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Classic Shanghai Rules

Classic Shanghai is a game of strategy, memory, and luck. There are 144 tiles, arranged in one of several layouts.

The object of Classic Shanghai is to remove all the tiles from the layout, one pair at a time. To be removed, both tiles in a pair must be free at the same time, and they must match. A tile is considered free if there's nothing on top of it, and if it can slide out to the left, to the right, or both. A tile which can only slide toward the top or the bottom of the screen is not free.

There are usually four of each tile, which can be removed as two matching pairs. In some tile sets, there are four unique tiles, or two pairs. Each of these tiles matches any other tile in the special group. The Guide to This Tile Set in the Tiles menu shows which tiles match in a set.

To remove a pair of tiles during the game, simply select the two tiles you want. To select a tile, click on it with the mouse. If it's free to be removed, it will become highlighted. Selecting a matching tile removes the pair.

If you change your mind about selecting a tile, just select it again, and it will become unhighlighted. You may also simply select another free tile. If you choose a blocked tile, it will not become highlighted.

As you remove tile pairs, the game tells you how many tiles still remain in the layout. Thus, if you see "T: 32" on the right side of the Menu bar, you know that there are still 32 tiles (16 pairs) to be removed.

You can change tiles (for a change of scenery or for an enhanced or reduced challenge) by pulling down the Tiles menu and selecting a new tile set. You can use the Layouts menu to change the layout.

The File menu lets you save a game, open a saved game, or save a copy of the current game under a different name (using "Save As").

During play of a game, you can use the Preferences menu to select such options as turning music, sound effects, and tile animations on and off. The game will automatically tell you when there are no more moves. When that happens, you can put tiles back until you get to the place where you made a mistake, or you can shuffle the remaining tiles (but that's kind of like cheating, don't you think?), or you can start over with a different arrangement of tiles. Each of these options can be found in the Help menu.

Classic Shanghai Strategy and Hints

- If you find yourself in imminent danger of getting stuck, you might want to put tiles back, using Back One Move or Try Again, or you might want to Shuffle the remaining tiles. (Shuffling is for wimps, though.)
- Concentrate your efforts on long rows and tall stacks.
- Plan ahead as many moves as you can.
- If all four of a tile are available, remove them all to unclutter the field.
- Don't count on the computer to show you the best possible move; the computer only shows the first move it finds.
- Identify as many matching pairs as possible. Check for tiles that need to be unblocked.
- Look for triples, and choose carefully which pair you will remove. Leave the one that's blocking the fewest important tiles.
- Concentrate on removing tiles that will unblock the most tiles.
- If you find two or more identical tiles adjacent to one another in a long row, think ahead how to remove them.

2-Player Classic Shanghai

Rules

There are two ways to play the two-player game.

In the "Count Down Timer" game, a turn ends when the player's timer (counting the seconds down towards zero from 00:30, the default setting) runs out or the player makes a match, whichever occurs first. The object is to have the most points at the end of the game.

In the "Count Up Timer" game, an endless timer runs (counting seconds upwards from zero) during each player's turn. A turn ends only when the player has made a match. The object is to have the lowest time at the end of the game.

Strategy and Hints

- Plan your next move during your opponent's turn.
- When sharing a mouse, make sure you don't click after your turn ends, or you'll score points for your opponent!

The Great Wall Rules

The Great Wall is played by pairing matching tiles, thus removing them (exactly as in Classic Shanghai). The difference, and the challenge, is that a gravity effect causes higher tiles to fall when they are no longer supported from beneath, which completely alters the arrangement of tiles. This alters the strategy that you must employ in order to win.

When tiles fall they often land a half-space away from the nearest neighboring tile. For a greater challenge, Magnetism exists as a selectable option in The Great Wall (under the Preferences menu). With Magnetism selected, a tile that is a half-space away from its neighbor automatically moves next to its neighbor. If the tile is halfway between two tiles, the tile moves toward the larger conglomeration of tiles (which has greater magnetism than the smaller one).

The goal is to clear all the "bricks" of the wall, just as in Classic Shanghai. When there are no more moves, the computer ends the game. As in Classic Shanghai, you then have the option of putting back moves or of shuffling remaining tiles.

You can choose your difficulty settings in The Great Wall by selecting different layouts. The easier layouts have more windows or doors in the wall of tiles, and the most difficult layout has no windows at all — the wall is solid, and the bricks are lined up vertically (which means that every time a brick is removed, the one(s) above must fall, and also means that there are fewer tiles available at any given moment).

The Great Wall Strategy and Hints

- The strategy you learned in Classic Shanghai won't work here — you can't count on things sitting still after removing a pair. When looking at future moves, consider which tiles will be moving.
- Concentrate your efforts on the bottom row.
- Try to avoid situations where two pairs exist in the bottom row, with no spaces between. If there are two pairs in the bottom row, no empty spaces between, and no matches for either pair anywhere else on screen, you will not be able to clear the screen without shuffling the remaining tiles.
- Don't count on the computer to show you the best possible move; the computer only shows the first move it finds.

2-Player Great Wall

Players take turns removing tiles. Two-player Great Wall is scored in one of two ways (selectable by the players): "Count Up Timer" (the player with the least time showing on his clock wins), and "Count Down Timer" (the player who removes the most tiles wins).

Strategy and Hints

- When sharing a mouse, make sure you don't click after your turn ends, or you'll score points for your opponent!

Beijing Rules

This variant combines traditional Shanghai gameplay with the sliding action of pocket-sized sliding tile puzzles. In Beijing, you can make matches by placing matching tiles next to one another, or by clicking on matching tiles according to Classic Shanghai rules.

To begin, the tiles are placed at random. This inevitably results in the adjacent placement of matching tiles, which are considered "dead," and are removed by the computer before beginning play. When the dead tiles are removed, the result is a layout with double-tile-sized holes scattered throughout. The game is now ready for you to begin playing.

Play consists of removing pairs of tiles, but there are two ways of doing this. The first way is to slide a tile or a group of tiles horizontally or vertically in an attempt to place a tile adjacent to its mate. The second way is identical to traditional Shanghai rules — you can click on a tile if it's unblocked on left or right, then click on its mate, which must also be unblocked. In Beijing, the screen can therefore be cleared as in Shanghai, but simply clearing the screen is not the only object. The main object is to gain the highest possible score.

Wisely selected slide-moves early in the game can result in very high-scoring moves later in the game.

If more than one match results from a slide move, the pairs are removed one at a time (with the usual tile-removal animation, as in Classic Shanghai or The Great Wall), and the score increases exponentially the more matches are made per move.

You can basically place a "finger" (as it were) on any tile, and push in any of four directions. You use the "click and drag" method to push the tiles — click on the tile to be used as the push point, hold the button in, and drag in the desired direction; this causes the tiles to be pushed in the indicated direction. You can only push in that direction if there is a gap in the row or column, and you cannot push any tile past the outer boundary of the layout. If you try to slide a row or column that will not result in a match, the computer disallows the move. If you slide a tile and push its mate, the computer disallows the move; you need to place the tiles next to one another without moving the second tile.

Eventually the game will reach a point where there are no more high-scoring moves. The game does not end at this point. At any time you desire, you can simply click on any available unblocked tile, and on its unblocked mate (exactly as in Classic Shanghai), and the two tiles will be removed. It is possible for this sort of simple 2-point move to open up numerous possibilities for new high-scoring moves which did not previously exist.

The game can be considered as taking place in two alternating phases. In the first phase, there are high-scoring moves available (and even higher for multiple matches in a single move). When there are no high-scoring moves, there are only 2-point moves (second phase), and the cursor changes to indicate this. The second phase is simple mop-up, involving the removal of the remaining tiles for one point each (2-point moves). During Phase 1 you can make high-scoring or 2-point moves, as you see fit, and during Phase 2 you can only make 2-point moves (because that is all that is available). It is entirely feasible for a Phase 2 move to re-open Phase 1 after Phase 1 previously ended.

Tournament Game Rules

In the Tournament game, you will play a series of twelve games. In the Solitaire Tournament, you will play four different games, three times. First Classic Shanghai, then The Great Wall, then Beijing, then Action Shanghai, then repeat twice. In the 2-player Tournament, you will play three different games, four times (there is no 2-player mode for Action Shanghai).

In Tournament, you are not allowed to use any of the "cheats" which are available to you in normal play. You may not shuffle or put back any moves, the computer won't show you matches, and you can't "X-Ray" the tiles.

For an increased challenge, the Tournament game changes tile sets with each game — you can, though, choose to use your favorite tile set instead, for no penalty. You can change your tile set at any time during a game.

As you complete the individual games, you will be rewarded by being shown a scene along the Great Wall of China. By completing an entire Tournament game, you will see scenes from one end of the Wall to the other, from Shanhaiguan at the ocean end, to Jiayuguan at the mountain end:

1. Shanhaiguan
2. Zunhua
3. Jundu Shan Mts.
4. Badaling
5. Beijing
6. Hopeh Province
7. Hong Shi Pu
8. Hohhot
9. Yanchi
10. Yinchuan
11. Gansu Province
12. Jiayuguan Pass

Upon completing all 12 games, the final reward sequence occurs and your name is entered into the Wall of Fame.

Beijing Strategy and Hints

- Watch the cursor as you play — its shape indicates the presence or absence of possible high-scoring moves.
- Think ahead — one move might set up future moves.
- When you have run out of high-scoring moves, you can make low-scoring moves which make high-scoring moves available again. Look for tiles to remove which will open up high-scoring moves.
- Don't be in a rush to remove a pair — study the board to identify possible triple moves (three of a kind), which result in even higher scores.
- Don't count on the computer to help you find high-scoring moves — it hasn't been programmed to be as inventive as you at creating your own opportunities.
- When a matching pair is on the same row or column, with one or more tiles and at least one space in between, you can remove the intervening tiles as is normally done in Classic Shanghai to set up the high-scoring slide move.
- If a potential move isn't possible because there are too many tiles in the row or column, look to see if you can get rid of some tiles using the normal Classic Shanghai rules.

2-Player Beijing

Rules

In the 2-player version of Beijing, the players take turns. Each player has a time limit (default: 30 seconds, adjustable by the players in the same dialog box used in Classic Shanghai). Within the time limit, the player can make a slide move resulting in removal of a pair, click on two matching tiles, or make no move at all. At the end of the game, the player with the highest score wins.

Strategy and Hints

- When sharing a mouse, make sure you don't click after your turn ends, or you'll score points for your opponent!
- When the clock is running, you might want to turn off the tile animations and sound effects.

Action Shanghai Rules

The beginning layout is a half-sized layout. There are 72 tiles on the screen. The remaining 72 tiles are in the computer's hand offscreen. At an increasing pace throughout the game, the remaining tiles are placed on the layout — the tiles are brought up from underneath, thus pushing existing tiles higher and creating an ever-changing situation. At the beginning of the game, the new tiles are placed one every 12 seconds (at the Easy setting). The timer then speeds up by one second every six tiles (at the Easy setting).

The game ends when either the tiles have all been placed by the computer opponent (you have lost) or when the screen is clear of all tiles (you have won), or when you quit. Your goal is to get the number of tiles on screen down to zero before the computer runs out of tiles to put on screen. If you were to do nothing, the remaining 72 tiles would be placed under every tile in the initial layout, resulting in a new layout twice as tall as the initial layout.

Three onscreen counters (each preceded by a letter) are shown in Action Shanghai at the right-hand side of the menu bar.

The first counter, preceded by the symbol "T:," shows the number of tiles that presently appear on screen. This number begins at 72 and goes up with each tile the computer places on screen (with a maximum of 144, if you make no matches) — but goes down by two with each pair of tiles you remove from the screen.

The second counter, preceded by the symbol "S:," is the score at present.

The third counter, preceded by the symbol "C:," shows the number of tiles that the computer retains in its hand, off-screen. This also begins at 72 and counts down steadily to zero as the computer places tiles on your screen.

You are awarded points for each pair removed and, when you clear the screen, you get a bonus for each tile remaining in the computer's hand. The faster you play, the higher your score. For each pair removed, you get 30 points, minus two points per second elapsed since the last pair removed. You are not awarded points for tiles removed by clicking on a pair highlighted by Rosalind or by the computer, so cheating is not rewarded! Bonus points are awarded for tiles remaining in the computer's hand according to which difficulty setting you are using. In Easy setting, you get 15 points per tile. In Medium setting, 30 points per tile. In Hard setting, you get 45 points per tile left in the computer's hand. Note that, if you finish the game leaving a solitary tile on the screen, you will win, but your score won't be as good as it would have been if you had left no tiles on screen!

Action Shanghai can be played solitaire only. And because of the timed nature of the game, you cannot use Back One Move.

Action Shanghai Strategy and Hints

- If all four of a tile are available, remove them all to unclutter the field.
- Don't count on the computer to show you the best possible move; the computer only shows the first move it finds.
- It's a little harder to plan ahead in Action Shanghai, since new tiles get added from underneath the display. This pushes tiles higher, creating stacks where there had been none before, effectively blocking some tiles.
- Speed is the name of this game — you just have to be quick. But you have to balance speed against your two main enemies — long rows, and tall stacks. Because the game starts with two of each tile, it often happens that crucial matching tiles are underneath other tiles. You can leave the animations on if you like, as the clock stops ticking as they play.
- Sometimes you'll want to hold off on taking a pair in order to keep from shuffling. If you're patient, the computer will place a tile, and you may get an opportunity. Of course, don't be too patient, or your score will suffer.
- Play as fast as you can, but try to avoid leaving one tile on the screen at the end, so you can get a higher score. The computer always places tiles a pair at a time, so the next tile to be placed will always be the mate of the odd tile left on screen.

Tournament Game Scoring

In Tournament you are scored by how fast you play (except in the Beijing games). A 15-second clock begins counting down when the game begins, and every time a pair is removed. If you cannot remove a pair within that 15 seconds, you get only two points for removing that pair; the sooner you remove a pair, the higher the points you get for removing that pair.

At the top of the screen there are three numbers shown in Tournament mode. In all games except Action Shanghai, they are preceded by the counters "T:," "S:," and "P:." "T:" stands for the number of tiles on screen. "S:" stands for the overall score for the current Stage (game). "P:" stands for the number of points you'll get for removing a pair at that exact moment (it changes until the 15 seconds runs out, after which it stays at 2). In Action Shanghai, the scoring is the same as it is in regular Action Shanghai play. The third number is marked with a "C:" (instead of a "P:"). "C:" stands for the number of tiles remaining in the computer's hand; your goal is to make "T:" equal zero before "C:" equals zero.

2-Player Tournament

In the 2-player version, you will play three different games, four times; there is no 2-player mode for Action Shanghai.

In Classic Shanghai and The Great Wall, you will play in "Count-Down Timer" mode to determine your score, and you will receive points as you normally do in Beijing. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that your highest score in a 2-player Tournament would be very different from the highest score you might receive in a solitaire Tournament game.

As in any other 2-player Count-Down Timer game, be careful not to click the mouse button after your turn has ended — you don't want to score points for your opponent! Listen for the warning sounds, and watch the cursor — if it changes color, your turn has ended.

Contemplation Mode Rules

This mode is available in any non-sliding game; i.e., Shanghai, The Great Wall, and Action Shanghai. Because Beijing is played so differently from the others, it's not feasible to have Contemplation Beijing.

In Contemplation mode, the play is identical to normal gameplay, only all the tiles are face-down. Tiles only turn face-up when clicked on, and you can only click on two tiles at a time. When the tiles don't match, they automatically turn face down after a second or two.

The object is to learn the positions of the tiles and clear the screen.

Tiles only turn face-up if available for removal (tiles in the middle of a row, or otherwise blocked, will not turn face-up when clicked on).

The computer won't show you matches in Contemplation mode, and neither will Rosalind.

Contemplation Mode Strategy and Hints

- You're not penalized for turning tiles over, so feel free to turn over as many as you wish.
- Just try to remember where everything is. And just keep in mind the same strategies you used in regular gameplay.
- If you want to try Contemplation Action Shanghai... lots of luck, Pilgrim!

