

## Video Game Review: Fun ‘Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 10, 2011 - 11:16am

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CHICAGO – Disney’s “Phineas and Ferb” is one of the most clever cartoons on the air right now, but that didn’t mean I wasn’t completely dreading the newest video game tie-in, “Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension,” now available for PS3, Xbox 360, and Nintendo Wii, and timed to tie-in with the hit movie that premiered this week on the Disney Channel. Not only are kids games notoriously horrendous but it’s completely common for titles based on TV shows or movies to be nearly unbearable. Just because the source is brilliant doesn’t mean the game will be. Ask anyone who’s played most of the DreamWorks Animation or Pixar tie-ins of the last five years.



And so, I’m happy to report that “Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension” isn’t half-bad. It looks good and has a few camera issues — graphic/visual weakness and dodgy viewpoints are common problems in kid’s games — but, more importantly, it attempts to recreate the anything-goes fun of the show on which it’s based. “Phineas and Ferb” is a show about two boys with endless imaginations and the developers of the game tried to capture that when they were making it instead of just offering a cheap tie-in for a market that often isn’t too discerning. The game still has its issues and is remarkably easy even for a kiddie title but it’s much better than I was expecting and should more than satisfy fans of the show and its already-legendary characters.



Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension  
Photo credit: Disney Interactive Entertainment

At its core, the show “Phineas and Ferb” is about the boundless imagination of little kids. The concept is that every day of that golden time between the last day of school before summer vacation and when you’re forced to go back to the kiddie version of jail must be used to its fullest advantage. With incredibly-smart writing, “Phineas and Ferb” is one of the most imaginative family programs on the air. It’s clever, fun, and consistently entertaining. I’m not ashamed to say that I’ve watched it even when my kid’s not in the room or stopped paying attention. I think I actually enjoy it more than he does.



Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension

Photo credit: Disney Interactive Entertainment

Naturally, a game based on a show about the power of imagination has a higher standard to live up to in that it better be pretty damn imaginative itself. "Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension" is more goofy than clever with decent level design and weapon choices that play up the fun aspect of the show without quite living up to the intelligent level of its writing. It's got a silly sense of humor and playfulness that at least runs parallel to the tone of the show even if it doesn't quite fit snugly on the same creative level.

The plot is simple and kind of thin. The title characters travel through a portal opens by Dr. Doofenshmirtz's otherdimensionator and find themselves battling enemies and solving puzzles through various new worlds like one filled with gelatin and another that looks like "Steamboat Willie." The level design is far-more-interesting than most family games and is arguably the most accomplished thing about the title. The actual gameplay is pretty repetitive and uninspired but I was consistently interested in where the boys would find themselves next.

Another reason the "Phineas and Ferb" game beats its competition is variety of weaponry. At one point, you're carrying a gun that shoots baseballs and at another you're using a gadget to turn a platform. Most kids games fall victim to repetition but "Second Dimension" features a wide enough variety of gadgets and even playable characters (you can choose a different line-up, including the awesome Perry the Platypus, before each level) to keep it consistently fresh.

While it's mostly-fun, there are some common problems to the family game genre including some awkward camera work, too-easy enemies, and over-simplified puzzles. "Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension" often feels like it plays even younger than the audience of its hit show. It could have been a bit more complex, especially some flying levels that require little more than holding down the shoot button to progress through them. The developers underestimate the gaming ability of the show's fans.

But it's a minor complaint. "Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension" is a surprisingly enjoyable title, one with a few of the common glitches of the family game genre but nowhere near as many as average. Like the show on which it's based, it's smarter and more fun than you might expect.

*'Phineas and Ferb: Across the Second Dimension' was released by Disney Interactive Entertainment and developed by Renegade PR. It is rated E (Everyone). The game is available for the Nintendo DS & Nintendo Wii, but the version reviewed was for the PS3. It was released on August 2nd, 2011.*



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