

Excellent Card Games

Welcome to Excellent Card Games for Windows



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General Instructions

Excellent Card Games has been carefully designed to be as easy to use as possible. The next few paragraphs provide a clear description of how to use the mouse, pick up cards etc, and also some of the more subtle features which you may not have noticed.

Picking Up Cards

Picking up a card, or a sequence of cards, is simply a matter of positioning the mouse pointer over the card, and clicking on the left mouse button. If the pointer is directly over the card, the program will try to add that card to a foundation. If you want to pick the card up, make sure you position the pointer slightly above or below it. To pick up partial sequence, the pointer must be directly above the first card you want to pick up. Once you have picked the cards up, keep the left mouse button down whilst you move them, and then release the button when you have reached the place you want to drop them.

Foundations

Most of the solitaire games have four foundations, one for each suit, on which all the cards have to be built to win the game. Some of the games differ, but most have to be built up strictly on the order Ace, 2, 3 .. Queen, King in each suit. Once placed on a foundation, a card cannot be removed.

Revealing Cards

If you want to see a card which is partly obscured by another, position the mouse pointer over it and hold down the right mouse button. The card will temporarily be displayed. This only applies to cards that are already face-up. You wouldn't want to cheat now would you!

System Requirements

Excellent Card Games should be compatible with just about any configuration of Windows, including Windows 3.1, Windows 3.11 and Windows '95.

Low Memory

If you have restricted amounts of memory, Excellent Card Games can be configured to use as little RAM as possible. To do this, go to the Preferences...Games menu and turn off the wallpaper, and select outline dragging for picking up cards.

Speed

To alter the speed at which Excellent Card Games runs, alter the speed gauge setting in the Preferences...Games menu

Preferences

Excellent Card Games contains a range of preferences and options that allow you to configure and customise the games to your own liking.

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Game Preferences

Select the Preferences...Games to bring up the main game preferences dialog.



A series of options can be selected:

Welcome

- None
no welcome dialog is given, but the current player's scores will be reloaded
- Current Player
the current player will be automatically loaded, and welcomed back
- Choose Player
a player can be chosen from disk

Moving Cards

- Display All Cards
all cards being carried will be drawn
- Display Top Card
only the top card that is being carried will be drawn
- Outline Dragging
draws only the outline of each card. Useful for slower computers.

Options

- Cycle Through Cards
automatically changes the card back design at the end of each game
- Return Card On Error
If a card can't be dropped it will be returned to its original position
- Animation
turn animation off for quicker dealing

- Sound Effects
either on or off
- Wallpaper
if wallpaper is not selected, a background colour will be displayed. When you choose a wallpaper bitmap file wallpaper will be automatically enabled.
- Handle Cards By Centre
when this option is selected, cards that are picked up will be centred on the mouse pointer.

Speed

Move the speed gauge to alter the overall speed of the game. This changes the rate at which cards are dealt and the length of any delays used for graphics or sound effects.

Wallpaper

Wallpaper style can be either tiled, centred, stretched or auto-formatted. A tiled image is one that is repeated many times across the screen. This uses far more memory than a full screen or stretched image. A centred image is displayed in the centre of the screen, surrounded by the current background colour. A stretched image will enlarge (or reduce) an image of any size so that it fills the entire screen. Select auto-formatting to have the computer automatically select an option that it feels best suits each image.

Most of the time auto-formatted wallpaper should work fine.

Click on the Wallpaper... icon to select a new wallpaper bitmap file. These can be GIF, BMP, JPG or PCX files.

Click on the Background... icon to choose a new background colour.

Choosing Card Backs

To choose a new card back design, simply click on one of the 12 card images in the bottom left of the preferences dialog. If you have selected the Cycle Through Cards option this design will change after every game.

Create Player

Choose the Preferences...Create Player option to create a new player score file. Simply type in the name of the new player.

Styles

Style sheets allow you to easily use a range of pre designed graphics for backgrounds and cards. New styles can easily designed. Graphics can be loaded in any popular format: BMP, GIF, JPG or PCX.

Each style sheet contains a new set of cards, card backs, and wallpaper. A range of styles are available, with the number constantly expanding. Many are freely available from our Internet site at <http://www.u-net.com/~tower>.

Styles currently available are Monet, Van Gogh, Renoir, Cezanne, Impressionist Painters and World War 2.

Cheating

The Replay Game menu allows you to replay the current game, dealing out exactly the same cards again. Useful if you've just misplayed one or two cards!

Shareware

Excellent Card Games is shareware. That means you can try it out for up to 30 days, but if you want to keep playing after that, you must purchase the full game.

Advantages of ordering



Order the full version and you'll never be bothered by reminders or license statements again. You'll be able to load new card styles and wallpaper in any of the popular graphics formats: JPG GIF BMP or PCX. The full game comes complete with colour packaging.

[Excellent Card Games 2](#)

[Ordering](#)

Excellent Card Games 2

Yes - there's more! Excellent Card Games 2 contains another five great card games with same user friendly interface as Excellent Card Games 1.

Cribbage



The definitive English card game needs no introduction. Six card cribbage is played against a formidable computer opponent.

Sir Tommy



Play the first patience ever invented!

Quads



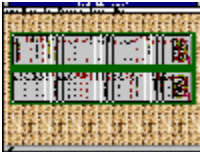
An extremely addictive patience game in which cards have to be removed in fours. Difficult to win but immensely satisfying when it comes out.

Rapide



This quick fire game is an excellent brain teaser. Easy to play, but you'll have to remember where you played the cards to win.

Betrothal



Pair off the cards to ultimately ensure a royal marriage.

[Ordering](#)

Ordering



Excellent Card Games costs £14.99, for the fully packaged game complete with a free shareware copy of Excellent Card Games 2. No extra charge for post and packing.

To order, telephone or fax 0191 285 5748

or by post to

Tower Software

P.O. Box 9

Gosforth

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE3 1QW

England

You can also order by email to sales@tower.u-net.com or via our web site at

<http://www.u-net.com/tower>

[U.S. Orders](#)

U.S. Orders



To order Excellent Card Games in the U.S. call NorthStar Solutions toll free on 1-800-699-6395 or fax to 1-803-699-5465. From outside the U.S. call 1-803-699-6395. Excellent Card Games costs \$24.95 inclusive of shipping and handling.

NorthStar accept VISA and MasterCard, or you can pay by check or money order sent to NorthStar Solutions, P.O. Box 25262, Columbia SC 29224.

NorthStar do NOT provide technical support.

Registered Version

You are playing the shareware version of Excellent Card Games. You are welcome to evaluate this version for up to 30 days, but after that you must purchase the full game if you wish to continue playing.

Why Register?

- No more license statements or reminders
- Use any JPG GIF or PCX as wallpaper
- Unlimited technical support
- Use new card sets freely available from our World Wide Web site

Yukon



Yukon has a similar layout to the old patience favourite, Klondike, being played with seven pillars of ascending size. The objective is to build up the foundations, to the right of the main play area, from Ace to King in each suit.

Any number of face-up cards from one of the main pillars can be picked up, and these can be dropped on top of another pillar providing the two joining cards build down in sequence and alternate in colour. So for example a sequence beginning with a red three can be dropped on top of a black four.

The secret to winning at Yukon is to uncover all the concealed cards as quickly as possible. A common mistake is to play off any aces, twos etc onto the foundations as they appear. DON'T! By leaving these cards where they are you have the maximum number of possible moves available. So, don't make any move unless it is essential towards exposing another face down card.

Once all the face down cards are exposed, it should be a simple matter to re-arrange the cards until you have four columns descending from King to Ace, and then all the cards can be played straight off onto the foundations.

Black Maria



Black Maria is a three player trick taking game in which the object is to AVOID capturing the Ace, King and Queen of spades, as well as any hearts. At the start of each game, your cards are dealt to the bottom of the screen, with your two computer opponents at the top left and right.

Discards

Before the game starts each player must select three cards to discard. Simply click on each of the cards and it will be played into the centre of the screen. Once all players have selected their discards, these are passed to the player to the left. You in turn will receive the discards from the player to your right.

Basic Play

Once the discards have been exchanged, your new cards will be displayed, and play begins. If this is your first game, it is you to lead and you can play any card. The second and third players must play a card of the same suit as the card that was led, if they can. If you can't follow in suit, you can play any card you like. A trick is won by the player who played the highest value card in the lead suit. If the trick contains any point scoring cards, the player who wins the trick scores those cards, and leads the next trick.

Points Scoring

Point scoring cards are the high spades and all hearts. The Queen of Spades scores 13 points, the King 10 points and the Ace 7 points, whilst each heart scores 1 point.

At the end of each game, the winner is the player who has scored the least number of points. There are 43 points to be scored in each game. Remember, you score as many points winning the queen of spades as you do by capturing every single heart. Each player starts with 17 cards. The two of clubs is discarded, so the three is the lowest club.

Strategy

Having the lead, particularly towards the end of the game, can be a serious liability. It is unusual to see many points played at the start of a game, so if you have the lead at the start it may be wise to play your high cards then, and keep your low cards till later when they will be more useful. If you don't have any of the high spades yourself, it is always a sound move to lead a low spade in the hope that one of your opponents will be forced to play his.

A void suit is always an asset. Diamonds and clubs are often played before hearts, so having one of these void (or nearly void) can be extremely useful.

Choosing Discards

There are many possible strategies when choosing discards. Of greatest importance should be

spades. If you have three or more low spades, the suit is relatively safe. If you have less than this you will want to pass on any high spades you have, and void yourself in your shortest suit if possible. This gives you a chance to get rid of any high spades if they are passed on to you.

Sets of 100 points are played, with the lowest scoring player being the winner.

Baroness



The objective of Baroness is to remove all the cards by discarding pairs that add up to 13, that is 7 and 6, 8 and 5, 9 and 4, 10 and 3, Jack and two, or Queen and Ace. Kings can be discarded on their own. Suits are disregarded. Simply click on the first card to select it, then click on the second card. If the two add up to 13 they will be removed.

The cards are dealt out a row at a time by clicking on the main deck. If there are any spaces these will be filled first.

Stonewall



Named after the American General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, the Confederate General of the American Civil War this is a pretty straightforward patience game made more awkward because many key cards are not visible at the start of the game.

As with many patiences, the objective is to build up from Ace to King in each suit, whilst sequences can be build downwards in alternating colour, on the top card of each pillar.

At either side of the main pillars are two columns of eight cards. You can play these at any time, but you should use them sparingly for a better chance of winning.

Your prospects will also be improved if you postpone playing a card to a foundation until the move is essential. Try to clear all the cards from one particular pillar rather than removing one from each. Once a space opens up this can prove extremely useful.

Frustration



To win this simple game all you have to do is arrange the Kings, Queens and Jacks around the edges of a 4 by 4 square grid.

The game is played in two phases. In the first you pick up cards from the deck one at a time and place them onto the grid. If the card is a King, Queen or Jack, it **MUST** be placed around the outside of the grid. The acceptable positions will be highlighted with a tick. Once you have filled the grid with sixteen cards, the second phase of the game starts during which you must remove as many waste cards as you can. Cards with a face value of 10, or pairs of cards that add up to 10, can be removed. To remove a pair of cards, simply click on the first card with the left mouse button and then click on the second. When you have removed all the cards possible, you begin placing the cards into the grid again.

The game ends if there are no cards that can be removed once the grid is full, or if there is no empty space available for a King, Queen or Jack.

Of course, Frustration! involves a certain amount of luck in order to win, but there is a definite strategy that can increase your chances of winning each game. When you are forced to play to one of the outside squares, always choose the one that has the least probability of being filled. For example if two Queens have already come out, but no Kings have yet been played, there is twice the chance that a King will be the next card.

With careful play, it should be possible to win approximately one game from every six. Frustrating, huh!

Tower Software

Excellent Card Games was developed by Tower Software

We provide full technical support: just phone, fax or email.



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