

Mega Man 3

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General Information

Route Information

Mega Man 3 has 4 routes that have been used over the years. Each has its advantages and disadvantages as far as difficulties go, but most finish within a reasonable amount of time of each other.

Top First

The old (pre 2012?) and now current (2017?-present) WR route is

1. Top
2. Shadow
3. Gemini
4. Needle
5. Magnet
6. Hard
7. Snake
8. Spark

The key features of this route:

- Top takes 2 damage from buster
- Gemini takes 2 damage from Shadow
- Needle gives Rush Jet for Magnet Man's stage

The primary downside of this route is it is EXTREMELY mash heavy. You will need to use buster on Top Man's cats and the middle section of Needle Man's stage.

Magnet First

Briefly a WR route in 2015-2017, the Nintendo Power Magnet First route is a beginner friendly and extremely race viable route.

1. Magnet
2. Hard
3. Top
4. Shadow
5. Gemini
6. Needle

7. Snake
8. Spark

Similar to Top First, Magnet takes 2 damage from Buster, and you will have Shadow as a soft weakness for Gemini.

The bad difference is you will need to navigate the Yoku Blocks of Magnet Man's stage without utility items, and you will not have Shadow Blades for the Hard Man first screen bees. On the bright side, you will have Magnet Missiles for Top Man's cats and Needle's stage.

Gemini First

The early 20-teens WR route was Gemini first.

1. Gemini
2. Needle
3. Spark
4. Magnet
5. Hard
6. Top
7. Shadow
8. Snake

This route has an eye on getting Rush Jet early; Gemini is a much more possible Buster fight than it appears with some practice.

Downsides include Gemini not having a buster weakness, and Spark not being as fast to kill with a soft weakness as Gemini Man (since there are two Gemini Men to do damage to). You also lose access to Rush Marine as a backup in Gemini.

The bright side is you have Rush Jet for a few more stages. You can skip the Yoku blocks in Magnet, and potentially use Rush in Shadow if desired. You'll also have access to the 2 E-Tanks from Gemini Man's stage immediately.

Needle First

An adventurous few go to Needle First for immediate Rush Jet. This route is less recommended than the other three, but can be fun.

Doc Robot Notes

Since you have all weapons for all of the Doc Robot stages, the route does not matter. You may want to look for stages with either more resets to do first (to get to the reset faster), or for more E-

Tanks (if you're just looking to survive).

All About Rush

All About Rush

Rush Damage Transfer

Shoot with Rush out (coil, jet, probably marine), switch weapons, the bullet does the damage of the weapon you switched to (like Top) even if you have no ammo in that weapon.

Rush Despawn

When watching most "top level" runs, this is most visible in Snake Man on the screen after the first Snake Midboss.

Rush (Jet And Coil) will despawn if, while sliding, you press Start.

Despawning Rush is primarily useful to reduce lag by getting Rush off the screen. It is hypothetically useful if you need to reposition Rush as well.

All About Rush Jet

- Rush Jet ammo/energy only gets used while Mega Man is on Rush. This is (some of) why players often jump on Rush Jet a lot.
- As with most things in this game, more sprites on the screen results in more lag. This is why in Snake and Doc-Needle, when Mega Man jumps to save ammo, we also jump off the top of the screen - one less sprite to draw.
 - When Mega Man jumps off the top of the screen, whether because of Rush Jet or Coil or something else, his hit-box screen wraps. This can result in
 - getting hit by enemies at the bottom of the screen (Doc-Needle Parashu)
 - collecting drops at the bottom of the screen (large energy drops, E-Tanks, enemy drops)

Screen Wrapping Items and Enemies

Technically not unique to Rush, this is most often experienced while riding Rush Jet or using Rush Coil.

When Mega Man goes off the top of the screen, his Y-coordinate "wraps". This makes it possible to grab items low on the screen while jumping off the top of the screen.

The easiest place to see this is in Doc Needle over the chasm. Position Mega Man on the Rush Jet over one of the large drops at the bottom of the screen, and full jump. Mega Man will collect the bottom of the screen drop.

This has a few effects.

- Collecting drops is usually considered a slow down, so space your jumps appropriately to avoid them.
 - You may want to collect something on purpose, like the E-Tank in the water in Gemini Man's stage using Rush Coil off the top of the screen.
- You can also collide with enemies near the bottom of the screen! Usually parashus and Dragon Flies in Doc Needle.
- You can manipulate the dragon fly enemies in Doc Needle to fly to the bottom of the screen if they track Mega Man's vertical position while you are off the top of the screen.

General Techniques

Or at least the non-Rush ones

Music Cancel

Why Cancel the Music?

Mega Man 3's soundtrack, while amazing, generates lag. By removing the background music, the game simply runs faster.

Technique

By taking a spike death on the exact same frame as a screen transition, the "Mega Man dying" sound also causes the background music to stop.

This can be done in

- Doc Shadow (reliable)
- Dos Spark (50/50 or 75/25)

Other locations nobody goes for it

- End of Doc Gemini (no known setup, saves frames)

Other Music Cancel Locations

These use other one-off techniques of canceling music, at least partially for the same desired "no music = less lag" effect.

1. Gemini Man - The Proto Man skip

Stop Hating Top Spin

Seriously. This weapon is much better than you think, it just has one major glitch that you can avoid once you know about it. It's actually quite powerful, just not as fast as other weapons in most situations for a speed run, mostly because at its core it's a melee weapon.

Avoiding Losing Top Spin on Shadow Man

Or, really, any boss with invincibility frames.

The problem is Top Spin triggers just about every frame it thinks it can hit an enemy. For Shadow Man, if he has invincibility frames, this means you get to watch the weapon ammo meter drain across 27 frames doing no damage.

The fix is very simple - just don't use Top Spin into invincibility frames. This goes for Shadow and Doc Heat.

Be Ready To Get Bumped Left

This is mostly noticed during the falling "Parishus" at the end of Shadow Man's stage.

Mega Man tends to get bumped left when killing an enemy with Top. Keep this in mind when trying to make tight jumps.

Boss Weaknesses

Weakness Order

Mega Man 3 has 2 weakness loops

- Magnet > Hard > Top > Shadow > Spark > Magnet
- Snake > Gemini > Needle > Snake

There are 2 soft weaknesses to "cross over" between the loops (at least 2 that are relevant to the speedrun routes), along with the two robots that take extra damage from buster.

- Spark takes 2 damage from Needle
- Gemini takes 2 damage from Shadow
- Magnet and Top both take 2 damage from the Buster instead of only 1.

Weak Against Themselves

Most bosses are weak against their own weapon. Not as dramatically as our dear friend Metal Man, but enough that almost any robot's own weapon is a viable backup in refights. (Notably, Gemini Man's refight is routed to use Gemini Laser against him)

Gemini Man

Proto Man Skip

The Strat

Speedruns of Gemini Man's stage often jump through the Cutscene screen.

By sliding onto the screen, the game does not remove control of Mega Man...until the slide ends. Use this slide distance to jump (**before** the slide ends) through the building and down the pit.

The building does not actually have a hit box, so just jump through it. No extra tech needed, just pretend it doesn't exist.

Why Do This?

1. Skipping the cutscene all by itself is just faster
2. By skipping the cutscene, it also stops the Gemini Man music in favor of the Proto Man whistle. This consumes significantly less memory, causing the game to run faster as long as there is no music.