KYODAI 3.01 - Release Notes

Mahjongg Solitaire Game for Windows 95
Also works under Windows 3.1 with Win32s
Best viewed in 800x600 and 65,536 colors

This program is shareware. You can distribute it freely around you, on any support (including CD-Rom). You must provide all of its files together. You can use try it freely for a period of 30 days, after which you are invited to register if you continue to use it. Registering will remove all the reminders from the game. No warranty or guarantee is implied or given and none of the authors of *Kyodai* can be held responsible for any problems that could be encountered during its use.

RULES OF MAHJONGG SOLITAIRE

You may already know them... Just remove all the tiles from the board, by pairs. The only condition to remove them is that they must both be free (no tile ON them, and at least one side free -- no tile on their left or no tile on their right). The tiles must be identical, except if they belong to a Flower or a Season family (in this case, they just have to be from the same family).

TWO-PLAYER VARIATION

The purpose of this variation is to get the highest score. Two players play at the same time on the board. They control a hand-cursor (P1 and P2) with the keyboard (see what keys to use below). Be quick and don't let your opponent take all the tiles before you ! Each removed pair gives you 100 more points. The winner is the player who removed the highest number of pairs at the end of the game. Each time there aren't any moves left, the board is automatically shuffled. You can't access the *hint* option here (for obvious reasons). Please note that your hand must be *completely* inside a tile before you can select it. It's just a matter of time before you can master the keys perfectly, you'll see !

Keyboard layout for player 1 (Qwerty keyboard) :

S : select or unselect a tile
W or E : top   Z or X : bottom
A : left   D : right

Keyboard layout for player 1 (Azerty keyboard) :

S : select or unselect a tile
Z or E : top   W or X : bottom
Q : left   D : right

Keyboard layout for player 2 :

5 : select or unselect a tile
8 : top   2 : bottom
4 : left   6 : right

RULES OF MAHJONGG RIVERS

The layout is replaced by a large wall full of tiles. This time, you can select *any* tile you want. The goal is the same : remove all the tiles from the board, by matching them by pairs. There is only one rule to connect two identical tiles : if you try to draw an horizontal and vertical line through the free space between them, there must not be more than two corners in the line, i.e. if you have to turn more than twice to arrive in front of the other tile, you can't select it. Of course, if two tiles are side to side, you can remove them immediately. If you don't understand the rules, try the game for some minutes, I'm sure you'll finally understand ! This game variation is absolutely great, and I find it much easier than the traditional Solitaire version - I usually finish a board in less than two minutes.

WHAT REGISTERING WILL BRING YOU

☐   No more reminders during the game
☐   Perpetual FREE upgrades. This means that you won't have to pay anymore after that to get any new version

of Kyodai. I've been updating it for nearly a year now and I'm still very excited with my game, so I don't see any reason why I should stop developing it.

 Free e-mail support. But please *read* the documentation and my website before sending me any bug report or other question !!

 You'll be contacted by e-mail each time there's a new version available -- you can choose not to be included in the mailing list.

HOW TO REGISTER

You can simply send a bill of **US$20** (twenty US dollars) to :

Rene-Gilles DEBERDT
80 rue Gauthier
62400 BETHUNE
FRANCE

REMEMBER : **DO NOT SEND ANY CHECKS** (Eurocheques included) ! Please send only cash by snail mail. You can also send money from your own country, provided that once converted, it is equal to US$20. French checks are accepted, in this case the registration fee is 100 French Francs.

If you don't have an e-mail, please enclose an envelope with your address and your name, and an international reply coupon.

DON'T FORGET to tell me the version you presently use, your e-mail address (if you have one) and a User Name of at least 8 characters (your first and last names, like "Helen Smith", will be fine).

If you have access to the Internet, go to my website. Here are several addresses where you can access it :

http://namida.animanga.com/kyodai.html
http://www.mygale.org/namida/kyodai.html

You will find there the instructions to register Kyodai online at GetSoftware. Price of the online secure registration is 20 US$ as well.

HOW TO UPGRADE
(FOR KYODAI 2.88 REGISTERED USERS)

If you had already registered for Kyodai 2.88, you've probably noticed that your password doesn't work on Kyodai 3.0. Why ? Well, the price of Kyodai has raised from $15 (cash) or $16 (online) to $20 in both cases. I'm *only* asking for the price difference. As I don't intend to raise again the price of Kyodai, it will probably be the only time I'll ask for money for an upgrade.

Do as you did when you first registered. Only, the upgrade price is $5 cash (by snail mail) or $8 (on-line registration). If you want to upgrade on-line, you'll have to take with you your GetSoftware password (which has NOTHING to do with the Kyodai password). I'm personally keeping track of every registration, so if you have a problem, just drop me a mail (naoki@animanga.com) with your user name and the approximate registration date.

Please note : some generous supporting users had sent me $20 instead of the asked $15. They can consider themselves automatically registered to Kyodai 3.0 and just have to send me an e-mail to ask for their password. In every case, I'm only asking for the price difference, so if you'd sent $16 by snail mail, just send $4 again.

MENU OPTIONS

File

 New Solitaire Game : Start a new classic Mahjongg Solitaire game.
 New 2-Player Game : Start a new Mahjongg "Not So Solitaire" game...
 New Rivers Game : Start a new Mahjongg Rivers game, based on Four Rivers / Arcade Mahjongg / Winojong
 Exit : Quit Kyodai (really ?)

Play

 Undo : Cancels the last move. Very useful if you feel like you ruined the whole game by doing a wrong move. Please note that you can undo as much moves as you want, everything is kept in a history list.

 Hint : Shows you a possible move by highlighting a pair of tiles. If you are not satisfied with the hint, you can call this function again and it will show you another possibility, until there's no other possible move. Using this function will add **40** seconds to your total time, so don't waste your time on it !! **Important** : this feature works neither on *Mahjongg Rivers*, nor on the 2-Player game (this one is for evident reasons).

 Shuffle : Shuffle current game tiles. It means that Kyodai will exchange the tiles between them, without touching their positions or their number. It's particularly useful when there are no more possible moves. Indeed, you can find new combinations this way. But please remember that every possible move left will then cost you **10** seconds. For example, if you have 5 moves left to do, press Shuffle, and you'll have, let's say, 8 moves left now. Your current time will be increased by (8x10)=80 seconds. So, use this function only when you really have no more moves left !

 Restart : Restart current game from the beginning.

 Stop : Stop current game and empty screen.

 Pause : Pause current game. You can

Options

 Configuration : Various options that you can switch on/off.

 - [Enable time tracking for the Hall of Fame] : If this option is not checked, your final time will not be recorded in the Hall of Fame. Check this option only if you don't fear to defy the Hall of Fame.

 - **[Start new game when changing layout]** : Says it all...

 - **[Switch to 800x600 at startup]** : When you're running the game in 640x480, you won't have the toolbar on. If you don't want to switch to 800x600 definitely but still want the toolbar, click on this menu item. Then, each time you'll launch the game, it will try to switch to 800x600 automatically. And when you'll leave Kyodai, it will switch back to 640x480.

 - **[Begin new game at startup]** : You can choose if Kyodai will automatically start a new game when you launch it, or if you'll have to press on the New Game button to start.

 - **[Play sound effects]** : Easy to understand, no ? This option is not available on the non-Direct-X version, because you won't have the sound effects.

 - **[Play music]** : Why should you want to stop this haunting music ? Oh, because your husband is trying to sleep ? Okay...

 Highlight : Defines how the current tile will be highlighted. The current tile is not a selected tile, it's simply the tile on which the mouse cursor is on. **[None]** means you don't want Kyodai to show you which tile you are on. **[Rectangle]** quickly draws a small red rectangle around the tile. **[Color]** shows the tile exactly as if it had been highlighted by a *Hint* call. The main difference between the [Rectangle] and the [Color] features is that [Rectangle] is faster on most PCs, but the rectangle isn't cut by the tiles surrounding it.

 Keyboard type : You can choose two keyboard layouts for now : Azerty (French keyboard) or Qwerty (most keyboards). I'm planning to improve this function later by letting you define you own keys. The keyboard layout is only used during the 2-player game, and it defines the keys to use for Player 1.

 Cool Mouse : Shows either the default Windows mouse cursor or a "futuristic" cursor.

 Player name : Click to change your name as it will appear in the hall of fame.

 Show Time Left : Shows or hides the "Elapsed time" counter. Added especially for a Kyodai user who wanted it :-)

 Show Moves Left : Shows or hides the "moves left" counter. This counter tells you how many pairs of tiles you can still remove from the board. The counter can increase if, for example, when you remove a pair of tiles, they both free other tiles that can be removed as well. It can be useful to track that counter if you want to see if your latest move was strategically interesting for the game. You can disable this function because you may feel it's a way to "cheat", or simply you don't like how close you are to the end... *Please Note* : the "moves left" feature does NOT work with the Mahjongg Rivers game.

 Show Hall of Fame : Show or hides the Hall of Fame panel on the right side of the screen. Not available in 640x480 mode. A beta-tester reported me that this menu item didn't appear in his version - but I really don't see any reason why it shouldn't.

 Show toolbar : Shows or hides the toolbar. If you are using a 640x480 resolution, you won't see that toolbar at startup, because there isn't enough space on the screen, but you can show it by clicking on this menu item.

Background

 Load from disk : Load a new background picture. If you quit the game while this menu item is checked, it will load the same background the next time Kyodai will be launched. Please note : click once on this item and Kyodai

will show you the last background you had loaded. Click again and it will ask you to choose a new background.

 ⬜ **None** : Shows a solid background behind the tiles. Useful if you don't like being distracted by the pictures.
 ⬜ **Kanji** (classic) : Shows a background full of chinese characters :-)
 ⬜ **Dragons** : Shows a very nice traditional dragon picture as a background.

Tileset

 ⬜ **Load from disk** : Load a new tileset. If you quit the game while this menu item is checked, it will load the same tileset the next time Kyodai will be launched. Please note : click once on this item and Kyodai will show you the last tileset you had loaded. Click again and it will ask you to choose a new tileset.
 ⬜ **Mahjongg (clear)** : the classic Mah Jongg tileset, as seen in Kyodai 2.x
 ⬜ **Mahjongg (darker)** : the same tileset, but with dark borders, much like in Kyodai 1.x

Layout

 ⬜ **External layout** : Load a new layout (*.lay file). If you quit the game while this menu item is checked, it will load the same layout the next time Kyodai will be launched. Please note that the Hall of fame is not enabled for this kind of layout. It might be interesting for those of you who don't like the idea of being in a hall of fame : first, select a layout, then click on Edit layout, save it as a new layout, and load this new layout to desactive the hall of fame. Please note : click once on this item and Kyodai will show you the last layout you had loaded. Click again and it will ask you to choose a new layout.
 ⬜ **Edit layout** : Call the layout editor.
 ⬜ **Other menu items** : Chooses a new layout included in the program.

Theme

 ⬜ **New Theme** : Load a new theme from your disk. See below for more about the themes.
 ⬜ **Use Theme** : Enable or disable the current theme.

Music

Select any of the items to select a new music. If there's no music playing yet, it will start automatically.

Help

 ⬜ **Contents** : Shows a dialog box with full details on Kyodai. The tab control [English] gives you some quick information on Kyodai, [Francais] is approximately the same in French, [Tiles] shows you a complete tile map with the tile names, and [Notes] displays this very help file.
 ⬜ **Register** : Click here to register. First, you must have got a user name and a password from the author. Enter your user name and your password *as they were given to you* (they are case-sensitive), and press Register. Thanks again for supporting Kyodai !
 ⬜ **Hall of fame** : Shows the hall of fame for the current layout. You can select another hall of fame by clicking on the combo box in the bottom of the dialog box and choosing another layout.
 ⬜ **About** : Shows information about the author and the version number.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

 ⬜ *IT'S TRUE* : Kyodai 3.01 works under **Windows 3.1** !! You just have to install the latest version of Win32s (a 2,5mb download from Microsoft) and run the file KYODAI3.EXE (KYODAI3DX.EXE won't work).
 ⬜ If you want to have the small sound effects, you will have to install Direct-X first. It's a good package, you can give it a try. You may find it at Microsoft's Web site : http://www.microsoft.com/directx/ (Check out the End User section). Presently, Direct-X 5.0 (5,5mb) is the latest version available.
 ⬜ If you are in a **640x480** resolution, when running the program, the window will open in full screen. If you want to see the taskbar, double-click on the window's title bar. To hide it again, do the same thing. If the window's bottom doesn't reappear, try again, it should work. In this resolution, you can see neither the toolbar nor the Hall of Fame panel. Just switch to a higher resolution if you want it.
 ⬜ If you are in a **800x600** resolution : the window covers the full screen except the task bar. There should be no reason to change anything. This is the recommended resolution, and the one I use to develop Kyodai.
 ⬜ If you are in a **1024x768** resolution, the window takes only a part of the screen. Everything should run correctly.
 ⬜ If you are experimenting **palette problems** in 256-color mode, just click on the menu item "Theme | New Theme" and choose ORIENTAL.BMP... It should fix the problem !

If you want to get rid of any *<hint>* Kyodai has given you, click on the right mouse button. This will remove any highlight from the board.

 To run the music, just press the green arrow button on the toolbar. You can pause it then play it again by using the yellow "pause" button on its right, or stop it by pressing the red square. You must have a soundcard installed, of course...

 Some people asked me what was the "Moves Left" indicator. It's simply the number of pairs of tiles you can potentially remove from the board.

 When the Hall of Fame panel is activated, your latest highscore is written in italic -- this way you can find it faster.

 My best time on the traditional board : 2:45. I know, it can quite easily be beaten, with a bit of luck. But leave me in my dreams :)

USING THE LAYOUT EDITOR

First, select a layout you like and you want to base your work on. Then, click on [Edit layout]. A new toolbar will appear. The five digits represent the number of levels shown. Clicking somewhere on the screen will add a new tile to the layout, but only on the highest level shown. If you want to add a new tile to the lowest level, click on "1". If you want to add a tile to the top of the board, click on "5". To complete a layout, you have to place exactly 144 tiles on the board. When you first enter the editor, there are already 144 tiles, so you'll have to remove some of them first. Simple : you just have to click on the tiles you don't want anymore with the RIGHT button. Then, the "Left tiles" counter will be increased. It's very easy to remove tiles, since it's just like if you were playing normally. You can remove as many tiles as you want. Second part of the work : adding new tiles. Just select the level you want to work on, and click with the left button at the position where you want a new slot. If it is shown at the wrong place, just click on the tile with the right button, and try again until you find the right position. Don't worry if you find this quite hard to do, when you're used to the editor it becomes very easy.

Before you can quit the editor and try the new layout, you'll have to fill the board with all the 144 tiles. You can leave the editor with one of the three menu options : [Save] will save the layout under the current layout file name. Be careful not to erase another layout ! [Save as] will let you save the layout under a new name. [Don't save] lets you play with the layout without having to save it. It's useful if you want to test the difficulty of a layout. You can then come back to the layout editor by clicking again on [Edit layout]. The default extension for the layout files is ".lay". You can even choose a name for the layout by typing it in the upper right edit box. This way, you can distribute your layouts by precising your name, the creation date, the name of your work, etc... Nice, isn't it ?

Send me your creations, I'll include them on my site. And if I like them, I'll gladly put them directly into the next Kyodai version, with a credit for you of course.

HOW TO CHANGE THE TILESET

This example uses Paint Shop Pro 4.1 to create the tileset. You can use any other paint program, but it will have to be able to deal with image masks.
Use PAI.BMP as a template for your new tileset. You can name it as you want. First, change the background color (#0) to something clearer (blue, for example). Now you'll notice that the tiles are surrounded by black lines -- they serve as a guideline, you must draw *inside* these lines, don't touch them. This is the harder part : everything relies on your own talent...
After you've finished creating your tiles, you'll have to create a mask for them. Select the square [0,0,370,256], Copy it to the clipboard, and Paste as a new image. Then, go to the Masks menu, click on New From Image. Select these options : *This Window*, *Any non-zero value*, and *Invert mask data*. Click OK. Back to the Masks menu, click on Edit. Now, click on the menu item Copy (in the Edit menu), and go back to your tileset window. Click on Paste As New Selection, and put the mask image exactly where the previous mask image was (coordinates 0,312,370,568). That's all !
The three tiles in the lower part of the picture are used as containers for the tile graphics. The left one is the "normal tile background", the middle one is used for selected tiles, and the right one is used for the hints. You can modify the backgrounds as you wish, but don't touch the white triangles at the right of the last tile : they're used as a mask for the tile containers.
Before saving the file, don't forget to switch back the background color (#0) to black, otherwise the tiles won't appear correctly on the screen !

If you want a place to find or submit tilesets, layouts or custom Asiatic-style background, try my site :
http://namida.animanga.com/kyodai.html

CREATING AND USING THEMES

Themes are simply image files that contain a tileset, a background picture and a "hall of fame" panel. They have two interests : you can load a tileset *and* a background with only one mouse click, and, more important, you can solve most of the palettes problems under a 256-color mode, because you can be sure the tileset and the background use the same palettes and there won't be any conflict.

The default Theme is "oriental", it simply contains the Dragon background and the Mahjongg (clear) tileset, both using the same palette. You can switch to another theme by clicking on the menu item "New Theme". Select a new theme file (there's none but Oriental for now in the Kyodai package), and it will replace automatically your tileset, your background and your Hall of Fame panel. You can disable it whenever you want by clicking on "Use Theme".

To create a new theme, first make a copy of ORIENTAL.BMP (the only theme provided with Kyodai). It's a picture file that contains :
- the tileset picture (like in PAI.BMP), coordinates (0,0,370,568)
- the Hall of Fame panel (like in HOF.BMP), coordinates (612,100,704,568)
- the background picture (like in KANJI.BMP), coordinates (0,568,704,1036)

Now you can create your own theme with a program like Paint Shop Pro. Because palette concepts need to know the Windows graphics bases, I leave this feature to the most careful of you, but I won't provide information about it for now. Just keep in mind that you must provide, on the same palette, all of your pictures' colors, and the default Windows colors (Paint Shop Pro handles that perfectly).

QUICK TROUBLESHOOTING

- I can't launch Kyodai ! It says something like "MMSYSTEM275 File not found"...
- Check out your Kyodai directory to see if you have all four MIDI files there (especially Ferral.mid). If you can't find Ferral.mid, copy a new MIDI file into this directory and rename it to "Ferral.mid".

- I can't launch Kyodai ! This time it says something like "DDRAW.DLL not found" ! Where can I find this file ?
- It's part of Direct-X, the multimedia extensions for Windows designed by Microsoft. I'm using this pack to play the sound effects simultaneously in 32 bits, but I'm also planning to use Direct-X soon to enable my game to be played via the Internet. You have three solutions : download Direct-X from http://www.microsoft.com/directx (it's quite a large file compared to Kyodai), or find it on a recent game magazine's CD-Rom (you can find it almost everywhere now). Or simply, if you think you don't need the sound effects, run the normal version of Kyodai (kyodai3.exe) instead of the Direct-X enhanced version (kyodai3dx.exe).

- The tiles don't appear don't appear when I launch Kyodai.
- Are you sure you checked the option *Begin new game at startup* ? If yes, try to change the tileset (click on Mahjongg Darker, for example). An user reported that he had this problem and that he solved it by this way. (I didn't manage to reproduce the so-called bug)

- My colors are all screwed up !
- Are you in 256-color mode ? If yes, just click on "Use Theme" (or choose a New Theme), it will solve the problem.

- Where's the toolbar ? I used to have a toolbar before !! Give it back !!
- You probably switched to 640x480. The toolbar is automatically disabled in 640x480, in order to let you see all of the tiles. You can use the menus where you'll find all of the toolbar's features, or you can switch to 800x600 easily : check the menu option "Switch to 800x600 at startup", then leave Kyodai and launch it again. The game will try to switch automatically to 800x600. When you'll leave Kyodai, it will switch back automatically to 640x480. Isn't that nice ? :-)

POSSIBLE BUGS

During the beta-testing sessions of Kyodai 3.0, I have been reported possible bugs :
- The Layout Editor
- The "External Layout" feature
- The Hall of Fame panel

They seem to have been removed during the beta-testing session of Kyodai 3.01. If you experience any bug, please send me a mail and describe your configuration and how to reproduce it.

WHAT'S NEW

Upcoming features for the next versions (1998)

- Several new layouts
- Some rules variations
- Additional game options
- A tileset editor (not sure at all)
- Two-player game, via modem/Internet (using Direct-X)
- Save/Load Game options (but is it really useful for a small board ?)
- Additional games : Concentration, Columns, Go-Moku, Reduced Genuine MJ, etc. Yes, I'm crazy !
- A routine to prevent impossible boards to be created. It shall enable you to finish *any* board without having to shuffle, if you are a good player at least !

New features in version 3.01 (December 1st, 1997)

- A *lot* of changes and some bugs fixed
- Added the *theme* concept into the program
- Reworked the help file (I'd forgotten to talk about the 2-player game...)
- The Hall of Fame panel on the right side of the screen is back ! (And now it flickers no more)
- Removed the reminders from the Editor and Two-Player game. Why ? Well, say, Merry Christmas !

New features in version 3.0 (November 26th, 1997)

- Improved this help file
- Layout editor -- happy ? :)
- Improved Hall of Fame feature
- Two new stupid layouts (as *.lay files)
- User-customizable BMP tiled backgrounds
- Cool new "Internet Explorer" look for the toolbar...
- Additional game : Mahjongg Rivers (I love this one !)
- Two-player game on the same screen (hey, this one rocks too !!)
- The tileset is now loaded from an external file, PAI.BMP, which means that you can modify it as you want !
- You can choose to switch automatically to mode 800x600 at startup, to help play a comfortable game if your default resolution is 640x480...

New features in version 2.88 (August 28th, 1997)

- Modified documentation to reflect changes in the registration process (no more checks, please !)...
- Now the games remembers what's your favorite layout.
- Corrected palette problem. At least, that's all I can do... The rest is Delphi's fault :)

New features in version 2.8 (August 18th, 1997)

- Turbo Speed ! Now as fast as in the 16-bit version, but without the bugs ! Enjoy...
- New background : Dragons
- It's now possible to highlight the current tile. You have the choice between a rectangle (like in MJWIN), very fast, or a colored tile (a bit slower).
- Can now save options/configuration
- Added sound effects support for Direct-X users - more will come.
- A hall of fame -- Something that really lacked in Kyodai before !
- There seems to be fewer palette bugs ! ;-)

New features in version 2.02 (June 6th, 1997)

- Finally, after many days of bug-blasting, I managed to speed up the game ! Yippie !! I never thought I'd manage to do it !
- Kyodai is now shareware -- it's not that I want to make money with my program, but I'm extremely poor and I can't afford to continue programming Kyodai without getting anything in exchange... Thanks for understanding - and registering the modest fee.

New features in version 2.01 (May 27th, 1997)

Improved the "about" box.
 New layout: Beatle... The hardest one ! A real nightmare ! You'll learn to love the new shuffle function with this one !
 I tried to remove the palette problems when starting the program. Apparently, it works better than before, but still not perfectly. If anyone has an idea to help me, feel free to write...
 It also seems I could remove a nasty bug that caused problems when trying to select tiles in another game after the player had won the previous one.
 Added a shuffle function. You will no more be frustrated with that terrible "Sorry, no more moves" message ! ;-)
 Fixed some other little bugs.

New features in version 2.0 (May 22nd, 1997)

 Entirely redesigned for Windows 95.
 No more loading delay when you start the program.
 New layout : Theater. A very easy one for the beginners.
 Restart option, removable toolbar and other stuff.
 You can put a custom picture in the background.
 Two new musics : Gisors and Gokuraku.

New features in version 1.21 (April 11th, 1997)

 New layout : Big Hole. Looks easy to complete... But actually it's quite a tough one !
 Default startup is now without music. You can still select it in the menu. I removed it because it didn't seem to work on some systems
 Fixed a few bugs. There are still some minor bugs left (at least two in the hint routines), but I've got no time to fix them for now

New features in version 1.2 (April 1st, 1997)

 Optimized speed during the game
 Optimized speed at startup
 Three different colors for the tileset
 Colors in the status bar
 NO April Fool joke

New features in version 1.1 (March 24th, 1997)

 Larger tiles (40x50 instead of 30x40)
 Music (stops after the end of the tune)
 Replaced seasons & flowers
 Color texture in the tileset
 256 colors

Features in version 1.0 (March 4th, 1997)

 30x40 tiles
 16 colors
 functions : back (undo), hint, layout
 traditional layout