

SHINING FORCE 2

• Mega Drive • £49.99 • Release: September • Sega •

Big Tag alert!

Ever wondered what a tag is? It illustrates the surroundings of one of the towns in an informative and attractive way. It's constructed by taking several grabs and then linking them all together. A BIG tag now follows...

All the buildings can be entered at will - much like this poor person's hovel, illustrated here.

Weapons and health potions are the order of the day here. Much like a cross between a health food shop and Toys 'R' Us.

At the church you're able to save your game, make a confession or sing off-key.

This hag greets you. She probably thinks the war's still on and tries to hide under the stairs every time a car alarm goes off.



Don't be soft... 'ave a fight!



The shaded areas represent the places where you can move to. Then it's down to the serious matter of some pugna.

Nowt wrong with fighting. Especially when there's loads of you, and you know spells and everything. I've raved about the fighting sequences in the text, so these pictures should give you a better idea of what's going on.



You then go to this screen to see the consequences of your actions.



You start off here. Not of any real interest, only that it's the start of the game and it's a poor excuse to fill up my quota of screen grabs.

Although it may sound like it's a new cleaning fluid, Shining Force 2 is really an RPG...

So, you thought RPGs were only for spoddy amurak types? Wrong! Not when the RPG in question is *Shining Force 2*.

This RPG creates a very believable world in which you lead an ever-growing band of mistis around a large map. You start off in the town of Graustiel and from there the story takes you around the

...where this is a shot of you wandering around the main map or you've suddenly grown in size by a ridiculous amount.



world with more twists and turns than a bag full of eels.

When we reviewed the first *Shining Force* game in issue 44, we gave it 88%, and not much has changed since then. *Shining Force 2* is identical to the first game in the way it plays and controls – only the size of the map and the plot have changed.

All the combat sequences are simple to operate, interesting and well-planned. Each player has a certain amount of spaces to move in, and a series of actions to perform. (Magic, use object or attack.) The screen then moves to an animated screen to show the effect of your actions.

Is the game too easy? Possibly, and that'd have to be the game's only stumbling block. If you're a hardened adventurer with magic coming out of every orifice, you'll probably cruise through this in a couple of days. But for the average gamer, the game is large and challenging enough to keep you playing.

What is it that makes *Shining Force 2* so good in comparison to, say, *Operation Europe* (reviewed last issue). I mean, they're both role-playing games with small

Ah, I remember when you could nip down the shop and buy a double-headed axe and all the trimmings with only 40 grots in your pocket and still have change.

sprites running about. The difference is that *Shining Force 2* is easy to access, fun to play and isn't bogged down with rooms of statistics. Hardcore RPG-ers can play endless heavy strategy games on the PC as much as they like, but a game like this is perfect for the Mega Drive. Light, simple to get into and damn fine fun to play. Highly recommended.



Don't talk to him and if he offers you anything for a bag of sweets, please say no. He's a very confused man.

This screen gives you all the stats you'll need for each of the characters. This one's me and aren't I a youthful chap? (Nothing at all like in real life, you understand, though. – Simon)

	NAME: Simon L.V. 100 HP 100/100 EXP 100 STR 10 INT 10 AGI 10 DEF 10 MDEF 10 RING: NONE WEAPON: SWORD ARMOR: NONE JEWELS: NONE SLOTS: 8 STATUS: OK
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Of course, in the old days, church services meant resurrecting the dead, curing boils and saving your game. Um.

Shining Force 2

- ▲ Simple controls
- ▲ Huge game
- ▲ Involving plot
- ▲ Great combat system
- ▼ Too easy for hardened RPG-ers

Graphics

8

Sound

6

Addiction

8

Lifespan

7

Power points

Release date September
 Players 1
 Levels Loads
 Difficulty Easy
 Sega (071) 573000

Final verdict

"At last! Another RPG you won't be ashamed to be seen playing. Playable, simple and addictive."
 Dean

90 Percent