BUBBLES INVASION

INSTRUCTION MANUAL



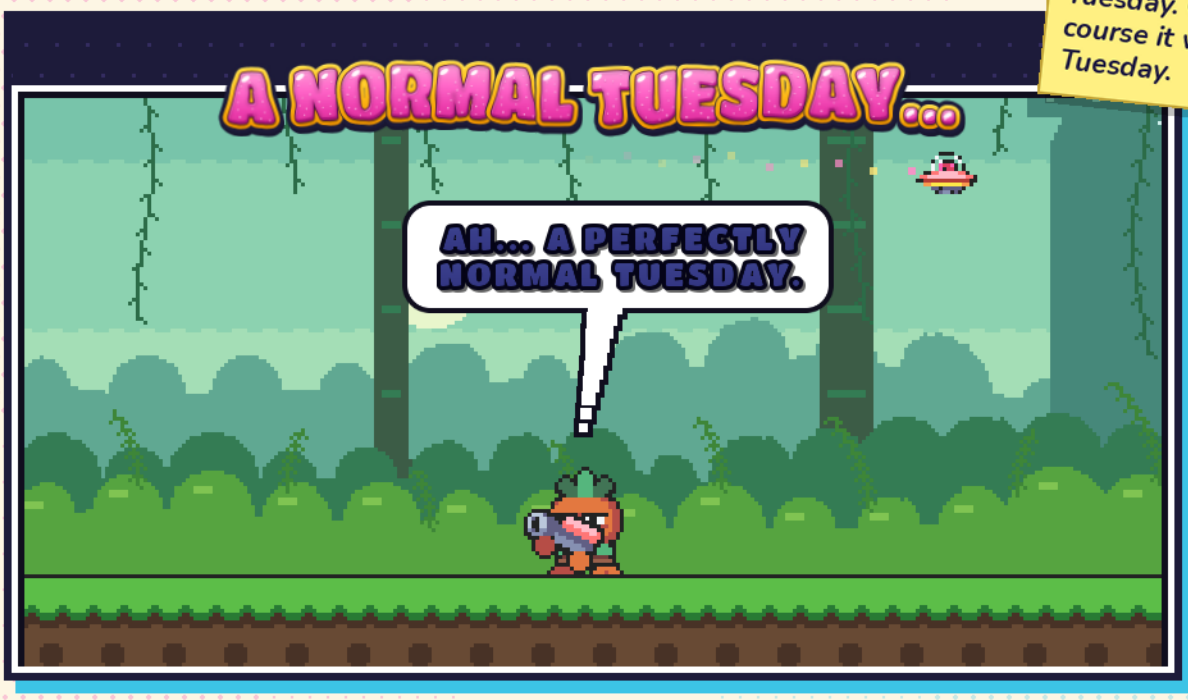
GSD INTERACTIVE

1–2 PLAYERS • CO-OP & BATTLE • WINDOWS • MACOS • LINUX

THE STORY SO FAR...

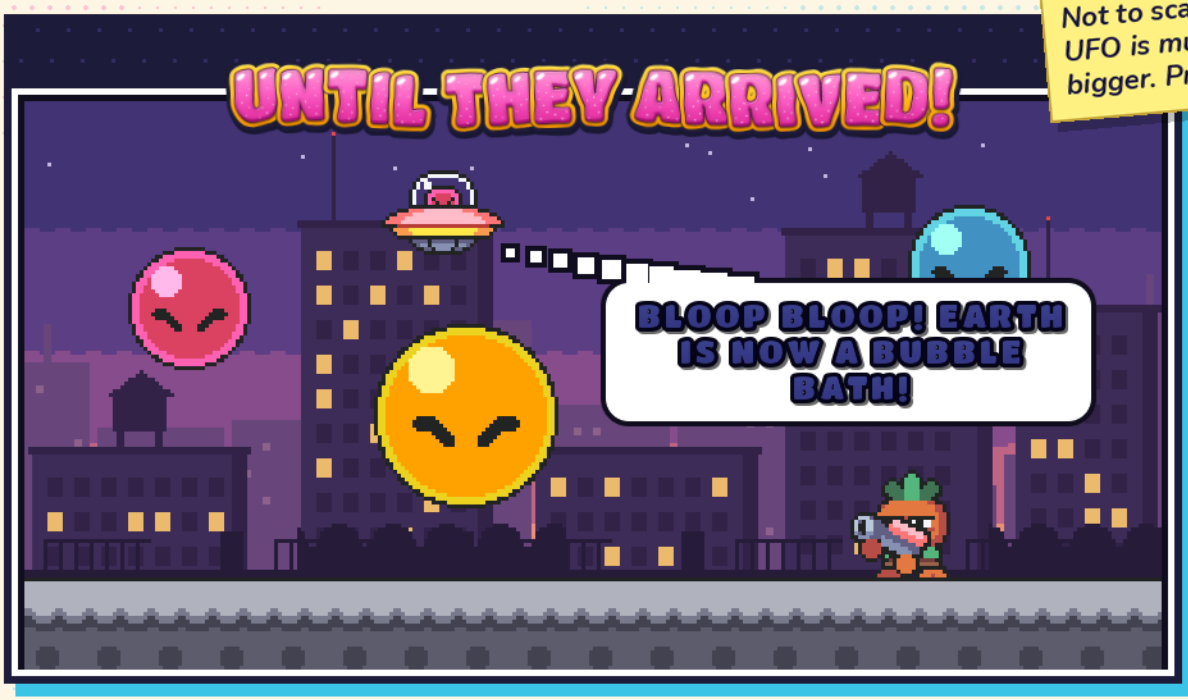
TOP SECRET • FOR HEROES' EYES ONLY

EARTH. A small blue planet, third from the sun. Population: eight billion, give or take a carrot. Nothing ever happened there. Absolutely nothing.



Tuesday. Of course it was a Tuesday.

*Then, from the cold depths of space, came a ship so vast it blotted out the sun. At its controls: the dreaded **EMPEROR BLOOP**.*



Not to scale. The UFO is much bigger. Probably.

To be continued... turn the page, brave reader!

THE STORY SO FAR...

TOP SECRET • FOR HEROES' EYES ONLY

Without a word of warning, the invaders unleashed their terrible weapon: giant, bouncing, unstoppable BUBBLES. Tanks bounced off them. Generals wept into their maps.

Actual footage of Earth's defences: not pictured.



So one brave carrot grabbed the bubble gear and took the fight all the way to the Moon. And somebody else came running...

2-player mode: because popping is better with a friend.



Somewhere in orbit, Emperor Bloop is very, very annoyed.

GETTING STARTED

WINDOWS • MACOS • LINUX • ITCH.IO

1 GET THE GAME

Bubbles Invasion arrives on itch.io on **Saturday 24 October 2026**, for **Windows**, **macOS** and **Linux** on the same day: **gsd-interactive.itch.io/bubblesinvasion**

2 UNPACK AND PLAY

No installer, no .NET install: everything is included. **Windows:** unzip and run **BubblesInvasion.exe** (SmartScreen warning? **More info** > **Run anyway**). **Mac:** pick **Apple Silicon** or **Intel**. **Linux:** unpack the .tar.gz and run **BubblesInvasion** (or **chmod +x** it first).

3 FIRST LAUNCH ON A MAC

macOS asks you to confirm the game once. **macOS 15 or newer:** open it once, then System Settings > Privacy & Security > **Open Anyway**. **macOS 14 or older:** right-click > **Open**. Still stuck? See **README_MAC.txt** in the download.

4 PRESS ENTER

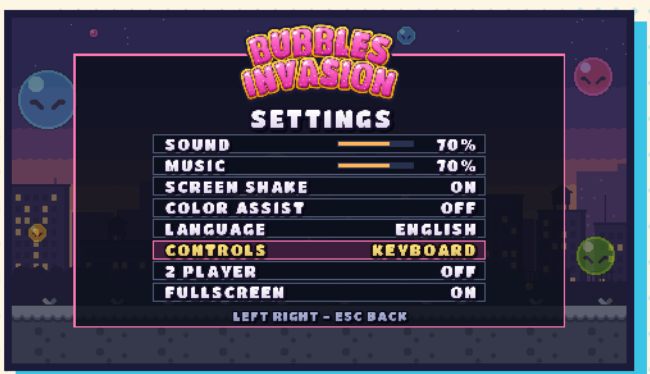
On the title screen, press **Enter** or **Space** (or **A** on a gamepad), then pick **keyboard** or **gamepad** (change it later under SETTINGS > CONTROLS). The comic intro plays by itself the first time; later you pick **SHOW STORY** or **SKIP STORY** (skip is preselected).

5 START GAME

Choose a stage on **SELECT LEVEL**; new stages unlock one by one and the **BONUS** stage **HALLOWEEN NIGHT** is always open. The first time you play stage 1, a small card shows your own controls. Your progress saves itself after every stage you clear.



THE MAIN MENU



SETTINGS

MAIN MENU

START GAME • **BATTLE** • **PANIC MODE** • **LEADERBOARD** • **SETTINGS** • **CREDITS** • **QUIT**
SETTINGS: separate **SOUND** and **MUSIC** sliders, screen shake, **COLOR ASSIST**, language, controls, **2 PLAYER** (co-op) and fullscreen



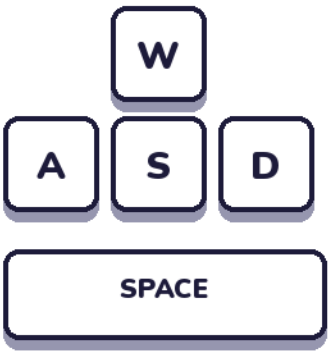
PIP SAYS:

Grown-ups call this 'reading the manual'. We call it 'loading the brain'.

CONTROLS

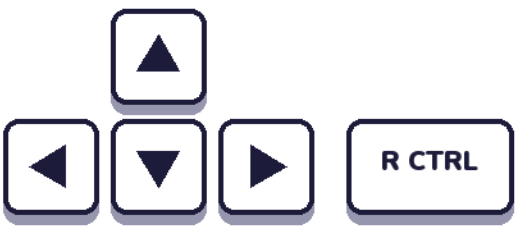
KEYBOARD • GAMEPAD • 1 OR 2 PLAYERS

PLAYER 1 (PIP)



A / D walk left / right
W / S climb ladders up / down
SPACE shoot
Playing alone? The **arrow keys** work for player 1 too.

PLAYER 2 (POP)



Arrow keys walk and climb
Right Ctrl shoot
F2 add or remove player 2 during play

GAMEPAD

D-pad or left stick walk and climb
A, X or RB shoot
Start pause menu / resume • **B** or **Back** when paused: quit to SELECT LEVEL
The **first gamepad is player 1**, the **second is player 2**: press **Start** on the second pad to bring in player 2. In menus: **A** confirms, **B** goes back.

ANY TIME

Esc pause menu: RESUME, RESTART STAGE or QUIT TO MENU. **Esc** again (or QUIT TO MENU) takes you back to SELECT LEVEL.
M mute all sound • Menus: **arrow keys** + **Enter** (the mouse works in menus too)

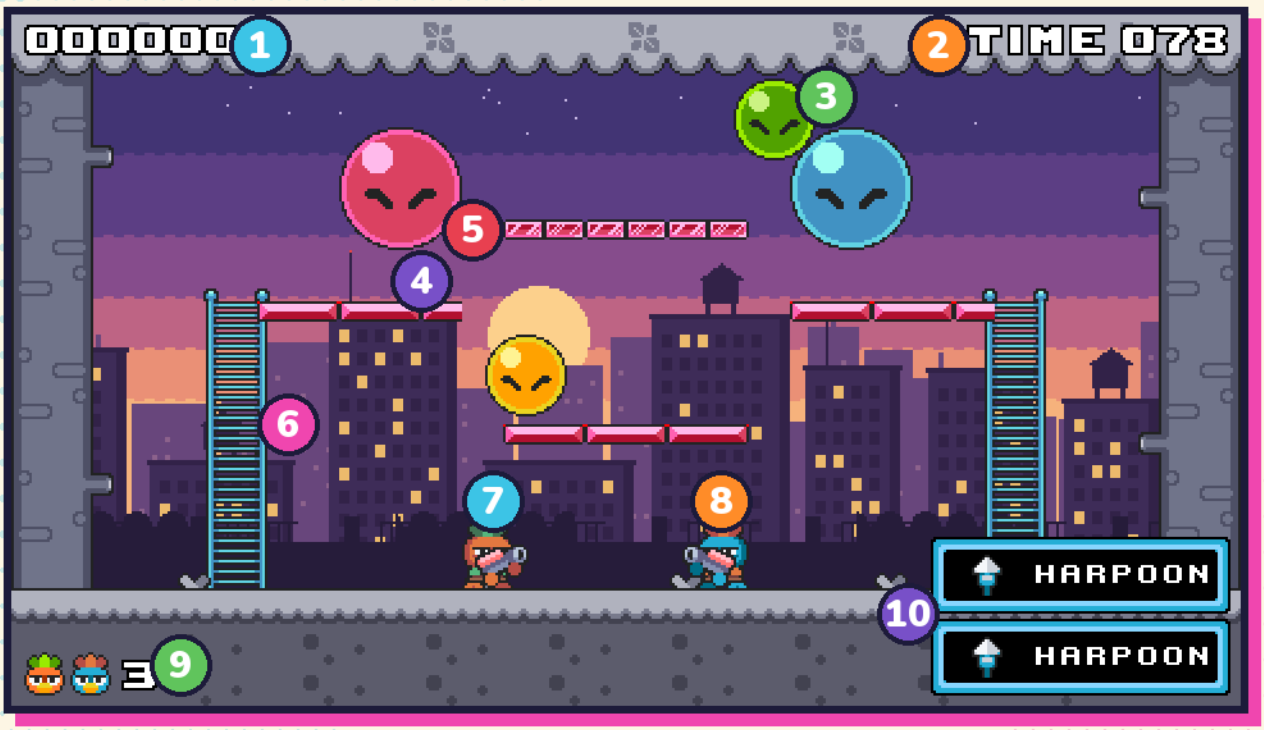


POP SAYS:

One fire button. Endless possibilities. Mostly popping.

THE PLAY SCREEN

KNOW YOUR BATTLEFIELD



1 SCORE
Your team score (both players add to it).

2 TIME
Seconds left in this stage.

3 BUBBLES
Pop them all to clear the stage. Each hit splits one into two smaller ones.

4 PLATFORMS
Solid ledges to stand on. Your shots fly right through them.

5 GLASS PLATFORM
Only glass and the ceiling stop your shot. Glass shatters!

6 LADDERS
Climb up and down to reach other floors.

7 PIP (P1)
Player 1, with the harpoon cannon.

8 POP (P2)
Player 2, in co-op.

9 LIVES
Shared by both players.

10 WEAPON
Each player's current weapon.



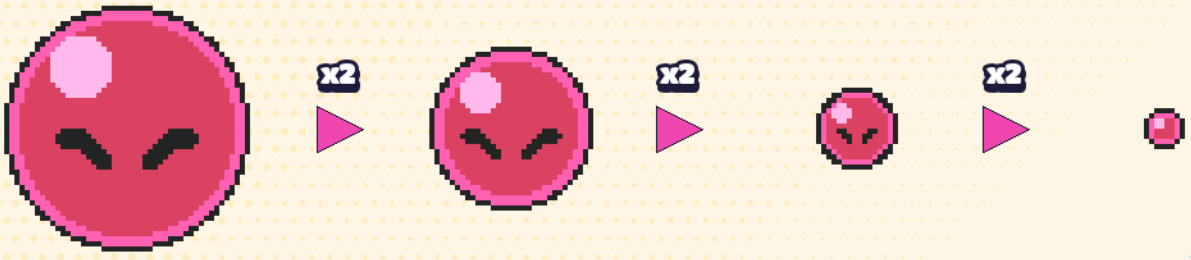
PIP SAYS:

Screen shown: a real 2-player stage in the city. The bubbles are real too. Very real.

HOW TO PLAY

POP • SPLIT • REPEAT

Shoot every bubble before the time runs out. Hit a bubble and it **splits into two smaller ones**. The smallest ones simply pop. When the last bubble is gone, the stage is clear!



GIGANT 100 PTS | **BIG** 200 PTS | **MEDIUM** 300 PTS | **SMALL** 400 PTS

COMBOS

Pop bubbles less than a second apart and your **bubble points** multiply: x2, x3... up to **x8**. Each player has their own combo.

COINS

Popped bubbles drop coins worth **10 points** each. Grab them before they blink away!

THE CLOCK

Every stage has its own time limit. At 15 seconds the **HURRY UP!** banner appears and the music speeds up. If the clock hits zero, it's game over.

LIVES

You start with **3 lives**, shared by both players. Touch a bubble and you lose one, unless you're wearing a shield. A **1-UP** gives you an extra life.

STAGE CLEAR

Every whole second left on the clock adds a **TIME BONUS** of **50 points**. Finish with half the time left for **3 stars**, a quarter for **2 stars**; any clear earns 1 star.

GAME OVER

Press fire to retry the same stage with **3 lives**; your score carries on. A **top-10** score asks for your name first, then takes you to SELECT LEVEL. You never have to start again from stage 1.

REPLAY

Play any unlocked stage again from SELECT LEVEL, starting with score 0 and 3 lives. Your best stars and best score are kept.



PIP SAYS:

Small bubbles are worth the most points. Size isn't everything!

THE HEROES

EARTH'S LAST LINE OF DEFENCE

PIP



PLAYER 1. An orange carrot with a harpoon cannon and absolutely no fear of bubbles. Likes: popping. Dislikes: popping without a harpoon. Pip fires straight up, climbs ladders and never, ever skips leg day.



WEAPON: harpoon cannon
SPECIAL MOVE: shooting straight up
FAVOURITE DAY: any day but Tuesday

POP

PLAYER 2. The blue one with the red-orange leaves. Pop joins for **local co-op** (one screen, shared lives, shared score) or races Pip in **Battle**, a split-screen showdown. Friendship has never been so bouncy.



WEAPON: harpoon cannon
SPECIAL MOVE: arriving just in time
FAVOURITE DAY: co-op day





PIP SAYS:

Pip and Pop: the best of buds.

THE INVADERS

KNOW YOUR ENEMY



EMPEROR BLOOP

Supreme ruler of the bubble fleet. Flies a pink saucer, laughs in bloops. Plan: turn Earth into one big ball pit. Weakness: sharp objects. His fly-by saucers (pink or blue) zip across the top of the screen: shoot one for **2,000 points**.

THE BOSS UFO

A giant UFO that hovers over the arena and drops bubbles on you. It guards **stage 11 (UFO ATTACK)** and returns, tougher, in **stage 25 (FINAL BOSS)**. At half health it gets angry: it gets faster and drops more, sometimes bigger bubbles. Defeat it for **5,000 points**.



THE BUBBLES



RED

Hot-headed. Bounces first, thinks never.



BLUE

Cool, calm and deeply annoying.



GREEN

Jealous of the other colours. Pops just the same.



YELLOW

Sunny smile. Sinister plans.

Four sizes: **Gigant 100**, **Big 200**, **Medium 300**, **Small 400** points per pop, before combos. The colour is just for looks: size decides points, bounce and splits.

WEAPONS & POWER-UPS

GRAB THEM BEFORE THEY BLINK AWAY

WEAPONS



HARPOON

Your standard shot: fires a line straight up. One on screen at a time.



DOUBLE HARPOON

Two harpoons on screen at once.



STICKY HARPOON

Sticks to the ceiling for 2.5 seconds, popping anything that touches it.



GUN

Rapid-fire bullets instead of a harpoon.

Lose a life or start a new stage and you're back to the plain harpoon (and any shield is gone).

POWER-UPS



1-UP

One extra life.



SANDCLOCK

+20 seconds on the clock.



TIME STOP

Freezes the bubbles (and the boss) for 5 seconds. Frozen bubbles still hurt!



SHIELD

Takes one bubble hit for you. Gone when you lose a life or the stage ends.



TNT

Pops every bubble on screen once. Big ones still split!



WEAPONS

Double harpoon, sticky harpoon and gun drop as power-ups too.

About **35%** of popped bubbles (medium size and up) drop a power-up, and now and then one falls from the sky. Each one you grab is worth **50 points**. They last **12 seconds** and blink for the last 3, so be quick!



POP SAYS:

Time stop freezes the bubbles, not the clock. Pop fast!

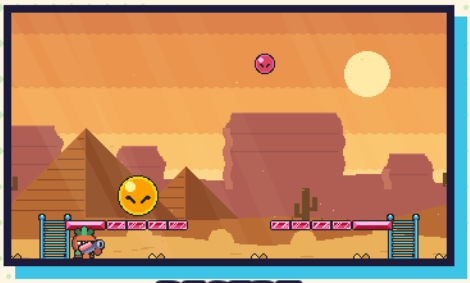
THE WORLD

25 STAGES • 9 SETTINGS • 1 BONUS STAGE



FOREST

1 Training Level
6 Deep Forest
11 UFO Attack
24 Ancient Woods



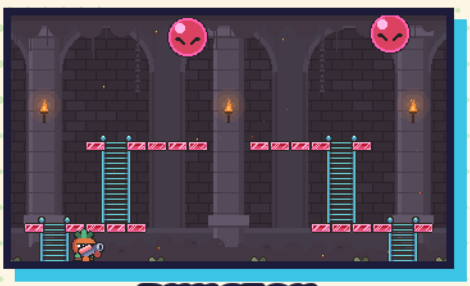
DESERT

2 Desert Dunes
7 Scorching Sands
16 Lost Oasis



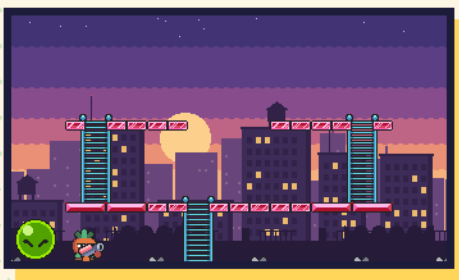
SNOW

3 Frozen Peaks
8 Ice Caverns
17 Glacier Pass



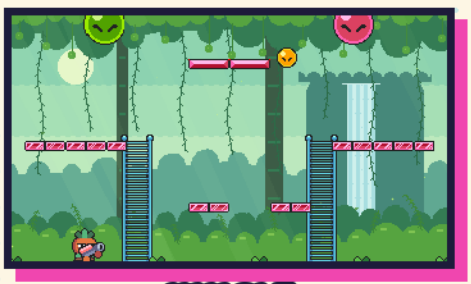
DUNGEON

4 Dark Dungeon
9 The Catacombs
20 Deep Vaults



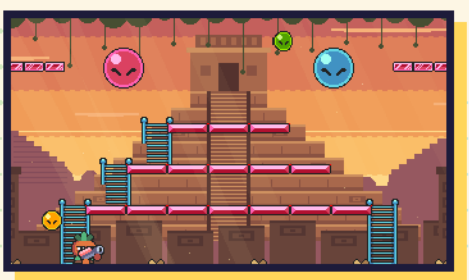
CITY

5 City Streets
10 City Rooftops
22 Neon District



JUNGLE

12 Wild Jungle
18 River Rapids



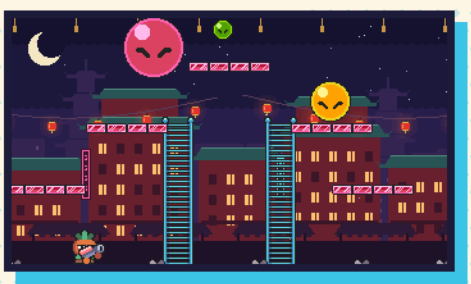
MAYAN TEMPLE

13 Temple Steps
19 Sun Pyramid



MOON BASE

14 Moon Base
21 Dark Side
25 Final Boss



CHINATOWN

15 Chinatown Nights
23 Dragon Gate



BONUS: HALLOWEEN NIGHT

Always unlocked. A **witch** replaces the UFO: shoot her for **2,000 points** and a **candy** that works as a shield. **Ghost bubbles** float right through glass!

HINTS & TIPS

FROM THE BUBBLE ACADEMY

1. The bigger the bubble, the higher it bounces. Small ones stay low but are worth the most: **400 points** each.
2. Pop bubbles less than a second apart to build a combo on your bubble points, all the way up to **x8**.
3. Shoot the UFO that flies across the top of the screen for **2,000 points**.
4. Colours hard to tell apart? Switch on **SETTINGS > COLOR ASSIST** and every colour gets its own mark.
5. A **sticky harpoon** stays on the ceiling for 2.5 seconds: park it where the bubbles bounce.
6. **TNT** pops every bubble once, so big ones turn into more, smaller ones. Get ready to dodge!
7. Save time for stars: keep at least half the clock for **3 stars**.
8. When HURRY UP! flashes, a **sandclock** buys you 20 seconds.
9. In co-op you share lives. Teamwork makes the bubble pop work.

DESIGNER'S HINT

"Don't try to pop everything at once. Split one big bubble, deal with the small ones, then move on. A calm carrot is a living carrot."
- the designer, who has lost many carrots



PANIC MODE

Pick **PANIC MODE** in the main menu, then **SOLO** or **CO-OP**. One empty arena, the **double harpoon**, no power-ups, no clock: the bubbles just keep coming. Every pop fills the **rainbow bar**; a full bar means the next **LEVEL**, and faster bubbles.
A rare **special bubble** switches between **clock** and **star** every time it bounces. Hit the clock to **freeze** everything; hit the star to **pop every bubble at once** (fills the bar, no points).
3 lives each. Solo, a hit restarts the level; in co-op you share the bar. Clear **level 99** to win! Your best runs go on their own **PANIC MODE** leaderboards.



POP SAYS:

Replay any unlocked stage to beat your record: your best stars and score are kept. 75 stars to collect!

BATTLE

2 PLAYERS OR VS CPU · SPLIT SCREEN



HOW TO START

1. Pick **BATTLE** in the main menu, then **2 PLAYERS** or **VS CPU**. Against the CPU, choose **EASY**, **NORMAL** or **HARD** with **Left / Right**.
2. Pip picks **3 stages** on SELECT LEVEL: any unlocked stage, even the same one twice (the boss stages and the bonus stage sit this one out). **Esc** or **B** undoes a pick. **G**, **Y** on a gamepad or a click turns **GARBAGE** on or off.
3. Race! Pip plays the left half, Pop (or the CPU) the right half.

THE RULES

- **Best of 3:** the first to win **2 rounds** wins the match. Both halves get the same stage with the same bubbles.
- Pop every bubble first to win the round. Get hit and your half **freezes for 2 seconds** (no lives to lose here), then you blink for a second.
- **Time up?** Whoever popped the most wins. A dead heat replays the stage as **SUDDEN DEATH**: the first hit loses.
- **Garbage:** a combo of **x3**, **x5** or **x7** sends a small bubble to the other half after a short warning.
- No score, coins, power-ups or fly-bys in Battle, and it never touches your progress or the leaderboard.

CONTROLS

The same keys as co-op: Pip **A / D**, **W / S** + **Space**; Pop **arrow keys** + **Right Ctrl**; or a gamepad each. **Esc** or **Start** pauses both halves: RESUME, RESTART ROUND or QUIT TO MENU. After the match: **REMATCH**, **NEW LEVELS** or **MENU**.



POP SAYS:

Best friends, best of three. Then best friends again. Probably.

CREDITS

THE BUBBLE BUSTERS

GSD INTERACTIVE

Netherlands, since 2013

gsd-interactive.nl • informatie@gsd-interactive.nl

GAME BY

Erik Grunschel

TOOLS AND ASSISTANCE

The Box Crew

AI DISCLOSURE

The game: AI-assisted code (incl. code-generated sound).

SPRITES

Albi Lico (@alb_pixel) - alb-pixel-store.itch.io

BUILT WITH MONOGAME

Thanks to the MonoGame team!

FONTS

Titan One by Rodrigo Fuenzalida (SIL Open Font License 1.1)
Fusion Pixel Font by TakWolf (SIL OFL 1.1), in the game
Nunito by The Nunito Project Authors (SIL OFL 1.1), in this manual



LIMITED WARRANTY

(A JOKE. PLEASE DON'T SEND LAWYERS.)

1. COVERAGE. GSD Interactive warrants that every bubble in this game is 100% poppable.

2. EXCLUSIONS. GSD Interactive is not responsible for bubbles popped in anger, high-fives that miss, or friendships tested during 2-player mode.

3. CARROTS. No real carrots were harmed. Several pixel carrots were bounced on quite a lot.

4. ALIENS. Any resemblance to actual intergalactic emperors, including Emperor Bloop, is purely coincidental. Bloop.

5. TIME. The HURRY UP! banner is not a legally binding deadline. The clock, however, is.

6. SIDE EFFECTS may include humming the music, saying "POP!" out loud, and an urge to play just one more stage.

7. CLAIMS. To file a claim, pop the bubble in question and write your complaint on a sticky note. Then pop the sticky note.

8. TUESDAYS. GSD Interactive cannot guarantee that any Tuesday will remain perfectly normal.

9. LIMITATION. Our total liability is limited to one (1) bubble, slightly used.



THIS PAGE IS A JOKE AND NOT AN ACTUAL WARRANTY.



POP SAYS:

I read the whole page. I feel very legal now.

BUBBLES INVASION



25 STAGES • 9 SETTINGS • 2 BOSS FIGHTS

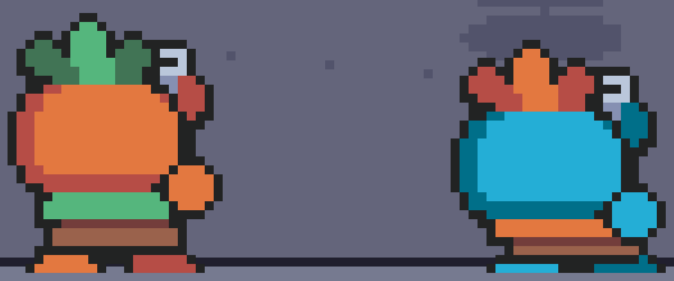
+ BONUS STAGE: HALLOWEEN NIGHT

1–2 PLAYERS • LOCAL CO-OP & BATTLE

WINDOWS • MACOS • LINUX • ITCH.IO

SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2026

gsd-interactive.itch.io/bubblesinvasion



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