



3DS



### PAPER MARIO: STICKER STAR

#### INFO

Publisher: Nintendo  
Developer: Intelligent Systems  
Platforms: Nintendo 3DS

#### RELEASE DATE

November 11, 2012

#### MULTIPLAYER/ONLINE

Single-player only

#### GENRE

RPG

#### SUITABLE FOR

Gamers who grew up with Mario and feel he's gotten too three-dimensional lately

GAME DETAILS

#### WHAT'S GREAT:

- ♥ Quirky and relevant humor
- ♥ Limited hand-holding
- ♥ Amazing, memorable boss battles

#### WHAT'S NOT SO GREAT:

- ✗ Few incentives to fight common enemies
- ✗ Difficult in ways it shouldn't be

#### CHARLIE SAYS:

Show me another RPG as cute and colorful. *Paper Mario* is always a refreshing change.



#### OVERALL RATING:

4



gamer



# PAPER MARIO: STICKER STAR



Taking the series back to its RPG roots —with a twist • Words: Casey DeFreitas

**T**urn-based battles make a welcome return in *Paper Mario's* first appearance on a handheld. This 3DS game is more than just a rehash of the popular console games—*Sticker Star* maintains fans' favorite parts while introducing completely new mechanics as well.

Mario's adventure begins when Bowser (the reason we can't have nice things) breaks the wish-granting Sticker Comet into fragments which scatter across the land. Kersti, a sticker fairy, accompanies Mario and acts as a guide and commentator. The witty dialogue the *Paper Mario* series is known for is genuinely fun and shines through the otherwise generic plot formula.

The tweaked battle system makes *Sticker Star* stand out. Stickers act as single-use attacks in turn-based battles. Some types of stickers have no effect on certain enemies, so maintaining a variety in your limited album pages is a task in itself. It's sometimes possible to defeat an enemy with less-than-effective stickers, but it's more satisfying to devise the least-wasteful strategy

possible, which is only attainable through trial and error. It's limiting, but this makes the system more challenging and deeper than it appears. There is no grinding, and no experience to earn, so relying on strategy is a must. But this lack of a reward system causes battles to feel redundant and unwanted. I found myself getting frustrated whenever I ran into a common enemy.

The vibe extends beyond battles into puzzles present in every level. More than once, I considered myself stuck due to my lame inability to progress. Other times, I simply didn't know where the game wanted me to be.

*Paper Mario: Sticker Star* is challenging, usually in the best way possible, but getting "lost" shouldn't be a part of a game's difficulty, and common battles should be more than annoyances. The strategy-intensive battle system makes for amazing boss battles, though, and the actual puzzles are rewarding. Its quirkiness adds a uniqueness few RPGs can compete with, all wrapped up in lovable Nintendo-themed flair.



▲ The Baahammer deals damage and puts enemies to sleep, but they recover health during slumber.



▲ Pressing A at the right moment results in a more powerful, and sometimes bonus, attack.

#### HIPSTER KAMEK \\\

Bowser's servant Kamek is a recurring antagonist, but pretty temperamental once Mario defeats him. His awful moods inspire Kersti the sticker fairy to call him horrible names—like "hipster." A nod to the meme or is it just those thick-rimmed glasses? He did ride broomsticks before *Harry Potter*...

