

**Game Title:** Resident Evil 2 (1997)    **Platform:** Playstation 1



### **Introduction**

Resident evil 2 lies in the genre of survival horror. The game is a sequel to the highly successful Resident Evil. The player must make his/her journey through numerous locations whilst solving puzzles and surviving against mutated creatures. The player is able to equip themselves with a variety of weapons, however, ammunition is limited. The game comes across more as an interactive movie than a computer game.

### **Main Competitors:**

Silent Hill was the big competitor for RE-2. It was a similar type of game where you had to survive against monsters in a ghost town. The controls were similar, the game play was similar and the interface is similar. However, the two games have completely different stories that obviously make them feel like different games.

Silent Hill is more disturbingly frightening where as RE-2 makes you jump a lot more. In Silent Hill, you can tell when something scary is coming. E.g. the eerie music builds up and up until the enemy appears. In RE-2, loud bangs and crashes are used to make you jump a mile! You can't predict when something's going to scare you in RE-2.

Resident evil's enemies consist of real life forms that are infected. Silent Hill's enemies are made up of monsters and never seen before creatures.

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### Control Layout and Gameplay

- △ Cancel previous action
- Run
- Access the status screen
- × Action button/Opens doors/Attack
- Start Button** - Starts game/Pauses game
- Select Button** - Access option mode from gameplay
- Directional button** - Selects mode (Title screen), Moves character
- R1 Button** - Draws weapon



The controls can be quite tricky when you first play the game. However, 5-10 minutes is all you need to get used to them. The control system makes you feel like you're controlling a vehicle rather than a human. Instead of turning around 180 degrees, the character must walk in a small semi circle (however, this may be because of the animations rather than the controls). Overall, the controls are fairly easy.

The gameplay in RE-2 is very similar to the original. Basically, you fire at monsters and solve puzzles. This can be done with one of two characters. Each character has its own diverse storyline. They both start off with different items which causes certain puzzles to be carried out in different ways. Certain weapons are only available for certain characters. Also, the player will meet a different group of people with each character. Even though the changes in the storyline are only minute, it keeps the player in suspense of what's going to happen next. The option of selecting separate game routes adds a lot of playability to the game.

Resident Evil 2 contains quite a lot of puzzles. Some easy, some hard. You don't have to spend all of your time shooting zombies. The main object of the game is to survive so it is sensible to maintain your ammo for larger/harder enemies (dodging the zombies is required).

A new 'head tracking' system was brought into this game. The player will know if there is an object or an enemy in the room because the character will keep looking at it. The health/energy system is also shown to the player through the characters body actions. The character will walk

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slower or limp depending on how much he/she has been injured. To heal yourself, green, red or yellow herbs are needed. The more you combine them, the more you get healed (more original than just normal health packs).

RE-2 uses unique, fixed camera angles that add more tension to the gameplay. You can only see certain parts of the rendered scene. They offer blind spots for enemies – the zombies could be waiting to pounce on you from these areas. RE-2 is full of eerie sound effects that help maintain the games horrid story plot.

### STORY AND CHARACTERS



The story in RE-2 is a continuation from RE-1. In RE-1, a mutagenic virus (the T-Virus) was secretly tested on humans in a mansion owned by Umbrella corporations. The virus's original purpose was to mutate organisms into lethal biological weapons. However, there was a fault in the virus which transformed humans into zombie like creatures. These savage beings basically intended to mutilate any living thing they saw.

Two months later, the virus has now found its way into Raccoon city (transported by rats in the sewers). This is where this game begins. The whole cities population is now infected by the virus – both humans and animals. As the virus spreads, our two main characters are heading into the city.

Leon S Kennedy is the male protagonist in this game. Shortly after graduating from the police academy, Leon was assigned to the Raccoon City Police Department.

As Leon travels to the police station on his first day on the job, he passes what looks like a dead body on the road. He steps out of the vehicle to investigate when all of a sudden, numerous zombies are now heading towards him (including the 'dead' guy). This is where Leon comes face to face with the T-Virus and is introduced to the game.



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Claire Redfield was a student before the T-Virus incident in Raccoon City. After the mansion incident in RE-1, Claire's brother (Chris Redfield – the protagonist from the first game), has gone missing. Her investigations to find her older brother led her to the contaminated area of Raccoon City. At the start of the game, we see Claire being attacked by zombies shortly after she arrives there. However, she is quickly reclaimed by our other protagonist – Leon Kennedy. In order to find safety, they both head for the police station. As they travel to their destination, an infected truck driver crashes into their car. The aftermath of the crash blocks them off from contact with each other.

These two characters now face a difficult path in the city. They must battle numerous zombies that roam the city in order to escape from the infected hell hole. What they do not know is that there is something much more thrilling than zombies waiting in the darkness...

### Level Example



*These maps have been manipulated slightly to relate to our research  
(See references for original maps)*

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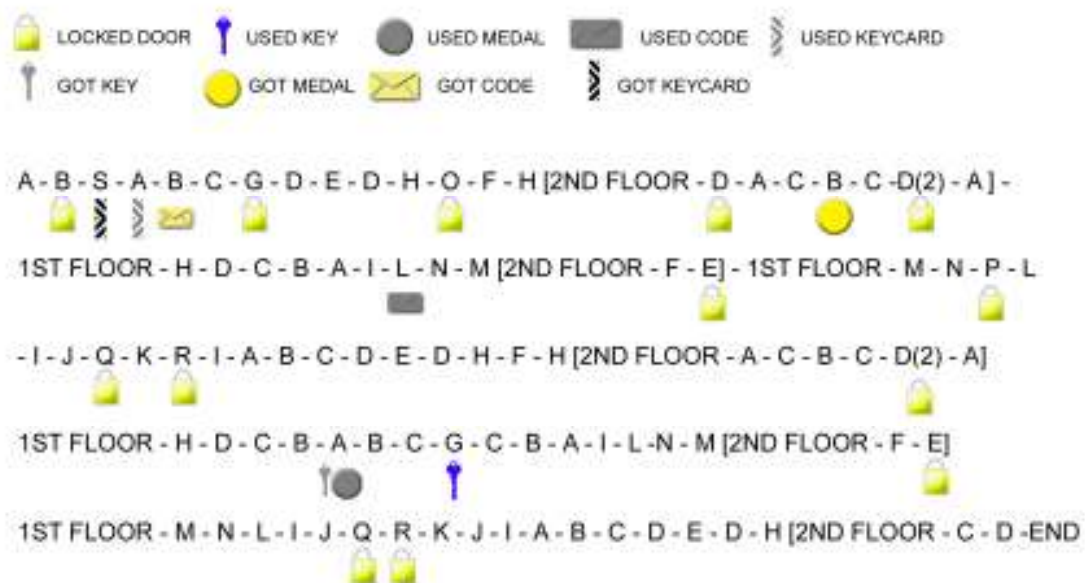
Here we are taking a look at the first section of the Police Station (from the main hall to the library). This is near the beginning of the game.

As you can see, the Police Station is quite a large area. It has a lot of rooms that all need to be explored in order to gain access to other parts of the station (upstairs, basement etc). Certain corridors/rooms are filled with zombies and slightly harder enemies. Remember, this is an early stage in the game so the enemies shouldn't be too hard yet.

The Station requires the player to carry out certain puzzles. These consist of challenges like: finding a combination for a locked safe, searching for special keys to open certain doors and a few logic puzzles.

When this game was first played, notes were taken to see how many times the player went through each room/corridor in order to finish the first area of the police station. Obviously, the player doesn't know exactly where to go because he's never played it before.

The results of the notes look something like this.



This looks quite confusing at first so here's an explanation. Each letter is a room on the maps above. The symbols underneath the letters show you what happened inside that room or if you tried to get into that room (lock means the entrance was locked etc). All of the letters were tallied up to see how many times we went into certain rooms.

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Here are the results.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Room	Times Entered
A	6
B	7
C	7
D	8
E	3
F	1
G	1
H	6
I	6
J	3
K	2
L	4
M	4
N	4

Average amount of times entered = 4.4 - Rounded off = 4

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Room	Times Entered
A	4
B	2
C	5
D	1
E	2
F	2

Average amount of times entered = 2.6 - Rounded off = 3

So, as you can see, there is a lot of backtracking throughout the game. Look at room D for example. The player passed through this room 8 times! Nobody wants to keep running through the same room/corridor. It's boring and more importantly, annoying (especially when certain puzzles need to be carried out). This may lead to the player leaving the game.

Another backtracking example is the medal puzzle. Look where the medal was found on the notes. Then look at how long it took the player to actually work out where it needed to go. The player passed through 38 rooms before he actually solved the puzzle. That's just too much.

### **Strengths**

Apart from overall good gameplay, Re-2 has a number of strengths that make the game memorable and addictive. One of the main points is the shock factor in the game. The scene you're in could be empty with quiet music playing in the background. All of a sudden, there is a loud crash/bang and there are a load of enemies charging towards you. This adds a lot of tension to the gameplay. The player is kept on high alert and is always immersed in the game.

The sound plays a big part in RE-2. As stated above, the loud noises help with the shock effects in the game. Also, the background music itself helps to create a frightening/eerie atmosphere.

The game can be played by two characters. This adds playability value to the game. Once you've completed the game with one character, you can then follow the journey of the other. Also, if you have a saved game on a memory card with Leon, when you load a game with Claire, Leon's actions will be noticeable in the game (and vice versa). E.g. if you take bullets out of a cabinet with Leon, when you go to get them with Claire they will be gone. This makes you believe that the 2 characters are in this mission together and that you're not just playing the same game twice with different characters.

Damage system – You can tell if the character is hurt by his/her body language.

### **Weaknesses**

Obviously, the main weakness of this game is the constant backtracking (stated above). Another big weakness in this game is the backpack that you can carry items in. It only allows you to carry 8 items (which isn't a lot considering all of the items in the game). Also, the size of the object doesn't effect how many items you can carry. Example, say you've picked up a key but there aren't spaces left to store it; you need to take an item out to put it in. Wouldn't a key be able to fit in a pack somewhere? Of course it would! Anyway, so then you take out an item that's 10 times the size of the key (shotgun), but you're only allowed to put in one key (not 10). This can be very annoying to the player and is rather silly to put it simply.

Something that adds bad gameplay to the game is the fact that you can only push objects – you cannot pull them. If you push something into the wall by accident, you cannot pull it back out,

it's stuck there. You need to leave and re-enter the room for the object to return to its original place. This makes the puzzle tedious and repetitive for the player if they make mistakes.

Another weakness which is noticeable in most games is that weapons can't open doors. You have to spend ages trying to find a key for a wooden door that could be blown to pieces with the shotgun hanging over your shoulder.

### **Ways in which game can be improved:**

The game contains some puzzles that seem to be out of place with their environment. Example, one room in the police station contains 3 large statues, a pressure activated lever (on the floor) which releases a nice shiny ruby (that a statue is holding). You wouldn't expect that to be in a station would you?

Also, some items seem to be placed in odd places; bullets in a library, spotless cans of first aid spray in dirty alleyways and small plant pots (herbs) in the corners of almost empty rooms. This takes away some of the believability from the game. It just seems rather random and a bit strange to find these items in these places.

All of the weaknesses and ways of improvement will be considered when the concept document is created.