

# Is Beedrill Good in Gen 3 and Gen 4? - Pokemon Competitive History

In Pokemon Red and Blue, Beedrill was a quick evolving, but relatively underwhelming Pokemon. It had a below average dual typing with Bug and Poison, and no good moves besides Normal-type attacks which had to be learned through the use of TMs. But, in Generation 2, with the release of Gold and Silver, Beedrill gained considerable Special Defense and a brand-new Poison-type move with Sludge Bomb.

In this second of three installments, we take a look at Beedrill's evolution through Generations 3 and 4 of Pokemon. Unfortunately, Beedrill was one of many Pokemon not available in Ruby, Sapphire, and Emerald. Weedle, Kakuna, and Beedrill were only available to catch in Fire Red and Leaf Green, so they required trading over to the other games.

This would even be the case in Generation 4. You can't catch Weedle, Kakuna, or Beedrill normally in Diamond, Pearl, or Platinum. It's one of several Pokemon requiring Fire Red or Leaf Green inserted into the Game Boy Advance slot of the Nintendo DS. In this case, you needed to insert Leaf Green, where you could then find a Weedle on Route 204 South.

Fortunately, Beedrill would gain some ground to keep up with the many new Pokemon released over these two Generations. In fact, it would be better in Generation 4 competition than ever. Let's see how the changes between Generations affected Beedrill, much of it for the better.

## Did Beedrill gain any moves between Gen 2 and Gen 3?

While Beedrill may have still been a below-average Pokemon, its stat boost and improved moveset meant that it gained a bit of ground over its Generation 1 status. Unfortunately, Generation 3 didn't offer much to Beedrill outside of a couple new moves and an ability. One of these attacks was Endeavor, a move that brought the opposing Pokemon to the same amount of HP as Beedrill. Considering that Beedrill has only 65 base HP, this was a useful move, especially in combination with Substitute or Endure.

Generation 3 also brought with it the advent of Pokemon abilities. Sadly, Beedrill only got Swarm, which while not a bad ability, isn't the most exciting. This Ability means that at one-third HP or lower, Beedrill's Bug-type moves are powered up by an additional 50 percent. Unfortunately, all Beedrill has which can take advantage of this ability is Twineedle and perhaps Hidden Power Bug. So, technically speaking, Swarm is an upgrade. But, as Sludge Bomb is still its most powerful move, Swarm is basically just a nice as-it-comes-up bonus.

Beedrill also gained TM access to a new Fighting-type move called Brick Break. It's a 75 base power Fighting move which also has the benefit of breaking through an opponent's Reflect or Light Screen. By this time, screens like this lasted 5 turns for the opponent's entire team, whereas in Generation 1 they only protected the user. In Gen 2, Reflect and Light Screen doubled the team's Defense or Special

Defense respectively. In Gen 3, however, it simply cut incoming damage in half, Reflect doing so for physical moves and Light Screen doing the same for Special moves.

## What was a good moveset for Beedrill in Generation 3?

Beedrill in Generation 3 did have some variance in its best moveset, depending on the role you wanted it to serve. [Smogon University lists three roles Beedrill could fill](#), albeit in the lowest of competitive tiers. These roles included Choice Band (named for a new held item Beedrill could use fairly well), Endeavor user, and Swords Dance sweeper.

Choice Band is a powerful held item that's still used in Pokemon today, which gives that Pokemon's physical Attack a 50 percent bonus, but it's limited to a single move. A Choice Band Beedrill moveset would look like this:

- Sludge Bomb
- Hidden Power (Bug or Rock)
- Brick Break
- Double-Edge / Twineedle

The idea here is that because of the held item, you don't need to set up with Swords Dance in order to sweep. However, you're locked into whatever move you choose until you switch Beedrill out. Those movesets that didn't include Hidden Power Bug would use Twineedle over Double-Edge. Hidden Power Rock covered two of Beedrill's big weaknesses in Fire and Flying. Brick Break could do massive damage to Normal, Dark, Ice, Rock, and Steel types, many of which were rather common by this point. Tyranitar, for example, is Dark and Rock.

The second build of Beedrill involved a familiar Swords Dance moveset, which looked somewhat like this:

- Endure
- Swords Dance
- Hidden Power Bug
- Sludge Bomb

This moveset relied heavily on being able to set up with one Swords Dance, then use Endure on the next turn to guarantee a Swarm activation to power up Hidden Power Bug. These Beedrill also took advantage of some of the new Berries that came with Generation 3. These are the Liechi Berry, which powers up the holder's Attack by one stage when at  $\frac{1}{4}$  HP or less, and the Salac Berry, which does a similar thing but for Speed.

The hope is that Beedrill survives long enough to get to +3 Attack with an activation of Swords Dance and the eating of a Liechi Berry, or +2 Attack and +1 Speed with the Salac Berry. At this time, you could take advantage of super-charged Sludge Bomb from the Liechi Berry and Swords Dance buff, or an additional

Swarm buff with Hidden Power Bug. This combination of powering up, along with same-type attack bonuses, could make Beedrill a surprise sweeper. The issue, though, as noted by Smogon University's Fire Red/Leaf Green era writeup, is that without Endure, Beedrill likely won't survive long enough to both set up and sweep.

This is where Beedrill's third potential competitive build emerged, with Endeavor. This Beedrill moveset looked like this:

- Endeavor
- Substitute / Endure
- Hidden Power Bug
- Sludge Bomb

These Endeavor builds of Beedrill also would hold either or a Liechi or Salac Berry, hoping to benefit either the Berry activation and/or Swarm to deal big damage with Sludge Bomb or Hidden Power Bug. But, this Beedrill has the option to use Endeavor to bring the opponent down to as little as a single HP. This was a decent way to deal with bulky Pokemon like Wigglytuff, or Pokemon that would resist Beedrill such as Swalot, Tangela, or Piloswine.

Unfortunately for Beedrill, it became significantly outclassed by Raticate in the Endeavor role, which enjoys a much better move pool. We'll actually talk about Raticate's evolution in Pokemon over the years in a future installment of this series. But, for now, it's sufficient to say that Gen 3 was kind to Beedrill, but it wasn't enough for it to remain relevant in a competitive sense.

### How Good is Beedrill in Fire Red and Leaf Green?

In this "Is It Good" series, we're looking at Beedrill with balanced perspective, considering not just this Pokemon's competitive chances, but also whether this is a good Pokemon to play with in general. Keep in mind that in the Fire Red and Leaf Green remakes of the Generation 1 games, you were limited primarily to Gen 1 Pokemon, with some exceptions. In those games, some Generation 2 and 3 Pokemon would emerge in those games, but mostly in the post-game.

Beedrill is much better in Fire Red and Leaf Green than in Red and Blue. After all, it has the benefit of both the Swarm ability and its much-improved move pool. A Beedrill with Sludge Bomb, Twineedle, Swords Dance, and Endeavor is a perfectly good Pokemon to play through Kanto within the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. However, in Fire Red/Leaf Green, players also had the benefit of evolving their Golbat into Crobat through friendship. The much faster and powerful Crobat is a much better teammate overall than Beedrill.

Still, overall, Generation 3 gave Beedrill a new lease on life, and I'm sure more than a few of us played with a Beedrill at one point or another; unfortunately, I never played much with Beedrill until Let's Go Eevee, which we will get to eventually, for reasons that will be shared in the final installment of our look at Beedrill. I always preferred Crobat, because it was still easy to get, and Poison/Flying is just a better overall type.

## How Did Beedrill Evolve in Gen 4?

Generation 4 brought a major shake-up to the Pokemon world when Game Freak decided to split every damage dealing move in the game into physical and special regardless of its type. Through Generation 3, Physical and Special moves were still segregated purely by type. Physical moves were moves that had these types: Normal, Fighting, Flying, Ground, Rock, Bug, Ghost, Poison, and Steel. All other moves were Special including: Water, Grass, Fire, Ice, Electric, Psychic, Dragon, and Dark. In Gen 4, many Pokemon movesets were massively reshuffled; Beedrill was no exception.

The biggest blow to Beedrill came in its signature Poison-type move in Sludge Bomb being relegated to a Special move. Fortunately, Diamond and Pearl would balance this out a bit, giving Beedrill a brand-new Physical Poison-type move in Poison Jab by level up. While it has 10 fewer base power, it greatly softens the blow of losing Sludge Bomb, and still has a chance to poison the foe.

Game Freak also bestowed Beedrill with another Dark-type move by level up being Assurance. This move is only 50 base power, but doubles in power if the target has already taken damage that turn. Assurance is helpful in many cases, as this can happen when the opponent takes indirect or self-inflicted damage such as from a held item like Life Orb, recoil damage, crash damage, or hurting itself in confusion.

More importantly, the Physical/Special split of damage-dealing moves meant that there were many moves that were added to the game. Beedrill benefited big time from this split on the Bug-type side, gaining access to both U-Turn and X-Scissor. With the invention of the Life Orb, which boosts attacks by 30 percent at the cost of 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the user's HP for attack, Beedrill could now take full advantage of its Swarm ability.

Fortunately, Beedrill was actually a bit more competitive in Generation 4 than in Generation 3. There were two potentially mid-tier competitive builds of Beedrill. One had a Swords Dance based moveset like this:

- Swords Dance
- X-Scissor
- Brick Break
- Poison Jab

This build of Beedrill would also hold a Life Orb, meaning a single activation of Swords Dance giving it +2 to Attack was enough to do major damage. Some Swords Dance Beedrill also ran Baton Pass to pass on the Attack bonus to another Pokemon, or Substitute.

The other competitive build of Beedrill was a Choice Scarf set. Like the Choice Band, it locks Beedrill into a single move, but instead of raising Attack by 50 percent, it raises Speed by 50 percent. By Gen 4, many more Pokemon were added that easily out-speed Beedrill. According to [Smogon University's write-up on Diamond/Pearl/Platinum Beedrill](#), a Choice Scarf Beedrill moveset looked like this:

- U-Turn
- X-Scissor

- Brick Break
- Poison Jab / Pursuit

U-Turn is a particularly good move on Beedrill, since not only is it a Bug-type move with a STAB (Same Type Attack Bonus), but it allows Beedrill to switch out, too. X-Scissor is often going to be Beedrill's best attack, especially if Swarm is active. Brick Break is great coverage. Poison Jab or Pursuit are both good last moves, with Pursuit being better in competitive play, as it deals double damage to opponent's switching out.

There is a third competitive build that uses Baton Pass, although this is frowned upon by many competitive players today. A Baton Pass Beedrill move set looked often like this:

- Baton Pass
- Agility / Swords Dance
- Substitute
- X-Scissor

With Baton Pass, you can actually pass on Substitute, which is pretty neat. Most of the time you'll likely be using Swords Dance on this set while sitting behind a Substitute for a turn or two. Some Beedrill will instead use Agility to pass on a Speed boost. Also, X-Scissor allows Beedrill to do significantly more damage once it's below 1/3<sup>rd</sup> HP thanks to the Swarm ability.

Lastly, as Beedrill had been gifted Toxic Spikes as a level up move, some players opted to use Beedrill as their lead to set up the Toxic Spikes entry hazard. These Beedrill would pack Endeavor and Protect, which they could alternate to try and toxic stall some opponents. In the last move slot would typically be U-Turn or X-Scissor, with the former being more likely to switch into a defensive Pokemon. This Toxic Spikes Lead Beedrill also used a Focus Sash as a held item, so that it would survive on 1 HP if it would be one-shot by an opponent, making Endeavor a particularly useful move.

Also, while not a move used in competitive Pokemon, Beedrill did gain an additional new TM to its Gen 4 learnset called False Swipe. This physical Normal type move will always leave a Pokemon with 1 HP if it would knock it out. This is an exceptionally useful tool for catching Pokemon, so Beedrill now could serve a new role as a way to help complete the in-game Pokedex. It's a little thing, but it's a nice addition to Beedrill's arsenal.

## How Good is Beedrill After Gen 4?

In Generation 3 and 4, Beedrill was not actually a part of the main games, so it was one of quite a few Pokemon that had to be traded in so that they could compete. Still, Generation 4 gave Beedrill many new tools and options to be a fairly versatile, if underwhelming team option. Going forward, this would be a high point for Beedrill, as Generation 5 was going to introduce massive power creep into the game.

Sadly, we will see Beedrill's rapid decline in competitive play in Generation 5. Fortunately, we will also witness its rebirth in Alpha Sapphire and Omega Ruby. with the introduction of Mega Beedrill. Be sure to check out about [how good Mega Beedrill](#) would turn out to be!

*Updated February 18, 2023*

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