

# Level Design Analysis

## Super Mario Bros.

---

### Level 1

Level 1 begins after the characters, plot and the end game objective have all been introduced to the player.



The player character, Mario starts at the left end of the screen the even though Mario is centered on the screen at all other occasions in the game. He also faces the right side. This gives the player some time and space to play around and figure out the controls and other aspects of the game. It also makes it obvious to the player what direction she is to proceed in. There is also a signboard which shows and confirms the same.

After deciding to proceed, the player immediately finds a shiny gold brick with a question mark on it. The designers have implemented it such that upon jumping with or without momentum the player has a good chance of actually striking this brick/block with their

---

---

head. Upon doing so, they receive a gold bonus (reward), thus giving the player a positive feedback and teaching them how to activate and receive such powerups/bonuses. This also gives the player the incentive to jump thus introducing a new mechanic if they weren't previously familiar with it.



The player, then, sees the first enemy, the Goomba. Now that the player knows about the jump mechanic, her first instinct is to jump over the Goomba. But due to the smart placement of the bricks above the Goomba, the player will most probably hit the brick the brick upon attempting to jump and fall of the Goomba, who gets smashed and dies. This teaches the player that enemies (or at least the Goomba) can be killed by stepping over them.

Upon hitting the brick/block, the player understands its properties and learns that it is breakable.



The player, now familiar with how to obtain power ups from the shiny question mark, proceeds to take the power up on the top. This releases a small mushroom. The player is expected to take this power-up as she, from previous experiences know that the question mark provides good bonuses. Even if she mistakes it for an enemy, she will attempt to jump on it (previously taught how to kill enemies) thus activating it and immediately receiving feedback as Mario becomes larger in size.

If she then tries to kill the Goomba on the right and misses, Mario's size reduces and thus giving a negative feedback thus teaching the player that the mushroom essentially provides an extra life.

It is to be noted in both these cases the player is being rewarded for effort (going all the way up to get the mushroom) and skill (for killing or dodging enemies).

The player is also introduced to coin pickups here.



The player now sees the moving slope and the pipe in the gap. Here the player is rewarded for being curious and smart. If the player goes down to the pipe and tries to enter it, she is taken to a secret place with a lot of coins and powerups(reward). This also teaches the player that she can go down some of the pipes. This also helps the player avoid a lot of enemies that she would encounter had she not taken this path.



---

Now the player encounters a new enemy, the Koopa Troopa. The player upon trying to kill it with previously acquired knowledge learns about its properties. The player learns that the Koopa Troopa, goes into its shell when she tries to kill it. She also learns that she is able to pick it up and use as a weapon. And the opportunity immediately arises as she sees an army of Goombas behind the Koopa Troopa who would've been really difficult to pass through without using the Koopa shell as a weapon.

She then learns that she is able to defeat/Kill enemies with the Koopa Shell.



Next she, comes up to the pipes. The first two pipes have some pathable area between them but the second and third pipe do not. This basically teaches the player that they have to jump between the pipes. The first one has pathable terrain between them to give the players some leeway and opportunity to make or correct errors.

The second set of pipes do not have pathable terrain between them thus not excusing players for mistakes and rewarding them for their skill. The second set of pipes also have coins arranged above them in such a way that it gives them an incentive to jump.



The players then reach a checkpoint notifying them of their progress.

The players are introduced to the slide mechanic here. The players keep on walking after the checkpoint and find that their character slides on the slope where there are a couple of Goombas. The player slides into the goombas and kill them. Here, the player learns that they can kill enemies by sliding into them.

Immediately after the player sees a question mark and a prompt telling them to jump there. Upon doing so , a flying mushroom appears out of it. The players take it and immediately have to use it to get to the large coin at the top. Thus the player learns how to use the flying mechanic and also about what the large coin does. The large coin also acts as incentive for the player to use their newly acquired flying mechanic.



Next, the players see a prompt telling them to jump and a lot of coins arranged. But they are aware that a normal jump is inadequate to be able to collect all the coins. Thus they have to make use of their new fly ability. Upon doing so, they are able to collect all the coins and learn about the full extent of their fly ability.



Now the players see a flag and also a set of coins arranged as seen above. I attempting to get all the coins, they land at the top of the flag and they see that they get a bonus life. The coins act as incentive for the player to do so thus teaching them that landing on top of flags give an extra life (positive feedback). Again, this rewards the player for collection and skill.

---

## Level 2

The players start level 2 similar to level 1, facing the right side and placed a little towards the left side.

The players immediately notice the slope and the Goombas and immediately use the slide mechanic to kill them off.



Now, going forward the player discovers an area that was previously hidden. There is nothing there except for a pipe. If the player uses the pipes in the the previous level, she will know what to do and go down the pipe. If she did not know of this she will stand on the pipe and try pressing all the buttons as she has nowhere else to go and nothing else to do.

She will sooner or later discover how to go down the pipe. Thus the player is taught this mechanic either from previous knowledge or by means of trial and error.



Going down the pipe, the player comes across a differently coloured question mark block. Upon trying to collect it, the player releases a blue flower from it. Picking up the blue flower gives the player the ability to freeze enemies. The player also get the opportunity to try out her new ability immediately on the Goomba placed nearby.



---

If the player is unable to get the blue flower on the first time, the game gives the player another opportunity to get it almost immediately.

The player then comes across a new block placed on the ground. Upon jumping on the block they learn that all the enemies nearby die and also all the coins fall on the ground.



Then the players are introduced to a new enemy, the Pirana Plant and their properties.



This is where the difficulty of the game starts increasing drastically.



The players are now introduced to a the tilt mechanic with a prompt and is immediately rewarded with coins and extra powerups if the player is able to use the tilt mechanic to its full potential and use it to get to the area above.

The player is then taught that bricks can be broken by jumping on them while using the fly mechanic by forcing them to do so.



The player is then introduced to 'star' collectible. Where they learn that they move faster and are invulnerable and kill anything they come in contact with during the active duration.

---

To give the player an exciting and 'parkour-like' experience, a large number of enemies and jumpable places have been placed after the start collectible becomes available for pickup.

### Level 3

In the beginning of level 3 , the players are introduced to a new enemy. They soon learn that this enemy is different as it is ranged and throws stuff at them.



The enemy jumps on the blocks when the player approaches nearby and the player is easily able to break the blocks and kill the enemy.



The player is then introduced to Yoshi. She learns that she is not able to activate yoshi by simply by walking towards him rather, she need to jump on him.

Yoshi provides the player with various buffs such as a higher jump and a ranged attack(eat)

The player learns this immediately as enemies approach. They also learn that if yoshi gets attacked he starts running away and the player needs to jump on him again to control him.

---

So yoshi essentially gives the players an extra life.

The player is now introduced to a new item(apple) which yoshi can eat. If yoshi consumes five of the apples the player receives an extra item/powerup.