

# Main Playing Area (PlayField)

The main playing area, also referred to here as the playfield, is where all the game action takes place.

It is divided into several areas:

[Foundation Stacks](#)

[Tableau Stacks](#)

[Deck](#)

[Discard Pile](#)

[Buttons](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Status Bar](#)

Help on these and other specific topics can also be obtained by using the Search button above.

## About 4 Corners Dialog

This dialog is displayed as a result of choosing the "About 4 Corners" menu item from the Help menu. It displays information about the application, including the author, copyright, and the version number.

### Register Button

Clicking on the Register button displays the "How to Register" dialog, where information is presented on registering your copy of the game.

### OK Button

Clicking on the OK button removes the About dialog and returns you to the game.

# Setting Preferences

The Preferences dialog is displayed as a result of choosing the "Preferences" menu item from the Options menu.

It displays and allows you to set and change several items which you can use to customize the game play and appearance to suit your own tastes. Each player can have his or her own unique set of preferences.

The preferences which can be set (and which are remembered from game to game and from session to session) include:

- Undo level
- Scoring method
- Sounds
- Elapsed game timer
- Status Bar
- "Watchdog" mode
- Card-back design
- Playfield background color

These are described below.

## Undo Level

A card move can be taken back, or "undone", by choosing Undo from the Edit menu or by clicking the right mouse button. The radio buttons in this group specify whether only a single play can be undone, or whether an unlimited number of plays can be undone.

If you wish to play a slightly tougher game, choose the "Single Level" option for a single-level undo. (Note: in this mode, you can Undo an Undo, which will process exactly the same as a Redo.)

Choosing the "Multiple Level" option provides a somewhat "looser" game. In this mode, each Undo in succession reverses the immediately preceding play. This can proceed, if desired, all the way back to the beginning of the game.

## Scoring Method

4 Corners supports two different ways to keep score, by card count or by card value (for the cards played to the foundations). The radio buttons in this group specify which method to use.

Choose "Total Cards Played" to keep score by the number of cards played. In this mode, a Deuce counts the same as a King (one point).

Choose "Total Card Value" to keep score by the value of the cards played. In this mode, a Deuce counts 2 points, while a King counts 13 points. This choice is available for completeness, but it doesn't really make sense for this game, because the Starter Card is randomly chosen, causing possibly wide swings in early point count.

## Sounds

This group of check boxes specifies whether certain sounds will be played to denote specific events. (Note: these sounds will only be heard if your PC can play such sounds.)

The first check box -- Play "Shuffle" sound -- specifies whether the cards will be audibly

"shuffled" before each deal.

If the box is checked, the sound will be played at the beginning of the game and before each new deal. Leave the box un-checked (blank) if you don't wish to hear the sound.

The second check box -- Play "TaDa" sound -- specifies whether a chord of congratulations is played when you win a game.

If the box is checked, the sound will be played when you win a game. Leave the box un-checked (blank) if you don't wish to hear the sound.

## **Show Elapsed Time**

This check box specifies whether the games will be timed or not. Timed games can add an extra competitive touch for some players, while others may be satisfied with the standard puzzle aspects of the game.

If the box is checked, an Elapsed Time will be displayed just below the statistics in the upper right portion of the playfield. The timer will begin counting seconds when the first card is played in a game and will continue until the game is won or until a new game is dealt. Leave the box un-checked (blank) if you don't wish to use the Timer.

Times of completed games are compared to a list of the best elapsed times to date. If good enough to make it into the top ten, a player will be notified by the appearance of the Best Elapsed Times dialog, with his or her current time highlighted and in its proper rank.

## **Show Status Bar**

This check box specifies whether the Status Bar will be displayed below the PlayField or not. The Status Bar can assist new players as they learn the game by keeping a running commentary of what's under the cursor, and displaying available options when appropriate. Some players might find the Status Bar distracting, however, and can turn off its display with this check box.

If the box is checked, the Status Bar will be displayed just below the playfield, for the full width of the window. Leave the box un-checked (blank) if you don't wish to see the Status Bar.

NOTE: IF THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM TO DISPLAY THE STATUS BAR BELOW THE DECK, THE STATUS BAR WILL NOT BE DISPLAYED, AND YOUR CHOICE WILL BE IGNORED. This situation can happen, for example, on a VGA display (640 by 480) with "Large Fonts". VGA displays with "Small Fonts" can usually display the status bar (although in somewhat reduced size), and SVGA displays (800 by 600) or better can always display it.

## **"Watchdog" Mode**

This check box specifies whether the special "Watchdog" mode is On or Off.

Perhaps the best way to describe the Watchdog mode is through an example. Let's say that the player chooses the "New Deal" command from the File menu or presses the New Deal button on the playfield but doesn't notice that one or more plays might still be made in the current game. When Watchdog mode is off, the Game will quietly carry out the requested command. But when Watchdog mode is on, the Game will make a quick check to see if there are any available plays from any Tableau stacks or from the Discard Pile; if it finds any, it will first pop up a message box and ask the player for confirmation before carrying out the command. (It will, however, exclude from consideration those possible moves where a card will just be moved from one tableau stack to the top of another

tableau stack -- sort of a "reasonableness" check.)

The player can of course override this watchdog warning by saying Yes to confirm the action. Or the warning might be heeded (by replying No), in which case the request is ignored, and the current game continues as if there was no interruption.

The "watchdog" mode also kicks in for certain other actions, such as Exit and Clear Statistics. This mode can sometimes assist new players as they learn the game by pointing out plays they might have missed or just asking for extra consideration before taking an irreversible step. Some players might find the Watchdog too much of a "nag", however, and can turn it off with this check box.

If the box is checked, the Watchdog mode is ON. Leave the box un-checked (blank) if you want the Watchdog mode turned OFF.

### **Card Design Area**

The Card Design area in the middle of the dialog shows the available designs for the card backs, displayed on the currently selected background color. The currently selected card design has a selection rectangle surrounding it.

To choose a different card design, just click on the desired one. The selection rectangle will move to that design, reflecting its pending choice.

### **Background Button -- Color Dialog**

Clicking on the Background button brings up a standard Color dialog where you can select a color to be used as the background color for the playfield.

You can select one of the standard colors by clicking on it, or choose a custom color by clicking on the Define Custom Colors button.

To cancel your color selection and retain the currently selected color, click on the Color dialog's Cancel button. To confirm your color selection, click on the Color dialog's OK button.

### **OK Button**

Clicking on the OK button saves the preference changes you have made and applies them as appropriate to the current game, and then removes the dialog and returns you to the game. If a change was made to the card-back design or to the playfield background, the playfield area is erased and then re-drawn with the new choices before play can continue.

### **Cancel Button**

Clicking on the Cancel button ignores any changes which might have been made to the preferences. It removes the dialog and returns you to the game.

## Game Won Dialog

This dialog is displayed as a result of getting a perfect score in the game by playing all cards to the foundations. Along with well-deserved congratulations, it displays a gentle reminder to register your copy of the game, if you haven't already done so.

### Register Button

Clicking on the Register button displays the "How to Register" dialog, where information is presented on registering your copy of the game.

### OK Button

Clicking on the OK button removes the Game Won dialog and returns you to the game. (Just choose "New Deal" from the File menu to begin another game.)

Note that winning a timed game with a time good enough to break into the top ten will cause the Best Elapsed Times dialog to display before you are returned you to the game.

## How to Register

The "How to Register" dialog is displayed as a result of clicking the Register button from either the "About 4 Corners" dialog or the "Game Won" dialog, or by choosing the "How to Register" menu item from the [Help menu](#).

It displays payment particulars along with the address to send the payment.

### **OK Button**

Clicking on the OK button removes the dialog and returns you to the previous dialog or to the game, as appropriate.

# 4 Corners Help -- Contents

Welcome to 4 Corners, another challenging and addictive Solitaire game from Heuristech Software.

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Help on these and other specific topics can also be obtained by using the Search button above.

(For help on how to use Help, press F1.)



# Introduction -- How to Play

4 Corners is an addictive Solitaire game in a compact layout.

In the upper left portion of the playfield are 9 stacks in a 3-by-3 group. The 5 tableau stacks are arranged as "cross" within the larger group. Surrounding the tableau are 4 foundation stacks, at the 4 corners of the group. The deck is in the lower right portion of the playfield. The "waste" or "discard" pile fans out to the left of the deck.

The game begins with the first 5 cards being dealt to the five tableau stacks, and with the sixth card being dealt to the first foundation stack.

Your goal is to build the foundations (on top) UP in suit, beginning with the original Starter Card for the current deal. The general sequence is Ace, deuce, trey, etc. right up through ten, Jack, Queen, and King, and "turning the corner" from King to Ace as necessary

The top card of each tableau stack is available to be played on foundations or moved to other tableau stacks. The top card of the discard pile is also available. Tableau stacks may only be built DOWN in sequence, but they don't have to be built by suit. (For example, a 3 of Clubs may only be played on a 4, but it doesn't necessarily have to be the 4 of Clubs -- it could just as easily be the 4 of any of the other three suits as well.) A space made by removing all the cards in a column may be filled with any available card. Click on the deck in the lower right corner to turn over the top card.

You may only go through the deck once.

To move a card, just drag it to where you want to play it and let go. Even easier, you may also click on a card with the left mouse button to play it, in which case it will be moved to the Game's idea of its most logical destination. (Which is always to the proper foundation stack, if possible, or secondly, to the proper tableau stack, except that when the deck is clicked, the only possible destination is the Discard pile.)

You can always undo your last move by choosing "Undo" from the Edit menu or by clicking the right mouse button. The default is to allow a single level of Undo, but unlimited Undo's are also an option. The default Undo option, along with scoring method, playfield background color, card-back design, whether or not to show the elapsed time for games, and whether or not to display the status bar, can be changed by choosing "Preferences" from the Options menu. A move that has been undone can be replayed as it was originally played by choosing "Redo" from the Edit menu, or by holding down the Shift key and clicking the right mouse button.

In addition, the game can track the statistics and preferences of multiple players, remembering them from session to session. New players can be signed in at any time by choosing "New Player" from the File menu.

Good luck.

# Using the Menus

The four menus on the menu bar and the commands they include are:

## File

**New Deal**  
**Start Again**  
**New Player**  
**Exit**

## Edit

**Undo**  
**Redo**

## Options

**Preferences**  
**Clear My Statistics**  
**Show Best Times**  
**Clear Best Times**

## Help

**Contents**  
**How to Play**  
**Search**  
**Using Help**  
**About 4 Corners**  
**How to Register**

For details about any of the commands, choose the appropriate menu.

# File Menu

The File menu contains four commands:

- **New Deal**
- **Start Again**
- **New Player**
- **Exit**

These are described below.

## **New Deal**

This command begins a new game with a fresh deal.

A new deal is automatically initiated whenever the Game is started or when this command is chosen.

If a game has been started but not yet completed (at least one card remains un-dealt, for example), you will be asked to confirm your decision to start a new deal if the "Watchdog" mode is on. This is just to guard against a possibly accidental selection.

F2 is the keyboard shortcut for this command. Also, the New Deal button on the playfield performs the same action.

## **Start Again**

This command allows you to start the current deal over again. That is, the same cards are dealt in the same places, etc.

You might use this command if you realize that the game might have taken a new (and hopefully better) direction had you chosen to play an earlier card differently. Rather than go through a series of Undo's, you might just choose to start over.

The current score is cleared, but the game still counts as "started" for the purposes of the Games Played and Avg Score statistics.

## **New Player**

This command displays the New Player dialog, which allows you to change players for all succeeding games.

When you initially begin playing 4 Corners, it doesn't know your name. It begins by assuming "Guest" as the current player. It's a good idea to use this command to specify your name as the current player -- if for no other reason, so that you can get credit for your well-played games.

Each new person -- say, another family member -- playing the game regularly can enter their name as a regular player, and the Game will remember and restore their preferences and statistics, just as when they last played.

Whenever 4 Corners is started up again, it will pick up where it left off when last played, and will assume the last player to be the current player.

## **Exit**

This command is used to exit from (quit) the game.

If a game has been started but not yet completed (at least one card remains un-dealt, for example), you will be asked to confirm your decision to start a new deal if the "Watchdog" mode is on. This is just to guard against a possibly accidental selection.

This command will also be triggered by any of the normal Windows methods for exiting an application (double-clicking the control box, choosing Close from the Control menu, pressing Alt+F4, etc.)

# Edit Menu

The Edit menu contains just two commands:

- **Undo**
- **Redo**

These are described below.

## Undo

This command is used to reverse the actions of the most recent move. For example, if a card was dragged from one tableau stack to another tableau stack, the Undo command would move that same card from the second stack right back to the stack it came from.

If multi-level Undo is in effect (see [Preferences](#)), each successive Undo will undo one more move. For example, if moves #1, #2, and #3 have been performed, then when Undo is chosen for the first time, move #3 will be undone. If Undo is chosen again before anything else, move #2 will be undone. Similarly, a third Undo in succession will undo move #1.

The Undo is very powerful. It cannot, however, undo a New Deal or a Start Again operation -- once a new game is begun, everything starts fresh.

If single-level Undo is in effect, an Undo that immediately follows another Undo acts just like a Redo. That is, it Undo'es the previous Undo.

Ctrl+Z is the keyboard shortcut for this command. That is, hold down the Ctrl (Control) key and press Z.

Clicking the right mouse button in the playing area is another shortcut for this command and is very useful and easy to remember.

## Redo

This command is used to reverse the actions of the most recent Undo, by re-doing the move as it was originally performed. For example, if a card was dragged from one tableau stack to another tableau stack, the Undo command would move that same card from the second stack back to the stack it came from; an immediately subsequent Redo command will move the card from the first tableau stack right back to the stack it was originally moved to.

If multi-level Undo is in effect (see [Preferences](#)), each successive Undo will undo one more move, while each successive Redo will redo one more move. For example, if moves #1, #2, and #3 have been performed and then undone, then when Redo is chosen for the first time, move #1 will be redone. If Redo is chosen again before anything else, move #2 will be redone. Similarly, a third Redo in succession will redo move #3.

As you might expect, any normal move will turn off the ability to Redo until the next Undo occurs.

Ctrl+R is the keyboard shortcut for this command. That is, hold down the Ctrl (Control) key and press R.

Clicking the right mouse button in the playing area while simultaneously holding down either Shift key is another shortcut for this command.



# Options Menu

The Options menu contains four commands:

- **Preferences**
- **Clear My Statistics**
- **Show Best Times**
- **Clear Best Times**

These are described below.

## **Preferences**

This command displays the Preferences dialog, which allows you to set and change several items which you can use to customize the game play and appearance to suit your own tastes. Each player can have his or her own unique set of preferences.

Items which can be set (and which are remembered from game to game and from session to session) include:

- Undo Level
- Scoring method
- Playing sounds
- Show Elapsed Times
- Show Status Bar
- "Watchdog" mode
- Playfield background color
- Card-back design

See Preferences for a description of these items and how to set them.

## **Clear My Statistics**

This command allows you to clear the historical statistics kept by the program and displayed in the Statistics area in the upper right corner of the playfield (all except Score, which applies to the current game). It can be used to provide a "clean slate". Note that this action only applies to the current player -- statistics for other players remain unaffected.

When this command is chosen, you will be asked to confirm your decision. This is just to guard against a possibly accidental selection.

## **Show Best Times**

This command displays the Best Elapsed Times dialog, showing the ten best times for completed games recorded to-date. (This dialog is also displayed whenever a timed game has been won, with a time good enough to put it into the "top ten".

The command is only enabled when at least one completed game time is on record. If no best times are recorded, the command is "grayed out", and can't be chosen. This situation can exist either because no player has turned on the "Show Elapsed Times" option in Preferences, or because the "Clear Best Times" command (below) has been chosen.

## **Clear Best Times**

This command allows you to clear the history of the best elapsed times to-date, as

displayed in the Best Elapsed Times dialog.

The command is only enabled when at least one completed game time is on record. If no best times are recorded, the command is "grayed out", and can't be chosen. This situation can exist either because no player has turned on the "Show Elapsed Times" option in Preferences, or because the "Clear Best Times" command has already been chosen.

When this command is chosen, you will be asked to confirm your decision. This is just to guard against a possibly accidental selection.



# Help Menu

The Help menu contains six commands:

- **Contents**
- **How to Play**
- **Search**
- **Using Help**
- **About 4 Corners**
- **How to Register**

These are described below.

## **Contents**

This command displays the Contents topic of this help file.

## **How to Play**

This command displays the "Introduction -- How to Play" topic of this help file.

## **Search**

This command open this help file and presents the Search dialog box, where you can enter part or all of a keyword or key phrase and see the topic(s) which have been associated with that keyword or key phrase.

## **Using Help**

This command displays the "How to Use Help" contents topic of the standard Windows help file.

## **About 4 Corners**

This command displays information about the Game, including the author, copyright, and the version number.

## **How to Register**

This command displays the "How to Register" dialog, where information is presented on registering your copy of the game.

## Acknowledgments

This version of 4 Corners was made possible thanks to a marvelous little development tool called QCard, written by Stephen Murphy of Pigeon Lake Software, Inc. 4 Corners is heavily dependent on QCard to handle much of the drudge-work of manipulating the cards. Thanks to this useful tool, I could concentrate on the mechanics of the game rather than on the much harder areas of card design and animation.

Thanks also to those people who helped test this game and our previous games, and to those who offered useful and/or encouraging comments

Ed Stout, February 1995

P.S. If you like this game, you ought to try one of our other games:

- » 40 Thieves
- » 3 Shuffles and a Draw

These are available on America Online, CompuServe, and elsewhere. They're among my favorites, and I'm sure you'll enjoy them as well.

## New Player -- "Enter and Sign In, Please"

The New Player dialog is displayed as a result of choosing the "New Player" menu item from the File menu.

It displays the current player's name in a text box and an initially hidden list of all players' names in the attached drop-down list. Just click on the arrow to the right of the text box to see the list of players.

You can change players in a couple of ways.

One way is to select one of the existing player's names by clicking on it. Or, you can enter a brand new name to set up a new player. You would do this, for example, when you first begin playing the game. Each new family member (or friend, etc.) can also sign in as they become familiar with the game. This allows each one to then set up their own preferences and to begin to accumulate their own statistics.

The special player "Guest" can also be chosen if you don't wish to permanently record a temporary player. Cousin Bob, for example, down for the weekend, can set up his own color scheme and play to his heart's content without bring down the average score that you've worked so hard on.

Note that each newly signed-on player inherits the preferences of the previous player as an initial starting point, but their statistics are set to zero. (There is one exception to this rule, however -- the very first player inherits the statistics of Guest, and Guest's statistics are set to zero; this is to handle those people who've played for a while before committing their name to posterity.)

### OK Button

Clicking on the OK button saves the information about the new or changed player, and then removes the dialog and returns you to the game. If an existing or new player was specified, his or her preferences and statistics are read in and used to set the playfield and game play characteristics. If a change to the playfield background or card back design is indicated, the playfield area is erased and then re-drawn with the new choices before play can continue.

### Cancel Button

Clicking on the Cancel button ignores any selection or entry which might have been made. It removes the dialog and returns you to the game.

## Best Elapsed Times Dialog

The Best Elapsed Times dialog is displayed in either of two ways: as a result of winning a game while the Elapsed Time was being clocked, and with one of the ten best times to date; or by choosing the "Show Best Times" menu item from the Options menu.

It displays the top ten timed games, the elapsed times achieved, and the players responsible. If the dialog was the result of winning a game and breaking into the top ten, the current game's score is highlighted along with its relative rank.

The dialog will also note a personal best time, if appropriate.

### OK Button

Clicking on the OK button removes the dialog and returns you to the game. (Just choose "New Deal" from the File menu to begin another game, or continue with the current game as appropriate.)

## Foundation Stacks

There are four Foundation stacks, located at the four corners of the nine stacks in the upper left of the playfield -- one stack for each suit. (Hence, the name of the game: "4 Corners".)

Each stack must be built in sequence, beginning with the original Starter Card for the current deal. The general sequence is Ace, deuce, trey, etc. right up through ten, Jack, Queen, and King, and "turning the corner" from King to Ace as necessary. A starter card (and suit) is randomly selected at the beginning of each new deal and automatically played to the first foundation. Your initial score is automatically credited with this first card.

Thereafter, the remaining cards of the same rank must be played to the other three foundation stacks as they are encountered. For example, if a Five of Spades is chosen as the initial Starter Card, it is placed in the upper left foundation stack. The Fives of Clubs, Diamonds, and Hearts must then be played to the other three foundation stacks. Each foundation stack would then be built in sequence as: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, J, Q, K, A, 2, 3, 4.

As cards are played to the foundation stacks, all cards after the initial starter cards are offset slightly so that the starter cards remain visible as a quick reminder.

## Tableau Stacks

There are five stacks in the tableau area, arranged in the shape of a Plus sign (or cross).

Each tableau stack starts out with a single randomly dealt card. Only the topmost card in a stack is "live" and playable. This card may be moved to a valid foundation stack (see rules there) or to a valid spot on another tableau stack.

You can move any playable tableau card on to another playable tableau card, but only if the card being moved is immediately below the destination card in rank, without regard to suit. That is, a Five of Clubs can be moved to any playable Six on another stack (Clubs or not). Also, you can move any card to an empty tableau stack.

# Buttons

Two buttons are located on the right side of the playfield, next to the middle group of stacks. These include (from top to bottom):

- 1) Hint; and
- 2) New Deal.

These buttons are described below.

## Hint Button

The first button in the group is the Hint button. When this button is pressed, the Game will enter a special Hint mode. (The button command will change color to remind you of this special mode.)

On entry into the Hint mode, the first card which can be legally moved to another stack will be highlighted. The top cards of the tableau stacks are checked first for a valid move, and then the top card in the discard pile is checked. Each successive press of this button while in the Hint mode will highlight another possible move, until all possible legal moves have been highlighted. If the button is pressed and no (more) legal moves are found, a message box will be displayed to that effect.

To leave the special Hint mode, you can choose any of the standard Undo methods (pressing the right mouse button, for example), or you can press one of the other buttons, or play a card, or choose a menu command, etc. In fact, you only remain in the Hint mode if your next action is to press the Hint button to view another move.

## New Deal Button

The other button in the group is the New Deal button. When this button is pressed, the current game will be completed and a new game will be dealt.

If the "Watchdog" mode is active, and if any obvious moves are available, the Game will display a warning dialog box to that effect and ask for confirmation before continuing.

## Statistics Area

Several statistics are displayed in the top right portion of the playfield. These include:

- 1) the Score for the current game;
- 2) the total number of Games Won to-date;
- 3) the total number of Games Played to-date; and
- 4) the Average Score for all games played to-date.  
-- and optionally --
- 5) the elapsed playing time for the current game

The Score and Average Score are computed based on the current scoring method, as displayed and set in the Preferences dialog.

The game timer is only displayed if the current player has checked the "Show Elapsed Time" option in the Preferences dialog. It begins ticking (silently) when the first card is played and stops when the game has been won or when the next game is dealt.

Note also that the Games Won, Games Played, and Average Score statistics may be cleared by choosing the "Clear Statistics" menu item from the Options menu.



## Status Bar

The "Status Bar" is located along the bottom of the playfield.

Messages are displayed here to keep you updated on the status of the game, and to identify items on screen and the actions you can take. As an example, if you position the cursor over the New Deal button, a brief description appears: "Press to start a new deal".

This area is especially useful for those new to the game, but may be optionally displayed or hidden depending on the value of the Show Status Bar check box in the Preferences dialog.

NOTE: IF THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM TO DISPLAY THE STATUS BAR BELOW THE DECK, THE STATUS BAR WILL NOT BE DISPLAYED. This situation can happen, for example, on a VGA display (640 by 480) with "Large Fonts". VGA displays with "Small Fonts" can usually display the status bar (although in somewhat reduced size), and SVGA displays (800 by 600) or better can always display it.

## Deck

The deck is displayed in the bottom right corner of the playfield. It starts off with the 46 cards remaining after dealing the original 6 cards (5 to the tableau stacks and 1 to the first foundation stack). The number of cards left in the deck is displayed in a running counter immediately above the deck.

Cards cannot be played directly from the deck until they have been dealt to the top of the discard pile. To deal a card from the deck, click on the top card (or click and drag the top deck card to the discard pile.)

## Discard Pile

The discard pile is displayed in the bottom portion of the playfield. It begins immediately to the left of the deck and extends to the left as necessary to show previous discards.

Only the top card of the discard pile is "live" and playable. If the move is legal, it can be moved to a foundation or tableau stack.



