

Is Butterfree a Good Pokemon?

Being one of the first Pokemon Ash Ketchum ever had in the anime, Butterfree is a fan favorite who also was a fairly good Pokemon in Red, Blue, and Yellow, as well as Gold, Silver, and Crystal. Over the years, Butterfree has gained two fantastic abilities in Compound Eyes and Tinted Lens, plus huge buffs to its move pool. Even in Sword and Shield, Butterfree is still a perfectly useful Pokemon in your casual play-through.

Then, the Game Freak developers decided to give this popular Bug Pokemon a special Gigantamax form. Unfortunately, that wasn't enough to give Butterfree its first competitive spotlight since Diamond and Pearl. Fortunately for Butterfree, the fan favorite Butterfly Pokemon gained a new shot in the Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl remakes. So, while there's little doubt Butterfree was a good Pokemon for the first four generations, it's possible to still build around one of the first Pokemon old school players ever collected.

Unfortunately, Butterfree has never been a top tier competitive Pokemon, although there are players who have championed it over the years. In the first two generations, there were no abilities. So, two of Butterfree's best moves, Sleep Powder and Stun Spore, were only 75 percent accurate. While Butterfree was pretty much useless during Gen 1 competitive play, [it did find a niche during Gold and Silver with a Double Powder moveset.](#)

In Gen 2, Butterfree's decent 80 Special Attack stat allowed it to use Psychic and Giga Drain in addition to its signature Stun Spore and Sleep Powder. However, being a Bug & Flying type, Butterfree is weak to so many different attacks, being two times weak to flying, fire, electric, and ice. Plus, in Gen 2, Heal Bell was so common to heal status conditions that those status moves were often proven moot.

Is Butterfree Good In Fire Red & Leaf Green?

In Generation 3, Fire Red and Leaf Green gave Butterfree a good chance at competitive play by giving it its first ability in Compound Eyes. This ability gives Butterfree's moves 30 percent more accuracy, so Sleep Powder and Stun Spore become 97 percent accurate. The Choice Band held item also allowed Butterfree to run two decent Same-Type Attack Bonus (STAB) moves in Silver Wind and Aerial Ace. While it was certainly not the best Pokemon for its utility role, [Butterfree has seen enough play over the years for Smogon to warrant its placement in its NU \(Never Used\) competitive tier.](#) This is the lowest competitive tier and includes Pokemon that would never be used in higher tiers, but can still hold its own against similar Pokemon.

In Gen 4 with Diamond and Pearl, Butterfree gained U-Turn and Bug Buzz as useful Bug-type moves, but it didn't really move up in terms of power level. Smogon still ranks it today in NU, again the lowest competitive tier for that generation.

Is Butterfree Good with its Hidden Ability, Tinted Lens?

Much like many other Pokemon, the Black and White games gave Butterfree a Hidden Ability. Butterfree gained as its new ability, Tinted Lens, as well as a huge Status boosting move in Quiver Dance. Tinted Lens is a good ability, making not very effective moves actually hit for double damage. It's the same hidden ability gained by Mothim, Noctowl, Sigilyph, Venomoth, and Yanmega.

However, you'd rather run Yanmega over Butterfree, who's much faster and has a significantly higher Special Attack stat. Because of the other Bug-type Pokemon being introduced in Gen 5, Butterfree was actually kicked down to the new lowest competitive tier, known as PU. That tier's name literally means these Pokemon literally stink. However, against its fellow PU denizens, Butterfree held its own, taking advantage of Quiver Dance to make it a surprise late game sweeper. Its only other Tinted Lens competitive being Mothim, who while being a better overall attacker, lacks Sleep Powder, which has always been Butterfree's bread and butter move.

Things didn't get any better in Gen 6. This is despite the fact that in Pokemon X and Y, Butterfree gained a significant buff to its Special Attack stat, a full ten points to a solid 90 SP. ATK. For its first generation, [Butterfree became untiered in Smogon competitive singles](#), a status it retained through Gen 7 with Sun and Moon. Even with its solid abilities and move pool, Butterfree's stats simply weren't enough to keep up with power creep of new Pokemon continuing to be introduced.

Is Butterfree Good in Sword and Shield?

After years of Butterfree falling behind and eventually out of competitive play, Sword and Shield offered Butterfree new life by offering it a Gigantamax form. Despite its majestic appearance, it doesn't gain anything besides lots of Dynamax HP and a special Gigantamax move called G-Max Befuddle. This move can cause either poison, paralysis, or sleep to all opponents, somewhat like a Bug-type Tri Attack. Based on the move it replaces in Gigantamax form, it can be at best a 130 power Special attacking move (Bug Buzz) or a 120 power Physical attacking move (U-Turn). Naturally, as Butterfree's physical attack is half that of its special attack, you'd want to focus on Bug Buzz.

While the G-Max form of Butterfree certainly gained a unique and powerful special move, it wasn't enough for it to become even a low-tier competitive Pokemon. However, in VGC doubles, Butterfree does have some fringe play. However, its G-Max form is nowhere to be seen, as Butterfree's chief attacking move in VGC competition is the flying type special attacking move Hurricane. With the Compound Eyes ability, Hurricane's typical 70 percent accuracy is boosted to 91 percent, making it a consistent attack.

Otherwise, the best moveset for Butterfree in Sword and Shield competition runs its signature Sleep Powder, as well as Pollen Puff and Rage Powder. Pollen Puff can be used for an attacking move, but it's typically used to restore the HP of a teammate. Rage Powder is typically seen on Amoonguss; it causes opponents to target Butterfree instead during that turn.

So, while Butterfree isn't considered a good competitive Pokemon, [Butterfree is good enough in Sword and Shield that it has seen play during VGC competition in 2022](#). Of course, such teams are mostly powered by the powerhouses of Zacian and Kyogre, and is typically not going to be one of the four you

bring from your six unless the match-up favors Bug or Flying type special attacks being used.

Is Butterfree Good in Brilliant Diamond & Shining Pearl (BDSP)?

In the Gen 4 remakes of Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl, you might expect Butterfree to regain some of its previous glory. While it's certainly never going to tear up the highest tiers, Butterfree has found itself on many teams. Unfortunately, BDSP is not an official competitive game for Pokemon, so the usage stats outside of Smogon BDSP OU are unavailable for a never used Pokemon such as Butterfree.

That being said, among the competitive community Butterfree does see play. It retains the Tinted Lens ability it gained during Gen 5 and the additional 10 Special Attack points from Gen 6. This makes it on par with Mothim as a Special Attacker, again using Bug Buzz as its main attacking move as it did during the original Gen 4 games. You can use it as a Choice Scarf lead with its Compound Eyes ability, running U-Turn as its other attacking move to easily switch out after using Stun Spore or Sleep Powder on an opponent's lead.

While Butterfree has certainly not be ignored by Game Freak, and has been consistently given new tools, its base stat total of 395 simply does not stack up to many similar Bug-type Pokemon. Still, as a Gen 1 Pokemon, Butterfree has its long-time fans, and despite not always being the optimal choice, it still has its utility.

It's unlikely that Gen 9's Scarlet and Violet will give Butterfree new tools to be competitive. But, as Gen 1 Pokemon go, Butterfree has enjoyed a fringe, but notable life in competitive Pokemon. That's more than can be said for a great many of the original 150, so Butterfree deserves some respect for what it's been able to do against much more powerful opponents for over two decades.

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