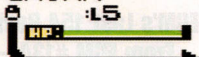


UNKNOWN



SCIZOR
:158♠
HP: 158/186

FIGHT FIGHT
PACK RUN

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Game Freak
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1
Supports: Link Cable, IR Port, Printer
Best Feature: Time aspects
Worst Feature: Repetitive battles
Web Site: www.nintendo.com



Nintendo may have kept the same underlying gameplay for Gold and Silver, but they also made enough adjustments and improvements to make them worthy follow-ups to some of the greatest-selling games of all time. Yes, you spend most of the game watching turn-based battles rage back and forth between two cute critters. Yes, you are a young scamp out to be a great Pokémon trainer, aided by a friendly professor and hated by a jealous rival. You still find wild critters in the grass and catch them in Pokéballs, still take them to the Pokémon center to get healed, still shop for items for them at Pokémarts in almost every town. So what exactly is different? First and foremost, the games add another layer of depth by keeping track of the time and date, with certain events only occurring on certain days. It's cool to be wandering around at night and see things or people that

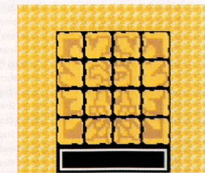
TAUROS 113♠



QUILAVA 130♠



QUILAVA
used EMBER!



There are a few of these tile-sliding "puzzles" in Gold and Silver, but still nothing very challenging.

weren't there earlier in the day. Pokémon can also now equip items, which they can use to power up their attacks or heal themselves with in battle. This gets rid of you always having to waste a turn to use items yourself, and also adds another level of strategy to battles—which Pokémon will you give which items to? Overall, the interface is more refined and better organized as well: You can tell what abilities HM and TMs have without using them, and all your items are separated and stored according to type so you can get at whatever you need quickly. As in the first games, all the new Pokémon have been ingeniously designed and named, each with its own interesting quirks and backstories. Other new features, like the Pokégear cell phone and radio, really make it feel like something is always going on, and the game world is always on the move and changing, just like the real world. All in all, it's pretty safe to say that anyone who liked the first game has the next 60 or 70 hours on their GBC booked.

In addition to a whole new map, with new cities, dungeons and routes between, Gold and Silver include a slightly modified version of the entire first game. It's a huge quest, even if you don't "catch 'em all."



FUCHSIA CITY
POKÉMON GYM

If you despise all things Pokémon, I don't have the time or space here for a full argument on why you should give them a try—I'll just say they are much more than cute little kid's games. Sure there's a ton of reasons why Gold and Silver are better than the first set of Pokémon games, but admittedly they don't make enough of a difference to change anyone's mind. In other words, if you liked the first game, you'll like the sequel. If you didn't, you won't. The whole concept—everything aspect of the game has been expanded tenfold—besides all the new creatures, there are items you get by trading Pokémon, people who only appear on certain days, Pokémon that only appear at certain times, new ways of evolving Pokémon, and enough other tiny secrets and hidden techniques to make your head spin. Needless to say, being the kid who knows everything about Pokémon just got a lot harder. My complaints are the same I had with the first game—combat is repetitive and happens way too often. Puzzles are practically nonexistent, and progress still relies mostly on "go here, talk to him, and get that." Also, if you import your old Pokémon, the game is way too easy. Still, the graphics (including attack effects) are improved and the sound is excellent, including little Pokémon voices and catchy tunes. And since the old game is included (with a few differences) after you beat the new one, it's also a great value. **Mark**

Behind the marketing and hype that made Pikachu and friends a billion-dollar franchise, there's always been a great game. Gold and Silver take Pokémon to the next level. The thing that's different this time is that, if you want it to—it will take over your life. 24/7. It's a game that's only as deep as you want it to be. If you find yourself waking up early just to catch a Ledyba, you've caught the fever. Graphics are some of the best I've seen on the GBC—a testament to how big a difference real color makes. Even if you've never touched a Pokémon game, Gold and Silver is a great place to start. Refined gameplay, new monsters, new gadgets...couldn't be better. **Chris**

I liked the original Pokémon Red and Blue as much as the next guy (well, except maybe Chris Johnston, that Pokéfreak), but I gotta say I dove into my Gold and Silver review with a certain amount of dread. After all, I'd collected a couple hundred Pokémon before, and doing it all over again, going through another thousand button-mashing battles, seemed like a chore. But Game Freak packed Gold and Silver with so much new stuff—more sidequests, real-time gameplay, tons of perks for trading with others, red-hot Pokésex—that I can overlook the same ol', same ol' drudgework. This is the only Game Boy game you'll need for a long, long time. **Chris**

| VISUALS | SOUND | INGENUITY | REPLAY |
|---------|-------|-----------|--------|
| 9 | 9 | 8 | 7 |