

For Christmas one year, Steve and I got a Super Nintendo, which at the time was the latest video game system along with Sega Genesis in stores. With the console we got the Mario Kart and Super Mario World, and a few other games. We must have played it for 500 hours straight, right through New Years until school vacation was over. The game console would get hot enough that we would have to shut it off for 20 minutes at a time just so it would cool down. One day, while playing Super Mario World, Nonno inquired about the game.

"What game is this? Can I play it?" he asked. I told him it was Super Mario World, saved my game, and handed him the controller. For those who played this game and have a good memory, before the game actually started, a caption would show for about 1/8th of a second reading "Mario Start!" before the actual game would begin. "What did that say?!" Nonno asked. "What the hell does 'Mario start' mean? What do I do?"

I explained that it meant nothing and that the game had begun. "Okay, what do I do now?" he asked. I explained that you had to hit the right arrow button to make Mario move forward, and the left arrow to make him go backward. He pressed the right arrow and Mario moved forward.

"What the hell is that?" Nonno asked when a walking mushroom came on screen. I explained that it was one of the bad guys, a "Goomba" that you can only kill by jumping on top of it.

"Why isn't he jumping?" he asked. I noticed Nonno was hitting the up arrow key, which doesn't do anything. "Hurry! Press B" I said. "What is 'B', where is it?"

It was too late, the slow-moving Goomba had walked into Mario, thus killing him and ending the game.

"Forget it, I'm gonna go read the paper".