



Version 1.50.000

Ask the Oracle of Shih Tao

Oracle: Contender, you've called me. Which page of the Book of the Gods may I open for you?

Contender: Oracle, bring me to the place, where I get the following information:

What is Shih Tao...

[First steps with Shih Tao](#)

How to play Shih Tao...

[Guide](#)

Give me a recipe to beat the Lords...

[Rules](#)

How to outwit the Lords...

[Hints](#)

How to become a Master...

[Scoring](#)

How to get my favorite colors...

[Dialog colors](#)

How to get my favorite symbols...

[Dialog symbols](#)

[How to enter the licence information...](#)

[Shareware information](#)

Take a look at the cards of the Lords...

[Technical information](#)

What is Shih Tao...

First steps with Shih Tao

Shih Tao is an old asiatic board game.

It contains of an eight to twelve game board and 72 stones. Each stone has a special combination of color and symbol - there are six colors and six symbols - so each combination is given twice a game. Your turn is now to place the stones each after another on the board.

Target of Shih Tao is to get many Shih Taos; a special combination on the board, you need therefore a good strategy and a bit of luck certainly.

Moving the mouse over the bitmap mouse pointer appears as a hand - you may click on every point to get more information. Logically this feature is available in the whole online help.

Related themes:

[Guide](#)

[Rules](#)

[Hints](#)

How to play...

...or the guide

Oracle: Humans believe that this field of competition is a game board. You can divide it into the following parts:

Game board

Pouch

Score

Chance

The player's job is to place the stones - one after the other - from the pouch onto the board by following certain rules.

Contender: How can I get the stones from the pouch onto the board?

Oracle: Choose from two possibilities:

Drag

Click

Contender: Is that all? I can hardly believe it. Is there more to come?

Oracle: Sure - there is a little bit more to come. I don't want your competition to end with exhaust. You may want to take a break. Take some time off, freeze the battle and continue by defreezing. Computerfreaks call it:

Save game

Load game

Contender: So far I understand, but what do I do if I lose my way?

Oracle: Of course, you can always take a look at my wisdom. Look up chapter How to outwit the Lords for details.

If you reached the end of the competition there are three possibilities. Start a new competition, restart the competition to quench your thirst of more glory or let Shih Tao rest between two competitions.

New game

Same game

End game

If you are on the way to become a Master, you might be elected to enter the Book of Lords (highscore).

Give me a recipe to beat the Lords...

...or the rules of the game.

Oracle: To prevent you from becoming a master, the Gods have created obstacles on your path. Here are some hints how to find our way into the ranks of the masters. There are several possibilities to get your stone accepted according to the Laws of the Gods. This chapter will show how.

First you must know two characteristic features of your stone:

Color and Pattern.

Furthermore you must have knowledge about reaching your desired position according to color and pattern of the neighboring stones. For an easy start the Lords will let you choose from three different competition fields. The choice is up to you, but you must decide before the competition begins.

New game

Contender: Well, I'm still a beginner. Please explain to me the beginner level.

Oracle: No problem.

Beginner level

This level of competition not only suits the beginner but also the advanced player pausing from an exhausting game or when concentration has not reached its top yet.

Your active stone will only be accepted by fulfilling the following criteria:

You can place your active stone anywhere on the game board. If you place it next to another stone, there only has to be correspondence of color or pattern. Neighboring stones are those located above, below, to the right or the left.

Contender: So far, it sounds quite easy. Maybe I should try a more difficult level. What's the difference?

Oracle: Okay, let me explain.

Intermediate level

This level of difficulty suits all contenders on their way to mastery who don't want to be dependent on the temper of the Lords. A stone will only be accepted by fulfilling the following criteria:

You can place your active stone anywhere on the game board. If you place your stone next to any number of neighboring stone, there has to be correspondence of color and pattern in a certain relation.

Examples:	number of neighbors	correspondence of colors	correspondence of patterns
Single	1	1	0
	1	0	1
Double	2	1	1
Triple	3	2	1
	3	1	2
Shih Tao	4	2	2

In case only correspondence of color or pattern is required, also correspondence of color and pattern will be accepted.

Contender: So far I understand, but I'd rather like to reach the limit of my intellectual capabilities. Tell me how I can play the most demanding level of difficulty..

Oracle: With pleasure, since I'm pleased with every new contender on the way of mastery.

Advanced level

If you have reached this level of difficulty, you cannot place the stone anywhere on the game board, instead there has to be at least one neighboring stone. Rules of correspondence see intermediate level.

All other moves will be ignored.

With the following one example of valid and invalid moves will be given taking into consideration the possible number of neighboring stones and the different menus.

Related themes:

Joker

Single

Double

Triple

Shih Tao

How to become a Master...

...or scoring

Oracle: The Gods will reward each of your moves in the competition. Quite a few criteria exist when it comes to the number of points given for each move.

Contender: Which are the criteria?

Oracle: The amount of points given depends on one hand on the achievement of singles, doubles, triples and Shih Taos and on the other hand on the already completed number of Shih Taos
Position of placed stone (Inner and Outer)
Number of neighbors of the placed stone
Number of already placed Shih Taos
Do you want to see a chart?

Contender: Yes.

Contender: Is there a reward for each move?

Oracle: For almost all moves points are given. Bonus points can be earned for the completion of a Shih Tao and depending of the number of stones left in the pouch.
The Gods have determined your destiny. However, if you want to change it (shuffling), you will have to pay tribute and you will loose a certain number of points.

Contender: How can I see my actual score?

Oracle: The actual score is shown under statusbar and after the word score.

Related themes:

How to outwit the Lords...

How to outwit the Lords...

...or playing tricks

Oracle: If you find the Lords too mighty in the course of the competition try to outwit them with my assistance. You can use several tricks to avoid the attention of the Gods. Nonetheless some will be immediately recognized by the Lords and you will have to pay tribute.

Contender: Tell me more about the tricks you offer.

Oracle: If you find that your last step wasn't witty enough to confuse the Lords, try to make it invisible and undone. If you want to undo more than one move, you must use your mouse and a certain key. This will work up to 66 moves. Click a certain stone and this stone plus all the moves played after will be undone (multi-undo).

Undo step

Ctrl+U

Menu Edit - Undo step

Shift+Press the left mouse button on the stone, which you want to have removed.

Contender: This is quite useful. But what do I do if I have removed to many stones?

Oracle: You can abort multi-undo with a double-click on the board. If the computer was too fast for you I can remind the Gods of your other moves.

If you for example want to replace the last three moves, follow these steps.

Undo the last (e.g. three) steps

Place the stone, where it fits better

Redo the other steps if it's desirable and possible.

Contender: Which key combination do I press?

Oracle: There are three possibilities:

Redo step

Menu Edit - Redo step

Ctrl+W

Shift+Press the left mouse button

Use the first two possibilities to bring back your moves. In that case use the mouse, press Shift, move the mousepointer on the desired position and click. Move after move is brought back on the board. If you wish to stop at any point, please double-click. Also it will be indicated if the recall of the old move will now be invalid due a changed stone position (as mentioned above under "Undo step").

Contender: I see, there are two options allowing me to change the position of the stones. But can I also change the stone sequence?

Oracle: **Shuffle stones**

Menu Edit - Shuffle stones

Principally before the start of each game the Gods have determined your destiny, i.e. the stone sequence has been determined.

Nevertheless there is a possibility to change the course of the game and your destiny. In that case you must pay tribute.

Each additional request in that aspect will cost you an higher tribute. Also you will change the sequence of the remaining stones including the active stone definitely. It takes a little risk, but with a little luck this in combination with freezing and unfreezing competition and a lot of patience you will be rewarded by entering the ranks of the masters and the high score list. But always keep in mind: one mastergame not necessarily means you are already a Master.

Further Help

Contender: So far everything seems clear. But now I have to start practicing the moves. How can you help me to do the first steps?

Oracle: To help you with your first steps and to support your further progress is my holy duty. The gods have left me certain instruments for the practice of this duty.

Contender: I'm very glad you don't leave me alone with all the different moves.

Oracle: I certainly will not.

In the beginning let me advice you to begin slowly. It's not a shame to start out with only little credit on your account. But also my creators have come the same way and after a while their patience was rewarded.

I suppose you would like to know how you can get the Gods to accept the move. Probably also of interest to you is the value of the reached position. All this and more, especially a Chart showing the value of reached positions, will be explained if you open the field Chances

Menu Option - Show possible moves (toggle chances)

Ctrl+M (toggle chances)

Right click

The moves will be indicated on the field with Roman numbers (I to IV, where is I for Single, IV for Shih Tao). During the course of the game you are able to keep the right button of the mouse pressed still being able to position your stone with the left button.

As an advanced beginner you would probably like to know if you can position your stone on a desired field at all. This will best be demonstrated by showing you the different mousepointer to symbols.

First make your wide:

Options - Pointer

on your menu.

Variable pointer

Choose option box *variable pointer*.

Now watch the mousepointer on different fields of the game board. If the sign *forbidden* appears, the stone cannot be placed on the desired position. Otherwise it will be accepted.

Normal pointer

Choose option box *normal pointer*. Normal pointer is the default pointer, which is known to you from the first start of the game.

Symbol pointer

Choose option box *symbol pointer*. The symbol pointer gives you a better idea of correspondence of color and pattern. Now the active stone is your mouse pointer for you to be able to compare it's features with those of neighboring stones - in accordance to the rules. Clicking the mouse leads to detachment of the active stone.

If you loose track of the different stones already in play, you are able to steal a glance into your pouch. Choose

Information - Show remaining stones

in your menu, or press key combination

Ctrl+R

and you will see the content of your pouch for a short glimpse.

Used file:

SHIHTAO.INI

Related themes:

Freeze game

Defreeze game

Let someone play for you

Chances

Hints for Profis

How to place a Joker...

Beginner and intermediate level

Condition: none

Valid move:



Here the active stone has no horizontal or vertical neighbors.

Related themes:

[Single](#)

[Double](#)

[Triple](#)

[Shih Tao](#)

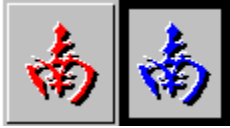
[What are the characteristic features of a stone...](#)

How to place a Single...

All level

Condition: 1* pattern or 1* color

Valid move:



Here you find the pattern of the active stone in correspondence with the pattern of the neighboring stone on the left.

Invalid move:



Neither symbol nor color correspond.

Related themes:

[Joker](#)

[Double](#)

[Triple](#)

[Shih Tao](#)

[What are the characteristic features of a stone...](#)

How to place a Double...

Beginner level

Condition: 2* color or pattern

Correspondence of pattern or color to two neighboring stones.

Valid move:



Color of the active stone corresponds with that of the neighboring stone to the left and with the upper neighboring stone.

Intermediate level and advanced level

Condition: 1* color + 1* pattern

Valid move:



Pattern of the active stone corresponds with that of the neighboring stone to the left and color of the active stone corresponds with the upper neighboring stone.

Invalid move:



Here the pattern corresponds with the neighboring stone to the left, but the color doesn't correspond with that of the upper neighboring stone. In this case only one condition of correspondence is achieved.

Related themes:

[Joker](#)

[Single](#)

Triple

Shih Tao

What are the characteristic features of a stone...

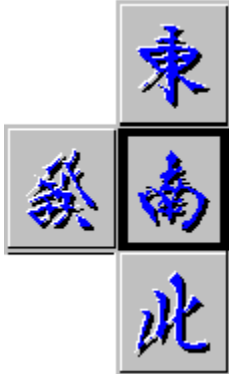
How to place a Triple...

Beginner level

Condition: 3* color or pattern

Correspondence of pattern or color to three neighboring stones.

Valid move:



Color of the active stone corresponds with that of the neighboring stone to the left, with the upper and lower neighboring stone.

Intermediate level and advanced level

Condition: 2* pattern + 1* color or 1*pattern + 2* color

Correspondence of pattern with two neighboring stones and of color with one neighboring stone or vice versa.

Valid move:



The pattern of the neighboring stone above corresponds with that of active stone. Also the color of the active stone corresponds with that of the neighboring stones to the left as well as to the upper.

Invalid move:



Only two of the necessary three requirements are fulfilled. The pattern of the neighboring stone below and the color of the left neighbor corresponds. Neither color nor pattern of the active stone corresponds with the neighbor above.

Related themes:

Joker

Single

Double

Shih Tao

What are the characteristic features of a stone...

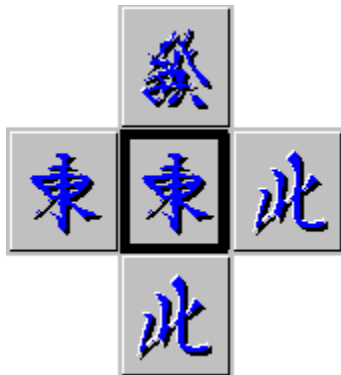
How to place a Shih Tao...

Beginner level

Condition: 4* color or pattern

Correspondence of pattern or color to four neighboring stones.

Valid move:



Color of the active stone corresponds with that of all neighboring stone.

Intermediate level and advanced level

Condition: 2* pattern + 2* color

Twice correspondence of color and twice of pattern.

Valid move:

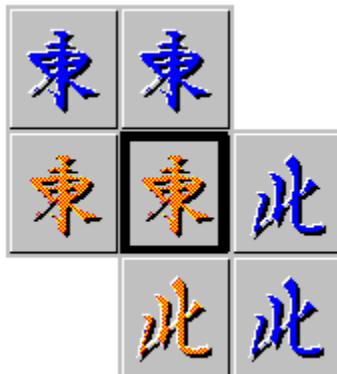


Correspondence of pattern with the neighboring stone above and to the left, correspondence of color with the neighboring stone below and to the right, i.e. fulfillment of the above mentioned requirement. Yeah, that's a Shih Tao...

Invalid move:



Since there's no correspondence with any neighboring stone with regard to pattern, two requirements are not fulfilled.



The bitmap is an example of a frequent mistake.

There is correspondence of the neighboring stones twice with regard to color and twice with regard to pattern. Nevertheless its not a valid Shih Tao move in intermediate or advanced level, because for one neighbor, there is no fulfillment. The right neighbor should have the color orange.

Related themes:

[Joker](#)

[Single](#)

[Double](#)

[Triple](#)

[What are the characteristic features of a stone...](#)

What are the characteristic features of a stone...

...or color and pattern

- Oracle: The stonemason has chiseled different chinese characters into each stone. There are six different characters. However, we will not guarantee for the correct spelling. Additionally we have chosen six different colors. Each stone's characteristic feature consists of one color and one pattern.
These features are important to get the stone accepted according to the rules of the Gods.
- Contender: I'd like to present a problem concerning a lack of contrast in color on my screen. How can I solve this problem.
- Oracle: We have figured that some contenders will face this problem. With the Options - Color on your main menu you can solve this problem easily.
- Contender: Talking about colors, what's my personal benefit if I only have a gray scale screen?
- Oracle: We have a solution to this problem also. The creators of Shih Tao have played sometimes with a gray scale screen. Version 1.10 gave you the opportunity to place a color code in form of characters onto the stone. With version 1.20 this was replaced by five different graphic options. Two of these are quite usable if you use a gray scale screen. Details will be listed on page pattern.
- Contender: Chinese characters look quite neat, however I soon could be bored looking at them. For years I got familiar with the possibilities of the registered version of Shih Tao.
- Oracle: We as the creators of Shih Tao thought this over and have come to the solution to let you choose from different sets of patterns. You should also design a few new on your own, if you want. Are you interested in details?
- Contender: Sure, I have longed to use my own set of patterns playing Shih Tao.

Related themes:

Joker
Single
Double
Triple
Shih Tao
Color
Pattern

How do I interrupt a competition...

...or Save game

Oracle: If you can't finish a battle to a decision, you are able to freeze it. Also, a finished game can be saved for the future, thus enabling you to convince any doubting mind of your masterly capabilities. Last not least it gives your friends the opportunity to compare their progress to mastery with what you already have achieved. You need only one instruction:

Menu File - Save game

Keyboard Ctrl-S

Still, the possibility to confuse the Gods by letting them forget certain moves and on the other hand reminding them of others is left unchanged.

Related file:

[Game file](#)

Related themes:

[New game](#)

[Restart game](#)

[Load game](#)

[Demo game](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

How to defreeze a competition...

...or Load game

Oracle: A saved battle can be loaded again. Choose:

Menu File - Load

Keyboard Ctrl-L

Any battle which has been saved before can be chosen. Call it file selection box and prove that you on your way to get intimately acquainted with your PC....

Before you continue with your battle you will have to show proof of being worthy for the Book of Gods

Related file:

Game file

Related themes:

New game

Restart game

Save game

Demo game

How to outwit the Lords...

How to start a battle...

...or New game

Oracle: If you are quite satisfied with the course of a battle or if you thrive for a new challenge, choose this option at the beginning of your menu:

Menu File - New

Keyboard Ctrl-N

If you have loaded Shih Tao just now, we have already done this duty for you, just continue to battle as you did before.

Otherwise you will have a dialogue box displayed to choose from the different ways to battle yourself.

If you have proven to be quite courageous in the course of a battle, you will be afforded to enter your name in the Book of Gods.

Related themes:

[Restart game](#)

[Load game](#)

[Save game](#)

[Demo game](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

How to repeat a battle...

...or Restart game

Oracle: If you satisfied with your result of a certain [battle](#), this option will be interesting to you. It will give you the opportunity to have a fair battle with a friend or may play the same battle over again. Choose:

Menu File - New game

Keyboard Ctrl-N

As if you have called out a magic spell, a box appears to let you choose from different ways to battle on one hand and the option Same game on the other. [Take your grab](#) into the check box and you will have your wish fulfilled as your desire. After a brave battle you will be asked to enter your name in the [Book of Gods](#).

Contender: Tell me the difference between New game and Same game.

Oracle: There is no difference concerning the sequence the stones will appear from the pouch, i.e. there's no shuffling. However, once you have shuffled you will always load a shuffled sequence of stone appearance when choosing Same game. There is no way to undo a shuffling once you have decided to do so. In return you will have the cost of shuffling (from the game before) remitted.

Related Themes:

[New game](#)

[Load game](#)

[Save game](#)

[Demo game](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

How to let somebody play for me...

...or Demo game

Oracle: This option offers several advantages. First, you can take a little break and rest while others play for you. You can follow a battle as a non participating player. Second you'd like to interrupt the battle you have started, he will be glad to finish it for you. Vice versa you can, if you wish, finish a game that was begun by the demo player. You will have to stop this thirst for action fist, though. If you are fast enough, you may force the demo player to accept your move. The only thing to do is to click into the current action. You may also continue if you believe you are better than the demo player. He may let you go ahead.

Contender: How does this work?

Oracle: You must hurry him to the desired way of battling which you can choose from your file menu before he starts to play for you. If you wish to have him perform more than one battle, you will have to do the following:

After your selection (file - demo game) and opening **Options** from the menu, there will be displayed a dialog, where you can choose between **New Game**, **Same game** or endless. During the last mode of operation we recommend you to use your screen saver. After each completed battle the Shih Tao logo will appear. With the help of the dialogue you may also alter the speed of battling (i.e. you can vary the duration of the pause between two moves from 0 to 30 seconds).

Contender: How does the demo player battle? Will he have the same outcome when playing the same battle once again?

Oracle: Of course not. First he is always out for new moves and second he wants to try out new strategies. All this can be set in the dialogue. But keep in mind, this is left to a magician only, since any change concerning the strategy requires the direct contact with the Gods of Shih Tao. I must warn you to change the magic spell.

Contender: Assuming I have found the magic spell and despite your warning still would like to change it, what do I do?

Oracle: In that respect I can not be of any assistance to you. You will have to contact the technician. Do you?

Yes

No

Last not least to all the bold persons I will reveal that the key to Lord's notebook is hidden under "normal button". Have we got this, well, then let's continue.

Contender: Tell me, what is the difference between single step and start listed on the menu?

Oracle: Easy to answer! After selecting start or Ctrl-D the player automatically begins the battle with the mode of operation. Speed and way of battling chosen. If you select single step he will need your assistance and well only continue with the next step if you give him a hint by entering Ctrl-E.

Related file:

[SHIHTAO.INI file](#)

Related themes:

[New game](#)

[Same game](#)

[Load game](#)

[Save game](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

How to end the game...

...or leave Shih Tao

Oracle: There are different ways to leave Shih Tao. Either use your Shih Tao menu or your system menu.

Menu File - Exit Shih Tao

System menu Close button

System menu Close (Alt+F4)

Contender: Quite easy.

Oracle: If you performed the game well, you will be asked to enter your name in the Book of Gods. If you're still trying out the Game of Gods, there will be a request concerning your registration.

Related themes:

[New game](#)

[Same game](#)

[Load game](#)

[Save game](#)

[Demo game](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

Becoming a master...

...or highscore

Oracle: If you're one of the best, you will be asked to enter your name in the Book of Gods. In addition to that you will be told on which page to enter your name and your personal rank. You will have to decide if you believe of yourself being worthy. In that case you must raise attention in face of the Gods by pressing button "Register" The Book will be opened. If you belong to the Top Ten, you will find your registration to consist of the following data:

Your name

Number of not accepted stones

Number of completed Shih Taos

Date of battle

Additionally the Gods have remembered your name. You may leave the dialog by clicking "OK" and your data will be automatically registered. If you have chosen to keep your name secret or if you don't want to be named because you have battled for a friend on his way to mastery, you may change the name. Entering "Help" will let you start all over.

In case you'd like to know your momentary position in the course of a battle, you may take a look at your stand in the Book of Gods. Just enter Information - Top Ten.

You will have the possibility to rid yourself of opponents. Without consequences you may cancel an entry in the Book of Gods. No one is born a master.

Related files:

[SHIHTAO.INI file](#)

Related themes:

[How to become a master...](#)

Counting the points...

...or grading of points...

Move	Neighbors	Basic points
Joker	0	0
Single	1	1
Double	2	2
Triple	3	4
Shih Tao	4	8

Each Shih Tao doubles the basic points of all following moves. Stones placed in Outer will not be honoured. Costs for shuffling will reduce the final score. For highscore you need at least 100 points.

Shih Tao	Bonus points
1	25
2	50
3	100
4	200
5	400
6	600
7	800
8	1000
9	5000
10	10000
11	25000
12	50000

Remaining stones	Bonus points
2	100
1	500
0	1000

Related themes:

[How to become a master...](#)

How to select my favorite colors...

...or dialog box colors

Oracle: Options - Colors

Anybody player who cares about aesthetics or any aesthetic who cares about playing will be able to choose his favorite colors. You will find the dialog box divided into the following parts.

Stones:

Within six fields you will find active stone colors. Whenever you leave the dialog clicking OK, the symbols will receive these colors. If you choose cancel instead, you will keep the colors as they were from the start. F1 will lead directly to this position.

Field:

With version 1,20 you are able to adjust parts of the game board - Inner and Outer, the colors of the stones (frame and base) and the color of the rim.

Stone base:

We are talking about the base of the stone. It will receive a certain color of the stone face. You will only find this color shown when you see the two settings of Symbol display, i.e. colored on coded and inversed color.

Stone frame:

Each stone has a frame which, depending on the right color composition, will show the stone three-dimensional.

Rim:

Actually we are talking about the color of the window. Lowered into the frame you'll find the game board, chance field and statusbar.

Active color:

The color code red marks the color which is being processed. It will be displayed on a field a little bit larger the usual (display field). If you click the color field, you will activate the color and transfer it to the display field. If you want to change one of the RGB values now to an existing RGB value of another color field, drag this other color field to the active color and release the mouse button (drop). In the case you want to copy only one of the RGB values, drop it about the desired color scale control.

Color scale control:

With three possible color scale controls you are able to adjust the RGB values. Each color thus can be separated into the tree primary colors. Now you're able to change a color by adjusting the possible value of each color component from 0 to 255. Using the arrow you may move in steps of 32. If you click the color control each step will proceed by 64. That way you can reach easily all main colors. If you find this to coarse, please move the control to the position desired, or enter the color value directly using a number between 0 and 255.

Color Palette:

To help you making a choice, we have already edited certain colors. You will find them in the middle third of the dialog box. If you click any color of the preselected color palette, you will have them accepted as your active color. Moving the mouse pointer over the palette while pressing left mouse button, shows you each crossed color as active color and in the display field.

Set of Colors:

To make the color arrangement easy and not having you to waste time we have made certain arrangement. You may choose them from the combobox. We have divided these arranged colors into stone and game board colors for you to combine to your like. The choice of the color set is up to you. If you leave the box clicking ok, your color composition will be saved in the ini file. The set of colors has not been named, since we really don't know your individual taste....

Related file:

File SHIHTAO.INI

Related themes:

How to select my favorite patterns...

The characteristics of a stone...

How to select my favorite pattern...

...or dialog box symbol

Oracle: First select your menu

Options -Symbol

You may want to become a stone mason yourself, which means you're able to create your own symbols. Yes, the pattern used in Shih Tao resemble those of Windows Metafile format (file extension .WMF). This format can be created with a vector oriented drawing program (e.g. "Corel Draw for Windows ©Corel Systems Canada). It's the standard format for graphics with Windows, so you should have no problems finding a compatible program. Because the patterns will be colored in Shih Tao, please let them black and white.

There are three possibilities to integrate your favorite patterns:

Copy separate pattern from **Clipboard**

Load separate pattern from a file **File**

Load a complete set of colors from **files** (six different pattern)

Clipboard

Dragging the Clipboard symbol to an existing pattern, tries to load the contents of clipboard as pattern. Be sure there is a .wmf file in Clipboard. Dragging an existing symbol and dropping it on the Clipboard symbol copies this pattern to clipboard.

File

Dragging Disk symbol and dropping it on the pattern to be removed, a file selection box will be opened where you can choose any .wmf file to replace the active symbol.

Set of Pattern

Aside from the original pattern of Shih Tao, there are two others delivered.

This and all other in the **Symbol Path** will be displayed in the listbox by name. The active one is also displayed as images in the fields 1 to 6 for your pleasure.

Symbol Path

Symbol Path is as default a subdirectory of your **Shih Tao Path**. You may change it with selecting another in the dialog which will be displayed after clicking button **Path**.

You must remember that Shih Tao will save the path settings even when you exit and might try to make him as active path with his next start. It's better not to select a path on a removable or network drive, if you aren't sure, you may have access to it in the future.

Save Set of Symbols

Dragging Shih Tao Icon and drop it on the Disk Symbol process this. Shih Tao saves the set of symbols as six single files with extensions none, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Load Set of Symbols

Dragging Disk Symbol and dropping it on Shih Tao Icon loads the active set of symbols. You may also double click the desired set in the listbox.

Delete Set of Symbols

Remark: The original Shih Tao set cannot be deleted. For all others you may drag the Shih Tao Icon and drop it on Trash Symbol.

Autoload Set of Symbols

If you have found your favorite set of symbols you may load it automatically every Shih Tao start. Check this box to compute this.

Symbols

Also you can if you wish change the way the different patterns are being shown on the stone. Options with GS in brackets are designed for use with gray scale screens.

Colored on reversed stone color (GS)

Symbols are painted with the chosen colors. The face of the stone will also be painted with one of the other five colors.

Colored on stone color

The pattern is stamped out from the chosen stone face color.

Colored on coded and reversed stone face color (GS)

Covering the stone face color there are colors already chosen as pattern colors, which are filled up to one third, one half or two third. The pattern is painted with the chosen color.

Black on stone color

Here you find the pattern always being black. The stone therefore will not appear with its chosen stone face color, but with pattern color.

Black on coded stone color (GS)

Here you will also find a code consisting of horizontal or vertical filling up to two third. Pattern appears in black.

Stamping

You may stamp the stones in different ways. If you select stamp Insert, you will have the pattern into the stone. If you choose raised instead, the symbol appears on the stone as if it was glued to it. The third possibility none will suppress any stamping. The pattern looks as if it was painted on the stone.

Related file:

[SHIHTAO.INI file](#)

Related themes:

[How to select my favorite colors...](#)

[The characteristic features of a stone...](#)

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

How to change my destiny...

... or dialog box Shuffle stones

Oracle: You may only change your destiny if you pay tribute to the Lords. They use the same currency as when they honor your success. So you find it mandatory that you already have had some success.

Since changing your destiny is a very intervening step, every use of this possibility will increase the tribute to be paid. In order for you not to lose track, you will receive a survey.

Thus you will be able to judge if a change of destiny is worthwhile at all.

Don't forget, payment is due by the end of the game.

Contender: Can I then withdraw from my intervening decision?

Oracle: Indeed, you are able not to change your future path. Once you make your decision by leaving dialog with ok, the result cannot be reserved.

You must know that the Gods won't guarantee the active stone will suit you better after the shuffle. If you have bad luck, you'll receive the same stone as before.

Related themes:

[How to outwit the Lords...](#)

The stone to choose...

...or active stone

Oracle: Before you start the battle, the Gods will decide the order of the 72 trials you will have to pass. To make it easier for you, you will have a reduction of six trials. These 6 stones are present on the game board from the start, 4 in Inner and two in Outer. These trials will not be honored, the remaining 65 stones are hidden in the pouch. One is left over, it's your active stone and your momentary trial.

Contender: How do I find my stone?

Oracle: It has been drawn from the pouch and it can be found under the word Move inserted on the game board.

Related themes:

[Statusbar](#)

[Chances](#)

[How to play](#)

[Hints](#)

How is my score...

...or score

Oracle: The score of the competition or your come off is displayed in the statusbar. You find it about the game board. It contains the following three parts:

points

remaining stones

Shih Taos

Related themes:

Chances

Active stone

How can I share your knowledge...

...or chances

Oracle: Activating the chance field enables you to profit from my knowledge. I will show you every possibility to get the Gods to accept the active stone. To make your decision easier these possibilities will be sorted according to their value, e.g. the number of neighbors. If you wish, they will be displayed under chances. Furthermore the corresponding value will be displayed on the game board.

Contender: Will the Lords notice?

Oracle: No, it's a way to outwit the Gods. They won't recognize my helping hand and you can only profit in the course of the game. Some might call this cheating.

Contender: How can I express this wish?

Oracle: Depending on your abilities and the progress you've done during hours of practice you might only want to rely on my help once in a while. You will only have to click right mouse button. In case you'd like to place the stone, also left click on the desired position. If you'd always like to rely on my knowledge and my helping hand during the course of game, just mark the corresponding field in menu. In short:

Hold right mouse button

Menu Options- Possible moves

Related themes:

[How to outwit the Gods...](#)

How to enter the licence information...

First you start the program you will be asked to licence the program. Please enter your name, your company or private and the licence code and number from the licence card. Please take a look of correct spelling, because the test is case sensitive.

The program will save your licence in a file with the extension .LIC in the program path. If you loose this file you have to reenter the licence, or if you have lost it, start the program in the shareware mode.

How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...

...or Shareware information

During the first four weeks you might want to test the game with no charge requested. If you'd like to keep it for regular use, you have to pay your fee.

[What's shareware...](#)

[What are the advantages...](#)

[What's the difference between registered and non-registered version of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the registration fee](#)

[How can I get registered...](#)

[Order form](#)

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: [Print order form now](#)

In case of unanswered questions, please contact the authors of Shih Tao, and you will soon be a satisfied member among the registered contenders...

What's Shareware?

Shareware was created as a marketing- and sales concept especially designed for software. Shareware is not Freeware or Public Domain. The authors do not give up the copyright of their product. Still, they'd like to give users the possibility to test their product for a certain span of time. After this, the user must decide if he want to keep the program and if so, has to pay a registration fee.

Please pass the unregistered version to your friends and other friendly people all over the world for fast circulation of what not only we believe is a fascinating game.

There are different sales possibilities. Here's a short list of the most important:

Shareware vendors

Shareware version (unregistered)

They offer copies of programs on floppy disk or cd-roms. Buying such a disk not necessarily means buying the program e.g. the license to use it for ever, but instead you pay for certain vendor services.

Registered version

This version can be obtained through the authors and authorized vendors.

Bulletin Board Systems (BBS)

There are different nets of BBS, such as FIDO, Internet or CompuServe. We will always upload the newest version of our programs in different BBS. In case you have access to one of these BBS or information systems, you want to download there. Of course, we are also glad if you brought our programs into other BBS.

In case you have access to CompuServe you're also able to register our products in the Shareware Registration Forum (GO SWREG). In a text file you'll find further informations.

Shareware CD-ROMs

The unregistered english versions of our products **cannot be pressed on cd-roms without explicit permission**. Please contact us for permission - CompuServe 100116,2133.

User

You can pass over the unregistered english version as often as and to whoever you like. The more people get to know our programs, the better for them (and us ;-)).

During and after the testing period of four weeks the user is allowed to pass the unregistered program over to other persons via floppy disk or modem.

Other languages

German: The german version is only available from us. This version is not shareware!

Deutsch: Die deutsche Version von Shih Tao 1,5 ist nur bei uns erhältlich. Sie ist nicht Shareware und darf nicht weitergegeben werden!

Related themes:

[How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...](#)

[What are the advantages...](#)

[What's the difference between registered and non-registered version of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the registration fee](#)

[How can I get registered...](#)

[Order form](#)

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: [Print order form now](#)

What's the advantage of the registered version of Shih Tao...

It isn't our strategy to bring limited shareware versions into circulation.

The existing version has no limitations to function and design. We want you to experience the program as it is and not as it could be. The only difference between a registered and a non-registered version is the registration screen, which will appear as you enter the program. By pressing cancel you can leave the dialog immediately.

Please don't betray the shareware idea by using illegal copies of the program. Shih Tao will automatically become an illegal copy if you exceed the granted test time of four weeks.

Related themes:

[What's Shareware...](#)

[How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the advantage of Shareware...](#)

[What's the registration fee](#)

[How can I get registered...](#)

[Order form](#)

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: [Print order form now](#)

What's registration fee...

It's our opinion quality and size of the game justifies the registration fee of **35 DM** or **US\$ 20**. Think of all the effort and expertise put into the realization of the program. Also we constantly optimize and expand it's functions to reach a maximum number of shareware vendors and BBS in order for you.

Related Themes:

[What's Shareware...](#)

[How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the difference between registered and non-registered version of Shih Tao...](#)

[What are the advantages...](#)

[How can I get registered...](#)

[Order form](#)

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: [**Print order form now**](#)

What's the advantage of shareware...

Both users and authors of programs will profit from shareware.

First the user will be able to test a product and thus avoid buying a program he doesn't like.

We call this first try - then buy software.

Shareware programs are less expensive in most cases.

There is less expenditure when it comes to package, handling and advertising. The product should and in most cases is able to advertise itself. Shareware allows a closer contact between user and authors of programs. Getting into contact with them during the registration procedure gives you a good opportunity to pass our suggestions, wishes and criticism.

Your



efforts will not get lost in the hassle of bureaucracy but instead the authors will be most grateful since feedback, positive or negative, will enable them to produce customer oriented products.

Furthermore there is no financial effort concerning market studies in contrast to the large software companies. Our contact to you is direct and will take any feedback into serious considerations.

Please don't hesitate to write down your suggestions and to send it to us. It will help us on our way to find solutions to our problems.

If you enjoy our game, please register and show us that our product was worth the effort. It will be encouragement for other shareware projects.

Related themes:

[What's Shareware...](#)

[How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the difference between registered and non-registered version of Shih Tao...](#)

[How can I get registered...](#)

[What's the registration fee](#)

[Order form](#)

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: [Print order form now](#)

How to get registered...

To register there are different ways.

1. You can register directly to us:

You only have to transfer the fee to us. We accept the following *credit cards*:

VISA, Master/Eurocard and American Express.

In this case we have to get US\$ 20 but we have to charge in DM. In case of currency fluctuations there may be a difference of a few cents.

For ordering the disk version of Shih Tao 1.5 english please refer to the order form. We have special prices listed on the order form if you order more than 2 Shih Tao, too! **If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: Print order form now**. If you want to take a look at the order form select the following jump: Order form

If you are a European citizen you can also pay with a *eurocheque* or *Postbaranweisung*. Germans can also use a "*Verrechnungsscheck*" or a transfer ("*Überweisung*") of DM 35,- to the following *bank account*:

Markus Kreisel
Deutsche Bank Koeln
Blz: 370 700 60
Kto.-Nr.: 5409693

Other citizens please think over that transfer charge of banks are about 5 to 20 DM, so it **isn't** an acceptable paying way for you.

Our address is:

Kreisel & Reinartz
Homburger Str. 22/6
D-50969 Koeln (Cologne)
Federal Republic of Germany

2. CompuServe:

It will be possible to register via CompuServe. Please look up the forum Shareware Registration (GO SWREG). Look also for a text file for more information. If you use this way, CompuServe will get the money with your monthly bill and transfer it to us. We will be notified automatically, so please don't post us also an e-mail - except you have questions or other suggestions.

3. Shareware vendors:

We will authorize different shareware vendors all over the world. We'll begin in Europe and USA, so it's possible that in your country isn't one yet, but we work on it.

Related Themes:

[What's Shareware...](#)

[How to pay my contribution to the creators of Shih Tao...](#)

[What's the difference between registered and non-registered version of Shih Tao...](#)

[What are the advantages...](#)

[What's the registration fee](#)

Order form for Shih Tao 1.5 english

Name _____

Company _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____ Country _____

Tel./Fax/CompuServe _____

I want to order:

<u>Pieces</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price in US\$</u>	<u>Total</u>
_____	Shih Tao 1.5 each for (licence card only, no shipping charge)	20.00	_____
	More than 2 Shih Tao	18.00	
	More than 4 Shih Tao	16.00	
	More than 99 Shih Tao	Call now!	
_____	3.5" disk (add shipping charge)	2.00	_____
_____	Shipping (disk version only)		_____
	U.S.A./Canada	6.00	
	Non EC countries	5.00	
	European Community	4.00	
	Others	10.00	
	Total		=====

You have to pay shipping charge only, if you order disks!

I want to pay with my Amex/MC/Visa credit card.

Credit Card Type _____ Number _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

Mail to:

Kreisel & Reinartz - Homburger Str. 22/6 - 50969 Koeln
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: +49 - 221 360 34 25 - CompuServe 100116,2133
Vendors welcome!

Order form for Shih Tao 1.5 english

If you select the following jump a order form will be printed for you: Print order form now

Name _____

Company _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____ Country _____

Tel./Fax/CompuServe _____

I want to order:

<u>Pieces</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price in US\$</u>	<u>Total</u>
_____	Shih Tao 1.5 each for (licence card only, no shipping charge)	20.00	_____
	More than 2 Shih Tao	18.00	
	More than 4 Shih Tao	16.00	
	More than 99 Shih Tao	Call now!	
_____	3.5" disk (add shipping charge)	2.00	_____
_____	Shipping (disk version only)		_____
	U.S.A./Canada	6.00	
	Non EC countries	5.00	
	European Community	4.00	
	Others	10.00	
	Total		=====

You have to pay shipping charge only, if you order disks!

I want to pay with my Amex/MC/Visa credit card.

Credit Card Type _____ Number _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

Mail to:

Kreisel & Reinartz - Homburger Str. 22/6 - 50969 Koeln
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: +49 - 221 360 34 25 - CompuServe 100116,2133
Vendors welcome!

Copyright of Shih Tao

Menu ?-About shows you a dialog with the copyright information. Here you see the adress of the authors of Shih Tao. Press Further Copyrights to see which tools was used for develloping Shih Tao.

Taking a look at the cards of the Lords...

...or technical information

Oracle: My knowledge ends with rules of the game and operating instructions. If you like I will contract our home technician for technical information.

Contender: Please do so, since I still have a couple of questions concerning earthly problems.



Technician Here I am. Welcome to the land of technology.
In this chapter we will deal with technical details important for those who would like to extend Shih Tao.

Content of the file [SHIHTAO.INI](#)

Structure of the move files [GAM](#)

[DDE commands](#)

[Strategy formula](#)

These information are only of interest to those who program themselves or really like to get into the "work behind the curtain".

File: SHIHTAO.INI

Technician: The file SHIHTAO.INI is kept in your windows directory on your hard disk. The file contains default information, thus enabling you to find your program unchanged whenever you load it. You can open the file SHIHTAO.INI through any text editor and you may take a look at it. However, please don't manipulate any part of it. In any case, make a copy before hand. **All the settings will be managed though the program itself. There is no need for any change.**

First you will find the section name within square brackets. In SHIHTAO.INI, so far only one section name exists: [ShihTao]. If you'd like to make any extensions, never use the following section names: MakeNum and Stte. Under ShihTao you'll find the following entries in an arbitrary order:

Color x=

Number displayed decimally e.g. 8388608. Values between 1 and 6 correspond with the color of the stones A thru F. After that colors 7 thru 11 follow, which are the colors of Inner, Outer, stone base, stone frame and frame of the board.

StoneDisplay=

Numbers 1 thru 5. Correspond with the default value of the dialog box for the different patterns.

SymbolSetName=

Name of the pattern set loaded when starting the game. If no name or an invalid name is given, the default pattern "shihtao" will be used. Please do not enter paths or file extensions.

SymbolPath=

In this path Shih Tao search for the pattern named by StoneSetName. Please don't enter here any file name.

ShowChances=

Null or minus 1. Shows you if the chance field is visible and if the number of the neighboring stones value will be displayed on the board.

VariablePointer=

Null, minus 1 or 1. Indicates if the mouse pointer is always displayed as an arrow or will change depending on valid or invalid move or should be displayed as the active stone.

EndlessDemo=

Null or minus 1. Indicates if the option "endless game" of the dialog box demo game has been checked or not.

DemolnHighscore=

Null or minus 1. Indicates if the option "transfer in the highscore" of the dialog box demo game has been checked or not.

Speed=

From 0 to 30. Indicates the time in seconds between to moves of the demo player corresponding to the scroll bar in the dialog demo game.

Screensaver=

Null or minus 1. Indicates if the option "screensaver" of the dialog demo game is checked or not. The screen saver shows a full screen Shih Tao logo after each demo game. It's especially useful if endless game is chosen. It protects your screen from burn-ins. Also, it's advertisement for us <g>. If you as a vendor want to have your company sign entered, please contact us.

Strategy=

7 numbers from 1 thru 7, exactly one of each must be part of the seven digit number. This formula will be explained in chapter [The strategy formula](#).

WindowWidth=

Gives you the width of the Shih Tao window.

WindowHeight=

Gives you the height of the Shih Tao window..

ActivePlayer=

Indicates the name of the player who last entered his name in the highscore list. With the next entry the name will be automatically displayed and needs only to be confirmed.

GameFilePath=

Indicates the path where a game file was loaded or saved last.

Stamping=

Will accept numbers minus 1, 0 and 1. These numbers stand for 3D effect inset, none or raised and will be set in the dialog box symbols.

Level=

A three digit number holds the chosen level. In Version 1,25 there are three valid numbers: 500 = Beginner level, 512 = Immediate level, 012 = Advanced level. You don't see the logic behind this numbers? No problem, you don't know the new possibilities of further versions of Shih Tao. But - this is our secret - for now.

Related themes:

[Structure of the Game files](#)

[DDE commands](#)

[Strategy formula](#)

The game files "*.GAM"

Technician: In the files with the extension .GAM Shih Tao saves all data of a game. These files are saved binary and cannot be loaded and changed with a text editor. If you're interested - here is the file format (Version 1,10 = 592 Bytes):

2 bytes Version (1.25 = Password)

2 bytes (Header length divided thru 8) +1

2 bytes Move = 72 - Remaining stones -1

2 bytes Number of Shih Taos

4 bytes Score

2 bytes Number of shuffling

2 bytes Level, coded as three digit. Structure like INI file.

Then follows 72 times the following structure for the origin shuffled game:

2 bytes Coded symbol as 1 thru 6

2 bytes Coded color as 1 thru 6

2 bytes Column 0 to 12

2 bytes Row 0 to 8 (If column or row is Null, the stone isn't yet placed on the board.)

Please remember that a given password cannot be brought back, if you forget it. The password will be saved with a trapdoor algorithm.

Associate

The move files can be associated with Shih Tao. Further information can be obtained in your windows manual under chapter "Association". From now on whenever you open a move file in your Program Manager or File Manager or use the appending API call, Shih Tao will be started and the move file will be loaded.

Related themes:

[Contents of SHIHTAO.INI](#)

[DDE Commands](#)

[Strategy formula](#)

DDE commands

Technician: Shih Tao has a DDE interface. External programs may:

- Place stones
- Get active stone
- Read all positions of game board
- Undo move
- Redo move
- Shuffle
- Start a new game
- Get number of remaining stones
- Get score

DDE interface is a Server. Application name is: "shihtao". Topic is "shibrett". Item is "DDEVerbindung". Link mode is 2.

Example coded with Visual Basic:

```
Sub Form_Load ()
    text1.LinkMode = 0
    text1.LinkTopic = "shihtao|shibrett"
    text1.LinkItem = "DDEVerbindung"
    text1.LinkMode = 2
End Sub
Sub Text1_Change ()
    text1.LinkPoke
    text1.LinkRequest
End Sub
```

Commands:

!column,row

Places the active stone at the specified position. Spalte (=column) is a number between 1 and 12. Zeile (=row) is a digit between 1 and 8. Blanks won't be accepted. The comma is required. DDERequest returns OK or KO.

?column,row

Gets the stone at the specified position. Spalte (=column) is a number between 1 and 12. Zeile (=row) is a digit between 1 and 8. Blanks won't be accepted. The comma is required. DDERequest returns a string, which can be understood as follows: =symbol,color; Symbol is a digit between 0 and 6 and color can be the characters @,A,B,C,D,E or F. If symbol = 0 and/or character = @, then the field is empty.

?0,0

Gets the active stone. DDERequest returns same values as ?column,row.

+

Redoes a move. DDERequest returns OK or KO.

-

Undoes a move. DDERequest returns OK or KO.

M

Shuffles remaining stones. DDERequest returns OK or KO.

N

Starts a new game. DDERequest returns nothing.

P

Gets the score. DDERequest returns score.

Z

Gets the number of remaining stones. DDERequest returns number of remaining stones.

A client program structure could be like the following example:

Start a new game, get active stone. Get all placed stones in a loop and put each in an array. Place active

stone. For further information contact us please.

Related themes:

[Contents of the file SHIHTAO.INI](#)

[Structure of the move files GAM](#)

[Strategy formula](#)

Strategy formula

...or the wonder of a magic spell

The strategy formula consists of seven digits 1 thru 7, each number has used exactly once. The strategy formula will be read from left to right. Each number stands for one search operation. The order of the numbers determines when Shih Tao will look for a valid move. The value determines where Shih Tao will search. There are two search areas one with four the other with three possibilities.

0 searches for a Joker.

This possibility is only available in Beginner and Intermediate Level. It doesn't work with Advanced level because this level accept stones only, if they have a neighbor.

Values one to four search for valid moves in Inner

Number one will look for valid Singles, number two will look for valid Doubles, number three will look for valid Triples and four will search for valid Shih Taos. For you not to miss a Shih Tao, the strategy formula should start with number four.

Number 5 thru 7 will search in Outer.

Number five looks for valid singles, six for valid Doubles and seven for valid Triples. Shih Tao cannot appear in the Outer, therefore number 8 does not exist.

Try and change the order of the numbers of the strategy formula and you will see the effect when you watch the appearance of stones on the game board.

You will soon recognize that the demo player doesn't play well. However, depending on the strategy formula he quite often manages to empty the pouch. Still, it's quite an achievement if you consider how little strategy there is. Thus Shih Tao can't really be that difficult. We've noticed that the demo player never achieved more than 3000 points in course of nightly test runs. If you are quite apt, you should manage 5000 to 6000 points. Our personal record (at least that of my co-author) is about 16000 points. A master game should come up to about 75000 points.

Related themes:

[Contents of the file SHIHTAO.INI](#)

[Structure of the move files GAM](#)

[DDE Commands](#)



Markus Kreisel and Renate Reinartz (K&R)

Not to confuse with the masters of a well known programming language...



The ten top players will be listed in the highscore list, if they reach the minimum score.



At least of all the persons, who have ever played...

...have ever heard of Shih Tao...

...have ever known somebody, who knew somebody, whose brother-in-law had a girl friend, who managed to complete three Shih Taos...

...have ever played Shih Tao on your computer...

...have ever edited the INI file...

...or the like...



Delete

You have the possibility to get rid of troublesome rival. In this case you can delete entries from the Book of Gods without consequences. One click on delete button gets it. Every one has to learn...



The pouch has all the stones which have not been positioned yet. The Gods keep it and therefore it's always invisible.



Bonus points are rewards of the Gods for special achievement e.g. less than 3 remaining stones or completion of Shih Taos.



Cancel button let the Gods know, that you have been wrong and doesn't want to get fulfilled actual selection in dialog box.

In other words: Nothing changes.







The files are kept in different shelves (drives) and compartments (directories), call it file selection box. By the way frozen games have in Shih Tao extension GAM.



The inner rectangle of the game board without the outer rows or columns.
Everything okay? No! Well, therefore we have dyed these stones differently. Use dialog Colors to suit them to your needs.



In the worst circumstance you might use the hard disk...



At least as long as there is electric, until the computer is turned off or reboots and until you leave windows or even Shih Tao...

...or just stop demo game in menu file; you know, where it all began. If it's all that difficult try Ctrl-D or Ctrl-C.



There're six different colors. The symbols are painted in these colors. If you don't like these colors, look for new ones or define them yourself. In case you have problems to distinguish them on your screen, try the colors settings of the dialog box symbol.

After this, you'll be asked, if you're sure about the consequences



At least one of the two managed 10 Shih Taos. The other is in advanced level still busy to get beat by the demo player. We know why, he's still working on the best strategy formula which keeps him from practicing.



What do you think? Yes, here you come.



All fields, which make up the first and last column and row of the game board. They are colored differently, since the maximum number of neighbors is three. You may choose any color from the dialog box colors. All other colors change accordingly.



Joker is a placed stone without a neighbor. It's only allowed in beginner and intermediate level.



Position the mouse pointer within the desired field and make a short left click.



Computer freaks may call it loading.



If you feed it properly, it may grow...



Your mouse... An animal with a tail and two to three ears. We have descriptions of invisible tails also. I've heard of a mouse, that has it's legs on the back(!).



Masters of Shih Tao must have completed at least one master game (at least 12 completed Shih Taos).



Game with 12 Shih Taos. On top of that no extra points are granted.
By the way, even since version 1.10 these have been simulated by the Creators in their test laboratory.
Has anybody seen a real one???

...

We're still waiting...

But, we could give a gift to a master in training with 11 Shih Taos.

Have I said that there are still two gifts waiting...

...for you?



With one command several moves can be completed at once...



Points will be withdrawn from your score. They are also called minus points.



The sequence of the remaining stones including the active stone will be changed.



Chinese letters are chivelled into the stones. These patterns can be changed thru dialog box symbol.



Every stone positioned in Inner has four potential neighbors, one to the right, one to the left, one above and one below.



Bless the Gods. You know how they are...

...whenever you need them, they will sit in a corner, seep tea and think about adding new features to the program. Disturbing them would mean risking one's life...



OK confirms the actual settings of the dialog box. So you let the Gods know, that you wish to do so.



Here you might ban less beautiful patterns...



Of course the field on the game board. Others don't count.



Positioning stones on the game board. What did you think? (Read the Online-Help?)



Points are given to measure your abilities.



Here:
Lower number are better... ;-)



So...

...if you don't use an illegal copy of Shih Tao
...or sit before an other computer...
...or have a family license
...or use a net license in your lunchbreak
than you now see your name.



All the stones of the set, that have not been positioned on the board yet. 6 have already been positioned. So there is a maximum number of 66 stones in the pouch.



The undo-function relates to the stones already positioned.



I've heard computer freaks call it saving.



The screen saver will save the screens from burn-ins, i.e. irreversible loss of little portions of your screen. The display will stay on the screen for 30000 milliseconds (take a bet!) unless you continue by pressing any key or perform a doubleclick.



The stone displayed under the word move, has just been pulled out of the (invisible) pouch and has to be positioned next.



Depending on the active field, the Gods might lose their memory or will activate it. If a stone has already been positioned on a field, the Gods will lose their memory, otherwise the Gods will remember every move including the stone that now has been removed. In case a field has never been occupied by a stone, all the moves will be repeated...



If a stone is positioned between 4 stones this move is called Shih Tao.



What's your personal record?

It's already worth a gift? The first three who send us a game with more than 10 Shih Taos in advanced level will get one.



The stones must be positioned on a field of 12 * 8 fields. It's divided into Inner and Outer.



Lately, the Gods know of 3 levels of the difficulties:
Beginner
Intermediate
Advanced



A click of this button opens the system menu.

Shih Taos dialog boxes has also menu points to move and close the dialog.



In the upper left corner of a program window the most Windows programs have a system menu. With a double click on the button or Alt+F4, you can close the application.



He's the freak who always walks around tea sipping and talks like somebody who thinks he knows about computers.



In title bar of applications the program name and i.e. the name of an open file is displayed.

Shih Tao shows his name and the active level.

Dialog boxes shows the name or sense of the dialog.



If you like to repeat a game here after, you have to freeze it first. Otherwise the option repeat will relate to the new game.



Joker (-), Single (I), Double (II), Triple (III), Shih Tao (IV)



You might call it a game...



The time has only nostalgia worth. He isn't in contents with your score, is it?



Position the mouse pointer on an active stone, hold it pressed, move the frame onto the field on the desired position and release the mouse button.



Who really would like to be victim of coincidence? After all quite often the sequence of the stones itself hinders faithful players to become masters.



Perhaps while lunchbreak...
...or before dinner
...or while commercial program
...every time you want to relax.

