Four Seasons Help

 Welcome to Four Seasons, a solitaire game of skill, luck, and strategy!
Select one of the following topics for more information ...

- Introduction
- How To Play The Game (Rules)
- Menu Commands
- The Button Bar
- Preferences
- Statistics
- Strategy
- Revision History
- How To Contact The Author
- How To Register

If you enjoy this game, please support it!

Four Seasons Introduction

Four Seasons is a standard one-deck solitaire also known as "Corner Card" and "Vanishing Cross". <u>Solitaire and Patience Games</u> lists the odds of winning at 1 in 10 games, though I've found that I can easily win half of the games with judicious use of the undo feature (yes, that may be considered cheating in some circles, but it does make the game a bit less frustrating!).

How To Play Four Seasons

The game of Four Seasons is begun by dealing five cards to the <u>tableau</u> and one to the upper left <u>foundation</u>. The remaining cards form the <u>stock</u>. The <u>wastepile</u> is initially empty.

The first foundation card forms the basis of all the other foundations.   That is, the <u>rank</u> of the first foundation card is the starting rank of the other foundations. For example, if the first foundation card is a seven of hearts, the other three foundations will also begin with a seven.   Each foundation is built up in <u>suit</u> until it contains thirteen cards, wrapping around from king to ace as necessary.   For example, with a starting card of seven, the sequence of cards built to the foundations will be:

<p align="center">7-8-9-10-J-Q-K-A-2-3-4-5-6</p>

The tableau cards are available for play at any time, and may be moved (one card at a time) to the foundations or to another tableau pile.   The tableau piles may be built down in rank, regardless of suit.

The cards in the stock are available for play to the foundations, the tableau, or to the wastepile.   The wastepile is used as a sort of temporary holding area for cards that have no other home. The top card of the wastepile may be moved to either the foundations or tableau.

The object of the game is to complete the four foundations. Do this and you win!   Good luck.

Four Seasons Menu Commands

Click on the menu commands to see what each does:

Game		Options	Help	
New Hand		**Undo**	**Index**	F1
Redeal Same Hand		**Auto Move**	**About ...**	
Practice Hand #1		**Preferences ...**	**Register ...**	
Practice Hand #2		**Sound**		
Practice Hand #3				
Top Ten Scores ...				
Session Statistics ...				
Exit	Ctrl+X			

Note: In the registered version of Four Seasons, the last item in the "Help" menu will be "Un-Register".   Clicking this will allow you to convert the registered version of Four Seasons back to the shareware version.

Top Ten Scoring List

Four Seasons keeps track of your top ten scores, displaying the list in decreasing order, with your most recent game (that made the list) highlighted.
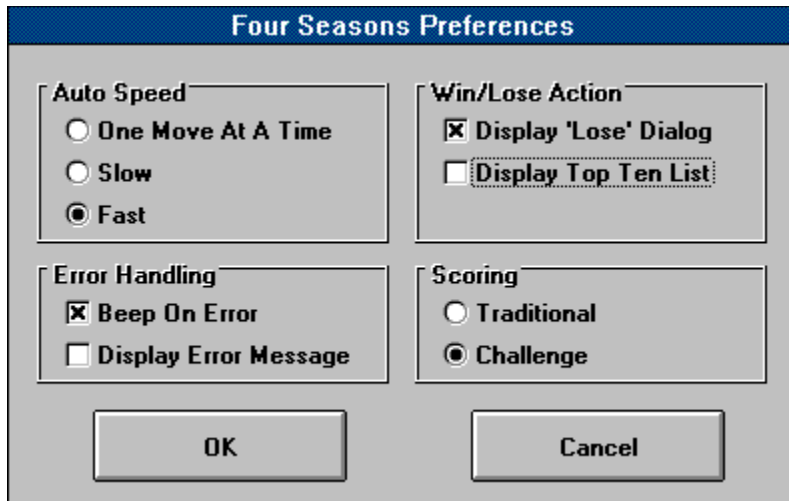
You can clear all of your statistics, including the top ten list, by selecting the "Clear Stats" button.   Since clearing your stats is something that you wouldn't want to do by accident, you'll be asked to verify your choice before proceeding.

Note: *The Top Ten list is really only useful when the* "*challenge*" *scoring method is selected (see* _Preferences_*).*

Four Seasons Preferences

The Preferences dialog box allows you to set a number of options that dictate how the game operates. These options are saved to disk so that they are remembered between program runs.

Click on the areas of interest in the dialog below to learn more:

Four Seasons Preferences

Auto Speed
- ○ One Move At A Time
- ○ Slow
- ◉ Fast

Win/Lose Action
- ☒ Display 'Lose' Dialog
- ☐ Display Top Ten List

Error Handling
- ☒ Beep On Error
- ☐ Display Error Message

Scoring
- ○ Traditional
- ◉ Challenge

OK   **Cancel**

Auto Speed: This determines how fast the "auto move" function operates.

Error Handling: This option determines what action is taken when you attempt to make an illegal move.   You can have the program beep and/or display a dialog box that explains the error.   It is recommended that you display the message while you are learning the game, and disable it once you're familiar with the rules.

Win/Lose Action: This option determines what action is taken at the end of a game. If "Display 'Lose' Dialog" is checked, then a concillatory message will be displayed when you lose a game.   If not checked, then no comment will be made.   If "Display Top Ten List" is checked, then the top ten list will be displayed after each game.

Note: If you make the top ten, the above options are essentially ignored -- you will be asked to enter your name, and then you will be shown the top ten list so that you can see how you rank.

Scoring: Traditional scoring counts one point per card.   Challenge scoring uses a different method to compute your score. You get five points per card, plus five points per "run".   That is, if you can manage to move more than one card in succession to the foundations, you'll get five points plus another five points for each card in the run.

For example, suppose you can move four cards in a row to a foundation.   The first card will be worth five points.   The second card will be worth 10 points, the third would be worth 15, and the fourth 20.

Challenge scoring drastically changes the strategy involved in playing the game.   You are no longer just moving as many cards as you can to the foundations.   You are now setting up runs of as many cards as possible.   Makes the game much more exciting!

Click the **OK** button to exit the dialog and save the changes.

Click the **Cancel** button to exit the dialog without saving the changes.

Four Seasons Sounds

Four Seasons has the ability to play various sounds in response to your actions.   This requires a Windows-compatible sound board, or the Microsoft speaker driver (which produces rather poor sound, but does work ...).   If you don't have a system capable of playing WAV sounds, the "Sound ..." menu item will be disabled.

The sound can be configured by selecting "Sound ..." from the "Game" menu.   This will bring up a dialog box in which each sound may be individually enabled, disabled, or tested.

Four Seasons uses the following sound files:

FS_1.WAV	"Solitaire" in the About dialog
FS_2.WAV	"Lose" sound
FS_3.WAV	"Error" sound
FS_4.WAV	"Card" sound
FS_5.WAV	"Win" sound
FS_6.WAV	"Top Ten" sound

If you don't have a way to play sounds on your computer, you may delete these files to save disk space.

If you don't like one of the sounds, you may delete it, or replace it with one of your own.   To do this, simply rename the wave file you wish to use to the appropriate name above.

Registration Bonus!

When you register Four Seasons, you will receive more sounds to use with the game.   These sounds will be automatically recognized by Four Seasons, and will play at random to provide a bit of aural variety.

Four Seasons Button Bar

🚗	Auto
📝	Undo
☰	Preferences
🏆	Top Ten
♠	New Hand
🚪	Exit

The button bar provides an alternate (and often quicker, compared to the menu) way to access commonly-used functions.   The button bar consists of a column of icons that depict the action each button performs, as well as a text description of the button.   **Click on one of the buttons at the left for more information.**

Four Seasons Revision History

1.00   09/12/93

- First public release.

1.01   09/23/93

- Bug Fix: Program was not automatically dealing a new game after winning.
- Added a "boss" key (Esc).

1.02   11/07/93

- Corrected Internet address.
- Fixed "minimized/close" bug.
- Several small speed improvements.
- Added "session stats" feature.

1.03   03/31/94

- Added WAV sounds!
- Added extra sounds as registration bonus.
- Added the "Un-Register" menu item.
- Fixed "subscript out of range" error.
- Corrected BBS.LST file.

1.04   05/15/94

- Fixed problem where the first card sometimes could not be dragged to a foundation.
- Added further protection against the "subscript out of range" error ... don't know if this fixes it once and for all, so please let me know if you see this error!
- Only enable the "sound" menu item if digital sound is possible.

1.05   06/15/94

- Fixed problem with strange "black lines" in front of graphics using some video cards (primarily Trident and Video 7).
- Added a sound configuration dialog box, so that each sound may be individually enabled, disabled, or tested.
- Made "OK" the default button in the "Top Ten" and "Preferences" dialogs (thanks to Karl Schmitz for this suggestion!).
- Corrected pricing error in registration form.

How To Contact The Author

There are several ways to contact the author, ranging from the quickest to the slowest:

The best way is to call the Nest Egg BBS, where I have a support forum dedicated to my games.   To join the solitaire support forum, simply type "J 5" from the main menu.   The latest versions of all my games are always available for download.   Also, you can leave me e-mail if you have a problem, comment, suggestion, or just want to say hi.   The number is:

The Nest Egg BBS
913-492-2739
1200-14400 V.32

You can also send me electronic mail on the Internet, or from CompuServe, America Online, or other online services that offer access to the Internet.   My Internet address is:

randy.rasa@colossus.cld9.com

I'm also available on any of the BBS's listed in the BBS.LST file.

Finally, you can reach me through normal postal service (snail mail) at the following mailing address:

Randy Rasa
18215 Troost
Olathe, KS 66062-9208

Telephone support is not offered at this time.

How To Register Four Seasons

Four Seasons is shareware.   You may freely evaluate it for a reasonable period (30 days).   If you continue to use it beyond the evaluation period, you need to register it.

Registration is only $10 and gets you the following benefits:

1. The latest version of Four Seasons on the diskette of your choice (5.25" or 3.50").

2. A registration code good for all future updates of Four Seasons.   This code will allow you to convert current and future shareware versions to registered versions, getting rid of the opening "reminder" screen in the process.   Acquiring the updates is, of course, up to you.   They will be available through normal shareware channels, and on the BBS's listed in the BBS.LST file.

3. More Sounds!   You will receive extra sounds to use with Four Seasons.   These sounds will be automatically recogized and used by the registered version of Four Seasons.

4. Discounts on other shareware offerings by Randy Rasa.   Refer to the registration form for details and pricing.

5. An opportunity to receive a CD-ROM chock-full of shareware from JCSM.   If you'd like to receive a registration bonus certificate, check the option on the registration form.

Let me re-emphasize that the registration code is good for all future updates of this program.   Unlike some commercial apps, you are not stuck in an endless cycle of expensive upgrades.   With Four Seasons, you register once, and that's it.   What this essentially means is: Free Updates!

There are three ways to print a registration form:

1. Select the **Print Registration Form** button from the registration reminder screen.

2. Open the **FS.FRM** file (included with this program) with Window's Notepad, and print it from there.

3. From the DOS command line type "COPY FS.FRM PRN".

Once the registration form is printed, simply fill it out (be sure to select a disk size!) and send it to the address listed on the form, along with a check, money order, or cash.   Expect your disk in about two weeks.   I ship out all orders within one week week of receipt of order.

Remember, shareware is user-supported software.   If you use it, please register.

Registration Reminder

This dialog box is displayed each time you run the program or if you select the "Help-Register" menu item.   Once you have registered, received your code, and entered it, this box will no longer be displayed.
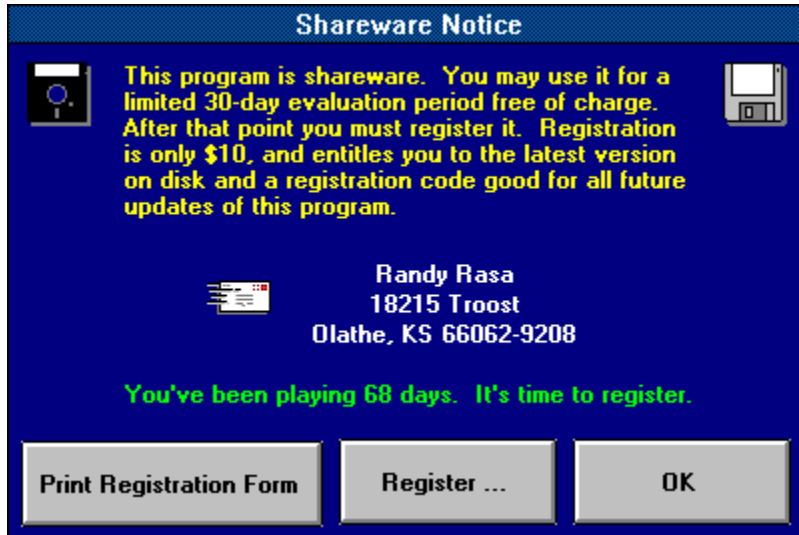
This tells you how long you have been playing the game.   You have thirty days to evaluate Four Seasons, after which you need to register.

Click the **Print Registration Form** button to print out a registration form on your currently-selected printer.   All you have to do is fill it out and send it in!

Click the **OK** button to exit this dialog and play the game.

Registration Dialog

Here's where you enter the registration code you will receive as a registered user of Four Seasons.   Once you enter the correct code, you need never see the shareware reminder screen again.

Four Seasons Registration

To convert this program from a shareware to a registered version, enter your name and the code provided when you registered.

Name: _____

Registration Code: _____

OK   Cancel

Enter your name here.

Enter your **registration code** here.   Enter it *exactly* as shown on the sheet you received when you registered with the author.

Click the **OK** button to accept the name and code you've entered.

Click the **Cancel** button to exit this dialog.

Four Seasons Statistics

Four Seasons keeps track of a number of game statistics.   These stats can provide you with feedback as to how well you are playing, and give you an incentive for improvement.

If you're the kind of person who just wants to play, and doesn't care about "the numbers" ... well, just ignore them.   Statistics are entirely optional.

The game keeps track of the following statistics:

> Number of Games Played
> Number of Games Won
> Average Score (for both Traditional and Challenge scoring)
> Top Ten Scores

You can also view your "session stats" by clicking on the "Stats" button in the score box. This provides you with data on how well you've played during the current session (i.e. the current program run).

_____

In case you're wondering, my current stats as of this writing are:

> Games Played: 300
> Games Won: 154 (51%)
> Average Score: 36.49 (Traditional) / 1062.81 (Challenge)
> All-Time High Score: 4215

<center>Go ahead ... try to beat me ... I dare you!</center>

Four Seasons Strategy

Strategy: Win the game and get as high a score as possible <grin>.   Seriously, there is actually room for a good deal of stragegy in Four Seasons, particularly when using the 'Undo' feature in 'Challenge' mode.

The basic strategy is to build up reverse-order runs on the five tableau piles.   As each card is turned from the stock, you have three choices: move it to a foundation, a tableau pile, or to the wastepile. Obviously, moving the card to a foundation should be your first preference.   If you cannot move it to a foundation, look at the tableaus and see if your card ranks immediately below any of the existing tableau cards.   If it does, move it to that pile.   If no other move is possible, move it to the wastepile.

As cards are moved to the foundations from the tableau, spaces will open up in the tableau.   Treasure these!   You can use the spaces either to start new reverse-order runs, or as temporary storage when you move cards from one tableau pile to another.   The creation and management of spaces is probably the major determining factor in whether you become good at this game ...

The 'Undo' button can be used to "try out" various strategies. Remember though, that you only have three undo's to work with.

**Tip:** Selecting "Challenge Scoring" completely changes the complexion of the game ...

Tip: The 'Auto' button can be used as a "Move Alert" -- an indication of whether any foundation moves are possible.   If a card (or cards) can be moved to a foundation, the button will be displayed normally.   If no foundation moves are possible, the button will be "grayed out" (i.e. disabled).

Hint: For the sake of those who like to play games at work (I know, I know, *you* wouldn't do that), this program has a "boss" key that will instantly minimize the game if the ESC key is pressed when the main game window has focus.   Use wisely.

The Complete Book of Solitaire and Patience Games by Albert H. Morehead and Geoffrey Mott-Smith is the standard solitaire reference book. It provides descriptions, rules, and odds for over 225 solitaire card games.
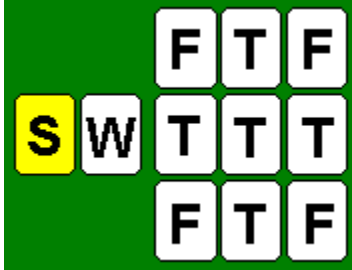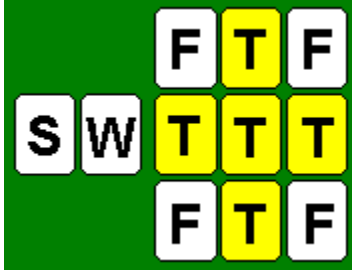
Stock: The pile of cards at the far left.   It contains all of the cards that have not yet been dealt.   The number of cards left in the stock is shown below the pile.
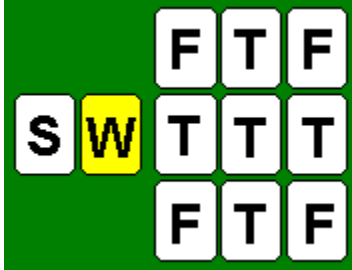
Wastepile: The pile of cards second from the left.   It is initially empty, but is used to hold cards that cannot be played elsewhere. The number of cards in the wastepile is shown below the pile.

Tableau: Any of the five piles of cards in the center of the layout.   These cards appear to form a sort of "cross". This is the "work area", where most of the card movement is done. These piles may be built down, regardless of suit, wrapping around from ace to king as necessary.
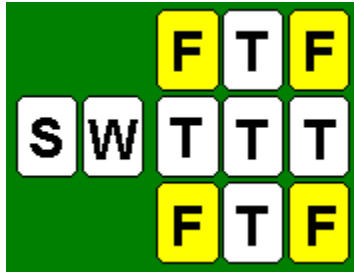
Foundation: The piles of cards in the four corners of the layout.   Initially, only the upper left foundation has a card in it.   These piles are built up in suit, wrapping around from king to ace as necessary.

Suit: The suit of a card is either heart, diamond, club, or spade.

Rank: The numeric or face value of a card, regardless of suit. For example, the rank of a five of clubs is 5.

Select this to abandon the current hand (thus losing the game) and deal a new hand in its place.

The three practice games allow you a chance to experiment with some relatively "easy" hands (i.e. hands that are winnable) without worrying about whether you win or lose.   The practice games will not count toward either your statistics or the top ten list.

Select this to abandon the current hand (thus losing the game) and redeal it, giving you another shot at winning it.

Pretty self-explanatory -- select this to exit the program.

Select this (or press the F1 key) to view this help file.

The undo command allows you to "take back" up to three moves. Any card movement, whether from the deck, wastepile, or tableau, may be undone.

At its simplest, the undo capability is an "oops, I didn't mean to do that" mechanism that lets you recover from mistakes, but it can also be used as a way to test out different strategies and card combinations.

Note: This will be 'grayed out' if the undo buffer is empty.

Moves cards to the foundations automatically.

Note: This will be 'grayed out' if no foundation moves are possible.

Select this to view the "About" box, which shows the version number, and whether the program is registered or not.

The Nest Egg BBS is a fast-growing electronic bulletin board system that has been online since 1987, with 1.2 gig of storage, over 70,000 shareware files, eighteen CD-ROMs, and a number of doors and online games.   The Nest Egg is a BASNet regional hub, and carries the ProgNet and RIME message networks.   The sysop is Tom Frye.

Drop in and say hello!

Other shareware programs by Randy Rasa.

If you enjoy Four Seasons, these are sure to tickle your fancy as well. At the time of this writing, my other games include:

Solitaire Suite
This is a collection of **seven** classic solitaires, including Calculation, Concentration, Idiot's Delight, Midnight Oil, Monte Carlo, Osmosis, and Royal Cotillion.   Feature-packed and easy to play, this is a very popular collection. Requires EGA or VGA and a mouse.

Simple Pleasures
This is a collection of **eight** new solitaires, all in a smooth and elegant program.   All of the best features of Solitaire Suite, plus a few more.   A new favorite! Requires EGA or VGA and a mouse.

More great games are in the works!

The **JCSM Shareware Collection** is published three times a year on CD-ROM.   The certificate entitles you to purchase one issue of the collection for only $9.95 (US) plus shipping and handling.

The most recent issue as of this writing contained a huge assortment of shareware programs for DOS, Windows, OS/2, and Windows NT on a double CD-ROM (two disks containing over 3800 programs!).   This issue sold for $23.95 (+S&H).

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">You'll save more than it costs to register Four Seasons!</p>

<p style="text-align:center">The certificate is valid until June 30, 1995.</p>