

Super Mario World Guide

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SUPER MARIO WORLD

For SNES

FAQ/Walkthrough by William Walker

Version 2.01

Version history:

- 1.00 - The oldest version, didn't resemble this guide at all, done years ago.
- 2.00 - The "new" version, completely rewritten.
- 2.01 - The only addition was that I started the achievement list of people for the Cheese Bridge Area goal in the walkthrough and decided to close down that list.

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E-mail information: My e-mail address is j-d-walker@worldnet.att.net . If you want to e-mail me with pertinent questions or comments about this game or my guide, please do - I love getting mail. Just please ask PERTINENT questions or make pertinent comments.

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1. Introduction

Super Mario World is one of the first SNES games that was released. It is about the continued adventures of Mario, the pudgy plumber who is Nintendo's trademark, in his struggles against Bowser. Super Mario World's perks include: the choice of just playing to win or to complete the game 100% (like Donkey Kong Country) a slew of cool new things Mario can do, and of course, Mario's new pal, Yoshi the dinosaur. It is one of the best installments to the Mario series and is one of the best games for the SNES, along with Zelda:

A Link to the Past and Donkey Kong Country 2. Although this game is quite old now and has a lot of tips already out on it, I decided another comprehensive guide wouldn't hurt, and I was bored, so off I went. I don't know anything about emulator play so if you are using an emulator, you'll have to figure its nuances out for yourself. I also don't know whether this game has been re-released for more advanced systems as part of a collection, like the Sonic games were. This FAQ/walkthrough will be as comprehensive as possible, focusing on the secrets of the game, as they are what the game is really all about. I hope it helps you.

2. Story and Characters

Story: Mario in his travels comes to Dinosaur Land, a strange place with plenty of strange creatures and landforms. In this strange land Mario discovers that Princess Toadstool, whom he has rescued twice already, is missing again! Looks like Bowser's got his claws in this place as well... anyway, Mario sets off to rescue Princess Toadstool with the help of his plumber pal Luigi and dinosaur steed, Yoshi. Not much of a story, but Mario games are not noted for the depth and complexity of their storylines.

Characters:

Mario: What would a Mario game be without this guy? Mario is the hero, as always. He comes in small, big, fiery and caped forms in this game. He is your character in a one-player game, or in a two-player game as player 1.

Luigi: Mario's fellow plumber never gets represented much in Mario games (who plays two-player for long anyway, and he isn't even in Super Mario RPG for crying out loud) but he is the equal of his brother in every respect. He prefers a more turquoise outfit, and is the character you play as in a two-player game if you are player 2.

Princess Toadstool: When will this lady learn to take care of herself? She gets kidnaped by Bowser in almost every Super Mario Brothers game, and this one is no exception... oh well. She is in Bowser's Castle and it's up to you to rescue her and return peace to Dinosaur Land.

Bowser: Again, nothing new here. Bowser is the evil dragon who's acquired some personality since his first appearance in the original Super Mario Brothers, but in this game he's as malevolent as ever, with a cool new flying machine (with a clown's head painted on it) to boot.

Bowser's Issue, a.k.a. The Seven Koopalings: Back from SMB3, some of these guys have gotten a bit out of shape since coming to Dinosaur Land. They're the same bunch however, and as fiendish as ever, although after their failure in SMB3 Bowser confiscated all their magic wands, and they decided to quit flying and take up civil engineering instead. You'll fight one in a castle at the end of each world.

(Drum roll please)

Yoshi: Yoshi the dinosaur is what most people associate with SMW. He's the cute guy on whose back Mario rides in his quest to best Bowser and win back his girl. He actually set off to beat Bowser by himself, but didn't get very far. You'll need to make him hatch first, but then he's ready and willing to help you. His appetite is appalling and he can help you reach some areas you can't otherwise reach. Different colored Koopa shells will give him different powers. The one caveat, though: like a lot of video game buddies, he isn't too prone to stick around in a tight situation; he's more apt to head for the next bus out of town instead.

Yoshi's Buddies: When Bowser's bratty kids installed themselves in Dinosaur Land, they imprisoned some dinosaurs in little eggs. This ticked Yoshi off considerably, as you can guess, but Yoshi can't free them without Mario's help. Whenever you stomp a Koopaling into oblivion or send him into a pool of lava, you'll find one of Yoshi's pals. When you've rescued all seven AND saved Princess Toadstool, they'll all hatch, and you can all just have a big party.

3. Basic Information

Here's where I have to get down to the knitty-gritty; I need to give you information about what is basically going on in this game, as well as tell you how the heck to move your character, so you don't stand in front of an enemy whose head you wish to blast off with a fireball and end up scrolling the screen to the left instead - that would be bad.

Super Mario World is divided into nine world, seven main worlds and two secret, bonus worlds. Worlds have about seven or eight levels apiece. Here are the types of levels in this game:

Normal, Totally Run of the Mill Stage: These appear as flashing yellow and white dots on the map. (Note that ODD-NUMBERED worlds have their own, mini-map, while even-numbered worlds are all on the 'big' map; weird huh?) They have only one exit and may have some secrets, but usually nothing major. These stages are really boring to describe, so moving on...

Secret Exit Stage: This is like a Normal Stage but appears as a flashing RED dot on the map. The red dot indicates that it has TWO separate exits, one 'normal' (the one at the end of the stage) and one 'secret' (usually accessed by putting a key through a hole, but sometimes a second goal like the normal one). Secret exits are the name of the game; they enable you to access secret shortcuts and levels you cannot otherwise access. They are sometimes hard to find, but few things in life are free, and you've got a nice, thorough guide to tell you where these are. I suppose you could play the game without ever bothering to seek out secret exits, but there are two instances in which you HAVE to use them to advance (the normal exit just leads to a dead end on the map) and if you use them, the game will be MUCH easier, primarily due to the switch palaces (see below). I think that's enough to say about how great secret exits are. Onward...

Ghost House*: Most SMW players (myself included) hate these stages. First, Yoshi can never enter one. Sorry, that's the rules. Remember, Yoshi is a big coward in disguise, and it's hard to persuade him to enter a place with white, grinning apparitions, or sharp, heavy objects. As the name implies, ghost houses have a lot of ghosts, none of whom are friendly, and some of whom have grown to truly enormous proportions. Boo Didley back in SMB3 would have plenty of company among these apparitions. Ghost houses often are very confusing too, with ample opportunities to get lost or disoriented, and there are apparitions waiting around every corner and sometimes in every block to take a bite out of you. Put simply, these places ain't fun... usually it's best to complete them and leave them well enough alone after that. Some do have secret exits, but it's impossible to tell by looking at a ghost house if it has one or not.

Fortress*: These steel places of pain aren't as common or as fearsome as they were in SMB3, their place being somewhat eclipsed by ghost houses. There are only four of them in the game, and they have the same general obstacles and enemies as castles. They always end with a boss battle with a creature named Reznor, who has been hired in Boom-Boom's place (the ladder being fired

because he too frequently complained of headaches on the job).

Castle*: Some of the hardest levels in SMW, these places are Koopaling lairs, and most of Bowser's kids have taken many steps to avoid personal company. Koopalings are not above using lava, undead creatures, confusing mazes, and sharp, pointy objects to watch you squirm, so beware. And of course, at the end of each castle is a battle with a Koopaling, and these guys have developed some rather novel fighting tactics, so beware. On the bright side though, after completing each castle, Mario will eradicate it in a different way. Some of his methods will leave you falling over with laughter!

Switch Palace*: Unlike Castles, you whoop with joy when you see one of these. They are often hard to find - three are only accessible through secret exits. There are four of them, in order of appearance, yellow, green, red, and blue. They are very short and end with a room with an enormous switch. Stepping on this switch will cause certain locations in levels, empty before, to become filled with blocks. These blocks' presence will always make your quest easier, sometimes significantly, so you would be well advised to activate these as soon as possible!

Star Roads and Pipes: These are locations on the map but are not levels. They will transport you to another location when you enter them.

* - After you complete one of these levels, you will be asked if you wish to save your game.

The objective of Super Mario World is, of course, to rescue Princess Toadstool and restore peace to Dinosaur Land. But, for those of you who want to brag you TOTALLY completed SMW, you will want to go for all 96 exits. Yes, there are 96 different exits to levels in this game (some levels have 2 exits, so there aren't 96 levels, of course). When you begin the game, after watching Mario demonstrate some of Yoshi's abilities in a demo, press start to go to the game choice screens. The game has three save files and you can start a new one (if it's empty) or load one, by selecting it. If all are full, you can erase them by using the erase option at the bottom. Next to each file is the number of exits you have used with that file. If you get all 96, a star will appear next to the number, indicating you are the one, the mighty, the omnipotent, 96-exit domineering master of SMW... you get the idea.

Now it's time to explain the controls. Here's what each button does:

Directional pad - Move between locations on the map, walk left or right, run left or right in conjunction with X or Y buttons, duck, slide, climb up or down vines, across fences, enter doors, etc. Also toggles between options at the start of the game.

B button - Makes Mario jump. If held down, can make Caped Mario glide and slow his fall, much like his counterpart, Raccoon Mario. But, a big bonus in SMW is that you can just hold the button down to glide, while in SMB3, you had to beat on it like crazy, which was a pain. If you hold the B button down as you stomp an enemy, you will bounce extra high, like in SMB3.

A button - Makes Mario do a spin jump, which is lower in height but really packs a wallop - it can smash most enemies in one blow. The normal jump often suffices for this as well, so you probably won't use this button much. Like the B button, hold it down after hitting an enemy and you will bounce extra high. One thing that eludes some gamers, though, is that some enemies who are otherwise harmful - such as Big Boo - won't hurt you if you spin jump on their heads, but you'll bounce off instead. This move is more useful than you may realize. It can also be used, if you're caped, to score 5 1-UPS in 1-UP bonus rooms. Also enters a location on the map and deletes some text on the

screen, mostly from help blocks (B button also does this).

Y and X buttons - These are the 'action' buttons. In combination with left or right, they allow Mario to run. Fiery Mario can also use these buttons to throw fireballs. Caped Mario can use them to whirl his cape around, and if he runs long enough, can fly, like Raccoon Mario in SMB3 but not quite the same. Caped Mario is a much clumsier and harder to control flier and I won't get into the exact mechanics of flying anywhere in this guide, because I don't fully understand them myself! This button can also pick up a Key, Baby Yoshi, P-Block, purple block, springboard, or shell. To do this, run into the item you wish to pick up and hold X or Y down as long as you wish to hold onto it. When you release it, you will put the object down, except for a shell, which you will kick away, mashing anybody (including yourself if it hits something and bounces back) in its path. To kick an object up, hold UP on the direction pad as you release Y. These buttons also allow you to punch when on a fence. Start - Pauses/unpauses the game.

Select - This button causes your 'reserve item' to fall from its box where you can collect it (see below for more information).

L and R buttons - Often forgotten, on the top of your controller, these buttons shift the screen view so you're at the left or right of it instead of in the center. You probably won't use these much either, but remember them. R is sometimes quite useful to see what lies ahead of you.

These controls are for Mario only. Controls for riding Yoshi are in Section 6. There are several other things I need to explain that fall into the Basic Information section. First of all, you begin the game with 5 lives. You die if you fall in a pit, run out of time, take a hit when you're small, or get crushed. Unlike SMB3, when you had to return to the beginning of a level whenever you died, in SMW there is a midway gate about halfway through the level. This is only in some levels, and it looks like a smaller version of the exit gate. Not only does this gate save your place in the level if you should perish later on, it also makes you big if you touch it when you're small. If you run completely out of lives, yes, kids, it is game over and you need to restart... but fear not, because you only have to return to the last point you saved. You are given an opportunity to save your game whenever you complete a Ghost house, Fortress, Castle or Switch Palace, and you would be well advised to take advantage of this opportunity.

The problem is that whenever you restart or load a game, you start with only five lives. This means you'll probably need to build up some lives before you head to your next location, so you have some built up in case you get into trouble. Luckily there are several fairly easy ways to do this; see the walkthrough for more information. If you press start and then select in a level you have ALREADY COMPLETED (yes, this is the SNES, you can replay completed levels in this game!!!) you will immediately be teleported back to the map. Remember this if you pause the game as you find yourself halfway into a pit; you might just be able to save your skin. Also, on the map if you press the L and R buttons while standing on the ruins of a completed castle or fortress, you can play it again, although why you'd want to is beyond me.

There are no items in this game you can carry around like in SMB3 to use whenever useful; they are replaced by the 'reserve item' concept. This works as follows: Whenever you collect a power-up, the state Mario is currently in (unless he's small) is transformed into a power-up and goes into the blue box at the top center of the screen. You can cause this power-up to fall out and become accessible by pressing select; it also automatically falls out if you get hit. Grab it if you can! This is what provides you with some insurance in this game, and somewhat makes up for the game's hit system. Oh yeah, that: unlike SMB3, when a hit caused you to regress one level in metamorphosis, in SMW you immediately become small when you're hit, even if you're fiery or caped (unless you're already small, in which case you nose dive for the south

edge of the screen).

At the end of each normal stage and ghost house is an exit gate. This gate has a horizontal bar moving up and down it. If you touch the bar, you will get bonus stars. The higher the bar is on the gate, the more stars you get. If you hit it at its highest possible point, you'll get 3-UP in addition to 50 stars. If you miss the bar however, you don't get any stars, but you still clear the level. Any enemies on-screen at the time will be transformed into coins. If there are 5 or more enemies on the screen when you pass through the gate, you will get one or more 1-UPS, but that's hard to do. You can re-clear levels you've already cleared and collect more stars. If you collect a number of stars that puts your total for all cleared levels over 100, you will get to play a bonus game at the end of the level before returning to the map.

The bonus game is simple: there is one block in the center which is fixed as a mushroom, flower, or star. The other eight blocks rotate around it clockwise in a square formation. Hit them from below by jumping and they will stop and reveal a mushroom, flower, or star. If you hit them all in order and get a rhythm going, it's possible to get them all to show the same object, but that requires excellent timing on your part. Once you've stopped every block at a particular picture, you get a 1-UP for every row of three (including diagonals) that shows the same picture. It is possible to get nothing. The bonus game then ends.

It is possible to play a 2-Player Game, but not many people do it and get very far, because you need to have two reasonably skilled players who want to burn time playing SMW. ANY game, even one that's already started, can be played 2-Player. The 2-Player game uses two characters, Mario and Luigi. The characters alternate whose turn it is; whenever Mario completes a level or loses a life, Luigi gets to do the same where Mario is or somewhere else. Luigi plays exactly the same as Mario. On the map screen, if either player presses the L or R button, a screen appears where players can give their lives to one another. On each controller, the B button takes a life from the other player, while the Y button gives one away. Pressing start again closes this screen. If a player runs out of lives, they cannot do anything until the other player gives them some of their lives. It's recommended, for your sanity, that both players agree not to take lives from the other player without the other player's agreement. Otherwise it just gets way too crazy.

4. Items

Following is a list of all the objects and power-ups in SMW.

Power-ups:

Mushroom - The red mushroom in every Mario game, it makes you big if you're small. Found in all yellow ! blocks, some ? blocks, and occasionally just lying around. Note that if you're already fiery or caped and have a better item in your reserve item box than a mushroom, you should avoid these, because any item you collect will replace whatever item is in your reserve box if you already have that power-up or better.

Fire Flower - This turns Mario into his fiery form. It's only in ? blocks. Fiery Mario was all the rage back in the day (in the original SMB) but now it's almost useless. While fiery Mario can throw fireballs by pressing X or Y, most enemies are now immune to them. The weaker ones, however, will turn into coins if they get hit by a fireball, which is kind of cute. Overall, except for the first world when there are no Feathers, Fiery Mario is rather useless; don't seek these out.

Cape Feather - Now this is the apple of your eye. This little yellow feather which floats back and forth will morph Mario into his Caped Crusader outfit.

Mario's yellow cape gives him awesome abilities; flight (which is actually one of the least used, since it's so hard to control), gliding by simply holding the jump button down (invaluable to go large distances or land with great accuracy) and of course, the power to whip it around and whack a pesky enemy in the face, crack open a ? block, or flip over a yellow block. This item is first available in World 2. It comes from a lot of sources: ? blocks, green ! blocks, and Super Koopas with flashing capes. This is the best power-up in the game and a cape on your back and a cape in reserve is the strongest set-up for virtually every level of the game, fireballs be cursed. The only thing that can make this set-up even better is to have Yoshi as well.

Invincibility Star - Unfortunately, this item is much rarer than in earlier games. It is in every Mario game that ever was and ever will be. It makes you invincible for a short time - any enemy unfortunate enough to meet you will hit the sack. There are some 'continuous invincibility' stars like in SMB3. New, however, is that if you kill nine or more enemies on one star, you'll start getting 1-UPS for each enemy after the ninth!

Other Goodies:

Coins - Another Mario standby, collect 100 of these for an extra life. They are usually just floating in the air but are sometimes found in ? blocks and yellow blocks.

Dragon Coins - A new type of coin found in this game, dragon coins are a misnomer, as they have a picture of Yoshi on them, who is not a dragon, last I checked. These are like K-O-N-G letters in

Donkey Kong; collect all five in the same level to earn an extra life. You can only get this extra life if you play the level without dying, though.

Multi-Coin Block - A hangback to older games, rare and kind of out of place in SMW. This block reveals coins when hit for about 10 seconds after the first hit, then it reveals nothing.

Coin Snake - Found in a few ? blocks, a really weird thing. It basically launches a snake of coins that extends, creating more and more coins, until it hits something - you, an enemy, a wall, or the side of the screen. You can control its movement with the directional pad and obviously should try to prevent it from touching anything to maximize your loot. Occasionally, one of these is found near a P-Block. That will cause the coin snake to become a block snake, which makes things very fun indeed!

1-UP Mushroom - This green mushroom, usually in invisible blocks or in bonus areas, is worth an extra life!

3-UP Moon - Very rare, worth three extra lives!

Yoshi Egg - Found in a few ? blocks, this will make Yoshi appear.

Wings - There are three of these in the whole game. They are found in ? blocks. They do absolutely nothing if you don't have Yoshi. If you do have Yoshi they will send you to a bonus stage where you can fly around and collect coins and dragon coins. You can collect more than 5 dragon coins in a level by doing this; this is the only way you can do that. Two of the bonus stages are cinches but the third is a treacherous gauntlet of enemies who wish to knock you out of the sky to your untimely death. These also morph Yoshi into a blue Yoshi, which is way cool.

Apples - Yoshi can eat these to cause effects, depending on their color.

Stuff you can pick up and carry:

Yoshi Baby - Found only in the five levels on Star World, these are baby Yoshis and can be carried around like a Koopa shell. They are the only way, other than Wings, you can get Yoshis of a color other than green. You must feed them five enemies (just make them come in contact with the enemy and they'll eat it) and they'll grow into a full-size Yoshi.

Key - These are rare and allow you to access a secret exit! Nearly always they are located right next to a keyhole, but not always!

Blue P-Block - This was first introduced in SMB3, but now you can pick it up and carry it. These are found in ? blocks, yellow blocks, or just lying around. It causes all sorts of strange stuff to happen, mainly turning brown blocks into coins and vice versa, temporarily. This can allow you to access secret areas. Very cool! These blocks also have other effects, such as causing coins, ? blocks, or doors to appear out of thin air.

Silver P-Block - Yes, now there are TWO colors of them! This type can be carried around just like its blue counterpart but has none of the same effects. It instead will transform certain enemies (mainly Spinies and Koopas) into silver coins, for a while. These coins are not like regular coins but are worth 100, 200, 500, 1000, 2000, 4000, 8000 points in succession. Every one you collect after the eighth is worth a 1-UP. It's possible to earn many 1-UPS this way, if you hit the block in the right place.

P-Balloon - Way cool but alas, very rare. This yellow balloon with a (surprise!) P on it is found only in ? blocks. It caused Mario to inflate like a balloon, which makes him defenseless, but he can float wherever he wants. After a while, if you don't collect another P-balloon, he returns to his normal state. This item is essential in one level in the Special World. Springboard - It's been here since SMB1, but now you can carry it. It allows you to jump extra high, by jumping on it and pressing the B button at the right time, right as you spring off it.

Purple Block - I was torn about whether to put this in the Types of Blocks section, but you can carry it. You can throw it up to hit foes or blocks high above you, or kick it in front of you to mow down enemies. It can't hurt you but dissolves a short time after you pick it up. Very fun to use.

Koopa or Buzzy Shell - Kick these at foes, blocks, or in the air for joy - just stay out of the way! NOTE: A shell that contains a Koopa or Buzzy will eventually come to its senses and get back on its feet; make sure it isn't in your hands when this happens! An empty shell, however, cannot.

NOTE: If you carry an item past the goal, it will turn into a power-up. Yoshi babies and keys will become 1-UPS. If you cross a goal while inflated, you will receive a Feather. Any other item (either a P-Block, shell, springboard or purple block) will turn into a Mushroom, Fire Flower, Feather, or 1-UP, depending on your current form and the item in your reserve item box.

Types of Blocks:

? Block - Another one that's been there since the beginning of Mario, this block can hold anything, from power-ups to coins, or even Yoshi. Punch it from below to make it release its contents.

Winged ? Block - These are like regular ? blocks but they can fly! Some fly in one direction; others fly back and forth. Punch them to make them stop and release their treasure - if you can!

! Block - Comes in four colors, corresponding to each switch palace. These only appear if you have activated their switch palace; they appear as clear boxes if you haven't. They serve purposes such as partially covering death pits, allowing you to reach goodies or secret exits, or even sealing enemies in. Make these real as soon as possible! Also, yellow ! blocks contain mushrooms, and green ! blocks contain feathers, but not all blocks of these colors are intended to be reached. Red and blue blocks contain nothing but are quite helpful anyway!

Crystal Block - A rare and awesome block that continuously cycles between the four power-ups: Mushroom, Fire Flower, Feather, and Star. Punch it to make it release its changing power-up which will bounce away, still changing every second. Collect it when it's in the form you want! Nearly always its best to get stars out of these because they are often located right before a large number of enemies. You can often get many 1-UPS by using these!

Yellow Blocks - Very common. These blocks look like they have two eyes (so do

purple blocks). Most of them contain absolutely nothing; they will start flipping over and over for a few seconds if you punch them; when they are flipping over they aren't solid and you can jump through them. You can also smash these blocks by spin jumping on them if you're any form except small. A few of these blocks, however, do contain items. These blocks cannot be smashed if you spin jump on them and reveal their prize if punched. Basically these blocks are replacements for bricks in the older SMB games, which would be a little out of place here.

Brown Block - Your garden variety block, this block cannot be destroyed or moved except by turning it into money with a P-Block. Any block that contains an item will become a brown block after its item is released.

Hint Block - Found mainly in the first world, when you punch this, it makes some text appear that explains a lot of the things in the Basic Information section of this guide. Other than that, it serves no function, but you might want to punch these anyway to see if you can find out anything good.

Note Block - These are very rare, unlike SMB3 when they were ubiquitous. They are like floating springboards. Jump on them to be bounced up; press B just as you bounce up to be bounced much higher.

Star Block - *This block will give you a 1-UP if you have collected 30 or more coins in the level it is in already; otherwise it will give you a coin*.

5. Yoshi Information

Yoshi is what a lot of people associate with SMW. For all the stuff it drops completely or pushes into relative oblivion, Yoshi somewhat makes up for it. Anyway, Yoshi is a green dinosaur who is trying to rescue his friends who were trapped by Bowser. He is found in a few ? blocks and once you make him appear, you can jump on his back to ride him. When riding Yoshi, your controls are a little different. Here is what the controls are when riding Yoshi:

Directional pad - Same, but you CANNOT duck or climb when riding Yoshi, so if you need to climb a vine, you'll have to give up Yoshi.

B button - Jump in the air.

A button - Spin jump off Yoshi. You can 'super jump' by jumping off Yoshi in midair. This is necessary to reach one of the secret exits.

X and Y buttons - Make Yoshi extend his red tongue, gobbling up anything in front of him. Yoshi has an unlimited appetite. If Yoshi has something in his mouth, pressing Y will make him spit it out.

You cannot shoot fireballs or whirl you cape while riding Yoshi, but you can glide if you are caped. You can also fly and flight while on Yoshi is MUCH easier than flight without him; in fact it's the only time I ever use the cape to fly! Yoshi can eat many enemies, including some bigger than he is! He can also eat P-Blocks, keys, springboards, and shells. All of these will remain in his mouth for a while after he eats them. If you hold the Y or X button down after you ingest the object, you will be able to run and fly without spitting it out. If you hold it in your mouth too long, Yoshi will swallow it, and it will disappear forever. All objects can be spit out and used again (Yoshi will not salivate on any objects in his mouth). An object in Yoshi's mouth when you cross the goal will NOT turn into a power-up. Yoshi can, however, carry objects around safely in his mouth to different locations. Yoshi's tongue can also go through solid rock; this is necessary to reach one of the secret exits. You can use a keyhole while riding Yoshi; just touch the keyhole when the key is in Yoshi's mouth.

Yoshi will stomp enemies with the force of a spin jump, meaning almost nothing he jumps on will hurt him. If you take a hit while riding Yoshi you will be knocked off his back and he will dash off. If possible run after him and re-mount him; if he falls into a pit or runs past the goal, he's gone for

good. Yoshi eggs are relatively rare so remember where they are and if you want to have your dinosaur pal underneath you, go back to a level where you found him and get him back. If there is a Yoshi already in a level any additional Yoshi eggs you find will release 1-UPS. Yoshi can eat apples on bushes or trees, and these fruits can cause interesting effects. Ten red apples (the usual type) will make him lay an egg with a mushroom - hardly worth bothering about. Two pink apples (rarer) will make him lay an egg which becomes a cloud that drops coins, and eventually a 1-UP if you get every coin. Green apples (found only in Funky, the last level of Special World) will add 20 seconds to the timer, per apple!

Yoshi has one last ability that is rather complicated. In this game there are five different colors of Koopa shells - red, blue, green, yellow, and flashing. A Koopa shell plus a Koopa body creates a full Koopa Troopa. The shell colors don't matter unless Yoshi eats one. If Yoshi has a shell in his mouth of a color other than green, he will gain the following abilities:

Red - When he spits the shell out, it will come out as three flames that will burn any unfortunate enemies standing in front of him.

Yellow - When Yoshi jumps, he will cause a small earthquake when he lands and send up a puff of smoke. Any enemy standing near where he comes down will go bye-bye.

Blue - The very best; when Yoshi is holding a blue shell in his mouth (and they are very rare) he can fly until he swallows or spits out the shell. Flying requires you to constantly tap button B, or just to hold button B if you are caped. Be sure to hold Y down after you swallow the shell so you can fly while accelerating. To REALLY put on speed, run until you are running fast enough to fly without a shell, then take off. You can skip large parts of levels this way. Note that when Yoshi is holding a blue shell, he grows wings and can really fly. The flight Mario can use when he is caped and riding Yoshi is something entirely different.

Flashing - Very, very rare, but produces ALL the above effects.

Not only are there different color shells, but there are different colored Yoshis as well! The red, blue and yellow Yoshis (Yoshi hasn't managed to make his skin flash yet, unfortunately) are available in Star World. They will start out as baby Yoshis. Feed them five enemies to make them grow into a full-size Yoshi. A Yoshi of a color other than green can use the effects that its color gives it with ANY shell. Thus a red Yoshi can breathe fire with any colored shell, and if he had a yellow shell in his mouth, could super stomp as well. A blue Yoshi (the very best) can fly with any shell. This is essential to completing some levels, especially in the bonus worlds. Note that the Wings item will transform any colored Yoshi into a blue Yoshi if you use it.

7. Enemies

Following is a list of Bowser's Koopa Troop. NOTE: All enemies that I know of that cannot be stomped (like Spinies) can be spin jumped on harmlessly. This is a great trick to remember!

Ground Grunts:

GOOMBA - Mario fans have gotten a little tired of the little frowning mushroom whose job is to become a mushroom pancake when Mario bops him on the head, so goombas in SMW have been given a small strength boost. They will flip over when bopped and can then be carried and thrown at other things. A spin jump, fireball or cape whack will take them out cleanly. Yoshi can also eat them. They sometimes parachute from the sky. They don't look much like the Goombas of SMB1 anymore; they look more like very fat hamsters (!)

PARA-GOOMBA - This guy's got little dinky wings that don't enable him to fly but do let him hop along the ground and watch wistfully at his flying idols. A simple stomp turns him into a regular Goomba.

KOOPA TROOPA - The same old turtle... with a twist. When you stomped a Koopa back on the NES, what you got was a shell. Now, the turtle is actually knocked clean out of his shell and will be stunned for a second, then get up and try to find a shell to inhabit. If he does he will become a Koopa Troopa again. Note that a fireball or spin jump will obliterate a shell completely and a cape hit will knock it into the air, and will cause the Koopa inside to disappear if there is one. The shell color has no effect on the Koopa's behavior; it only affects Yoshi's abilities when he eats the shell. Beware; a flashing shell with a Koopa inside it is INVINCIBLE (except to Yoshi; he can slurp it up and become almost invincible himself).

KOOPA PARATROOPA - These are all the Koopas with wings. They come in all types from ones that bounce along the ground, to ones that bounce really high, to ones that just fly up and down. A bop on the head transforms one into a regular Koopa Troopa.

REX - A new enemy, Rex is a purple dinosaur that is slow and stupid. One bop will flatten the top half of him but cause the bottom to move faster; another will finish him off. So will a fireball, spin jump, cape, or Yoshi's maw. Very common in the first level of the game but afterwards a bit rare.

BOB-OMB - This little bugger from SMB2 has become an adopted child of the Mario series. He is immune to fireballs and if stomped, will explode, will wipe out any enemies or plumbers standing nearby. Fear not; if Yoshi ingests him he will not blow up; his digestive juices will diffuse the bomb. A spin jump will cause him to pop like a balloon and not explode. Found in a few levels later in the game, most importantly Forest of Illusion 3. Sometimes parachutes from the sky.

SUPER KOOPA - A new enemy and a very good one, Super Koopas are aspiring Supermen. They look like a cross between a bird and a Koopa with a cape, and they swoop at you from the side of the screen. A single one isn't much cause for alarm, but a swarm of them can be. NOTE: Super Koopas with flashing capes, if stomped, will cough up cape feathers!

JUMPIN' PIRANHA PLANT - Dinosaur Land apparently isn't very hospitable for these flora with an appetite for plumbers, much to your relief. The only one of the seven or so species in SMB3 that survives here is a little sprout that hops high out of pipes and then slowly falls back into them. Some can shoot fire. A fireball or whip of the cape will destroy one; but you can't stomp them.

PIRANHA PLANT - A more peaceful version, this plant merely lunges out of its pipe to get at its prey. These usually come out of upside down pipes.

BULLET BILL - Another famous Mario enemy that this game under represents, Bullet Bills are rare and not very threatening. They are small black bullets that launch from cannons. Be careful; in Vanilla Dome 4 they will shoot constantly from the side of the screen, like in 5-3 on the original SMB, and in one section, FIVE will launch AT ONCE from ALL DIRECTIONS! Who says Bullet Bills are harmless?

BANZAI BILL - What cannon can launch these behemoths is beyond me! They are gigantic Bullet Bills that launch from the side of the screen at preset locations. Despite their fearsome appearance and huge size they can be stomped, and try spin jumping one - you'll be in for a funny sight! These are quite rare; they are only really found in, oddly enough, the first level, Yoshi's Island 1.

LAKITU - Yes, the rumors are true: even the great Lakitu has fallen into disuse. Where the heck is the Mario series going? Lakitu is a rare enemy in this game, found only in two levels - Star World 3 and Forest of Illusion 4. In the latter level he is first holding a 1-UP Mushroom out on a fishing pole as bait. If you grab it (and you can hardly avoid doing so) he will begin his usual policy of throwing Spinies down at you. IMPORTANT: If you defeat Lakitu with any method other than stomping him, you can steal his cloud and use it

to fly!!!

PIPE DWELLING LAKITU - A cowardly Lakitu who pokes his head out of a pipe to see if anybody's watching, then chucks a Spiny out. Stomp him when he pokes his head out.

SPINY - Lakitu's pet, a turtle with spikes on his back, sometimes found without Lakitu and rather rare. Don't even THINK about stomping this guy, but any other method of destruction will work just fine.

AMAZING FLYIN' HAMMER BROTHER - What else will they get rid of? Hammer Brothers, the stars of SMB3 with four species, have been paired down to one ugly guy who looks like an evil angel sitting on a flying platform chucking mallets. Avoid the hammers (easier said than done) and bop his platform from below to beat him and hijack his platform!

MONTY MOLE - This cute little fellow burrows out of the ground or out of rocky outcrops and charges at you. Don't underestimate how annoying he can be with his speed, but any attack method will beat him because he is very weak.

WIGGLER - This guy is a PAIN. Found only in forests (mainly Forest of Illusion 1) he cannot be killed. If you stomp or spin jump on him, he will turn red and get mad, and start moving faster. So just leave him alone unless you are invincible or have Yoshi. Yes, your dinosaur pal is able to eat one of these huge caterpillars and doesn't mind it wiggle as it squeezes down his throat!

DINO-RHINO - A huge blue, um, dino-rhino that is indigenous to Chocolate Island (perhaps that's why he's so fat). If you stomp him he will become a very angry Dino-Torch but if you spin jump him he will pop like a balloon and trouble you no more. Any other attack will be unable to penetrate his thick hide. Yoshi CANNOT eat him; either he is just too big even for your ravenous friend, or Yoshi has compunctions about eating his own kind.

DINO-TORCH - a smaller version of Dino-Rhino, found in the same places, faster and more annoying. He can also breathe fire from time to time. Stomp him if you can; Yoshi can eat these guys, as they're too far removed from dinosaurs to make him queasy.

VOLCANO LOTUS - The Lava Lotus of SMB3 has adapted to the land. This touchy plant blasts out sour fireballs whenever someone comes along to disturb it, like you. Yoshi has no problems eating red-hot food (they should have some hot peppers in this game that transform Yoshi into red Yoshi, seriously) so he can have them for lunch, and a cape whip will also destroy them, although fireballs won't. Kids, don't stomp this fellow.

LIVING FLAMES - Found only in Special World 7 (Outrageous), these guys are a real pain, hopping around dropping fire wherever they land that burns out after a few seconds. The only way to stop their reign of terror is with Yoshi; again, he doesn't mind spicy food.

POKEY - Deja vu from SMB2! Pokey is, as before, divided into sections. He can't move very well, although he can move slowly, and he is now yellow, not green. He is invulnerable UNLESS your dino buddy is by your side; he can ingest this cactus one course... er, section, at a time!

HEDGEHOGS - An annoying little black ball with eyes that moves around on suspended wires or rotates around blocks in some levels and is a real pain. Invulnerable.

SUMO BROTHER - A turtle with attitude problems, Sumo Brother is invulnerable except to being bopped from below (and that's not always possible) and won't move much, but will stomp and cause large fires below him that disappear after a few seconds. Usually these fires are right where you need to go, so you must run under him and time it so you don't get burned.

CHARGIN' CHUCK - One of the weirdest enemies in the game, Chargin' Chuck is a football player who was too violent for the NFL, so he is instead trashing Dinosaur Land. Before he gets hit he will do one of several things: throw baseballs, throw footballs, dig up rocks, or just charge at you. After you stomp him once he will be dazed for a moment, then charge at you, no matter what he initially was doing. A second stomp will do the same thing, but note that when he is dazed he cannot be damaged with further stomps. A third stomp

will knock him out but that's a lot of work to go to. A barrage of fireballs will also defeat him, but it takes quite a few. The most effective ways of dealing with him are punching him from beneath if possible, or a whack with your cape - both of those will tackle him instantly. Occasionally he helps you be tearing through blocks and creating pathways. Unless you can take him out in one shot it's often best to avoid him. YOSHI CANNOT EAT HIM!!!

Subterranean Slimes:

SPIKE-TOP - A little red guy with a single spike on his back, NOT to be confused with a Spiny. This fellow crawls along the ground, up walls, and on ceilings. If you have a cape use it, otherwise avoid these creeps.

MEGA MOLE - A mole who needs to go on a diet. Mega Mole is sometimes helpful, as you can ride on his head and cross danger that way. But if you touch him from the side, you'll get hit. Yoshi can eat these guys, even though they're bigger than he is!

SWOOPER - A green and brown bat who swoops down from the ceiling seeking to take a bite out of your plumber self. Often roosts off the screen or in locations where he's harder to avoid. Be careful of these guys. Anything will defeat them; they rely more on stealth than strength.

BUZZY BEETLE - A blue beetle with a rock-hard shell who just trundles along, minding his own business, until you stomp him, after which you can kick his shell around like a Koopa shell. Yoshi cannot carry Buzzy shells in his mouth, and the beetle itself will not pop out when you stomp it, like a Koopa will. These guys are immune to fireballs, can also be disabled with a cape whip, and are flattened completely by a spin jump.

BLARGG - A dragon who sticks his head above the lava he rests in when anybody comes near, hoping to take a bite out of them if they don't jump out of the way. Invulnerable, and found almost exclusively in Vanilla Dome 3.

MUNCHER - This invincible, inert piranha plant from SMB3 is back. Stay away from them.

Marine Marauders:

CHEEP-CHEEP - Back for more, although this fish looks a little sad, perhaps because his buddy Blooper is not with him. Cheep-Cheeps swim back and forth and are very weak.

BLURP - A Cheep-Cheep who grew up near a nuclear power plant, Blurp has the strange ability to swim through rock. He just doodles along in one direction until something (fireball, cape whack, or dinosaur tongue) takes him out of this world.

RIP VAN FISH - Despite his silly name and appearance, this fishy is a serious pain. He snoozes away until some dinner comes near, then he wakes up and pursues it. He is quite fast and hard to avoid but if you outswim him, he will go back to the land of nod. Fireball or cape will do him in.

PORCU-PUFFER - A very rare enemy found only in Vanilla Secret 3, Porcu-Puffer serves as punishment for those unlucky enough to fall in the water, a bit like Boss Bass in SMB3 but not as bad. He is fast, relentless and invulnerable. Don't play in the water, kids.

URCHIN - This is probably the only enemy whose name actually describes what he is. This large purple pincushion is quite content sliding back and forth in a small area of the lake of Forest of Illusion 2. Unless you've got a purple block to chuck at him, he is invincible.

TORPEDO TED - The good guys run when they spot this guy! Luckily he is only found in one stage in the whole game, The Sea of Dew (a.k.a. Soda Lake) but is a painfully frequent sight in that stage. He is basically a Bullet Bill that launches elongated, painful torpedoes at swimmers constantly and cannot be stopped. The torpedoes cannot be destroyed either. Watch out!

Ghastly Ghouls:

ALL OF THESE GUYS CANNOT BE KILLED!!!

BOO BUDDY (a.k.a. Boo Didley) - Back from SMB3 with some friends, this little ghoul is the same as before; he falters when you look at him, but when you turn away, he floats toward you, trying to creep up on you. So be brave and face the foe!

THE BIG 'BOO' - Huge, fearsome, and hopelessly narcoleptic, this gigantic apparition floats toward you when you turn away (and believe me, you don't want to have a close encounter with him) but closes his eyes and goes to sleep at the sight of your face. Be brave, plumbers!

'BOO' BUDDIES - An enormous circle of Boo Didleys rotating around a common point. They aren't much of a threat, seeing as you need only wait for the gap in the circle to come to proceed.

EERIES - AAAGH! These guys are a PAIN! They float through the haunted houses of Dinosaur Land, usually in packs, and look like toads. They don't care about whether you're facing them or not, they just continue on their merry way, taking a bite out of anybody they meet. Stay away from these dudes!

THE FISHIN' BOO - A MAJOR pain but thankfully found in only ONE level, Choco-Ghost house. He fishes like Lakitu does but if you touch the blue fire at the end of his fishing pole, you'll get a nasty burn.

GHOST BLOCKS - They look like gray blocks, but when you look away...

GHOST SNAKES - A snake of Boo Buddies that floats diagonally and bounces of walls. Choco-ghost house only.

BUBBLES - Huge green bubbles of pain. Spin jump on them and you won't be harmed.

DIVING GHOSTS - These Boo Buddies dive from a cloud of ghosts above you. Beware: if you don't keep moving, you can easily get overwhelmed.

Castle Critters:

DRY BONES - He's back but a little different. He still crumples into a pile of bones when stomped, but hops back up in a minute. However, a big new change is that he can now be killed outright with a simple whirl of your marvelous cape (fireballs, though, won't make a scratch). He can also throw bones.

BONY BEETLE - Similar to Dry Bones, these mummified Buzzy Beetles will walk slowly, but can also stop and grow spikes. If you stomp them while they are not spiked, they will crumple into bones but soon pop back up. Cape slap 'em and they're done.

MAGIKOOPA - A magician hired by Bowser, luckily found in Lemmy and Larry's Castles only. This mage can apparate and disapparate randomly and shoots spells that will hurt you and also melt yellow blocks, turning them into yellow Koopas. He is quite a pain. The only thing that can 'defeat' him is a stomp; but he'll soon reappear if you remain in the area.

FENCE KOOPA - These turtles will climb on fences in fortresses in castles. They are pathetically easy to beat and can provide you with plentiful extra lives, if you beat them by stomping without touching the ground.

NINJIS - They're back from SMB2... but only in Bowser's castle. They just hop up and down.

MECHAKOOPA - The only robot enemies on the whole game, these droids prowl the depths of Bowser's castle. Stomp them and they can be picked up and thrown around, but will revive in your hands and bite your head off if you're not careful. They are also in the final battle.

ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CANNOT BE KILLED!!!

THWOMP - At least they kept this guy! He's back with a little brother and an attitude. He's up to the same old tricks: slamming down when you come near, then resetting. Run by when he resets.

THWIMP - Thwomp might seem more dangerous, but this little version of him actually is, because of his habit of hopping all over the place and causing mayhem.

LIL' SPARKY - A small fireball that rotates around blocks. You can safely spin jump on him.

HOTHEAD - A larger, slower version of Lil' Sparky, found only in Wendy's Castle.

FISHBONE - A dead fish that hunts sunken waters with an appetite for meat.

PODOBOO - A fireball that launches out of lava pits, burning visitors. Some move diagonally.

GRINDERS - A spiked wheels that grind intruders into plumber burgers.

BALL N' CHAIN - A spiked ball rotating on a chain.

GARGOYLES - Come in two types, found in later castles. The silver type is harmless itself but shoots fireballs, and the gold type is harmful and jumps around.

REZNOR, KOOPALINGS, AND BOWSER - These are bosses. For tips on how to beat them, read the walkthrough!

7. World Guide/Level Relationship Index

This is a map of Dinosaur Land. I can't make an ASCII diagram of the whole game, so I will give you this chart. The first column gives a list of every level in the game. The second column tells what location you will go to if you exit through the level's NORMAL exit. The third column will tell you what location you will go to if you exit through the level's SECRET exit, if there is one. You must complete levels first to open paths to new levels. Any level with a - for a normal exit means that it is at a dead end; you don't go anywhere after completing it. Star Roads have been given numbers, although they just warp you from place to place, because there are seven of them. Star Road 6 leads to Special World. Star Road 7 is one-way and it takes you to Yoshi's House, where you start the game. Yoshi's House is not included because its exit does not count toward the total of 96. Pipes are not included, since they just take you from place to place.

Note that Star Roads 1-4 are not connected to anything until you build the path to them by clearing levels, but Star Road 5 is connected to Bowser's Castle, so if you go there from Star Road 1, you can reach the final battle in about 30 minutes. NOTE: If you enter Bowser's Castle through the Front Door without completing Larry's Castle first, you will be permanently stuck there!!!

Name of Level	Normal Exit
Secret Exit	
YOSHI'S ISLAND	
Yoshi's Island 1	Yellow Switch
Palace	-
Yellow Switch Palace	-
-	
Yoshi's Island 2	Yoshi's Island 3
-	
Yoshi's Island 3	Yoshi's Island 4
-	
Yoshi's Island 4	Iggy's Castle
-	
Iggy's Castle	Donut Plains 1
-	
DONUT LAND	
Donut Plains 1	Donut Plains 2
Donut Secret 1	
Donut Plains 2	Donut Ghost house

Green Switch Palace	
Green Switch Palace	-
-	
Donut Ghost House	Donut Plains 3
Top Secret Area	
Top Secret Area	-
-	
Donut Plains 3	Donut Plains 4
-	
Donut Plains 4	Morton's Castle
-	
Donut Secret 1	Donut Ghost house
Donut Secret House	
Donut Secret House	Donut Secret 2
Star Road 1	
Donut Secret 2	Donut Plains 3
-	
Morton's Castle	Vanilla Dome 1
-	
VANILLA DOME	
Vanilla Dome 1	Vanilla Dome 2
Vanilla Secret 1	
Vanilla Dome 2	Vanilla Ghost house
Red Switch Palace	
Red Switch Palace	-
-	
Vanilla Ghost House	Vanilla Dome 3
-	
Vanilla Dome 3	Vanilla Dome 4
-	
Vanilla Dome 4	Lemmy's Castle
-	
Lemmy's Castle	Cheese Bridge Area
-	
Vanilla Secret 1	Vanilla Secret 2
Star Road 2	
Vanilla Secret 2	Vanilla Secret 3
-	
Vanilla Secret 3	Vanilla Fortress
-	
Vanilla Fortress	Butter Bridge 1
-	
TWIN BRIDGES	
Cheese Bridge Area	Cookie Mountain
Soda Lake	
Cookie Mountain	Ludwig's Castle
-	
Soda Lake	Star Road 3
-	
Butter Bridge 1	Butter Bridge 2
-	
Butter Bridge 2	Ludwig's Castle
-	
Ludwig's Castle	Forest of Illusion 1
-	
FOREST OF ILLUSION	
Forest of Illusion 1	Forest of Illusion 2
Forest Ghost house	
Forest of Illusion 2	Forest of Illusion 3
Blue Switch Palace	

Blue Switch Palace	-	
-		
Forest of Illusion 3		Forest Ghost house
Roy's Castle**		
Forest Ghost House		Forest of Illusion 4
-		
Forest of Illusion 4		Forest of Illusion 2
Forest Secret Area		
Forest Secret Area		Forest Fortress
-		
Forest Fortress		Star Road 4
-		
Roy's Castle		Chocolate Island 1
-		
CHOCOLATE ISLAND		
Chocolate Island 1		Choco-Ghost house
-		
Choco-Ghost House		Chocolate Island 2
-		
Chocolate Island 2		Chocolate Island 3
Chocolate Secret		
Chocolate Secret		Wendy's Castle
-		
Chocolate Island 3		Chocolate Island 3*
Chocolate Fortress**		
Chocolate Fortress		Chocolate Island 4
-		
Chocolate Island 4		Chocolate Island 5
-		
Chocolate Island 5		Wendy's Castle
-		
Wendy's Castle		Sunken Ghost Ship
-		
Sunken Ghost Ship		Valley of Bowser 1
-		
VALLEY OF BOWSER		
Valley of Bowser 1		Valley of Bowser 2
-		
Valley of Bowser 2		Valley Ghost house
Valley Fortress		
Valley Fortress		Bowser's Castle -
Back Door	-	
Valley Ghost House		Valley of Bowser 3
Larry's Castle		
Valley of Bowser 3		Valley of Bowser 4
-		
Valley of Bowser 4		Larry's Castle
Star Road 5		
Larry's Castle		Bowser's Castle -
Front Door	-	
Bowser's Castle - Front Door	END	
-		
Bowser's Castle - Back Door	END	
-		
STAR WORLD		
Star World 1		Star Road 1*
Star Road 2		
Star World 2		Star Road 2*
Star Road 3		
Star World 3		Star Road 3*

Star Road 4	
Star World 4	Star Road 4*
Star Road 5	
Star World 5	Star Road 5*
Star Road 6	
SPECIAL WORLD	
Gnarly	Tubular
-	
Tubular	Way Cool
-	
Way Cool	Awesome
-	
Awesome	Groovy
-	
Groovy	Mundo
-	
Mundo	Outrageous
-	
Outrageous	Funky
-	
Funky	Star Road 7
-	

* - Don't forget to use these exits once if you're going for 96.

** - Unless you use Star World, these secret exits MUST be used to complete the game.

8. Walkthrough

Since this is a long game, and I haven't found all the secrets by any means, there are probably many 1-UPS, etc. that I have not found. Search them out if you wish, but since 1-UPS are a dime a dozen in this game (and there are ways to get many at once, and I HAVE found most of these) you won't get any benefit except satisfaction. The walkthrough will be fairly brief, as I've got a lot of levels to cover and I don't want my FAQ to be too long. So, with no further ado, we will begin!

8A. Yoshi's Island

After a text box appears with a simplified version of the story, you will begin the game at Yoshi's House. If you enter it, you will find nothing but a group of apples in the tree and a hint block that is really a letter from Yoshi, who you will meet up with in due course. You have a choice of two levels to play at the beginning: Yoshi's Island 1 or 2. Yoshi's Island 1 is not necessary to play, but it is necessary to get to the Yellow Switch Palace, which should be one of your first objectives. If you have a lot of trouble completing it, you may wish to play Yoshi's Island 2 and obtain Yoshi first, but you shouldn't have much trouble.

1. YOSHI'S ISLAND 1 - You'll notice a lot of Rex enemies here. The easiest way to defeat them is by spin jumping, which will smash them instantly. If you jump on them they will take two hits to defeat, and will speed up after the first hit. You'll probably have the most trouble from the Banzai Bills, the huge bullets that come from the right at pre-set locations. Duck under them or jump on them, depending on their height and the terrain. Note that most enemies (including Banzai Bills) will regenerate, so try not to backtrack. There is one pipe that you can enter by spin jumping and breaking the blocks if you're Super. Inside the pipe is a bonus room with a dragon coin. There is a 1-UP in a visible block high in the air. To collect it you must kick the nearby shell straight up; if you forgot how to do this, hit the

hint block next to it and it will remind you. Once you've got the extra life knocked loose, move to the right, and super jump off the Banzai Bill to get up to the cloud it's on. If you wait for it to fall off the cloud, it will be tougher to get. Remember that yellow outlines are nothing but empty air for now. *There is a 3-UP Moon here, only accessible once you have a cape. On the cloud ledge to the right of the 1-UP, fly up to the left, and you'll run straight into it, on a higher cloud ledge*.

2. YELLOW SWITCH PALACE - This level has nothing at all to hurt you. First hit the P-Block and the whole room will fill with coins. Grab as many as you can before the P-Block runs out of power; when it does, enter the pipe and hit the huge yellow switch. Now all yellow outlines are filled with ! blocks, which will be a huge help for the rest of the game, but especially in this world.

3. YOSHI'S ISLAND 2 - This level is in the forest. At the start, kick the Koopa shell on the ground into the line of Koopas and if it knocks out them all, you'll get an extra life. You'll find Yoshi soon enough; have fun with him. Get used to doing the moves with him and have fun eating your enemies. There is a second Yoshi block after the midway gate which will contain a 1-UP if you still have Yoshi. There is a vine you must climb; you'll have to jump off Yoshi to do it since dinosaurs cannot climb, but it's worth it as a dragon coin is up there. You'll find having the Yellow Switch Palace activated helps you a lot here. There is a pipe you can go down in the latter half of the stage; it leads to a room with four purple blocks you are supposed to throw up at the blocks flying back and forth above you. They are difficult to hit, but try to hit the third one from the left - it holds a 1-UP.

4. YOSHI'S ISLAND 3 - You're now in the hills, and you'll want to avoid looking down, as this is your first jumping-type level. It is also something of a challenge. There is a Yoshi here but he won't be of much help. This level is mostly about keeping your footing on the moving platforms and brown platforms on chains that rotate. One fall will be your last, although some gaps are partially covered by yellow ! blocks. Take it slow and get used to jumping, as this is fairly easy compared to the jumping you will need to do later in the game. I had a lot of trouble finding the fifth dragon coin in this level; it's in a pipe located below the second rotating platform in the level.

5. YOSHI'S ISLAND 4 - After a nice long trek in the mountains, you come upon this picturesque mountain lake which you must cross. Unfortunately, many nasty water creatures (Cheep-Cheeps and yellow spiked mines) are abundant in this lake. Stay out of the water if you can and when you come to a pipe, go down it. It leads to a mini-level with (of all things) multiple Pokeys that are invulnerable if you don't have Yoshi with you. When you come out of the area, you'll see a P-Block on a block above you. Use the Koopa shell to knock it down by kicking it up (be careful not to torch it if you're Fiery) and stomp it. Then, and only then, hit the other block, within reach. It holds an Invincibility Star. Blaze ahead to the exit, assisted by the temporary block bridge the P-Block creates, and defeat as many enemies as you can. You can get about 4 1-UPS if you kill everything you see, a nice profit. Head into the exit pipe and you're on to your first castle.

6. IGGY'S CASTLE - The bad news is that Yoshi will not be able to enter this level (or any castle, fortress, or ghost house). The good news is that this castle is a fairly easy introduction to the rigors of castle storming and has a chance for some nice 1-UPS. Jump on the wire fence and defeat all the turtles on it by stomping. It will be tempting to punch them when they're opposite from you, but resist the temptation. DO NOT get off the fence for

anything. After stomping nine turtles, you'll get a 1-UP for each one you stomp without touching the ground. You can get about 10 1-UPS here if you make use of the panels that, if punched, transfer you to the other side of the fence, where you can stomp more turtles. Be careful of lava and the hot objects that tend to emanate from it. Once you reach the end of the fence, break the midway gate and enter the door to the next room.

In the next room there will be forced scrolling (meaning you will be pushed right by the screen, and will be killed if you get crushed between a solid object and the screen) and several huge yellow pillars (these are HUGE; they fill up half the screen) that will fall from the ceiling. They will not kill you, only hurt you, but you'll want to avoid that as well, so stay at the left edge of the screen to avoid them. At the end of this fairly tough section is a large red door. Take a deep breath, for large red doors at the end of a castle or fortress lead to...

BOSS FIGHT: Iggy Koopa. Iggy used to be the most athletic of the Koopalings, but he's grown fat and ugly like all his brothers in Dinosaur Land. In fact, he's so overweight he's unable to move; all he will do is sit in one place as the platform he's standing on tips back and forth like an amusement park ride. However, below this platform is more lava, so you really do not want to fall off. To defeat Iggy, stomp him when the edge of the platform he is closest to is DOWN. When you stomp him he slides in the direction the platform is tilting, so if you keep stomping him without stopping you'll simply bounce him back and forth, but if you wait until the platform is tilted to the right, you need only stomp him twice before he takes a nice steamy bath in the boiling lava. If you leave him alone for a while he will drop orange balls which roll toward you, so be aware of that. After frying the demented turtle you will rescue the first of Yoshi's friends, who will be, unfortunately, still incubating in his egg. Off to world 2: Krispy Kreme Donut Land!!!

8B. Donut Land

1. DONUT PLAINS 1 - This level is on the open plains and is packed with a new enemy: Super Koopas. Stomp or avoid the yellow ones; it doesn't matter. But be sure you stomp the ones with flashing capes; they will cough up a cape feather! Now you can sport a yellow cape on your back, perfect for sailing through the air (or not) or whipping an annoying enemy into oblivion. After a while you'll come to a purple pipe that can only be accessed if you have the Yellow Switch Palace activated. To enter a pipe facing up, jump into it and hold up. Inside is a 5-UP bonus room.

There are several rooms in the game that are like this. They are all entered through pipes, and they all have the same set-up: a room with five levels, each with three ? blocks. The blocks, if hit in a correct order that is different for each set, will yield a 1-UP with the third block. But, if you hit a block out of order, you will get nothing. You can nullify this order, however, if you hit each block from the LEFT with your cape. This requires, of course, that you have a cape in the first place, and that you spin jump when standing below and one block to the left of the block you wish to hit. As long as you take it slow and don't get careless, all these rooms will yield 5 1-UPS. In the future, whenever you enter a similar room I won't mention it, since it's assumed that you read this explanation and know how it works and how to cash in.

After you exit this room you'll see another pipe to your left. Go down it and you enter a huge area that allows you to practice using your cape. There are many, many coins here for an able flier to snare; just don't run out of time. After diving and sailing around this area, exit through the pipe on the other

side and you'll come out the same pipe you came out of the bonus room from and can even go back into the cape practicing area again and again. Anyway, to finish the level, just mosey on over to the right. You'll find a Yoshi egg on the way in plain sight. If you're having trouble finding the fifth dragon coin in this level, it's on a cloud high in the air - you'll need to fly up and explore the skies. It gets a bit hairy near the end with all the Chargin' Chucks throwing baseballs.

SECRET EXIT - The first secret exit of the game is located right before the normal exit. It's hard, but possible to reach without the Green Switch Palace activated. You'll need to fly up there with a cape, and there aren't any ideal runways nearby. But, since you're going to activate the Green Switch Palace soon anyway, I'd suggest just waiting until you have it active and coming back. When you return, you'll find a huge pillar of green blocks leading up. Run up them using the pink triangle block which allows you to run up walls (!) and you'll run right into a key and keyhole. Pick up the key and touch the keyhole holding the key, or have Yoshi eat the key and touch the keyhole.

2. DONUT PLAINS 2 - This level's title is a misnomer; it would be better described as 'Donut Caverns'. This cave stage has forced scrolling (it's one of the only levels in the game that does, unlike SMB3 when it was fairly common) and a bunch of new things to bear in mind. First of all are the huge pillars of sandstone. Some can apparently defy gravity, all rise and fall, and MANY CAN CRUSH YOU into a 2D plumber if you aren't careful to stay out from under them. Also, there will be Buzzy Beetles and Swoopers. Both are tougher to avoid because of the forced scrolling, and since you can't see what's coming, it's not advisable to kick a Buzzy shell off the screen - it's possible it will hit something just beyond your field of view and come flying back, conking you.

SECRET EXIT - Enter the second green pipe in the ceiling, above the third rising sand column in the open area after the first section. You wouldn't normally think of entering that pipe when you're thinking about avoiding getting crushed by the sandstone, which explains why this is a SECRET exit... anyway, you'll find yourself in a room. Go right, smash the blocks around the blue shell but be VERY careful not to smash or kick the shell itself. Take the shell and kick it straight up at the fourth (highest) yellow block in the stairway (if you're caped, you can also climb up and hit it with your cape, but that's trickier). To reveal a vine. Climb up there and you'll find a key and keyhole; unfortunately, Yoshi will need to be left behind unless you're an amazing flier. But, rejoice, you've found the Green Switch Palace, one of the best in the game!!! Better yet, when you re-play the level, enter this room again and exit through the pipe on the right side - it leads straight to the normal goal!

3. GREEN SWITCH PALACE - Try using the shell below to knock out all the Koopas and if you succeed, you'll get a 1-UP or two. Then as usual, enter the pipe, hit the switch, and enjoy.

4. DONUT GHOST HOUSE - Welcome to your first Ghost house. You'll begin in a room full of diving ghosts that you don't want to hang around in. Go right, hit the message block if you want to get a remarkably unhelpful clue, and jump over the pits. Don't let any ghost from above take a bite out of you, which is most easily accomplished by moving quickly. When you make it to the door, enter it to enter a new room. In this room, follow these instructions: go right, ignoring the Boo Buddies, and enter the door. You'll appear on the platform below the main ledge (in Ghost houses, doors are often one-way and drop you at a place where there's no door... eerie). Hit the yellow block to reveal a P-Block. IGNORE IT and enter the door on the right again. Hit the

yellow block again and now it will be a vine. Climb the vine to reach a ledge with another door. Enter it and say adios to your first Ghost house. Unfortunately, there will be many more... alas.

SECRET EXIT - WAIT!!! Donut Ghost house is one of the few that has a Secret Exit, and boy oh boy is it secret! Get a cape from Donut Plains 1 and enter the haunted house. Run to the right a ways (so that the far left of the house is off-screen), then stop, run back to the left, and fly up on the far left side of the screen. If you are lucky, no diving Boo Buddies will appear and knock you down. If you do collide with one and lose your cape, immediately start-select (do this after you've found the normal exit), get another cape, and try again until you succeed. When you do succeed you'll find a whole new level. There are ghosts up here too, so run right, not stopping for anything, until you drop into an area with four 1-UPS. If you're feeling brave, punch them quickly, collect them all at once, and exit through the door before you are eaten alive by the angry ghosts above your head. Enter the door and throw your hat in the air, for you've found...

5. TOP SECRET AREA - Wow! This area is one screen with exits on both sides like Yoshi's House, but it's got the following stuff: two Fire Flowers, two Cape Feathers, AND a Yoshi egg! That's enough to make yourself fully powered up for any level, ANY time you want! It can also be a source of quick lives - just hit the Yoshi block over and over, collect the 1-UP, and exit. Make use of this area as often as possible!

6. DONUT PLAINS 3 - Somewhat like Yoshi's Island 2, this stage introduces you to the hundred knicks and knacks of platform movement, which will become more and more difficult the farther you get in the game. You will be introduced to platforms that rotate around a block in threesomes, platforms that move on lines, ON/OFF switches that change the position of lines (!) and of course, those most annoying Hedgehogs who ride on platforms lines and cause you no end of trouble. Avoid them at all costs and take it easy. That's about all there is to say, except that there's a yellow pipe in the air that you must take a higher path to reach (shortly after the midway gate, I think) that leads to a 5-UP bonus room if you manage to enter it. Try to collect at least 30 coins here because there's a star block at the end of the level.

7. DONUT PLAINS 4 - This level has a few new things. At the beginning, if you have Yoshi, allow the Koopa to enter the rainbow shell, then swallow it to gain the powers granted by all three shells. If you don't have Yoshi charge right as soon as you begin, full steam, and you'll grab the shell before the Koopa can get into it, avoiding his rather nasty attack. Continue on and you'll meet Amazing Flyin' Hammer Brothers, and Goombas. There's a few pipes you can enter but nothing noteworthy is in them. After a while you'll find Yoshi, then shortly after that, your first crystal block. Hit it when it is a feather and you'll grab it when it is a star (hopefully). Blaze a path straight ahead, not stopping for anything, and if you defeat enough enemies, you'll be able to snare a few 1-UPS. Take out the last Hammer Brother and ride his platform over the large pit right before the goal. *There is a 3-UP Moon in this level, located after the crystal block. It's on a cloud high in the air and you'll need to fly up there, but it's hard to find a runway nearby. Good luck.*

8. DONUT SECRET 1 - This is a water level. There's little advice to give as there are few secrets. There is a pipe you can go up which leads to a dry cavern where you will find a P-Balloon. If you inflate yourself, fly up to the left where you'll find another P-Balloon, then fly up to the very top, where some dragon coins and a 1-UP are. Keep swimming, observe how different aquatic enemies behave, and if possible, come into this level with two Fire

Flowers, one in reserve. Firepower is even better than a cape underwater, since it can fry most enemies from a distance (I'll never understand how Mario can shoot FIREBALLS in WATER). Keep going until you come to a P-Block.

SECRET EXIT - Take the P-Block as far right as you can safely do so. You may need to take a hit on purpose to move it farther. When you've moved it as far as you think you can, push it and swim right as fast as possible. When you get to a depression that has coins above it, get those coins immediately, before they turn back into blocks and seal the depression. The far right block is a ? block that can only be accessed by using the P-Block. It holds the key. The keyhole is right there, so you'd probably suspect the key was nearby, and that ? block looks awfully suspicious, so this secret exit is pretty easy to find. The normal exit is a little further to the right.

9. DONUT SECRET HOUSE - ANOTHER two-exit Ghost house in the land of cruellers? Incredible - anyway, this Ghost house is also fairly easy, considering it's only the second world. It does introduce some new stuff, though. Your first obstacle will be the Polar Boo Club... er, a circle of Boo Buddies. Duck through the gap in their circle when it comes around and be patient. Next, you'll need to use a springboard to bounce over an enormous Big Boo blocking your way. Enter the door on the right and in the new area, head left and dodge another circle of Boo Buddies. Continue left and be sure to collect the five coins on the ledge guarded by a Boo Buddy. There are Boo Buddies all over the place here, so be careful.

SECRET EXIT - On the far left is a P-Block on a ledge. Jump and grab it, take it right, near the pit, and stomp it. This will cause a blue (magical P-Block activated) door to appear on the ledge on the right side of the pit (I hope you got the coins around it before). That's the normal exit to Donut Secret 2. The visible door in the pit that can now be accessed due to some ? blocks appearing due to the P-Block, and the door in the far left corner of the room, both lead nowhere, a common phenomenon in ghost houses. If you wish to reach for the stars, QUICKLY stand in front of the visible door in the pit while the P-Block is active and jump. The block above the door contains a vine. Jump onto it (you can jump straight up due to the P-Block power), climb up, and run right as fast as you can! When you see a blue door, dive into it before it closes! Welcome to Master Boo's Lair, and he isn't too happy to have visitors...

MINI-BOSS FIGHT: Master Boo. This mini-boss is unique in SMW. He is just a huge Big Boo that can appear and disappear and, oddly enough, be harmed by mortal weapons. Pick up a purple block (the whole floor is made up of them) and stand in a position where you face both Boo Buddies. When Master Boo comes within range, throw your block up at him. He will then disappear (you can see his outline) and relocate. When he reappears, hit him again. Three hits will make Master Boo cross over and give you access to Star World!!!

10. DONUT SECRET 2 - This often-forgotten stage is an ice cave in the mountains surrounding the Valley of Bowser and is on a secret path to skip part of Donut Land. It's pretty simple. The ice is very slippery, so watch out for that. The first block you see is will release a coin snake. There is an Invincibility Star but this one's very hard to squeeze any 1-UPS out of, so don't try. Slip and slide on the ice but watch out for Spike-Tops and other enemies. Yoshi will help here so get him if you're having trouble. This is the only ice level in the game, which is a very good thing. You can get a 1-UP if you stomp the column of Paratroopas at the end without touching the ground.

11. MORTON'S CASTLE - Finally you've made it to the residence of the king of the Krispy Kremes, and his fortress is a little more complex than Iggy's. The

first room contains a series of nasty obstacles: Thwomps, Thwimps, and Ball n' Chains. Make your way slowly and carefully; there's little other 'advice' I can give here. There's a 5-UP bonus room located above the start but it's VERY difficult to access. Come here with a cape or two and fly up above the start, through the gap, into the tunnel that leads to the pipe. You will have great difficulty finding an adequate runway with the Thwimps hopping around, and once you get up, the passageway in the ceiling is small and hard to enter.

At the top of the first section is a door to the second, which is very different. This part has a black background and is made up of blue stone blocks that move back and forth in a cyclic pattern. You need to jump on them to climb up in most cases. This section requires patience because you need to wait for the blocks to move into the right alignment for you to climb up. There will be some Dry Bones on the solid ledges as well. If you can, smack them with your cape, otherwise you'll have to avoid them. There is a vine in the second block from the right in a five-block set about halfway up; it leads to a secret room with an invisible 1-UP. When necessary, move quickly so you don't get crushed by the blocks; you know what that means. Near the top there are some spikes you'll have to avoid using precise jumping on the thin ledges. Right before the final door, there will be a green ! block with a cape feather. These are located at the end of almost every castle and are one of the sweetest rewards you will reap for activating the Green Switch Palace. With a cape on your back if you didn't already have one, confidently enter the door and meet...

BOSS FIGHT: Morton Koopa Jr. This guy is a joke. He will 'attack' by charging at you - stomp him and he will become more oblate, look surprised, then recover and move faster. If possible stomp him three times before he reaches the wall. If he reaches the wall he will crawl up it and onto the ceiling - you can't hurt him while he's doing this - and try to slam down on you. Run underneath him when he does this and jump. *If you're in the air when he lands, you won't get frozen for a second*. Then he will repeat this pattern; stomp him again. The only problem you might have is when he moves very fast, as he will when he's angry, he can be a bit hard to stomp. Three bumps on the head sends this loon into the background for all eternity. Mario will demonstrate his ability to flatten a castle using only his body and then head on to a new, underground world called the (salivate here) French Vanilla Dome!!!

8C. Vanilla Dome

1. VANILLA DOME 1 - For those of you who dislike caves intensely, sorry, because Vanilla Dome is a cave world. The only thing of note in the first section besides the secret exit (more on that below) is a large area of blocks in the middle that you have to get through. If you're having trouble the best way to get through is to get a Yoshi and walk through the bottom, eating any Buzzy Beetles in your way (who otherwise are impossible to stomp without jumping to the higher level. Once you're in the final chamber (the one on the far right that's a little wider than the others) the FAR LEFT yellow block above you (in that chamber) holds a 1-UP. Grab it and mosey on over to the pipe to the next section, but note that the enemies are getting nastier and the obstacles tougher, so you'll need to be more on your toes. This is because you are advancing in the game.

The second section is a dark cave with a huge pit of lava that has a huge block of compacted sandstone that will sink into the lava when you touch it. Basically, grab the star at the beginning and RUN full speed across the sandstone - any haste will mean your untimely demise - and you'll make it. You can get a 1-UP if you hit the last enemy but it's not worth bothering

about. Once out of here you'll find the midway gate, but you're actually a bit more than halfway through the level. The last section is the easiest. It's a maze with some enemies in annoying spots, but the maze isn't too difficult to navigate and if you go slow, you'll do fine.

SECRET EXIT - Get the Red Switch Palace (in the next level) and come back. In section 1 there will be a stairway of red ! blocks leading to a yellow block that has a vine. Climb up and voila!

2. VANILLA DOME 2 - This level is fun. It's an underground cave that is partially filled with water. The only water creatures you'll encounter are Cheep-Cheeps, but still, you might want to have firepower here. There is a vine early on you must climb, which means you cannot bring Yoshi into the latter part of this level. Soon after the vine you'll see a passage down blocked by a 3 X 3 block of brown blocks. Remember where it is for later. Swim down and to the right, and when you come to a large area with a row of coins over your head and a thick mass of blocks above them, DON'T GET ANY COINS! Do, however, jump out of the water beneath the far left coin - there's an invisible 1-UP there.

Continue on and jump out of the water when possible. Go left and you'll find a P-Block on top of the mass of blocks. Hit it and if you left the lower row of coins intact, you will be able to get more coins. After this retrace your steps but this time go right. There is a lower path but the higher path is highly recommended, because you'll find the midway gate (again, it's well past midway through the level) AND a crystal block. The problem is that both ways, you'll have to allow Chargin' Chucks to charge through masses of blocks blocking your way. They'll bulldoze the blocks easily enough, but if you don't have great timing and don't jump out of the way in time, they will hit you as well. In areas like this with many Chargin' Chucks, it's unwise to try to take out every one, unless circumstances favor it. It'll be a little hairy getting the star from the crystal block with mad football players throwing themselves at you, but try your best. Once you are invincible plow on ahead to the goal. It's possible to get a few 1-UPS if you beat enough enemies, but unless you really want more lives, just plunge ahead and put this stage behind you.

SECRET EXIT - But wait; this stage is a red dot on the map, so we have to re-visit it. Go exactly like you did before until you get on top of the large mass of blocks where the P-Block is. Instead of pressing it where it is, take it left, through the wall of coins, THEN stomp it. Go left through a wall that no longer exists, jump over the first gap, and dive into the second gap (the one filled with coins). The key and hole are down here, but oddly enough, the key isn't right next to the keyhole this time - you've got to tote it a ways. Be careful not to drop it into an abyss. This is the only time in the game you have to carry a key a ways, luckily.

3. RED SWITCH PALACE - Yay, another switch palace. As usual you can get a 1-UP in this one. This time, you'll need to hit the P-Block, jump on the platforms of coins-turned-blocks above the floor, and go right, allowing the rainbow shell to mow down all the enemies. Beware; it can easily hurt you as well. It can also be hard to get into the exit pipe if you do this, so it might be best to just head for the pipe and ignore the 1-UP chance. Hit the big red switch as usual.

4. VANILLA GHOST HOUSE - This will be your last haunted haul for a while, and it's not THAT hard, actually. It does, however, introduce a lot of things that will be new to you if you haven't played the Donut Secret House yet. The first area has a Boo Circle, then a series of platforms that you must jump across while being harassed by Boo Buddies. After this you'll meet a Big Boo

in an area of blocks. If you can lure him to the left and then pass him, the block in the lower set beneath the second gap in the upper set holds a vine. Climb it and you'll miss a power-up, but can skip to the end of this section.

The next part has enormous green bubbles (!) that bob up and down. These bubbles are a serious pain because they are so dang BIG; you can jump over them with a normal jump, but it's difficult, and you'll need to jump over pits at the same time. You can also spin jump on them and they won't damage you, but you need to hit them from above, not from the side, for this to work. Luckily you won't be seeing these bubbles again, except for a cameo appearance in the Valley Ghost House in Bowser's dugout. When you come to a 3-block set, the middle block holds a P-Block. Carry it right or stomp it and run right (bubbles will be coming at you from both sides of the screen, so good luck) and to the right of the normal door, a blue door will appear at the end of the path while the P-Block is active. That door leads to the goal. If you mess up, you'll need to enter the normal door, which leads back to section 1, and try again.

5. VANILLA DOME 3 - This stage looks very mundane but actually has several secrets. Most of it is about riding a platform of four skulls across large wastes of steaming lava (I'm sure you realize that in real life, lava burns at a distance of five feet, so Mario, standing on a platform right above a lake of lava, would soon take on the appearance of an overcooked steak). Your rides will not be peaceful, however, thanks to a fellow who loves vegging out in hot tubs and pulling other people in for some company - Blargg. You will meet him frequently, and he will lunge out of the lava at you. When you see something ahead that drops into the lava when you approach, JUMP. In between the lava riding stretches are flat sections with their own perils.

At the beginning you will see two ? blocks fly past you, shortly followed by a third. The third has a 1-UP in it. DON'T go for it. 9/10ths of the time, you'll die. More appealing, however, are two secrets right after the second lava ride. To find the first one, fly up and to the left while left of the two pipes. You'll find a tunnel with a 3-UP Moon. Another tunnel is right across from it, leading to the right to the right of the two pipes on the floor. It leads to a 5-UP bonus room. Both runways are quite short so you'll need to start right next to the pipe and take a leap of faith just as you're about to run into the lava. After you come out of the bonus room, you'll be near the midway gate. The ? block right above the gate has, of all things, a Yoshi egg. You'll need to stomp on the shell oscillating between the two pipes (not a job for the cautious) and kick it up to hit the block; there's no other way. There are a few other tunnels in the ceiling near the end of the stage, but they don't lead to anything particularly alluring.

6. VANILLA DOME 4 - Huh? A glimpse of the sky in Vanilla Dome? Yes, but don't cheer up - this level is a pain in the butt. It's got no secrets, save a hard to get 1-UP (you'll find it, trust me) and a pipe you can go down that leads to another skull platform ride. The most serious problem in this level is that Bullet Bills will constantly fly at you, not just from the right, but from the left and sometimes from above and below as well. They also no longer fire one at a time; there's a section in the middle where they fire FIVE at once! On top of that, this level is full of tricky jumps, and those aggravating green springs that function like normal springboards, but are more nerve-wracking to use, especially with bullets flying every which way as you try to jump to the next ledge. Be as careful of the bullets as you can, but all in all, this is one stage that just won't let up.

7. LEMMY'S CASTLE - This castle is hard. The first part is maddening. You'll be in an area with two rows of yellow blocks, but you won't be alone. Bowser's most elite troops, Magikoopas, will be in with you. These guys can

apparate and disappear at will, and will launch spells at unwanted intruders. The spells can hurt you and will also turn blocks into Koopas (I am not making this up, people). If you are big you can spin jump through the blocks, but that's a bad idea since you'll end up in the lava, so wait for a Magikoopa below you to vaporize a block, then drop down and head right. You can stomp Magikoopas but they always reappear. After the blocks you'll find a much-needed Cape Feather power-up, and come to an area of platforms in water. The platforms DO NOT sink - trust me - but Magikoopas will still be launching spells at you. There are some blocks overhead but they are few and precious, so try not to touch them or let Magikoopas destroy them.

When you see a P-Block, clamber up to it if you can, always moving swiftly but not carelessly, or you'll plow right into a Magikoopa. Take the P-Block down and jump to the next two-block ledge. Set it down and hit it. This will turn the coins sitting below the door on the right into solid blocks. You don't HAVE to go through this door - there's another on the far right - but it leads to a 1-UP and, even more important, the midway gate. The coins, annoyingly enough, are formed into a U shape, blocking you from getting at the door. There are several ways to go about this. One is to take a running jump from the blocks to the left to the lone block, and from there jump into the U. The problem is you won't have much room to pick up speed, so it's a very hard jump. The other way is I guess to collect some of the coins before hitting the P-Block, allowing you to access the door from below, but that's probably even harder. I recommend the leap of faith method. When and if you get inside this door, rejoice - you won't see Magikoopas again until Castle #7!

There is a second part to the castle but it's easier. It mostly just requires you to be slow and careful rather than lightning fast and precise. You'll see blocks that move like in Morton's joint, only here they move vertically. Some of them are in pits of lava while others present the risk of crushing you. If you go slowly and wait in safe spots while you plan your next move, you should be fine. There will be a few Dry Bones hanging around so having a cape will help a little. At the end grab the Feather (I really hope you've activated the Green Switch Palace by now) and face...

BOSS FIGHT: Lemmy Koopa. This boss is unique from any you've fought before. You'll be in a room with seven pipes of varying heights in the top half and a pit of scalding lava in the bottom half. You can't fall in the lava, but there's a very annoying Podoboo that bounces around the top half of the room and will things rather hot (hee hee) for you, since you have little room to maneuver. On top of that, three enemies will pop out of three of the pipes. If one comes out of a pipe you're standing on, jump out of the way. You need to stomp Lemmy - the REAL one - three times in the second or so he's out of the pipe and vulnerable. You know which one is him since it's the one that looks different from the other two. If you're not in a favorable position to hit Lemmy, let him go that round. You have all the time in the world, but if you're careless and take too many hits, Lemmy will get the last laugh. Three bops on the head will send Lemmy to a much deserved bath in the lava below and you into World 4!

8. **VANILLA SECRET 1** - Completely on the other side of the Vanilla Dome is this secret path. After the first level, no levels on this route have secret exits. It'll eventually link up with the main route at Ludwig's Castle, and it has six (!) levels. I drew the line for the worlds at Vanilla Fortress; everything after that is in World 4. This is the only level on this path that has a secret exit, and it leads to Star World. This is also the first, and last, level you'll play that is entirely vertical. Yes, you'll be climbing up, up, up through the caves to reach the light of day, making use of vines, springboards, and a long series of ledges. There's no secrets to mention and

the obstacles are pretty self-explanatory, so I won't dwell much on this stage.

SECRET EXIT - About 2/3 of the way through the level there is a line of Koopas with a break in them that you must bounce between using a springboard (this is, incidentally, one of the hardest obstacles in this level). Below this, fly up/left (there's a Feather in the far right ? block to the right) using the long ledge as a runway. In the top left corner of the room is a pipe. It leads to the secret exit and Star Road 2.

9. VANILLA SECRET 2 - Whew, we're back outside! This level would be pretty insignificant but for the fact that it contains the single fastest (and probably funnest) way of maxing out your lives in the game. When you start, you will be attacked by a huge army of Paratroopas. These guys are hard to dodge, but do the best you can. Come with two capes if you are having trouble (that's nearly always a good idea). After what seems like an eternity, you'll leave the Koopas behind. The rest of the terrain is pretty self-explanatory. Just dodge obstacles like usual and go carefully, until you reach the goal.

Now, the big trick: Begin the level at the midway gate by replaying it up to that point, exiting via start-select, and re-entering. This will ensure that the armada of Paratroopas at the beginning is still intact and not chewed up by you. Now, proceed until you find a large pit filled with Spinies. Punch the second block in the block set (you'll need to do a 'one-foot jump like in SMB1) to reveal a SILVER P-Block. If you use it right now, you can get a handsome load of silver coins from the Spinies, but don't be tempted; you can get much, much more. Drag the P-Block all the way back to the midway gate. THEN stomp it. Run left with reckless abandon (jump over the pit, of course) and you'll find that the Paratroopa squad has all turned into silver coins! Run like heck and you'll get increasing points, then 1-UP, 2-UP, and 3-UP for every coin you collect after the eleventh!!! At the end of the line, hit the block containing Yoshi (there's one at the start, I forgot to mention that), WAIT for the game to finish giving you all you 1-UPS, then exit by tapping start-select. JACKPOT!!!

10. VANILLA SECRET 3 - This level, unfortunately, isn't nearly so spectacular as its predecessor. You'll need to cross an enormous lake by riding the backs of friendly blue dolphins who jump for joy above the water of the lake. There are no secrets in this level at all, believe it or not. There is a Porcu-Puffer fish who will show up about halfway and serve as punishment for those who fall into the lake, but if you are careful on the dolphins, he will miss his dinner.

11. VANILLA FORTRESS - This is a fortress, a castle-like stage that is not at the end of the world, has the same boss every time, and is generally a big PITA. This is the first, and last, flooded fortress - with water, not lava, luckily. You'll need to swim the submerged corridors avoiding Fishbones, who debut here, Ball n' Chains, and a few others. There's not much to say, since this level is about going carefully and slowly to dodge your enemies and keeping a sharp eye ahead (it may help to move the screen to the right using the R button). Try to have a cape here or you will have major problems with the Bony Beetles and Dry Bones. Go slow and easy and you should do fine. There is a fork early on; if you're not small, you'll need to take the higher road. It's longer but actually safer and it's certainly not worth getting hit to take the lower route. There are areas here you don't have to explore, so just keep heading right until you see a large red door, which means on the other side is:

BOSS FIGHT: Reznor. Reznor is the boss of EVERY fortress in the game, so I'll give you one, and only one, explanation of how to beat him. He is actually

pretty hard, harder than most Koopalings. He is basically a large mass of what looks like wood onto which four gargoyles (who are much uglier than Bowser's) rotate around on metal ledges. You'll begin in the bottom left corner, and Reznor will rotate in the center of the room. The gargoyles will spit fireballs at you - dodge them. When you're ready, run in and punch a platform from below to knock its gargoyle into the boiling deep. This is tricky since the platforms are rotating and you won't find it easy to stand directly under a platform for more than a second. To make matters worse, after you kill two gargoyles, the floor begins to collapse. If you can, knock out one more gargoyle but beware; you can very easily get dunked in the lava doing this. The only way to avoid becoming a french-fried plumber as the bridge crumbles is to jump on one of the vacated platforms and defeat the last one or two gargoyles from there. To do that simply rotate with the platform and when a gargoyle is right above you, jump. Time it so you don't fall and don't bother trying to dodge fireballs; your maneuvering room is so restricted that doing so will usually just cause you to drop into the frying lava below. A hit is better than dying outright. Try to defeat the final gargoyles quickly before they get much chance to shoot at you. Once you stand alone on the rotating monster, you will be victorious and level the fortress to the ground, and continue on your merry way.

8D. Twin Bridges

1. CHEESE BRIDGE AREA - Back in the overworld, you stumble upon this bridge of Swiss cheese that somehow doesn't sag under your great weight. Unfortunately, large portions of it have collapsed, leaving you to use your (hopefully) excellent jumping skills once again. The whole first half of this level is about riding one of three platforms along a long line, while avoiding saws that will come along the line and try to cut you loose (jump over them). I highly recommend going on the highest platform and ignoring all the goodies, unless you're masochistic. After this part, you'll reach midway, then find some Wings. If you have Yoshi, collect them if you wish, but be warned that instead of heading to the easy coin heaven you are supposed to go to, you get sent into a literal nightmare of Hedgehogs and blocks in the sky. It is VERY easy to die there... in fact I strongly counsel against any attempt to do it, but if you try and succeed, you'll get a blue Yoshi for your efforts.

Continuing on, you'll find a large area of saws on the radar. Your only course of action here is to grab the rope that you see, and as it moves to the right, frantically climb up and down to avoid being mutilated. One hit will send you into the lake far below, since you'll fall off the rope. This is a really nasty part. When you finally see dry land again, rejoice - you've reached the end of the bridge of cheese, hopefully without gaining 10 pounds. But wait; as you exit the stage and look at the mountain in the distance, you'll notice an arrow sign, past the goal, pointing right. This level is a red dot on the map. Putting two and two together...

SECRET EXIT - Yes, kids, it is past the goal. How to get past a goal without triggering it, though? You cannot go above it, but BELOW... but how to get back up onto the goal ledge once you've gone beneath the goal and avoid falling to your death? One way would be to fly down there, flying the entire second half of the stage, and then pull yourself up by and tap of left-right on the directional pad before you tumble to your death. That is extremely difficult however, so it's not recommended. I started an achievement list for people who accomplished this feat but have decided to close it down. However, as promised, the two people who did e-mail me before now are:

-Epi_Chaos a.k.a. Miss Heretic

-Kyle S. and Mom

Congratulations, guys!

Anyway, for all you gamers who are mortal, get a Yoshi and bounce around the saws in the second half, bouncing from saw to saw, and not using the rope at all. You'll need to have a cape (and preferably one in reserve). One hit will mean instant death, but it's really easier than it looks. Just stay cool and ignore the fact that you're bouncing off razor-sharp saws. When you get to the goal, glide under it with your cape. As soon as you pass it, release the B button and instantly hit the A button. If done right, Yoshi will fall into oblivion (temporarily) but if you did it soon enough, you will have enough height in your jump off Yoshi to land on land again! Now just cruise on to the right to find ANOTHER exit gate (not a key and keyhole) with a 3-UP Moon to boot. Funnies aside, great job - you've found one of the most difficult secret exits in the game.

2. COOKIE MOUNTAIN - This stage with few secrets but quite a few enemies stands between you and Ludwig's Castle. It's not really much fun. You'll meet a lot of Monty Moles, who are all under sugar highs (due to the composition of their environment) and zipping around like mad, coming at you. They are annoying enough, but even worse are the Sumo Brothers here, who are not happy to see you. There are some secrets, but no major ones. First, when you see a green pipe that seems to reach up to the heavens, if you have a cape, fly up there. To the right is a long cloud ledge that seems empty but will magically generate a 1-UP if you walk on it. Further right, after the midway gate, is a vine you can climb to find another 1-UP, this time in a block. DON'T enter the purple pipe after the midway gate - try it and you'll see why. There's a Yoshi egg which can only be accessed if you have the Red Switch Palace (you'll see more and more things like this in the second half of the game). Finally, there's a crystal block on the ground. Have Yoshi eat the power-up (yes, Yoshi can actually eat things inside blocks!!!) When it's a star. You can't get any 1-UPS, but you can blaze ahead to the goal unmolested.

3. SODA LAKE - A lake full of cola seems like a wonderful prospect, but this is one of the hardest water levels in the game. Actually, it's THE hardest. The main enemy here is Torpedo Ted, who is basically a Bullet Bill underwater, who fires CONSTANTLY and CANNOT BE STOPPED in any way (standing next to him just gets you a face full of pain). They will be complemented by scores of Cheep-Cheeps and Blurps, all of whom can strangely survive in a lake of soda (which even more strangely, doesn't turn into alcohol, like a real lake would). T top it off, there is NOTHING in this stage - no pipes, no 1-UPS, no secret areas, just tons and tons of torpedoes, some of which are virtually impossible to get past without getting hit. Your reward for making it through this sugary submarine stage is access to Star World.

4. BUTTER BRIDGE 1 - AAARGH!!! This level is evil. It is the LAST level in the game with automatic scrolling, thank heaven. Butter is a very weak bridge building material, so most of it is currently floating in the lake far below, while only a few bits remain, magically suspended, for you to cross. This stage harkens back to SMB3 when it was more common; you've only got to pass this test once in SMW, but sadly, you don't get a P-Wing. The main obstacles in this level are the mushroom see-saws (a la SMB1). When you jump on one side, it will sink and the other side will rise. Keep jumping in place if you can't see far enough ahead to make your next leap or you'll slowly descend to your doom. Also, the automatic scroll will speed up and move diagonally some of the time. This is a real pain... luckily, the Red Switch Palace will help by covering a nasty gap (God knows why you COULDN'T have the Red Switch Palace at this point in the game). Gray ledges plummet, BTW.

After a while you'll descend a long way down on a mushroom see-saw (safely), then a little further to the right, you'll have to climb back up on a series

of yellow block ledges. There are some goodies hidden in here, but are only for the bold. The bottom ledge has a ? block with a Cape Feather. The third block from the left in the second row from the top is a multi-coin block, although trying to milk it is suicidal) and the second block from the left in the top row is a 1-UP. Punch your way up through the blocks and decide whether to go for the goodies, but whatever you do, don't spin jump. After this there will be some more tricky jumps (this level doesn't even have a midway gate, so you'll need to beat it all on one life) and eventually, at long last, an exit pipe. R.I.P., Butter Bridge 1!!!

5. BUTTER BRIDGE 2 - This stage is much easier because this part of the bridge is much more intact (perhaps it is higher up and thus colder, so the butter is more solid)? It is, however, the meetinghouse of the Super Koopa Club, as well, so prepare for a literal barrage of the flying creeps as you make your way, stopping frequently so sample the delicious bridge. This level always seems to get bogged down. There is a pipe you can go down leading to a bonus room with some coins. There are, early on, two Super Koopas with flashing capes, who yield a Feather when defeated. Unfortunately, Super Koopas with red capes yield nothing at all. That ? block on the ground contains, of all things, Yoshi. If you can to the goal on his back, you don't need me anymore... except for the secrets. The same applies if you get the last dragon coin... heh heh heh.

6. LUDWIG'S CASTLE - Now castles are starting to become something to be dreaded. Ludwig's Castle has three areas, NO midway gate (Koopalings are by no means obliged to provide you with a midway gate if they want to watch you squirm) and plenty of painful stuff. You need to move along in this level, especially if you want to get everything, so you have no problems with time running out. Come with two capes in case you lose the first one - you'll see why later.

You begin in a narrow, red hallway. Cape whip the Bony Beetles (otherwise they are very hard to pass) and go very, very carefully when you see Ball n' Chains. It's almost inevitable you'll take a hit near the end with the two Ball n' Chains opposite each other, unless you make a mad dash through when the path clears briefly. You come to the door to the next section, but don't enter it. In the ceiling there will be a 2 X 2 brick between two larger ones. That brick is FAKE. Jump through it and go right on the ceiling (you never thought you could get up there, but you can) and you'll find a 5-UP bonus room. Ludwig isn't really uncompromising, he just likes intruders to use their brains if they want to have the pleasure of being fried by him.

The next room is tough; it has a falling spiked ceiling a la Indiana Jones that you've got to avoid. Basically, at the start, sprint left but don't go too fast; there's some lava. Wait for the Podoboo to go down and jump across. Do the same with the second lava pit even though the ceiling is closing in (in fact, you'll probably need to make a short jump to avoid clipping your head) and you'll see an ON/OFF switch. Punch it immediately to cause the ceiling to go back up. Don't be fooled, when it reaches the top it will come down again and this time cannot be stopped (I know the guy who thought up this part has seen Temple of Doom). So, go left, jump over four lava pits (don't get hit on purpose if you can help it) and then run left for dear life. Most of the time, you'll make it to the door on the far left before the ceiling can come down. If not, well, you don't...

The final area of Ludwig's Castle is made up of fences like his younger brother Iggy's, only these fences are much more fragmented, with only one or two turtles to a fence, and go generally vertically. Like before, you can get quite a few 1-UPS by stomping the turtles without touching the ground, but watch out. The turtles change sides quickly, and if you aren't careful, you

might find yourself impaled on some spikes. You probably don't badly need another 1-UP opportunity (there's another one in the very next level) and may be running short on time, so just scamper ahead to the door. Time to duel with the Beethoven of Koopalings...

BOSS FIGHT: Ludwig von Koopa. Ludwig is no longer the strongest Koopaling, but he does have a unique attack pattern (unlike all his seniors, who are copycats). He will stand in the far right corner and spit four fireballs, if you just sit there. Stomp him and he will be flattened; after he recovers he will attack you in his shell. He's invulnerable; jump over him and stay near the center of the very large arena. Eventually he will stomp moving and make a long jump in one direction, and start his pattern over again. Stomp him again (you can't do this if he's off the screen, hence you want to bring him into the center). Do that one more time and this Koopa composer will head for the bottomless void. Mario will literally blast his castle into the stratosphere in celebration, and proceed to his next challenge: the deep, dark Forest of Illusion.

8E. Forest of Illusion

1. FOREST OF ILLUSION 1 - The Forest of Illusion is so named because it has many secrets, and most of its levels have secret exits. It's not too hard, though, considering you're in World 5. The first level has quite a few Wigglers, who are the caterpillar guys. If you have Yoshi, eat them (Yoshi should be on Survivor, seriously) but otherwise, avoid them - if you stomp them they'll get mad. There is a Yoshi in this level, but unless you've got too much time on your hands, don't go for all the berries in the trees... it's interesting to figure out how to reach them, though. There's a 1-UP in an area of note blocks that's tough to get. Release it, then punch it from below to knock it to the right and catch it as it falls. Shortly after the midway gate is a crystal block. Grab it when it is a star and run right. You'll not only pass on otherwise difficult section, you'll mow down a truckload of enemies, and gain a lot of 1-UPS, especially since the Wigglers are worth 2-UP! Shortly after this is the goal, but...

SECRET EXIT - ... you don't want to go speeding off without finding the level's secret exit, of course. It's in plain sight actually, but in your invincible dash you may well miss it, below the ledge you'll run on. How to get down there, I hear you ask? P-Balloon in the ? block right after the invincibility part - you'll have to give up Yoshi though. Rats.

2. FOREST OF ILLUSION 2 - If you play the game without entering Star World or bothering with secret exits, this is the only underwater level you'll play. If you do, however, Donut Secret 1, Soda Lake, and Star World 2 are all water levels, but none are as intricate as this. Basically, being caped and on Yoshi won't help here; what you do need is firepower (good luck finding Fire Flowers at this point in the game). Fireballs will turn the Blurps and Cheep-Cheeps on this stage into fish sticks, but you will also encounter Urchins. Unless you happen to have a purple block handy, they're invincible, but they only move back and forth in a predictable pattern, and are thus fairly easy to dodge. There are no Torpedo Teds, thankfully, but the tradeoff is that this level is a maze that's somewhat hard to navigate. Just explore every pathway, take it easy and don't take needless hits - you'll find yourself missing whatever it is you lose. There is no midway gate here, but there is an invisible 1-UP somewhere - I forget exactly where, so I'll let you find it. The last stretch before the goal is rather frenetic, with Rip Van Fishes and even scuba-diving Chargin' Chucks all converging on you.

SECRET EXIT - Ah, this is a truly nasty one, and it figures that it's one of the most important in the game. Right before the last stretch where you get

chewed up, down to the left is a yellow ! block. The wall to the left of it is FAKE. Swim through and you'll find the key and keyhole. This is the last fake wall in the game.

3. BLUE SWITCH PALACE - Congratulations on finding this place, the last of the four switch palaces. Your rewards later in the game will be great, believe me. Anyway you can collect all the coins and stomp both P-Blocks to gain a 1-UP or two from the Spinies, or just head on to the big switch and fill in the last of the colored outlines.

4. FOREST OF ILLUSION 3 - This is a weird level, but it isn't too hard. You're deep in the forest and are facing an onslaught of Goombas and Bob-ombs in bubbles. The bubbles float through the canopy until they hit something or pop by themselves, then their contents will walk around like normal. Avoid touching the bubbles and if possible, run under them to avoid having to deal with their contents. You can actually rush through this level without too much trouble if you don't want to get anything, and there's nothing good here, save a Yoshi early on. Occasionally, Mushrooms will come out of bubbles - get 'em if you need 'em.

SECRET EXIT - Go down the tall green pipe, two pipes before the goal, right after the Chargin' Chuck who splits in two. As long as you're big, you'll be able to get the key. This secret exit MUST be used to get to Roy's Castle - the other path will not go there. This IS the Forest of Illusion, after all.

5. FOREST GHOST HOUSE - Drat, another ghost house. This ghost house begins in a claustrophobic series of corridors reminiscent of Ludwig's Castle. It opens up eventually, but you'll need to deal with the usual motley group - Boo Buddies, Big Boos, and Eeries, all of who are undead and must be avoided. After a while (make sure you go slowly and carefully to avoid running into a sudden attack) you'll come to a door. Go through it and you'll be below a menacing cloud of ghosts who wish to take a bit of your life. Run right, getting the power-ups if you dare, and jumping over the blocks on the floor. You'll see a P-Block - DON'T stomp it, carry it right and get into the second (larger) area sealed by coins. THEN stomp it, quickly, and dive in the blue door on the far right before having a close encounter with the diving Boo Buddies. Whew, done! Well, not quite, go left (not right) and you'll come to a door. That leads to Forest of Illusion 4.

SECRET EXIT - This leads to Forest of Illusion 1 which is useless, but it does have a 3-UP Moon, and is a required exit if you want 96. Ignore the first door you see and enter the second.

6. FOREST OF ILLUSION 4 - Say hi to the Lakitu Gang. This stage is the only stage (except Star World 3, which isn't much of a stage) with Lakitu. He will initially hold a 1-UP Mushroom out on a fishing pole as bait; grab it (you don't have much choice) and he will start dropping Spinies. If you stomp him he will leave you alone for a while. If you hit him with a shell or a fireball, however, you can steal his cloud and use it to fly for a while! There's nothing much else to say for this level, except that it's a bit brighter than the rest of the Forest of Illusion, it's got a lot of pipes with Pipe Lakitus in them, and it's got a crystal block that doesn't translate into a 1-UP opportunity. There is a way to get infinite 1-UPS (until the timer runs out) at the beginning, by kicking a shell so it oscillates in the depression before the first pipe and kills Spinies. The problem with this technique is that you'll need to be careful of Spinies coming from the Lakitu above all the time, and there are better ways to get many lives.

SECRET EXIT - The purple pipe in midair, right after the midway gate, has the

secret exit inside, which you need to progress. To reach it, either ride a Lakitu cloud, or lure the Paratroopa to the right over and bounce off him.

7. FOREST SECRET AREA - This level is very easy and quite fun. All you'll be doing is riding one of two platforms over a wide abyss. Avoid Paratroopas you encounter, stay on your platform, and ignore any coins. There is a 1-UP you can get if you have the Blue Switch Palace activated. That's it! *There are 3 1-UPS behind the goal, to get the, you'll need to sneak past the goal, off-screen, by getting a blue Yoshi and swallowing a shell.*

8. FOREST FORTRESS - This fortress is the only thing between you and Star World (heck, you could go from here right to Bowser's Castle with just one easy level in between) but getting through it will not be easy. This fortress is the hardest yet. The first area is like the part in Iggy's Castle where the huge pillars come down, trying to crush you. However, here there will also be Grinders you'll have to dodge at the same time. This gets very hairy. Try ducking in a depression to dodge the pillars, and stay to the left. There will be several pits filled with various ! blocks, making you glad you activated all those switch palaces when you were supposed to (at least you better!) Part 2 is no easier. You'll need to dodge more razor-sharp Grinders as well as Podoboos. There are several spots, like the place where you've got to run up the wall above the Grinders, that are particularly hard. Just take it slow and come prepared for this level. There is no midway gate and at the end of it all, another battle with Reznor. This stage just won't let up.

You may notice that above the path that leads to Reznor is another path that leads to a large pit of lava. If you can fly across this pit, which has many Podoboos and is very, very wide, your reward will be 9 1-UPS. FORGET IT. It is sheer suicide even if you're a decent flier.

9. ROY'S CASTLE - Another Koopaling's castle, this one is hard but not inordinately so. The first major obstacle you find will be a platform of brown blocks that slides over a large pit of lava, following a predetermined course that you cannot predict. All you must do is stay on for dear life and if you can, dodge the many Podoboos by moving around on the platform. This is actually peaceful and fun in between stressful parts. After the platform snakes its way across the boiling brew it proceeds to a corridor of spikes. Remember that brown ceiling spikes will drop; other than that, this section is pretty easy. When the platform descends into a pit, do the smart thing and jump off.

You now find a P-Block in plain sight. Don't hit it just yet; take it right, avoiding Podoboos. You'll see a 1-UP and a gargoyle above you, the 1-UP apparently guarded by the gargoyle, but actually it will simply slide to the right once you stamp on the P-Block. Avoid the gargoyle on the bridge, and collect the 1-UP. Proceed to a series of platforms that expand and contract horizontally. They can be tricky to maneuver, with Podoboos flying all around, but stay in the very center of them and you'll be okay. Duck if that helps to dodge the Podoboos. Grab the green ! block's Feather to help too. Just three expanding/contracting platforms, and you've made it to the boss. That wasn't TOO bad, was it? On top of that, the Koopaling in shades is a pushover...

BOSS FIGHT: Roy Koopa. Roy was one of the meanest Koopalings in SMB3, but now he's no problem at all. His attack pattern is exactly the same as Morton's with one difference: every time he slams down on the floor, the walls of the room will move closer to each other by a little bit. This is only a problem if you don't take him out quickly, which you will. Three quick bumps to the brain and you're off to the Isle of Nougat!

8F. Chocolate Island

1. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 1 - Welcome to Chocolate Island. Chocolate aside, you will find that it is harder than anything you're used to. This IS World 6, after all. Oddly enough, the idea of an island of chocolate is not confined to this game; there's also a kids puzzle book called Chocolate Island. Anyway, Chocolate Island 1 is a level with no secret exit but a few things to bear in mind. The rampant enemy here is the Dino-Torch and his bigger brother, the Dino-Rhino. I recommend that you try to spin jump on the Dino-Rhinos; they are easy to hit and if you stomp them normally, they will immediately breathe out a jet of fire in their smaller form that will likely hit you. Dino-Torches are nastier than they appear; they can hop around with great agility and breathe fire in all directions. The best method of defeating them is firepower (which is odd seeing that they breathe it) or Yoshi's mouth. Otherwise, avoid them.

Other than that, there will be two green pipes at an angle that, if you go down another pipe before them, you will be launched out of. The first one isn't absolutely necessary to use but I suggest you do because doing so will cause the midway gate to appear; it won't otherwise. The last one is necessary to use to get blasted over a huge chasm before the exit, but you'll need to survive a jaunt over a lake with two Porcu-Puffers in pipe land before you can have the privilege. There is a Yoshi in this level. Finally, after the midway gate is a huge bowl-shaped depression in the ground. It's shaped a bit like a crescent moon, and sure enough, above this in the air is a 3-UP Moon.

2. CHOCO-GHOST HOUSE - This ghost house is not only not a house of chocolate (that's be awesome) it is one of the most frightening experiences you will ever have in a haunted house. The first area is quite linear and open enough, but it's got many nasty things that require great dexterity to avoid. The first is the many, many Eeries who will come at you in a wave motion, often in groups. The second is the moving pits (in ghost houses, even PITS are alive), one of which is moving around the door at the end of the section, making it difficult to enter. The third, and worst by far, threat in the first section is The Fishin' Boo. Thank your lucky stars this fellow is only encountered here. This apparition is a Lakitu who wants revenge and will float above you, holding out not a 1-UP, but a ball of ghostly blue fire that you really don't want to touch. He isn't that bad when you can stay low, but when the floor rises or forces you to jump, you'll need to master jumping short of the level of the bait, but high enough to leap over whatever you're trying to leap over (like a moving pit). This section will not cut any breaks - be prepared.

The second part is a little easier and much shorter, but it's not a walk to McDonalds. First you'll encounter a trio of Ghost Blocks, who turn into Boo Buddies when you look away. They initially appear under a power-up; decide for yourself whether it's worth getting. Further right are several Ghost Snakes who are weaving around, waiting for any live prey to come their way. Avoid them as best you can and slowly lure the three Ghost Blocks right. You need to turn them into blocks so you can use them to boost yourself up to the door above your head, which leads to the end of this haunted hall. It's not easy - you need to jump to get them the appropriate height, avoid Ghost Snakes as you're doing it, and avoid turning the blocks into ghosts at the wrong time - but the only alternative is flying up there, which is even harder. Just do your best with this part. Get in the door and kiss the Choco-Ghost House good-bye! YAY! No more ghost houses, SAVE ONE...

3. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 2 - After the hardest level in the game up to this point, you'll be relieved to find out that this stage isn't really hard, but it's WEIRD. It is the weirdest level in the whole game. The first area is simple;

climb over the chocolate tower in the center (which looks like it's an enormous Hershey bar with almonds) while avoiding more blue dinosaur enemies. There's a Yoshi here and it's not too hard, as long as you don't rush too much and slam into an enemy. Enter the pipe at the end and you're on to the next area, which is a little harder - you'll be high in the air (you'll find Chocolate Island is a very mountainous place) and have to cross a long series of SLANTED Nestle mountains. If you really hate jumping on slanted surfaces you could enlist a blue Yoshi, swallow a Paratroopa and fly through this part, but it's not that hard, as long as you keep your cool. Avoid contact with the Paratroopas and jump continuously to avoid sliding on the ledges. Having a cape really helps here too.

At the end of the second part, however, things get interesting. If you have LESS than 250 seconds remaining on the timer, as you probably do, where you go will be determined by how much time you have left (!!!) There are all sorts of areas in this level, including a water area, flat area with Dino-Rhinos, etc. I can't give any more tips because that would require figuring out where you go in each time interval, which I'm not doing. You could spend hours figuring out all the intricacies of this level, and if I get a comprehensive explanation of every area and what determines where you go in an e-mail, I might add it to my FAQ in an update, with generous credit to the author.

SECRET EXIT - You'll find the normal exit eventually by just blundering ahead eventually. Oddly enough, Chocolate Island is very poor in secret exits, in stark contrast to the Forest of Illusion. This secret exit offers a fantastic shortcut to the Koopaling's castle and it's very easy to reach - just complete section 2 with 250+ seconds left on the timer, and you get dropped in an area with a few Chargin' Chucks throwing baseballs, then the key and keyhole. Getting through the first two areas in 50 seconds is a tall order for an inexperienced player, but it's not that hard.

4. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 3 - Oh, boy, a jumping stage. The good news is there's no automatic scrolling. The bad news is that this level is basically nothing but a long, LONG series of gray rotating platforms rotating around blocks, with almost no solid land and a great pit spanning the whole level. On top of that, some of the blocks the platforms whirl around have Hedgehogs on them. Rather than carefully make your way through, simply get a Yoshi from the previous level, have him swallow the first blue Koopa you meet, and fly ahead, but not recklessly. In fact, the first half is pretty easy, so you don't really need to fly through it. What you do want to do, though, is eat the blue Koopa right before the midway gate. As long as you HOLD the Y button down after you eat him, not letting go for anything, and hold right and B, you'll be able to fly through the whole level, over the pipe, to the goal. But, to your amazement, the path revealed on the map just leads right back to this level!!! What to do?

SECRET EXIT - Look past the goal, that's what. The secret exit is way past the goal, after another huge chasm. Luckily getting past the first goal isn't nearly as difficult as in Cheese Bridge - you just need to walk under it. As for how to fly over the chasm, there's two ways. You can take off with a cape from the stretch of land behind the first goal, or get a Yoshi to the end of the stage, have him swallow the blue Koopa, and take off. Either way, your reward, besides access to (gulp) the Chocolate Fortress will be 4 1-UPS.

5. CHOCOLATE FORTRESS - This is the only fortress you'll play if you don't go in for secret exits. It is pretty hard, of course, but nothing compared to what is coming up. It has two sections. The first section has several large wooden spikes that extend and retract. They sometimes come in pairs, sometimes alone, and must be jumped over. They only hurt you if they impale

you. Compounding this will be pits of gray lava (which does exist in nature, believe it or not). Also, fire will be constantly coming at you in this section from the right side of the screen, a la SMB1. Take it slow, jumping over one spike at a time, and you should be OK. It's otherwise just a matter of timing and luck. The fortress engineer is kind enough to give you a midway gate, then you have to deal with a Thwomp area. There will be many, many Thwomps and their annoying little kids, Thwimps in all sorts of annoying positions. Some will be trapped by ! blocks... if they're active. Some will require you to make a jump partway over spikes in order to trigger them, then fall back onto safe ground and jump over the spikes as the Thwomp is resetting. It's not easy, but not too maddening. At the end is a big brown door (Reznor's painter was taken with a sudden bout of flu while on the job here, so the door is unpainted). Inside is Reznor. Beat him like you did before.

6. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 4 - Ah, a cave stage. This stage isn't that hard, but it introduces Mega Moles, who are HUGE moles who burrow in caves like this and aren't entirely malevolent, as you can ride them over obstacles, but if you get in their way, it's bye-bye, world. The only ways to kill a Mega Mole are with a cape spank or have Yoshi eat one (!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!), although in this level they also walk into the murky brown water that will kill you if you fall in. Over some underground lakes of toxic groundwater, 'carrot' platforms (so named because they are colored orange and green) will float back and forth. These platforms are steeply slanted but for some reason, you can stand on them perfectly safely. Use them to traverse the pits. The only secret worth mentioning is a pipe that obviously leads to good stuff, since it's blocked off by blocks. Hit a nearby P-Block to gain access, then hit the P-Block inside the pipe, and drop down. There will be several rows of blocks-turned coins; if you have a cape, use it to slow your fall. The block tier you land on will be determined by where you are when the P-Block runs out. If you are lucky enough to land on the right one, you might get several 1-UPS, or you might just end up with a puny mushroom. Oh, and there's a big pit with blue ! blocks sealing it in this stage as well. This pit has three 1-UPS on it just sitting there, a reward for players who sought out the elusive switch palaces earlier.

7. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 5 - You are so close to Wendy's Castle that you can smell her perfume, but you've got to blast through this weird stage first. It begins with a P-Block whose implications are enormous. First of all, you must carry it off its initial location because if you stomp in where it sits, you will fall to your death most ignobly. Now, I recommend ignoring all the changes wrought in the landscape around you and the items you can get, and just going down the yellow pipe you temporarily have access to. (Punch the ? block near the P-Block - it's a Yoshi egg). This pipe not only leads to a 5-UP bonus room, but allows you to skip half the level! You'll come out near the midway gate (although it's more than 2/3 through the level) and have to get past a few jumps, on pipes that rise and fall (!) and platforms that extend horizontally AND vertically alternately. Make it past these jumps and a few Chargin's Chucks and you're set for a date with Wendy .O Koopa

8. CHOCOLATE SECRET - This level in the mountains of the Valley of Bowser is rather difficult. After a dangerous spring over a lava pit, you'll face a whole team of Chargin' Chucks who wish to use you as a goalpost. They will be booting footballs at you like mad, and it's all you can do to dodge the unpredictably flying projectiles and take them out. Do not, repeat DO NOT, enter the pipe in the ceiling. You will really be sorry if you do. It's going to be hard to hit the midway gate, but do it any way you can. The next part is a series of descents down steep slopes. Use your slide move (press down when on a slope) to zip down them unharmed, and get ready for the last part. You'll be in the depths of a cavern, where it's very dark and magma flows.

Spike-Tops will make an attack early on, then later you'll be charged by another team of Chargin' Chucks (how on earth did they get down here?) but the hardest part is crossing the lava pits. Twice you'll be forced to cross a series of sandstone blocks that, when you touch the first one, all sink into the lava - it's ridiculously nerve-wracking, seeing as the ledge you must jump on is rapidly plunging into the seething red goo. You must run full speed and not stop for anything; if you do you'll just barely make it across these stretches. The first time the ledges are flat, the second time they are angled, which makes it even harder. After that, at last, is the exit.

9. WENDY'S CASTLE - Get ready to be crushed, minced, mutilated and fried in this lady's lair. Wendy Koopa has placed a whole series of enormous spiked pillars, that plunge up and down with fearful noises, in the first section of her castle to ensure any intruders she had meet her crushed and mutilated. A dead-on hit from a pillar will kill you instantly, while slamming into one from the side will 'only' cause a hit. Getting passed these colossal instruments of destruction is a matter of lightning reflexes, perfect timing, and luck. This would be bad enough, but making matters MUCH worse is that the pillars will often be combined with Grinder wheels. You will be jammed in tight positions, forced to jump to elude Grinders on tracks, while you wait for the spiekd pillars to rise and allow you to proceed. There are also some very difficult places with Grinders by themselves, in configurations that make them very hard to avoid. It's a horrible mess, this first section. Come with at least 10 lives in reserve. After a few fast-moving pillars that require 'runs of faith' you will reach the end of this torture chamber and pass a much-needed midway gate.

Section 2, thankfully, is substantially easier. It's a lot like Lemmy's Castle with moving blocks, although there are several things that complicate this. It's shorter, but rotating around most of the stationary blocks are fireballs - Lil' Sparkys and Hotheads, who are both late in making their debut but eager to have a turn in hurting you. Jump over them when necessary and take your time in making your jumps - there is at least one place where making a reckless jump will cause your immediate death, even though it appears safe. The square, gray platforms are pretty self-explanatory; they move horizontally. There is only one place where you can be crushed, and you should recognize it and be OK. After some of this, you'll find a green ! block as usual, and meet...

BOSS FIGHT: Wendy O. Koopa. Wendy is the ugliest female boss I have ever seen in a video game. She is also a pain. Not only is her castle an exercise in torture, she is the hardest Koopaling to defeat in the game. She uses the same general pattern as Lemmy did with two important differences: all the pipes in her room are level, which is a nice plus, but she has also acquired the services of TWO fireballs, who will patrol her lair as she cowardly peeps out of a pipe with her two decoys. This battle will be a lot bloodier than the battle with Lemmy even though the two fireballs move in synchrony, at least at first, so try to get land 3 hits on Wendy O. Koopa's bow-tied head quickly. Do so and another Koopaling will be in the hot soup. Mario will so despise Wendy's machinations that he will literally erase her castle from the face of Dinosaur Land.

10. SUNKEN GHOST SHIP - Okay, you've cleared Chocolate Island. Where do you go now? There aren't any more places on the overworld map, save a sunken ship off the coast of the island. Alas, this ship is populated by ghosts, so the game designers have basically snuck in another ghost house level before you can even see the Valley of Bowser. D'OH! Yoshi can come to this level, but he cannot eat ghosts, and will be more of a hindrance than a help. Okay - swim to the right after you come out of the pipe, past the Bullet Bills. Go down another pipe. In this large, open area, you will at first not find anything

troubling. But first looks are deceiving; after you swim right a ways, the whole area will fill with ghosts! These ghosts are stationary and will disappear and reappear in new locations every few seconds. Basically, move very slowly and carefully; a ghost will never appear right where you are, but they can appear right next to you. If the way ahead is clear enough, cautiously swim ahead, otherwise tread water. When the ghosts disappear, swim forward a little bit, then stop as they reappear again. Take it very slowly; you'll probably want to get through this section fast, but that is exactly what the ghosts (and programmers) want you to do. This section is one of the most nerve-wracking in the game.

After a long while, the ghosts will stop appearing and disappearing. You'll face two lone Boo Buddies - you should know how to handle these guys by now - and two Boo Circles before you reach the exit pipe. The last section is a free fall. You'll begin with an invincibility star. This is another part of the game with a lot of stuff that nobody in their right minds should get. All you really want is to get to the bottom safely. The best way to do that is to fall in the middle of the screen (in between the blue and yellow Koopas you are falling with) and you should land on a five-block wide platform about halfway down. Get another invincibility star here and plunge down through some layers of coins, some spiked balls, until you reach some water. If you swim down very quickly you can grab some 1-UP Mushrooms before they fall off the screen, but you risk suffering that fate yourself if you aren't careful. There is no goal in sight but there is a strange green orb on a pedestal above the water. Grab it and you have cleared the Sunken Ghost Ship. Great job and enjoy as a huge dragon head rises from the sea like in The Legend of Zelda. Enter and you've made it. You've made it to...

8G. Valley of Bowser

1. VALLEY OF BOWSER 1 - This is the last world, so things ain't gonna be easy. Your reception into the Valley of Bowser consists of this underground stage that is, simply put, a maze. A rather complicated and confusing maze of passages populated by Mega Moles. These guys are all over the place here, and although they are not very bright, they can make sudden dashes at you, so be on your toes. For some unfathomable reason, Mega Moles wear shades, which is VERY odd, seeing that moles are blind...

Anyway, here's the directions through the maze, forgetting all unimportant stuff like dragon coins. The first fork in the maze comes early on. Take the upper path. Leap over the depression and allow it to trap the Mega Mole, then climb the steps. Take the lower path at the next fork, then the upper path at the fork right after it. You'll be in a narrow tunnel blocked by a Mega Mole. Jump onto his forehead, which is difficult because of the low ceiling, and scamper over him. If you're any Mario but small, you'll need to squat jump. This is a nerve-wracking point. After this jump over the gap and use the triangular indentation in the ceiling to safely jump over the Mega Mole ahead. Continue right to a fork; the lower fork leads to the midway gate, while the other fork continues on. You'll come upon a bed of hungry Munchers; luckily a Mega Mole is running back and forth across it (apparently oblivious to the biting mouths below him) and you can ride him across. After that jump the gap (aided by a blue ! block) and you'll find a 3-UP Moon.

Drop down and head right. You'll come to a four-way fork. Take the lower route at the first juncture, then the upper one right after it. You'll come to a dead-end, but see a gap above you. Jump into it and some invisible coin blocks will appear, blocking your path for now but creating a bridge. Backtrack and jump up to the high ledge on the left (you'll need to do a running jump when the Mega Mole charging from the left is on-screen; otherwise he'll plow into you). Then take the upper, then lower path,

crossing the bridge you just created. Your next challenge is jumping out of the way of a mad Chargin' Chuck as he tears up the block wall to get at you, but also creates a path for you. Take him out with three stomps (otherwise he may come at you from behind) and proceed. Dodge another Chargin' Chuck in the same way. Then drop down to the lowest level, walk right, jump over a Mega Mole, allow a Chargin' Chuck to bulldoze a path for you (this one you may be able to jump over and not tangle with) and enter the pipe. DONE!!!

2. VALLEY OF BOWSER 2 - This level is a PAIN, especially if you want to find the secret exit. The first section is mundane enough. Just go right, avoiding Swoopers, and wait for the sandstone blocks to move up before proceeding. After a while of this, you'll pass the midway gate and enter section 2. Now, for the normal exit, I STRONGLY recommend having a Yoshi with you (there's one in Chocolate Island 5) and simply touching the Wings at the outset of this section. You'll be blasted up out of the cave into the world above, get to fly around the clouds a bit, and finish the stage. Then come back and get ready for the tunnel of doom...

SECRET EXIT - This will take a bit of explaining. Come WITHOUT Yoshi (you can't do this part with him; he's too big) and go past the Wings in the second area. You'll come upon a huge wall of sandstone that is really two walls, with a narrow space, big enough for you, in between. It's best if you come here in your small state, so you take up as little space as possible. Basically, get in the space and move right, and DON'T GET CRUSHED as the space moves back and forth. In here there are many solid walls, and if you end up between one of them and a block of sandstone, you will be served with butter and syrup for breakfast. After a while you'll be forced to make mad dashes when the tunnel moves in alignment with the passage you need to go through to get to the next safe spot (a spot which extends all the way to the floor or ceiling, is 'safe'; you won't get crushed there) before being smashed out of existence. It goes on and on like this forever. There are a few spots that are especially nasty, including one where you must duck slide if you are big to get through before being smashed. Planning is essential to figure out where you must be and where you will die if you stay.

After what seems like forever, you'll see the exit pipe to this section, which is one of the most aggravating in the game, but your troubles aren't quite over. In area 3, as soon as you land on the sandstone block below the entrance pipe, it rises... so BOOGIE over to the right, before you get flattened, but STOP when you come to a steep cliff. If you go down there, you can moan in agony, because you can't reach the secret exit. So STOP when you come to the end of the solid ceiling on the edge and wait for the sandstone to rise all the way. Now, jump on the edge of the sandstone that has risen above floor level, and then jump on TOP of the ceiling to the left, off-screen. Run left, past the entrance pipe, to... the key and keyhole. Wow. Note that there is a normal exit here as well, but by using the Wings instead, you avoid going through the 'Tunnel of Doom' part twice.

3. VALLEY FORTRESS - ARRRRRRUCK!!! The smashing pillar things are BACK and even worse than before. There's almost nothing I can say since this fortress requires absolutely flawless timing and dexterity, as you'll be forced to out-dash spiked pillars, then time jumps perfectly to the tune of fast-flying pillars. These often have lava or spikes between them, forcing you to jump at exactly the right time. There are sometimes Podoboos in the lava as well. The only good thing about this fortress is that it is very short, only one area, a straight haul, and there are only about four or five spots that require perfect timing. If you can get through these, you will be fine. Remember that there's nothing much ahead as you get repeatedly turned into hamburger. At the end of it all is the big spinning beast Reznor for the last time. He's not as hard to beat as getting to him is, and once you clobber him, you'll

find the secret back door of Bowser's Castle, a well-earned reward.

4. VALLEY GHOST HOUSE - This is it; it is your LAST ghost house in the entire game. It isn't even that hard, and it's the last time you'll meet your friends the Boo Buddies until you decide to start a new game. There's one big snag, though. This last ghost house has a secret exit, and it's THE HARDEST to get in the game. It consistently takes me ten or more tries to get it to work, and each try is another run through this haunted mansion. Well, enough hysterics, let's begin. Area 1 is short and sweet; it's got a few green bubbles that are fairly easy to dodge as long as you go slowly and don't make rash jumps. Area 2 puts you on a small ledge with a P-Block above you, over a huge chasm. Here's what to do: stomp the P-Block (obviously) and it will make a bridge of ? blocks appear to the right, and also cause the coins to the right to become blocks, allowing you to cross the abyss.

Now, SPRINT RIGHT as fast as you possible can. Run, do not worry about getting hit, do not worry about collecting your reserve item, and dive over the gaps in the block bridge. After a few times at this, you'll get the feel of the gaps and be able to sail over them smoothly, with or without a cape. Once on solid floor, you'll see a tunnel to the right. Run through it with wild abandon. The tunnel is blocked up with coins, which will turn back into blocks when the P-Block runs out, sealing the tunnel. You need to make it at least to the third door in the tunnel; the first and second doors lead nowhere useful. The third and fourth doors both lead to the normal exit. Say adios to the Boos until...

SECRET EXIT - ...you decide you have some free time and are feeling lucky, so you decide to go for this. This secret exit is useless (it just leads to Larry's Castle) but it's one of the 96 and boy, oh boy is it hard to get. It's also the only key and keyhole in a ghost house. First of all, you need to make it to the fifth and final door, not an easy task. If you do make it, you will get a 1-UP. Enter it and take the P-Block you see right. Don't step on it yet. Eventually you'll come to a room with some Boo Buddies and a ? block. Inside the ? block is a coin snake. You need to create the snake, stomp the P-Block to turn the coins into blocks, and use the blocks to create a bridge up/right to an alcove in the top right corner of the room that is accessible through a tiny hole, where the key and keyhole are.

It's going to be so hard you'll feel like giving up, but here's the way I do it. Get the Boo Buddies out of the way by luring them off to the right, then set the P-Block down below and one block left of the ? block. Stand below the ? block, punch it to start the coin snake, and land on the P-Block, next to you. The new block snake will be moving left; quickly jump on the left ledge before it gets there and immediately press up and right. Jump on the block snake and when you land, press up, wait, then press right again. You're creating a stairway of about 3 or 4 block increments, that you can ascend, leading up and right. After a few 'stairs', you'll see the hole. Run the block snake right into the ledge below the hole (this requires you to time press right correctly), jump up, and dive in the hole. For your sanity it is highly recommended that you are small when you do this, to fit without duck sliding. A couple more things. One, make sure the blocks go up in increments of 3 or 4 (5 is too high to jump up, 4 can only be reached with a running jump). Two, the blocks will kill you if you cause them to run directly into you, so be aware of that. Three, this is the hardest secret exit to reach in the game, dexterity wise. Be persistent and GOOD LUCK!!!

5. VALLEY OF BOWSER 3 - A sedate and relatively easy level with few secrets. This level is inside a gigantic cavern, and is actually more of a sky level than a cave level. You'll be riding on 'carrot' platforms, colored identically to those of Chocolate Island 4, but flat, and with numbers. When

you jump on the platform it moves right for 1 or 4 seconds, depending on its number, then drops off the screen. There are several series of these platforms you must ride on, with obstacles like Paratroopas and Banzai Bills, back from Yoshi's Island 1. It isn't that difficult though and you should clear this level with a few lives. It's the only stage that isn't a royal pain in the whole Valley of Bowser! Oh, and in the first half, when you come to two yellow pipes facing each other, stop to go down the bottom one. It leads to a 5-UP bonus room, the last in the game. If you come here with a blue Yoshi, you can fly through the level (stop about midway to change shells) and skip the jumping if you really hate jumping.

6. VALLEY OF BOWSER 4 - This is the last 'normal' level of the game. It's another spelunking expedition. This cavern is full of lava, which has platforms floating in it that will nonchalantly sink into the red brew when you jump on them. The other major threats in this level are the many, MANY 'Chargin' Chucks who will dig up rocks and send them bouncing toward you. They don't move very fast, but you can have trouble with them if you're not careful... once you stomp a Chuck, it will begin its usual, charging attack. There is a pipe that leads to an ice mini-level with a Feather but some tricky jumps, and forces you to backtrack a bit. After this is a vine and a Yoshi block, the last in the game. Hang onto this Yoshi as long as you can - you will get rewarded if you hang on to him to the end. The second part of the level is the same - there is a long plunge through a column of yellow blocks, with a side-tunnel leading to a 1-UP - don't even THINK about going for this one - and then just more lava, sinking platforms, and 'Chargin' Chucks.

SECRET EXIT - This is the only secret exit that is in totally plain sight. The trouble is, the key is enclosed in solid rock! How to get it? Yoshi can reach through solid rock. GETTING him here, since it's at the very end of the stage, is the tricky part. If you lose Yoshi after passing the midway gate, then I'm sorry, you'll need to clear the whole stage and restart it from the beginning.

7. LARRY'S CASTLE - This is it, your last castle, except of course Bowser's Castle. Expect a lot of diabolical stuff here, but thankfully, smashing pillars, Grinders, and other painful things will be absent. The first section is a ride on a moving block platform, like in Roy's Castle. The block platform is much longer, giving you more room to maneuver, but there will be more obstacles, primarily Ball n' Chains, for you to dodge. Shift your position on the platform, jump, and duck, whatever is necessary to avoid a two-close encounter with a whirling mace, and stay on your ride as it slithers through the area.

When it begins to descend into a pit DON'T JUMP OFF! *Stay on the block platform as it descends and you will find a secret midway gate, two dragon coins, and a Mushroom.* This is one of the lowest tricks in the game, but they had the guts to do it. Anyway, the next part is pretty hard, as the Magikoopas are back for the last time. You will face them along with Dry Bones, lava, Podoboos, wooden spikes, and walls of yellow blocks. If you aren't caped, you'll need to wait for the Magikoopas to blast a hole in them for you, which can be quite frustrating, so come here with two capes. Dodge the other obstacles as best you can. With a little luck and pluck, you'll make it to the end, and head into the great door for the last time...

BOSS FIGHT: Larry Koopa. Larry may have flipped from first to last in the order of the Koopalings, but he's still a pushover (perhaps Bowser is overprotective of his youngest son and thus forced him to remain within view of his own keep). Larry is fought just like Iggy (surprise, surprise) except three Podoboos will also be in the room. No matter. Podoboos or no Podoboos, you'd have to be not trying very hard for this fool to top you - just stomp

him twice, when the platform is tilted with the right side down, and he'll fry like all his older siblings. His castle was apparently not well constructed, as Mario doesn't even need dynamite to flatten it. He just chucks the whole keep into Bowser's moat and saves Yoshi's last baby buddy. Before you can bring out the champagne though, there's still the little matter of the big cheese to be taken care of...

8. BOWSER'S CASTLE - This is it, this is the Castle of Koopa itself. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how much you like challenges, this will be it for SMW. There will be no messing around, no extra world a la Donkey Kong Country 2, nothing after this. On the other hand, Bowser's Castle is not to be underestimated; it is rather complex. If you enter through the FRONT DOOR, you will be at the beginning of a hallway with four doors in rooms with numbers (of blocks) of 1-4. Each door leads to a room with a different challenge. Here are the challenges:

#1: A room with scrolling screen, huge brown pillars from the ceiling falling down, plenty of Grinders, and lava pits with Podoboos partially covered by various ! blocks. A very challenging area you'll want to steer clear of.

#2: A very easy area you'll probably want to do. Cross the wire fence ON THE BACK (punch a square section to switch sides) and you'll only have to deal with red Turtles, not the Podoboos. You can even gain a 1-UP by stomping all the Turtles.

#3: A block maze with sections that can be jumped through and Mechakoopas. Spin jump the Mechakoopas to dispatch them; if you stomp them they will be deactivated for a while and thrown around, but remember they can return to their senses and deprive you of yours. There is a 1-UP in the top-left corner of the maze.

#4: A room I seldom visit, since it's rather hard. If I remember correctly, it's got blue blocks with square gray blocks that shuttle between them, and some Lil' Sparkies and Hotheads.

The exit door of each room leads to another hallway with doors numbered 5-8. Here THEY are:

#5: This room can get you done really quickly, but it also has a high probability of leaving you dead. All you need to do is time your dash under the spiked pillars right and you'll zip under them all, as well as the Thwomps. Beware; your margin of error is very small.

#6: Please, PLEASE don't come here, if you are wise. This is a bleak underwater area with Ball n' Chains in nasty positions and other painful stuff, and it's very long.

#7: A short but challenging room, packed with Gargoyles, mostly the usual silver kind but with two even-nastier gold ones as well.

#8: Bowser didn't have time to put anything in here, so he hired the Oakland Raiders to do the job. They can jump around like crazy and fly out of nowhere, but this room is still probably your best bet, especially since there's a green ! block, which will help you defeat the Chargin' Chucks.

All these rooms lead to a darkened hallway. The BACK DOOR entrance begins here. This hallway is easy enough. Hit the red ? block to make a light appear to illuminate your way. This final area has Ninjis, little black blobs from SMB2 who jump for joy until dispatched, and Mechakoopas, Bowser's mechanical bodyguards. At the end is a midway gate if you came through the BACK DOOR, a bridge over a lake of lava, and one, last door...

FINAL BOSS: BOWSER. Yep, you're face to face with that maiden-pilfering dragon himself on the roof of his castle, with lightning flashing in the background. Bowser is too cowardly to fight you face to face after his embarrassing defeat in SMB3, stomping through his own floor, so he'll duel with you inside his latest invention, the Clown Cockpit. The sides of the

Cockpit will not hurt you but the propeller at the bottom will, so avoid it. At first Bowser will do nothing to attack you but likewise you can't hurt him. Then he will stop to throw out two Mechakoopas. Stomp them and throw them at the dragon aviator to hurt him. This is the only way you can damage Bowser and it requires good timing to hit him on the head rather than his Clown Cockpit, which will destroy Mechakoopas on contact. Luckily Bowser only takes two hits before he flies away and you move on to phase 2. However, between phases, fire will fall from the sky; six fireballs will fall and begin to evaporate, then six more will fall. Make a running leap to the left where the fireballs are evaporating and you will be OK.

Princess Toadstool will wriggle free and toss you a Mushroom, then Bowser resumes his attack. Now he will float directly above you instead of floating back and forth. Also, before releasing two Mechakoopas he will twice drop a huge bowling ball out of his Cockpit that will bounce toward you. Like most enormous objects, you can spin jump on it without injury, but jump over it quickly, before Bowser can maneuver his cockpit over and get in your way. Make sure he's near the center when he releases Mechakoopas; if he's near the side of the screen, you may only get one. The Mechakoopas will be harder to aim this time since Bowser will try to fly directly above you, requiring you to run from one side of the screen to the other, jump, and throw the Mechakoopa up before Bowser can catch up to you. Remember that Mechakoopas can revive; don't hold them too long.

After two more hits Bowser will fly away, the falling fire/Mushroom sequence will repeat, and you'll be on to the final phase, where Bowser's Clown Cockpit takes on Satan eyes, and begins plunging up and down, trying to eradicate you. Run under and away from it and when it eventually stops to launch Mechakoopas, grab them and throw them at Bowser. It's easier than it seems because Bowser does move side-to-side with fair rapidity; if you boot a Mechakoopa when Bowser is near you it should hit him. Land two more hits and that's it! Bowser is defeated once again and Princess Peach is yours to plant one right on the cheek again!

Enjoy the ending - it's great!

CONGRATULATIONS ON BEATING SUPER MARIO WORLD!!!

8H. Star World

Star World is kind of like SMW's warp zone. It is not really a warp zone, though. All the Star Roads, except Star Road 5 (which takes you to Bowser's Castle, ONE-WAY) lead nowhere until you clear paths to them in the regular map. Star World is, however, the only place in the game you can get yellow, blue and red Yoshis (except by using the Wings, which turns your Yoshi into a blue one). Each level of Star World has a Yoshi egg. Get it to hatch and feed it five enemies and it'll become a full-grown Yoshi of a different color. These eggs can also be used to earn quick 1-UPS, since they are usually at the beginning of each level. Finally, very important, YOU CAN ONLY ADVANCE IN STAR WORLD BY USING SECRET EXITS! Normal exits count toward the 96, but lead nowhere. This may get you thinking that Star World is quite difficult. Quite the contrary; these five levels are some of the easiest in the game.

1. STAR WORLD 1 - This is THE easiest level in the game. All it has is a huge, HUGE mass of yellow blocks. Spin jump on them and bash your way down, like a human oil well, until you reach the pool of oil (the exit) at the bottom. There are loads of goodies embedded in the yellow blocks, but you need to know where to drop to find them. The only good ones are a Cape Feather and the secret exit. The Cape Feather can be reached by drilling down on the second block column from the left, and the secret exit can be reached

from the far right column. Everything else is junk.

2. STAR WORLD 2 - A water level, this level is important because it gives you two things you will need for Special World: 1-UPS and most important of all, BLUE YOSHI!!! Yes, the little creature who possesses abilities to fly that make him invaluable as a companion is waiting in his egg at the very start, and all you need to do is feed him the Invincibility Star that falls from the sky (it'll plop right into his mouth if you let him hatch) and he'll instantly become full-grown. As for the level itself, when you play it, DON'T let Yoshi eat the Star. Instead, allow it to bounce a few times, THEN take it. This gives you time to reach the ? block, which will generate a second Invincibility Star ONLY if you're still invincible from the first. With that, blaze onward, colliding with as many fishes as you can (you'll rake in about 10 1-UPS) until your Star fizzles out, then proceed carefully. The secret exit is at the end of the 'secret' passage below the normal exit.

3. STAR WORLD 3 - This stage is two screens wide (!) has Lakitu, and a silver P-Block you don't even need to bother with. The secret exit is in the top, hidden part of the stage. To get there: 1) Fly up, with or without Yoshi, with or without shooting Lakitu down first, or 2) throw a purple block up at Lakitu when you can climb up and get in his cloud (super jumping off Yoshi will do it) and ride that up. The whole floor is made of purple blocks; just don't remove your only support. Put simply, there's a ton of ways to get up there!

4. STAR WORLD 4 - A level that at least approaches a semblance of normalcy, this stage is about jumping from ledge to ledge, beating Koopa Troopas up - sound familiar? There are some blue Koopa Troopas, so if you have Yoshi, he can fly for part of the level. The secret exit is near the goal, after the jumping part ends, below the main ledge. To get to it you'll need either blue Yoshi or the Red and Green Switch Palaces activated. Use your cape or a shell to get at the key.

5. STAR WORLD 5 - This level is REALLY hard, so skip the stuff (which includes miles of plunging platforms and a cion-turned-block snake like in Valley Ghost House that you HAVE to ride) by getting a blue Yoshi, eating a shell, and viewing all the stuff from on high. Stop once for a new shell. Soon you'll see a long series of yellow ! blocks in the sky. Land on those, ditch Yoshi for reasons that will soon become apparent, and head right. After a walk over all colors of ! block (you can get up there without all the switch palaces active; just bring blue Yoshi) you will find the key and keyhole that is your ticket to...

8I. Special World

This is the secret world in SMW, the culmination of all your sleuthing and secret exit searching. This world has eight levels, distinguished by a lack of ! blocks, midway gates, and secret exits. All you have to do is make it through these eight levels alive, and you'll find the greatest prize in the game! Sound easy? Well, these eight levels are challenging to the extreme, so prepare to go back to Star World many times to get capes (SW1), blue Yoshis (SW2) and lives (anywhere with quick, cheap lives) and don't get frustrated! These levels are only intended for the most elite gamers out there! You will get a chance to save every two levels. If you wait long enough on the map screen of Special World, you will hear the SMB1 music!

1. GNARLY - Odd that these superhard levels all have variations of the name 'Great!' This first level of Special World isn't so bad, it's actually a pushover... don't get any idea that this is a harbinger of things to come. All you need to do is climb up the left side, up a series of vines and tiny

blocks, then dive down the other side and enter the pipe at the bottom, to find yourself in a new place. Stomp a P-Block, bonk Ernie (Hammer Bro) from below and snatch his platform, then charge right, past a Lakitu, to the goal! Yay! 1 down, 7 to go! BTW, to get those dragon coins below the ledge you come out on, you'll need to enter the pipe in midair as you plunge downward. To do that, lug a P-Block all the way to the top (where you make your big dive), stomp it, and fall down on the far right. Getting a P-Block up there is no small feat, though. If you do it though, walk to the right from the dragon coins to find 3 more invisible 1-UP Mushrooms!

2. TUBULAR - Ah, this is what Special World is all about. You have two options for this stage:

1) Do it the 'normal' way, which means get the P-Balloon in the first ? block you see and float right, avoiding any and all enemies and finding which ? block contains the second P-Balloon. There are about three P-Balloons you'll need to ride right, then you'll reach the goal. Each time, it will be tricky to get to the next P-Balloon in time, so you'll need to hurry - which is exactly what the many Chargin' Chucks, Paratroopas, and Volcano Loti along the way want. This way will usually take 20-30 lives to get right.

OR 2) Get a cape and blue Yoshi. Stomp the P-Block but don't get the P-Balloon. Instead, make a series of difficult running jumps to the right, aiming for tiny blocks, bouncing off enemies, whatever's necessary, until you get to a line of red Paratroopas. While the P-Block is still active, jump on the coins-turned blocks, swallow a Paratroopa, and fly through the rest of the stage. You'll need to fly low and go carefully to avoid the enemies ahead, but you'll have much more control of yourself and be able to move much faster (provided you hold Y down) than with a P-Balloon. You'll still need to hustle, though, to reach the goal before Yoshi gulps down his shell and begins to fall.

Either way, ONE hit from ANY enemy will send you plummeting to an immediate death, which is what makes this level such a pain!

3. WAY COOL - Get on the platform and ignore the first two switches. Avoid the Hedgehogs. Hit the third switch to turn it OFF, then hit the fourth switch to turn it ON. This will bring you to a pipe. Enter and get Yoshi. Exit the pipe. Hit the ? block nearby. Wings!!! Zip off to bonus land and kiss this stage good-bye. For the love of your hide, don't attempt the section to the right of the Wings.

4. AWESOME - Another maddening level that you can 'cheat' with. Get blue Yoshi, eat the rainbow shell at the start, and fly through the first half of the level. When you see a yellow shell on the ground, at the end of the pink terra firma, eat it by getting to the right of it (glide through the narrow space so you don't obliterate it). Then fly right, don't stop for anything, and enjoy the show the enemies will put on below you, and be glad you aren't in. It. If you stop moving right drop down until you can move right. You should make it to the goal. If you're just short, super jump off Yoshi.

5. GROOVY - This level is not even worthy of Yoshi's Island, let alone Special World. It is the level the demo at the beginning of the game is of. Just waltz through, use the crystal block to mow down the enemies ahead of it and score 15+ 1-UPS, then finish the stage carefully. That's it!

6. MUNDO - A water level with a strong leftward current and a water table that rises and falls. This stage is a pushover; just come with two capes and blue Yoshi. There are no secrets worth mentioning and a few nasty spots (primarily dealing with the Amazing Flyin' Hammer Brothers) but nothing horrendous. There are some Koopas, so blue Yoshi can fly through the stage.

Darn it, I need a challenge! Rats, I shouldn't have said that...

7. OUTRAGEOUS - This stage is hard... almost as bad as Tubular. You'll be back in the forest, but it's overflowing with cannons and Living Flames, the latter of whom spread fire all over the place and are really, really annoying. Bring Yoshi and have him become a fire-eater; and dodge the whirling bullets as best you can. You'll need to drag a springboard around to bounce over a super-tall pipe (why was it built so tall?) while bullets fly around you, which is very stressful. Bring two capes and Yoshi, although there are no shells here, so you'll have to tough it out. Amazing Flyin' Hammer Brothers are a pain, but their platforms are necessary to use. Good luck and the sooner this stage is put behind you, the better.

8. FUNKY - Drat, they can't even make THE LAST STAGE OF SPECIAL WORLD a challenge. This stage has a few tough things, like plenty of Sumo Brothers and a nasty time factor (you'll need to eat green apples to add to your timer to finish in time). But that's all immaterial - just take your faithful friend, blue Yoshi, out for the last time, eat a Koopa, and fly on to your destiny. Eat a second shell for more time and you are home free. After you pass the tall yellow pipe, touch down about a screen after it to avoid a last attempt by team Chuck to stop you, and walk right under the words YOU ARE A SUPER PLAYER!! spelled in coins. Get them if you wish, but I don't feel it's right to disturb them and besides, I don't have much time. Dive through the goal and you've beaten SMW 100%!!! Your reward, you ask? Go in that Star Road and find out - I can guarantee it won't be what you think!

9. FAQ

Well, at this time this FAQ/walkthrough is not posted, so I have no 'asked' questions, so I just threw in a couple of questions here that I thought you might be thinking about sending me, so I don't get unnecessary e-mails.

Q: How can I get 96 exits?

A: Well, the main way is to remember that any exit, even a pointless one, counts to the total. This includes all the normal exits in Star World, and other useless exits in the game. Other than that, just be very thorough in completing each world, making sure you have found every single exit.

Q: How can I do well in the Bonus Game?

A: You have to hit the blocks with a rhythm to cause them all to stop on the same object. Stand in one place and hit each block at exactly the same time as it moves above you, in order. It takes practice.

Q: Do the levels that are named after food really resemble the foods in their names?

A: Nope! With the exception of some levels of Chocolate Island, levels bear no resemblance to their food names, i.e., Soda Lake has water that is normal color, and there are no donuts on the 'Donut Plains'. As to why the levels are named after food anyway, my only conclusion is that the foods they were named after were favorites of the programmers who programmed them.

Q: Do you have any Game Genie codes for this game?

A: No. Sorry.

Q: Is there any reward for getting all 96 exits?

A: Other than a star in your file number, no.

Q: I've beaten SMW. What are some ways I can make it more interesting?

A: There are many ways. How quickly can you beat it? Can you beat it without dying? Can you beat it without Yoshi? Can you beat it without using the cape

suit? Can you beat it without ever replaying completed levels, except to find secret exits? Can you find all 96 exits? Can you find all the dragon coins? Can you complete it in one sitting?

Q: I've heard it's possible to kill Koopalings with fireballs. Is this true?

A: Yes, but only three Koopalings - Morton, Ludwig and Roy - can be killed this way. It takes 12 fireballs to do the job. It's only for show, since it's difficult to get to any of these Koopalings with firepower and usually easier to just stomp them.

Q: What's the quickest possible way to beat the game?

A: Play the following levels, using only the secret exit in levels with an asterisk, in order: Yoshi's Island 2, 3 and 4, Iggy's Castle, Donut Plains 1*, Donut Secret 1*, Donut Secret House*, Star Roads 1*, 2*, 3* and 4*, and Bowser's Castle. The downside to this is that you can never replay your file; once you enter Bowser's Castle from Star Road 5 without completing Larry's Castle first, and completed the game, your file can never be used for anything except playing Bowser's Castle.

10. Conclusion

This about wraps up everything I know about Super Mario World. I won't say anything else about it except that it is a great game, brought new things into the Mario series, and was a great first game for the SNES. I hope you get it, play it, and enjoy it for all it's worth.

As far as credit for this FAQ/walkthrough, I have much to give out. Firstly I wish to thank Nintendo for making this game in the first place, as it wouldn't exist without their commitment to making great, fun video games. Secondly, I wish to thank Snow Dragon, who wrote a very good and comprehensive FAQ/walkthrough for this game which I located some secrets from. *Any sentence in asterisks in the walkthrough contains information taken from Snow Dragon's FAQ/walkthrough*. Thank you!!! Finally, I need to give credit to GameFAQs, for continuing to run the best site for video game tips, codes, and reviews on the web.

As for where I'll be heading next, I hope to begin redoing my FAQs for Zelda games (which are antiquated and get a lot of queries) or start a new line on the Donkey Kong Country series.

Adios and good luck with SMW!!!

END