'The Prince'. © 1992 Ralph S. Sutherland

Game #6 from the Card Shell.   v1.0.4

Contents:

Apocryphal background

There is no apocryphal background....   Actually, King Albert is a very difficult single pack solitaire, and even the relaxing of the rules to allow the player to move cards back from the foundations to the tableau doesn't help much.   I wonder if the real Prince Albert was as difficult??

With the two harder sequence rules this is definitely one for the masochists. The easy simple rank matching rule variation make this game a light diversion and is really a bit too easy.

The Aim

The aim is to simply build up the four foundations from Aces to Kings each in strict suit order.

The Deck

A deck of 52 cards is used, comprising of a normal 52 card deck.

The Layout and Deal

• Nine columns of cards are dealt with decreasing numbers of cards from 9 down to one card.   This uses 45 cards, the remaining 7 cards are placed above the columns and are available for play at any time.

•The four foundations are in a vertical columns on the right.

•Aces are layed of immediately, before the game starts.

•All this is achieved using the New Game item (âŒ˜N) on the File menu.

Moves

•Only one card may be moved at a time.   However, any card may be placed in an empty column,   this is a 'vacancy'. By using vacancies whole sequences may be moved.   The length of sequence that may be move is limited by the number of vacancies and whether the sequence is being moved to another column or into a vacancy. i.e.:

Moving onto another column:
1 vacancy   - can move 2 cards at a time.
2 vacancies - can move 4 cards at a time.
3 vacancies - can move 8 cards at a time.
        and so on for more vacancies...
(for the math inclined you can move 2^n cards
                        where n is the number of vacancies)

Moving into a vacancy:
1 vacancy   - can move 1 card at a time.

2 vacancies - can move 2 cards at a time.
3 vacancies - can move 4 cards at a time.
and so on for more vacancies...
(for the math inclined you can move 2^(n-1) cards)

•Cards may be moved between columns according to the sequence matching rules in force.(see below)
•Any of the seven free cards may be played at any time onto the tableau or foundations.
•Cards may be built up on the foundations at any time.   The foundations are built from Aces up to Kings in strict suit.   Aces are layed-off automactically.
•Cards from the foundations may be played back onto the tableau if desired.
•Cards may not be played onto the seven free card spaces above the tableau.

Special moves

•Each move made is recorded by the computer.   Using the Moves menu the player can step back through previous steps and forward again to the most recent move. This means that an erroneous move can be undone.   In fact the entire game can be replayed.   Use of the Forward (âŒ˜F) and Backward (âŒ˜B) is permitted under the rules,   it is in fact encouraged.
•Possible layoffs can be check and executed using the Layoff (âŒ˜L) in the Moves menu.

Sequences

•Sequences in columns may be built up according to the rule currently in force.   The rules may be selected using the Moves menu with the Sequences… item.
•The standard rule says that sequences are built in descending rank using alternating colours (red and black).   This may be changed to be simple descending rank, regardless of suit, or descending sequence in strict suit.
•In general the simple rank rule is to easy and the strict suit rule is probably impossible.

Endgame

•The game is lost if no further foundation layoffs are possible.   Scoring is done after choosing New Game (âŒ˜N)from the File menu, before the new game is dealt.

Scoring

The scoring is a points system that depends on the rules in use for a given game according to the following table:

Rule	Win	Loss
Match any suit	1pt	-4pt
Match alternating colour	2pt	-2pt
Match same suit only	4pt	-1pt

The scores are recorded along with some other statistics such as winning/losing streaks and game move counts.   Overall points and winning percentages as well as a breakdown by rule type is given at the end of each game and at any other time

using Scores… from the Special menu.

Strategies
•This is simply a difficult game.   The key is the handling of vacancies.   Don't fill them unless it is neccesary since they are the only way that whole sequences may be moved.
•Sometimes no opening moves are possible.   If you make no moves then chosing New Game item (âŒ˜N) on the File menu redeals and doesn't count as a win or a loss.

Cool features of the Card Shell games
•Automatic saving means that you can quit at any time and when you restart the game is restored as it was left off.
•All the games from the card shell can simultaneously share the same 'Cards' file. This contains the sounds and cards pictures.   This saves duplicating ~400k of common data for each new game.   The games themselves come out about 50k each.
•The very first time a Card Shell game is started, it looks for the Cards file in the same folder as the game.   If it cannot find it the user is prompted to find it.   Once found its location is recorded along with identification and search info. so that the 'Cards' file can subsequently be moved anywhere else on the disk and still be found.
•The card graphics have be optimised to work equally well on B&W monitor settings as well as 4,16,256,thousands and millions of colours.   The layout will fit (just) on the small 9" monitor of an SE/30, and on larger screens the window can be moved anywhere on a multiple monitor set-up.

Artwork
•The court cards are quite symbolic.   I have included motifs of the original card suits: Staffs, Cups, Swords and Coins on their modern counterparts:Spades Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs.   This means that I have moved the characteristic 'oops I've just stuck a sword though my head!' from the King of Hearts to the King of Diamonds, and given the King of Hearts a nice drink (cup) instead.
•The   other common convention in the court cards is the identities of the one eyed cards: Jack Hearts, Jack Diamonds and King of Diamonds.   This will permit the playing of some obscure Poker variants that actually depend on this.
•The cards are in the form of colour icons in the 'Cards' file.   The cicns also contain modified B&W versions that will look better in mono than just letting quickdraw do it's stuff.

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Credits
Special thanks to Neville Smythe for brave and dedicated Alpha testing.
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Help Text with Imaj from the Data Suite.