it's on to...

\*3-2\*

Character: Literally anybody is just fine for this level.

This is a level that involves going back and forth between two screens several times to reach a goal (every video game has some area like this). That door below you at the start leads to 3-2C, but as you probably guess, it's gonna be a while before you get in there. This level also introduces, a new enemy, Ostro, the annoying ostrich guy who gives Shyguy a bit more mobility. The first section isn't that hard. Walk right over the top half of 3-2A which is above ground - try to ignore what's below your feet. Do pay attention to Ostros who will charge you out of nowhere and annoying Beezos. When you get to a Panser, chuck something (anything you can get your hands on) at him rather than try to jump over him (this one only shoots his flames straight up, unlike others of his clan). When you get to two POWs, you have a choice to make. You can take a POW and drop underground, which is shorter and easier, but you'll pass up a mushroom. I don't want to overemphasize getting mushrooms, but I suggest you try to get this one.

At the far right edge of 3-2A is a small hill with three clumps of grass. The far left one is a potion; drop it to get a mushroom and four coins, watching out for the Snifit. Once you return pick up the grass to the left; both contain bombs, which you should use to blast your way down to the lower level, watching out for bullets. Once below, go left and down the ladder.

The rest of the level involves going back and forth between 3-2B, which is the cave down below, and the lower half of 3-2A. There are obstacles in each. The first section of 3-2B is perhaps the most difficult. You'll need to blast through four walls - yes, I said four walls - to proceed. You'll be very limited in the number of bombs you have, and will have to start over (by leaving the screen and coming back) if you run out of bombs. First pick up one of the two bombs on the higher ledge on the left side. QUICKLY run right, drop down, hook around to avoid falling into a pit and drop your bomb next to the first wall. If you mess up just throw the bomb away and try again. Avoid allowing a bomb to explode in your hands at all costs. The second wall is the hardest, because although there are two power-ups down below, you need to save them for the last two walls. So, grab the bomb on the right of the upper ledge, drop down (don't bother with the ladder because you can't climb with something in your hands), dash left and THROW the bomb at the next wall. If you're close enough it will skitter to a stop right next to it and blow it up. The last two walls will not be as hard, because you'll have the benefit of the two bombs on the lower level which are much closer at hand, but still take it easy - you don't want to mess

up now.

After finally demolishing the walls, three Tweeters will attack. Grab the first one and throw him into the second, then hop over the third and power squat jump up to the ledge above. Climb back into the light. The next spot looks hard but it really isn't, just run left between pairs of falling flames. Go back down and you'll face a tricky series of jumps across narrow platforms. Be careful, it's easy to lose a life here. The next section of 3-2A has no obstacles save a couple Beezos. Then comes a tricky spot. This is the same as the shortcut in 1-1 but hee you HAVE to do it. You will need to drop a bomb so it explodes in mid-air and blasts through a wall. Stand with the bomb in your hand next to the hole until it starts to flash; wait half a second, then drop it. If it destroys only one brick you can squeeze through with a series of duck jumps, but it's better to just try again. You will get three bombs and can leave and come back for more if you run out, so take your time getting the timing right and be very careful not to get hurt by a bomb.

After this you can just climb up and face Birdo, but you should get a second mushroom to replenish your life before doing so. This one seems hard to get but isn't really. It's inside that alcove on the right sealed by rocks with two spiky guys (Porcupos) inside. The far left power-up is a bomb; drop it on the second rock from the left in the gap on the right. After it explodes, grab the far right power-up. It is the potion. Drop it and grab the mushroom and two coins, then head to that door (boy, it's been a hard go getting here) and you'll meet an even madder Birdo. You can fight with eggs - in fact, that might be good to get some practice - or with mushroom blocks. There are five mushroom blocks here and they are floating, forming a bridge. So if you grab one and aren't holding left or right (and sometimes if you are) you'll fall down. Use a power squat jump to get back up, being careful of eggs as they bounce off the wall. It'll be tricky getting three mushroom blocks back to Birdo, so either use eggs or the same mushroom block several times. Beat Birdo up and head to the next stage.

\*3-3\*

Character: This is a tough stage, so Peach or Luigi is recommended. They are about equally useful.

This one's got it all; many, many areas (seven by my count, eight if you count the start area) dangerous dungeons with Sparks out their ears (some of this level's Spark areas are as challenging as Wart's Castle) and like most dungeon levels, a Phanto, this time much nastier than anything you've seen before. There are no special shortcuts here - you'll just have to grind it out, and it will be one heck of a grind. The only good thing about this stage is that the boss isn't that

bad, and if it's any comfort, this is the hardest level until 5-3 (which most Super Mario 2 players shudder at the mention of).

Begin by exiting your cozy little cave and heading out into the world. You will be attacked by some flying red birds called Albatrosses that will drop Bob-ombs; this is a warm-up for 5-3 and isn't that hard to avoid, but stay on your toes and watch out for the bombs as they explode. Try to grab the far right clump of grass in the row of four and get out of there. Now you are holding a potion; drop it on the tallest pillar to the left (so don't stand ON the pillar as you drop the vial) and enter the door. You will be standing in front of the mushroom; jump up and grab it and then take the three coins. Make your way right avoiding the nasty Albatrosses and the Ostro. You'll soon come upon a door to one very large brick building. Enter if you dare.

3-3B is in the bowels of the building. It begins with two Ninjis coming at you. These guys are nasty and mean business, but try to grab one and kill the other one with him. Grab the second clump of grass (which is of the artificial variety I guess, since no sunlight gets in here) from the left. It's a potion; use it to get three coins. Exit and return; this time you can defeat the Ninjis with a POW (there's one in the far right and far left clump of grass). This time take the potion and run left, under the Sparks, past the first door until you come to a locked door. Drop the potion next to the locked door and in sub-space, QUICKLY climb the ladder and grab the mushroom during your limited time to do so. The door on the floor leads to a complete dead end; unlike often in this game there really is no way to get anything out of that path. Instead you must go to the door on the ledge you saw before, above your head. Go in there being careful of the Sparks.

The next room - 3-3C - has about eight levels, each with an Evil Jar that will release Shyguys, so don't fool around and just go straight up as fast as you can. You can warp sides of the screen here; this is one of the only places you can do this. At the top is a door. Inside is... your key, guarded by a Spark. Kids, you are going to have to lug this out of here (being careful of the Spark), ALL the way back down through the room with the jars and Shyguys and over to the locked door in 3-3B, with Phanto on your tail. Here it is probably practical to keep dropping your key and throwing it ahead to move it, albeit slowly, without molestation. If you just grab it and run Phanto will probably run you down and bite you to pieces. Be careful of Shyguys as you descend. The hardest part is actually in 3-3B. Here as before, just keep dropping your key and throwing it forward until you make it to the locked door.

You're far from done, however; next up is 3-3D a.k.a. the Chamber of Sparks. It is so called because it is made up of many weirdly shaped blocks with Sparks flying around them. You'll

need

to climb up these blocks always watching where the Sparks are and dodging them. Take it slow and be alert when you have to tangle with the pesky critters. After a while you come to a door.

Enter it - you can keep going up 3-3D, but it leads to a dead end. 3-3E isn't much easier, though.

DON'T fall down - if you do, you'll have to go ALL the way back down and to 3-3B again. Instead, climb up the rough stairs avoiding a few enemies.

Soon you'll meet two very vicious Pansers guarding the way forward. As you have no weapon and can't carry one here, dealing with them on the floor is out of the question, but perhaps in the air. Basically, as soon as you see them at the top of the screen RUN and JUMP onto the chain at the left - if you're fast enough, their first fiery outbursts will miss you. Climb up and get ready for a tense part. You'll need to cross over the two flowers via the chains above as they blast fire at you. However, the chains are separated, so you'll need to drop from one chain to the next, climb back up to the top, and do it again. If you hold right and up on the control pad you'll be okay. It's not too hard really, but the pressure of the fire flying below you may cause you to slip, fall and get turned into french fries. After this you'll see the door. There sometimes is be a Snifit guarding it.

Back in the Chamber of Sparks, past the dead end below, you'll face a nastier climb than before, including a nasty place where you'll need to dodge four Sparks at once. Just be really careful and power squat jump when necessary. I can't give much advice for this part since it's just dexterity and watching carefully the movement of the Sparks. After a series of nasty places you'll see a ladder. Climb up to the door and you'll exit this tower of pain at long last! Pick up the turtle shell and use it to knock the Ninjis out of your way like dominoes. Hop over the gap in the bridge and once on the other tower, take the crystal ball located conveniently in front of the gate it opens, and hop in for a re-match with...

BOSS FIGHT: Mouser. That terrorist-minded rodent is back from the dead, with another sack full of bombs to chuck at people who want to advance to World 4. Before you attack Mouser stand directly below him. Jump over the Spark in the room when it comes your way. After a while if you don't take any bombs one bomb will blow up and kill the Spark, making the battle much easier. Once that's done have at Mouser like before. This time the fact that he's higher up will actually be beneficial, since when you jump and drop a bomb on his ledge you don't need to worry about hitting him from below. After five bombs Mouser will head for the grave... again. Wish him good riddance and enter the door that magically appears. \*World 3 Complete\*

\*\*\* WORLD 4 \*\*\*

Character: For these ice levels, Peach is always your best bet, since she can glide and

land

accurately when everybody else slips and slides uncontrollably. So, you should play as her for all three of these levels.

Yes, people, World 4 takes place at the North Pole, but you won't find Santa Claus here. You will find a new enemy found only in the ice and snow named Flurry. These guys are serious charlie horses. They can zip at you out of nowhere, slide at you very fast on the ice, and are darn near impossible to jump on and throw. I recommend just jumping over them and leaving them well enough alone. 4-1 is pretty much a warm-up for the rigors of polar exploration; it has only two areas. 4-1A is just slipping and sliding over ice over an icy ocean. You'll meet Flurries in abundance and a few Trouters, who will be no problem if you don't go too fast. Although you'll be slipping and sliding like heck on the ice, jump over the many Flurries and glide and hover your way to safety when things get too hot.

Halfway through 4-1A is a potion by itself positioned very awkwardly under a shelf of ice with many Flurries zipping around near it. There are three things to do with this potion: take it and use it where it is to get a mushroom, take it a little to the right to get five coins, a nice profit, or ignore it completely. All three have something to say for them; it depends on your courage, experience level and predilection for mushrooms or coins. At the far right of 4-1A (you'll know you're there when the ground becomes solid) is a small island with four clumps of grass. There is a potion in the one on the top of the island on the left. Drop it making sure the icy outcrop on the left is in view. Enter sub-space and take a mushroom and two coins (don't try to get the one under the cliff). Once back in the regular game, drop and hook down (Peach can just drop partway then hover) to reach that power-up below the icy ledge. It is a rocket that will take you to 4-1B (cool!)

4-1B has the boss music blaring in the background. You'll need to make it past four Autobombs, an enemy found here and once in 4-2. This enemy moves fast, will not slide, is piloted by a Shyguy and shoots fireballs. It is a tough customer but you can defeat it with a thrown enemy. I would just jump over it and move on, however. Watch out for the ones that tumble down steps to attack; they are nasty. Once the fourth Autobomb is to your rear you'll find... the stage's exit?!? No door to Birdo? Don't ask questions, just grab the crystal ball and proceed to 4-2. Birdo is apparently taking a day off.

\*4-2\*

Character: Again, Peach is highly recommended.



This stage will be much harder; it is the hardest level of World 4. The first section will be quite hard. You'll be on an icy causeway being attacked by a huge swarm of Beezos. These fly straight laterally rather than diagonally. The ones that fly above your head are no problem. The ones that need to be ducked under or jumped over are. Don't let them break your stride (you're best off getting this over with ASAP) and don't jump and coast over them; you're bound to collide with a Beezo in mid-air. A few Flurries will be here too; jump over them like you would a low-flying Beezo. This is a really hard section, so prepare to shed a few lives. Luckily it is the hardest you'll have to get through for a while. Here's the sequence: Low Beezo (jump over), high (slide under), low (coming fast, be ready), then a low-high-low-high sequence (jump and glide over), two Flurries (jump over), low Beezo, high, low, high (on lower ledge), then on the higher ledge again, high, and finally a Flurry - done!!!

After the Beezo onslaught halts, enter the door to find yourself in an easier, but very weird place. 4-2B is about riding the backs of whales catching some rays and waving their tails at you to wish you luck. The whales will shoot bursts of water from their blowholes, which oddly enough are on their backs, not their heads (anything goes in SMB2) which can be used to lift you up if you're standing on them, but WILL hurt you if touched from the side. First you need to decide whether or not you're warping to World 6. If you are, then do that now. If not, take your time and collect the goodies. First there is a potion to the left on the whale with grass growing on his back (!); a mushroom is located on his tail, making it a little tough to get without falling into the water and becoming a block of ice. DON'T collect coins here, though.

Do that to the right, where there are three cliffs, the first two with three power-ups each, the last with only one. Yup, that's the potion - grab the six coins, head back to 4-2A and back, and rake in the loot once again. Now that you are stinking rich, make your way right. Make sure you collect all the cherries you see - there should be six, three before the cliff and three after. If you collect some twice, that's fine - just make sure you have one or none when you exit 4-2B. You'll find out why soon. You'll see a jar below you underneath a ledge that is hard to reach, but practically says 'WARP' right on it. Lug the potion from the cliff all the way here and say goodbye to the ice and hello to the scorching sun once again if you wish. At the far right of 4-2B (if you walk on the ledges above, it will be easier going) is another rocket which will blast off to 4-2C.

4-2C is quite short. You'll see a cherry and an Autobomb. Get the cherry if you have none

but  
pass it up if you have one. If you have more than one, you won't be able to do the next thing.  
Nimbley hoist Shygyu off Autobomb, throw him away (if you mess up they will reappear if you go  
left and come back) and hitch a ride on Autobomb. Duck as you pass under the rocks and you'll  
ride across the spikes, collecting four cherries. If you have followed my directions, the last cherry  
you get should cause a star to appear. Grab it (if you have > 1 HP, it's fine to get hit getting it).  
As soon as you do run right and into the door. You'll be in Birdo's lair and it's an icy cave. Birdo  
will be red here, AND you'll find him on ice, with very little maneuvering room. It sounds really  
hard and it is unless you make use of your invincibility. Do a power squat jump over the wall at  
the entrance (do it as soon as you can, about one second) and charge right towards Birdo. If you  
can plow into him while still invincible you'll kill him in one shot! If not, well, you're screwed.

\*4-3\*

Character: Peach definitely, because she's the only one who can access a shortcut.

This is supposed to be a really hard level like 3-3 only with a really hard boss as well. However, it  
is better to use your head than break your back, and in this stage, there is a little trick you can do  
to bypass all the nasty stuff (which is two icy towers AND a Phanto run even worse than the 3-3  
one). First exit the ice cave and you meet... Birdo?!? yes, him again, but this time he's pink and  
only spitting an occasional egg. Ignore him and grab the potion above you (far left clump - how  
does grass grow in this tundra?) and take it left to three icy poles. Drop it on the top one and  
enter the door. You'll be standing right in front of your mushroom; jump straight up to get it.

That done, re-enter the door to make the potion reappear, pick it up again, and with it in hand,  
jump on one of Birdo's eggs going right. The egg will sail across the wide ocean and on the other  
side, you'll find an island full of vegetables! Drop your potion and cash in (you can kill yourself  
and do this again, if you want to try your luck at the slots). Now, walk right to a door. You don't  
want to get entangled in the morass in there, so nonchalantly do a power squat jump and glide  
right to reach the end of the stage. Hop in the door on the right, take the crystal ball in plain sight  
and enter the icy room beyond, and someone will be waiting for you...

BOSS FIGHT: Frygyu. Cool name for a fiery foe in an icy chamber (isn't that the weirdest sentence you've ever heard?) Frygyu is NO JOKE; he is much harder than any boss you've faced  
yet. He will fly around the room dropping fireballs from his bloated, flaming self. To put him out

you'll need to bean him with three mushroom blocks. The best strategy is to grab one of the top two blocks as Fryguy is moving to one side of the screen, then run in the opposite direction, get out of his way and climb back to the top. You can warp sides, so take advantage of that. Once at the top with a mushroom block in hand drop it on Fryguy's big head, either off to the side (which will require you to drop down and retrieve your block) or just on the top ledge when Fryguy is below it, high enough to be in range (DON'T let him come up below you or you'll get the bottom of your dress singed).

Three mushroom blocks and Fryguy should die... alas. Instead, he splits into four mini-Fryguys. They move slowly at first, but once you knock out a few, they start hopping around like mad. It takes just one lucky mushroom block to kill all four and wipe Fryguy off the face of SMB2 for good, but usually you won't be lucky to kill all at once, and the last one or two will dive at you and finish you off. If you can, grab another block, turn around and clobber them. You are coming into the fight fresh, unlike if you'd gone through the regular level, so that should help. It's SO maddening (and kind of funny) when you die and your mushroom block you were holding kills the last mini-Fryguy, causing the door to World 5 to appear as you finish dying. Eventually, if you're persistent, you should get the better of Fryguy and kiss the land of snow and ice good-bye.

\*World 4 Complete\*

\*\*\* WORLD 5 \*\*\*

\*5-1\*

Character: I know you are probably getting tired of playing as her (errr... maybe not) but Peach is absolutely essential here; you will see why shortly.

Ah, 5-1 - a stage that has no doubt frustrated many a player into never playing SMB2 again, but like usual in this game, need not be as hard as it appears. Okay - head on over to the right, haul Shyguy off Ostro's back and use him to beat Panser ahead and get by safely. Drop down to the lower ledges and head into the door to 5-1B, the main area. The rest of the level will be underground. What makes 5-1 so challenging to most people is that 5-1B is mostly waterfalls that are wider than most characters can jump. This means your only way of crossing them is to hop across those tiny little Trouters that launch up from the depths, which, as you can probably figure out, is not easy. But Peach can use her awesome gliding abilities to glide over the tumbling water without breaking a sweat. Simple, huh?!?

But first, some money business. DO NOT grab the first power-up you see - it's a Bob-omb

which

will rather annoyingly blow up in your hands - but by all means grab the second; it's a potion.

Drop it and slobber over the six coins, then waltz in and out of the door to get them all again.

Now handsomely rich, move on to the waterfalls. The first long one is a bit tricky because even

Peach can't glide across; you'll need to use the falling logs as stepping stones, but it's not really

that hard, especially with Peach, if you take it easy. Next comes a 3-Trouter hopper that means

trouble for anybody but Peach... as Peach, squat on the left edge and do a power squat jump.

Glide across, being careful to avoid a mid-air collision with a Trouter. Admittedly it's not easy but

kids, this is World 5, few things are easy.

Just glide over the next waterfall. Now do another power squat aided glide and if you're lucky,

you'll make it to the high ledge with two power-ups. If you don't, you'll need to use the Trouter

on the left (the third one) to get a lift. Glide over where he'll come up, hover and cross your

fingers. Admittedly this is tough but it's the hardest part of the level and if you don't do it, you'll

need to ride a Trouter at the next waterfall anyway. Once up on the ledge grab the left power-up

first. It's a 1-UP. Then grab the other, which is a potion. Drop it in the middle of the high ledge.

Don't drop it off the ledge! Enter sub-space, grab your mushroom and don't even bother trying to

get back up - you'll be zipped right back up when you exit sub-space. Now glide across to the

right completely avoiding the next waterfall (which is otherwise too high to scale without a

Trouter's aid).

The final waterfall has two logs floating down it. You can just ride down and leave it behind you,

but here's a crafty point. From the ledge jump to the first log as soon as it appears (or, if you're

really good, right before it appears) and immediately duck. Hopefully you'll be able to execute a

power squat jump before the log starts to sink much, but you'll have to be quick. If you succeed

jump immediately and hold the jump button down. Glide right, onto the rocky cliff, off the screen.

(You can also get up there with a normal jump - you decide which is easier). If you succeed pull

up the RIGHT mushroom block, throw it away and enter sub-space. You will get the second power-up mushroom. If you fail, you will not get the prize because it will be

inconveniently

blocks by the mushroom block. Don't sweat it, though, there's just one thing left, right in that

door there.

Birdo is back, but since you last saw him in 4-3, he's come down with a bad cold he'll never really

kick until the end of the game. Warning: this will be the subject of many bad jokes from now on!

Birdo's cold is no boon to you, however, since his throat is so sore, he can only breath fire. But breath it he does, in jets of three at a time. So your only weapon is a dinky little mushroom block. You've got to bonk Birdo with it three times while avoiding his hot breath. Think you can do that? It takes skill and a bit of luck. As a general rule, try throwing it THROUGH him rather than ON him; this should put it a little farther away from him and make it easier to re-grab for another hit. Take it easy and make your moves in between series of fire, and this one will be in the bag.

\*5-2\*

Character: This stage requires a good jumper, so Luigi or Peach is best. This will be the case in almost every stage from now on. I like to play Luigi here because he can handle Birdo and he's a nice change form Peach, but it's up to you.

Begin by climbing into the night and heading right. 5-2A is just a simple, get-to-the-right screen. Plenty of nasty spots, Hoopsters, and other buggers will stand in your way. Don't pull up any power-up you don't have to; there are some Bob-ombs hiding in the grass here. If you pull one up throw it away immediately and run away to avoid damage. The Hoopsters in many spots just won't let up, including an early spot where you need to do a power squat jump over a cliff with three Hoopsters at the top (hint: land ON the first Hoopster by timing your jump; this makes this spot easier). Ride Hoopsters when necessary and in one spot, you'll need to throw a Hoopster at a Panser on a very narrow ledge to take him out and pass unscathed. A good jumper (L or P) can often glide over the difficult spots. There is a mushroom here, but it's hard to get and is the ONLY mushroom in 5-2. Fairly early on you'll see a jar. Go down it and grab the power-up to find... a bomb. Use it to blow through the floor and drop down to a secret area. THERE'S the potion. Take it back to the surface and drop it to the right of the jar. Grab the three coins (the fourth one is not worth getting) and the precious mushroom. Redo it and get four more coins.

Keep going until you find a vine leading up to 5-2B. 5-2B is a climbing area and although it's fairly brief, it's a pain. First you'll need to climb past two Snifits. I like to just climb straight up and hope for the best; if you try to wait for a break you might get lucky and get one, but you might not. After this comes a Hoopster on the opposite vine. Climb past him and immediately, a Hoopster will appear on your vine, right over your head. You can take a hit and get by him but who wants to do that? As he plunges down to get you dive over to the other vine just in time and hopefully you'll land above the other Hoopster and can climb straight on to the door. If

you get nervous, climb back down and try again. Avoid hitting a Hoopster at all costs.

Once in the door, you'll be in 5-2C, and there seems to be no way to proceed, so just take the POW... wait, it capped a secret hole. Fall down, still in the process of picking up the POW, but WATCH IT!!! Your drop will be past a series of spikes that can give your behind pain for days to come should you land on one. To slip past them safely, drop down in the middle. You'll go past some spikes on either side, then as soon as you see spikes in the center, below you, swing on over to the right (it's a little easier than the left). As soon as you do get ready to swing back left to avoid clipping a nasty spine on the right and slip through the small passage. Some spikes on the left (ignore them) then swing left to avoid some on the right. Almost! The passage widens, and you'll want to go over to the right but not too far or you'll land on a last spike on the far right, but far enough to avoid falling in the water. Two blocks to the left of the far right are fine. You can also land on the left but it's a little trickier, and on the right, you can go right into the final door, and someone will be waiting for you...

Birdo is back, now recovered from his cold, but not completely. His throat's still a bit sore so he'll be blasting out a mix of flames and eggs. Here the arena is quite large and is on a bridge with a pit located between you and Birdo that is a real pain. There's also a Trout that jumps for joy right in front of his avian pal. That stupid fish can be a boon to you if you only stand on the bridge above where he comes up jumping over Birdo's barrage. Let him come up, pick him up and hit Birdo with him. He regenerates so you can do this repeatedly. This is one way to Beat Birdo and if you're Luigi, it's the only practical way. The other way is to let him launch an egg and then go left so Birdo is off the screen and can't launch anything else. Along with the egg, pick it up and throw it back. The tricky part is getting your egg to actually connect avoiding both the Trout and Birdo's fire (which is a real pain as you probably realized a long time ago). Hopefully you'll be able to send Birdo into the ocean deep and yourself to the final challenge of World 5.

\*5-3\*

Character: If you're planning on warping to World 7, Luigi is your only option since he's the only one who can warp. If not, Peach is your only option because she's the only one who can handle this level itself.

Wow. 5-3 is one of the worst levels in the game. It's got everything troublesome or hard you can think of. Get ready for a real tester. On the bright side, this is the hardest challenge you'll face

until World 7. Luigi can also skip the fun and zip straight to the real tester by going far enough to get a potion, power squat jumping up to the high ledge and entering the jar in sub-space. Assuming that isn't what you're doing, you will immediately meet a series of Albatrosses who will drop Bob-ombs on you like there's no tomorrow. You got a taste of this in 3-3 but this time the walking bombs will fall like rain and are almost impossible to dodge. Do your best and get cherries if you can to get invincible. The first part with the rocks is really hard. When you get to five clumps of grass in a row, grab the first one - it's a potion - and drop it. Grab four coins and the mushroom. That done, sprint to the end of 5-3A. Don't stop for nothing. You will meet plenty more paratrooper and ground soldier Bob-ombs, but ignore them all. When you get to a rock wall either jump on a Bob-ombs head or power squat jump; both are about equally risky. There is a mushroom there but it's behind the rocks, so you'll either need to wait for a Bob-omb to destroy the wall (I've tried and tried but found it nearly impossible) or just move on and accept a 3-unit life meter for the rest of the level.

Climb down the ladder and enter 5-3B. There's something you can do if you're bold: grab the mushroom block capping the jar to the right. Immediately a Bob-omb will climb out under your feet, but don't let the can of worms you've unleashed un-nerve you. Run or glide left, and drop the mushroom block just left of the two weak rocks, on the first Bob-ombs head. Soon more Bob-ombs will come and, because they are blocked by the mushroom block, blow up the rocks and allow you to go down. The tricky part is just getting the mushroom block in position. Once you make it to the lower area the potion is the first power-up you see (the far right one); take the five coins and use the far left power-up (a bomb) to get out of there. Proceed left watching out for sudden Bob-ombs attacks. You'll come to a gap in the bridge; on the other side, a Panser guards the door to 5-3C. This fellow is virtually impossible to pass without a scorching unless you get lucky and nail him with the one vegetable you get to do the job. If you miss, there's no second chance (well, you could leave the screen and come back, but that's even riskier). I recommend taking the hit and just getting to 5-3C, especially if you have a few lives in reserve.

5-3C is the big tree area. You'll be inside of an enormous tree and need to climb up to the top. This tree might be like the World Tree, because when you come out, you'll be among the clouds, but worry about that later. First job is to slip down past pesky old Spark. Do so by picking the mushroom block up when he won't be in your way. Drop the mushroom block and notice the Shyguy-launching Evil Jar. There's a tiny space there which you can use to get over to the left side of the tree and save some time. To use it, duck, jump, and press the hold the jump button

again when you are at the level of the passage (it's easiest to do on the way down, of course).

Time it so a Shyguy won't appear and block you and glide through the passage (do it close enough to the hole that you can make it on one glide. Then start climbing. Don't go down to see

what you missed; it isn't pretty.

Climb up but take a mushroom block for insurance. Soon you'll see... ahhh! Run! A MOVING Panzer! Wait... this one can be dodged, by taking advantage of the screen warping. As he moves

down the wooden steps walk from side to side of the screen and he should not be able to get you

and will eventually fall off the screen. Then proceed to meet... another, harder one. This one you

can use the same tactics for, but it will be harder to avoid damage. The mushroom block in your

hand allows you to try to use it to take out either Panzer if you wish. Past the second Panzer is the

door to 5-3D (whew, long level!) At last you're getting to the end; you can hear boss music

playing here. Go right to meet Pidgit. This will be your last meeting and it's no different than

before; just throw him off his ride and take it to the right. Once past the large pit (ignore the

second Pidgit) proceed right but take a Shyguy in your hand because you're about to meet...

Birdo. Yes, you've got to fight him here. He'll be red and spewing eggs and fire like there's no

tomorrow. Use your Shyguy for the first hit; the other two will have to be the old-fashioned way;

the last egg in a batch of three (if it's an egg); thrown probably after another full batch of fire to

avoid a collision with another object and a miss. Whichever side of Birdo you fight on, your room

will be limited. This is a tough bird to crack, but hopefully you'll get him and proceed to...

BOSS FIGHT: Clawgrip. An even harder nut to crack. Clawgrip will attack by hurling rocks at

you through his enormous claws. Some will be thrown high and land in the pit at the left while

others will tumble down the steps at you. You need to jump on them, pick them up, walk up the

steps and bash Clawgrip's tough shell with them. No, I am not nuts. It is very difficult but

possible. There's not much else to say, except that this is a very difficult battle, so the usual, be

patient and don't snap the game controller in half in despair (that would be bad). A little tip: try

throwing a rock at Clawgrip when he's about to throw one at you. With Birdo, this results in you

missing and not hitting him at all, but with Clawgrip it can actually result in TWO hits! Stand in

the alcove between the pits when you're waiting for a rock and wait for a good one to come your

way. Be patient and agile and eventually you WILL crack Clawgrip's shell (5 hits) and get burned

under the bright desert sun (great) again. \*World 5 Complete\*



\*6-1\*

Character: Peach or Luigi are recommended here because of their superior jumping ability, but are not absolutely necessary (although Peach should be recommended for EVERY stage).

No cool cave to begin the journey in here; the hawk will spit you out right in the desert. 6-1A is

hard. It is long and has plenty of annoying spots. There will be plentiful Cobrats, both types, and

three Pokeys. There are two mushrooms but both are hard to get. One is in the very first jar you

see (well, the mushroom's not in there, but the potion is). Use the potion on the bone to the right

of the jar and dive in before Pokey can nail you. The mushroom will fall in the quicksand; grab it

instantly or it will vanish forever. The other power-up is at the very end of the area, at the door to

6-1B. Trouble is, you've got to lug a potion there, past - get this - two Pokeys AND a walking

Panser. That Panser is virtually impossible to pass with defeating him with a Pokey head; I

recommend getting hit by him on purpose simply to get by him with the potion. The mushroom will cancel any hits you have taken. With a full (4-unit) life bar and four coins to boot, enter 6-1B.

6-1B is at least nice and cool, but it's got some problems too - chiefly, 21 (!) jars, one of which

contains a key you need to proceed. You all know what THAT means, luckily, this is the last time

until Wart's castle, which still isn't for a while. If you are daring, enter the third jar from the left.

Burrow down in the sand to find a buried 1-UP, the last in the game. The big catch is that when

you pull the mushroom block off the jar, a Cobrat pops out and hits you automatically. The hit's

probably worth the extra life, but you decide how daring you wish to be. The key is in the fifth jar

from the right. It's next to a Cobrat but you can get in by simply pressing down. Inside, dig past

the waiting Phanto, grab the key and start jumping. If you jump quickly you should make it out

before Phanto can catch up to you. Once back in 6-1B, run right past the jars to the stretch of

floor. Phanto will turn around and come after you; do the only intelligent thing and drop the key.

If you do it soon enough Phanto will go away; grab the key again and sprint in the door before the

grinning demon can come back.

Birdo has now come down with the flu and he looks very ill indeed, but his sore throat will be no

easier to handle. This time you'll have three mushroom blocks at your disposal. Use them to put

the ailing Birdo out of his misery. It's best to take one at a time over the rock structure and hit

Birdo with it, then go back through the underpass for another. Now another level is over - not too

many left!

\*6-2\*

Character: P or L can better handle some of the jumps here, but if you're daring, try a weaker character.

This is the weirdest level in SMB2. No questions asked. Begin by power squat jumping out of the entrance cave (even entrance caves have tricks at this point in the game) to find yourself on a 10,000 foot high cliff. Falling down is a real bad idea and the way ahead is, well, abyss. You'll see an Albatross migrating to the right; this should give to a clue. Jump to the ledge on the right and jump back. Now another Albatross will appear much higher. QUICKLY do a power squat jump and jump on his head. Anybody can do it with luck and if you miss just try not to fall into a pit.

\*Now on Albatross Airways, Inc., the first bit of turbulence you'll encounter on your ride will be a Beezo flying straight at you right after the Panser uselessly spewing his flames into the night (they can't reach you). Enjoy the view of a cliff below with two blades of grass (you can get a mushroom and a coin here, but if you do you'll have to ride all the way back to the beginning). Three other airplanes... err, Albatrosses will come flying at you, due to an error made by the Albatross traffic controller. Don't panic, rider, and jump onto the top one's head, then back to your aircraft. Another Albatross will come flying at you and must be jumped over, but after this, your perils are over, except for an Albatross you must duck under. I hope you have had an enjoyable ride on Albatross Airways, Inc.\* You will be dropped off at Birdo Airport and can either see your ride off peacefully or shoot it down with a rotten vegetable if you like to be nasty.

Birdo is still violently ill. This time you'll have two mushroom blocks to hit him with. The first two hits should be easy; the last might be a bit tricky, depending on where the two mushroom blocks are and how easy it is to get one back for the final hit. Still, this is a pretty easy battle, a good thing too because you've only got two units in your life bar. Send another Birdo off to the big nest in the sky and grit your teeth as you prepare for what will surely be the hardest level yet...

\*6-3\*

Character: Anybody can do fine here. Toad's actually pretty good for the boss battles due to his picking up and throwing prowess.

This level is a gimmie. It's not too hard really, just long and boring, but there's a super-secret shortcut that will allow you to SKIP THE WHOLE STAGE!!! THAT'S what I'm talking about!

The shortcut is a bit tricky to enter - go to 6-3A and enter the quicksand on the left. Stand next to the wall and allow yourself to sink about three fourths of the way down. Hold left all the time and you should start moving under the wall. As soon as you are under it, beat on the A button like mad to avoid sinking all the way and dying. Your head barely above the sand, hold left and burrow under the wall in this tiny passage. Eventually you'll come out at a door. Enter it and you'll be in 6-3D, in the clouds for good. You are now nearing Wart's castle but first need to enter a pyramid in the sky. Inside is...

Birdo's bad case of bird flu has eased just a little, so he will be blasting out his eggs again. You'll have to deal with little room and only one puny mushroom block to use as a weapon. You can use it on Birdo if you jump on the hawk's head to boost up to his level. Either use it and throw it through him three times, or stand against the left wall and play the game with the eggs. Three hits and Birdo will go down again. Enter the hawk's maw to meet...

BOSS FIGHT: Tryslide is back (or perhaps this is his spirit, in heaven) and breathing more fire than Birdo could ever breathe, even with the worst sore throat in the world. No matter - stack three mushroom blocks up on the right side of the platform above you to block the fire quickly. It's somewhat hard to get them stacked up without getting incinerated but be careful and you should be okay. Then from behind your mushroom block shield, take the other blocks and throw them at Tryslide. Three hits (you've got seven blocks so don't worry) and Tryslide will be put out... again. On to the final world!!! \*World 6 Complete\*

\*\*\* WORLD 7 \*\*\*

Character: Peach is best for this very tough stage. She (only) can also access a secret shortcut.

Well, you've made it. This is World 7, cloud castle. You will need to get through a series of obstacles in the clouds before you can enter Wart's castle, and dispatch his faithful servant, Birdo, one more time. 7-1 is tough but does have a great chance to pig out on coins, a very welcome thing right now. Okay - climb past the meaningless first screen to 7-1A. You will have many chances to skip some of the level by power squat jumping to an Albatross - don't. The loss of coins and mushrooms far exceeds in worth any danger you might miss. Make your way right over a bridge of rock that will be destroyed by Bob-ombs dropped from Albatrosses. It's tough but you can do it. You'll pass a tall house of sorts (in the clouds!?) with three power-ups, but all are turnips. Then cross another dangerous bridge and grab the potion on the other side. Take it

BACK to the house and use it there for a mushroom if you can. Abstain from coins. Now go right over the bridge a third time (if it's been bombed out, glide) and continue right until you see a door.

This is one of the weirdest things in the game: a door, in plain sight, leads to a bonus room with six coins and a mushroom, in world 7-1! Don't ask questions, just take it; Wart must be fattening you up, so to speak, so he can have more fun chopping you down. The potion is the third power-up from the right, and watch out for Sparks (this room isn't completely trouble-free after all). Use it and grab the mushroom and as many coins as your greedy hands can grab. Then... exit and re-enter, of course! Pawn your loot so you can be light enough to ride Albatross Airways, Inc. again.

\*Catch your flight on top of the house you are currently on. The Albatross traffic controller has been fired, so your flight will be fairly peaceful. Our apologies for your problems with our service in the past. You will, traveler, be responsible for jumping over three huge pillars that block your path, but unfortunately, our airplanes can only fly straight, so the traveler must do this for him or herself. Please be very careful or you may fall off your plane. When you reach your destination exit your aircraft and enter the rocket which will help you continue your journey.\*

That should be the last time I talk like a flight attendant. Anyway your rocket will explode, leaving you to tackle 7-1B. Your first difficulty will be a Snifit perched on a short pillar. Take him out with the Tweeter or by jumping on him and proceed right. You'll see a very tall pillar and your immediate impulse will be to go left and try to follow the path under it. Don't do that - only people who wish to die take that path. Instead, add to your list of difficult sections you can pass without a scratch by using your head. In this case, stand on the short pillar to the left, power squat jump, and (if you're Peach) glide right off the screen. The pillar doesn't extend off the screen but you'll need to avoid gliding too far and falling in the pit. Hang back, climb the ladder and it's on to 7-1C, the final normal area.

You'd think Sparks are only for dungeons, but they can also travel along clouds (I guess they are lightning here). Climb up two cloud platforms avoiding their electric guardians, and climb the ladder. Climb in the middle to avoid the Sparks going around it. On the next level you'll see a series of ladders above you. Your first thought is, Great, I've got to take a mushroom block and build a ladder up, and that'll release the second Spark trapped there too... great. Well, before you take the plunge, at least try power squat jumping and grabbing a ladder from below first. Guess

what!!! You can do it. Try to grab a ladder on the side though; the middle two ladders have pesky Hoopsters who have finally learned to climb ladders. Your final obstacle will be a Snifit guarding the final door. Take a deep breath, climb straight past it and hope for the best. Even if you get hit, don't sweat it. Enter the door and...

Birdo again. For the last time... NOT! You'll meet him again in Wart's castle, and he'll have recovered from his flu at last, but for the time being, he's still sick to the stomach and breathing fire. You'd love to let him wallow in his pain, I know, but unfortunately we have to take him out to move on. Do so with a single mushroom block, like in 5-1. It's not easy but just past that hawk's maw is Wart's castle. Think of the end of the game and bash Birdo's stopped-up head three times.

\*7-2\*

Character: Hmmm. This is the last level of the game. Who would we usually use for a hard level, one that might require agility? Peach is your best option here by leaps and bounds (no pun intended). If you want a huge challenge, try beating Wart's castle as someone else, but don't go for it without expecting a hard challenge.

You won't start in Wart's castle of course; you'll need to get past some clouds and guardians first. You'll need to handle three Snifits before you can enter the castle. Get on the first one's head and power squat jump glide over to the right; you can get past them easily that way. Or, take it slow and take them out one by one. Now stand in that big black door which is a little too high, and press up. Yes, you are now officially in Wart's castle, and will probably not find it to be to your liking. Unlike before, 7-2 has no special shortcut or trick, ever. You'll need to slog through everything the game throws at you, and it will throw a lot, all the way to the end. There are two paths through Wart's castle; both have a power-up mushroom. I will take you through the easier one, in my opinion.

7-2B (the entrance hall) has a conveyor belt. It also has two Evil Jars that spit out Shyguys and Bob-ombs. Avoid them on the sliding floor as best you can. When you see a chain leading down TAKE IT. You don't want to tangle with the Pansers ahead. The path ahead leads to the Path 1 of Wart's castle, which is substantially harder, but ends up in the same place as Path 2. The chain down leads to Path 2, the under-way. The first area of Path 2, 7-2B (for simplicity's sake areas on Path 1) will not be given letters is kind of fun. It's got a series of mushroom block floors you simply need to pull up to descend. The catch is the many Sparks that will be in your way and

make your life hard. Rather than taking them out with mushroom blocks, which gets rather tricky,  
I recommend just pulling up mushroom blocks and diving down. Don't go recklessly; look down  
to see if a Spark is going to get you if you pull up the block you're standing on. If so, wait. Only  
turn around and fight if you get cornered. I highly recommend going down on the right; because  
of the way the Sparks move, it's much easier. At the bottom of the mushroom block chamber is a  
door.

7-2C has more Sparks. Go right avoiding the balls of static with eyes until you come to a door.  
Path 2's mushroom room is in plain sight (in contrast to Path 1's which is far out of your way and  
guarded by a Panser). Enter and grab the clump of grass on the left for a potion. Use it on the far  
left pillar. You'll be right on top of your mushroom. Grab it for a much-needed increase in your  
life meter. Don't touch the other power-up; it will change the face of your quest as well as change  
the contortions of your face, because it's a Bob-omb. Exit the room and continue. 7-2D is a climb  
up a chain. You'll have trouble in the first two rooms, because the chain is broken, so you'll need  
to jump off and immediately jump up to the next link of the chain, timing it around the fiercely  
rotating Sparks. After the second gap, just climb straight up. Don't bother collecting cherries; any  
star you get will run out long before it's useful.

7-2E (wow, you're really coming along) is a tiny area with some Sparks rotating around a chamber, and a Spark trapped between two chains zipping up and down. That last Spark is a real  
pain. You need to run under him when possible, but that's difficult to do because of the narrow  
space; your timing must be impeccable. An alternative plan of attack is to duck jump and glide  
over him. Climb to 7-2F, a really hard area. It's like 3-3's "Chamber of Sparks" but the platforms  
here are conveyor belts. Sparks, Snifits and other fiends, but mainly Sparks will impede you as  
you make your way up. Take it slow but act quickly when around the Sparks. Be aware of which  
way each conveyor belt is going. There's only one place where you need a power squat jump; it's  
near the middle, and it's very tricky because you'll need to land on the conveyor belt on the left  
and power squat as you are slid over to the right before you fall off. Watch out for the Snifit at  
the end; he's a big pain. If you can jump up to his level AS SOON AS YOU SEE HIM; otherwise  
he will torment you for a long time to come. After this, climb the chain to 7-2G.

Oh, great, here's Birdo again, healthy to boot. Wait - if you could only slip by him, you wouldn't  
have to fight him. To do that duck jump and slide above his head. Hopefully you're good enough  
at that maneuver by now to execute it flawlessly. Cross your fingers that Birdo won't jump

when

you try to do it. 7-2H has the boss music; you can hear your heart start to pound when you know

you're getting really close to the final battle, but your way is blocked by a locked door. DANG

IT! Well, few things are easy in life, so go over to the right avoiding Sparks (run under them and duck) to an unlocked door. You will see inside...

Birdo. Yes, this is your LAST LAST LAST fight with the pesky bird. He'll be red and spit out

eggs and fire. You'll be fighting on a conveyor belt but he isn't affected by it. This makes life very

hard indeed. I recommend fighting over to the right where you will be pushed against the wall and

don't have to jump on eggs while being slid around. Don't climb the chain; that's the entrance to

this room from Path 1. You've fought Birdo many times; use all the skills you've learned and beat

him up. Bash his brain three final times and he'll finally, once and for all, die. He'll cough up the

key with his dying breath and it'll slide to the right side of the screen. While you fought Birdo you

probably glanced at that dormant Phanto waiting above him, waiting to come after you. Now for

a really tricky thing: you need to get in the door with the key. The tricky thing is pressing up

exactly at the right time because you're on a conveyor belt. If you miss, throw your key away so

Phanto doesn't tear you up, and try again. It's not really hard, just a matter of the right timing, but

the pressure of everything at this point may cause you to slip up.

Once back in 7-2H drop your key immediately to get Phanto off your back. Then pick it up again

and power squat glide over the two Sparks. Be sure to HOLD B down when you pick up the key to avoid dropping it. Once over the Sparks enter the locked door just beyond to find...

no, not

Wart yet. You need to enter a hawk gate first. No Birdo to contend with, so take the crystal ball

and... WHAT?!? The hawk gate seems to have had it with obediently opening its mouth hand letting you in, so aided by Wart's magic, it attacks! Take the two mushroom blocks to the right

before taking the crystal ball in preparation and smash it! You'll need to do so three times. It

behaves like Phanto, swooping back and forth nastily. It has trouble reaching the floor so use that

to your advantage. You'll get hit a few times, but hopefully will win. MAKE SURE you are IN

FRONT of the hawk's mouth when you hit it the third time! If you aren't, power squat jump to

get there. If you for some reason cannot enter its mouth after it takes three lumps and finally

opens, it will close and attack you again. This fight is a pain but you only have to do it once.

Now there's nothing left but...

FINAL BATTLE: WART!!! With cool music to boot. Charge right and meet the evil monster, the king of the world you're in... anyway, Wart will be to your right, walking back and forth.

There will be two platforms and a machine below you that periodically launches a vegetable from one of its three pipes. Wart will periodically attack by spitting blobs of foam out in batches of five (with a fearsome noise). Either slip between them, jump over them, or glide back to the left. Don't worry, the Phantos in the background are spectators. You need to get Wart to eat six vegetables; this will kill him. Trouble his, he won't eat the rotten things unless his mouths open. Basically, the strategy is this: get a vegetable somehow (you can be as patient or daring as you want in getting them, but some are impossible to get anyway - I like to stand ON the machine and when a vegetable launches I can grab, jump up and grab it from below, and glide left to dodge the foam attack) and stand on the platform above Wart.

Now your timing must be ridiculously precise; you must throw the vegetable when Wart's mouth is closed but about to open. A little too early and it will fly through him, a little too late and it will be turned to dust by a blast of foam. Wart always opens his mouth while he is stepping back and forth, I've noticed, if that helps you. It will take much practice to get the vegetables in Wart's mouth, but trust me, it can be done! One you've made Wart sick to his enormous stomach, that's it! Enter the door and you'll automatically pull up a cork that releases the trapped good inhabitants of this world, and they all throw a huge party for our four heroes! Wart gets turned into fried chicken and you see how many levels you completed with each character. Probably you'll have the biggest contributor be Peach. Then you find out... this whole game was Mario's DREAM. OHHHHHHHHH. Well, at least he'll dream up the names of all the enemies (with Wart sneaking a snigger in there - nice touch) and that's about it. YOU'VE BEATEN SMB2!!!

GREAT JOB!!!

## 9. Challenges and Conclusion

So you beat SMB2. Can you beat it without warps? How quickly can you beat it? Can you get through the entire game as Mario? As Luigi? Can you use each character equally (five times?) Can you get all the mushrooms? Can you beat it without dying? How many coins can you get? How many lives? Can you collect every power-up? Can you play without using some of the secret shortcuts?

Those are just some of the challenges you can try to make SMB2 more fun. Anyway, I must go. It's been great diving back into this old game. My credit to Nintendo for making such a great game, and for their Nintendo Power tipbooks, which were invaluable to me in completing it. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, drop me a line at j-d-walker@worldnet.att.net. I love gettign e-mails! Just ask pertinent questions, please.

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