Shih Dao **Help Contents**

To learn how to use **Help**, press **F1** or choose **Using Help** from the help menu.

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Menus and Game components

Game   Options   High Score   End Game   Undo   Help

Score

0

Four Ways

0

Tiles Left

66

Click on the part of the Board you want to know more about.

Tile

There are 72 total tiles available for play in each game.   Each tile has a color and a pattern.   There are only six colors and six patterns in each tile set. Thus there are 36 unique tiles, and each tile occurs twice in every tile set.

Board

The Board is rectangular and has 96 playing positions. Its dimensions are eight vertical positions by twelve horizontal positions.

End Game

This command will end your current game. When the game displays a message telling you that the game is over, you must **end game** in order to start a new one. The reason being (when the undo feature is added) is that if you wish to place your last tile in another position, you may undo your previous move and try again.   Also if you place a tile and   the game alerts you that there are no more possible moves (and you have 10 tiles left), you might wish to undo your previous move and place the tile elsewhere in the hope that you may continue the game to the end.

Score Board

The Score Board displays your current point score (top),your current number of four way matches (middle),and the number of tiles left for you to play (bottom).

Play Tile

The Play Tile area displays the next tile for you to play.

Game Menu
New
 This command starts a new game.

Open
 This command starts an "Shih Dao **open file** dialog" , which allows you to retrieve and continue playing any previously saved game.   Double-clicking on the name of your saved game in the dialog box will open that game.

Save
This command saves your current game as a file with a name of your choice.   The extension .DAO is automatically attached to your filename for ease in recognition and retrieval.

Exit
 This command closes Shih Dao.   If there is an uncompleted game in session you will be asked if you would like to save it before exiting Shih Dao.

Options Menu
Tile
 This option command lets you select the tile pattern of your choice.

Board
 This option command let you select the playing board design of your choice.

Tile Message
 When enabled, this option causes informational error messages to be displayed when tiles are misplaced.   (Without this option enabled, the misplaced tile will simply reappear in the Play Tile area of the board.)

Show Possible Moves
 When this option is enabled, stars will be displayed in each position of legal placement for the current tile.   This option is a great help when first learning to play Shih Dao !

Show Tiles
 This command shows the remaining tiles in their order of play. Use of this option is sometimes deemed "cheating" !
 Oh, Yeah, no high score for those who cheat!

Undo Menu

This command will allow you to take back your last move (or tile placed).

High Score Menu

This command displays the highest scores of the top five Shih Dao masters.

Help Menu

The commands in this menu opens the help file you are now reading.

Shih Dao **Strategy and Rules**

How the Game Works

At the start of a game, the computer randomly orders seventy two tiles in a "bag" (which you can look at by choosing the option "SHOW TILES"). The game then displays six different tiles, representing all six colors and all six patterns, on the board. One tile is placed in each corner and two are placed in the middle. Another tile will appear in the PLAY TILE area. This is the next tile to be played. You must place this tile according to the Shih Dao rules, explained below.

Rules

1. A tile must be placed next to another tile.
2. A tile can only be placed next to another tile that matches in color or pattern. (**One Way** match)
3. A tile can only be placed next to two tiles if one matches in color and the other matches in pattern. (**Two Way** match)
4. A tile can only be placed next to three tiles if one matches in color and the other two match in pattern, or if two match in color and the other matches in pattern. (**Three Way** match)
5. A tile can only be placed next to four tiles if two match in color and two match in pattern. (**Four Way** match)

Scoring and Strategy

Shih Dao is a game of strategy, planning and trying to get the highest score you can ! The basic idea is to make as many 4ways as possible. It is possible to get 12 4way matches in a single game but it takes much thought, practice and patience ! The more 4ways you make the more points you get for all additional matches. It is actually possible to have only three 4ways and yet have more points than if you had four 4ways. It all depends on how long it takes you to get your first four way !

The point distribution is as follows:
Placing Tiles - Point Distribution

One tile touching another	**10 points**
One tile touching two others	**20 points**
One tile touching three others	**30 points**
One tile touching four others	**100 points** (4way)

Every time you make a 4way the point distribution for placing a tile increases. For Example suppose you have created two 4way matches. Your points then accumulate as follows:

One tile touching another (with two 4ways)	**30 points**
One tile touching two others (with two 4ways)	**60 points**
One tile touching three others (with two 4ways)	**90 points**

The four way scores increases even more than the one, two or three way scores !

4way Point Distribution

One	4way	100	points
Two	4way	1600	points
Three	4way	3100	points
Four	4way	4600	points
Five	4way	6100	points
Six	4way	7600	points

Seven	4way	**9100**	**points**
Eight	4way	**10600**	**points**
Nine	4way	**12100**	**points**
Ten	4way	**13600**	**points**
Eleven	4way	**15100**	**points**
Twelve	4way	**16600**	**points**

So, now you see that the idea is to create as many four way matches as possible.   How is this done?   Well, now that you've asked, we'll tell you.   It isn't that hard, but it takes practice to get more than just four or five four way matches in one game.   There are different approaches to setting up a four way -- it will depend on where on the board you want to create one...

The first box shows the two tiles that are placed in the center at the start of a new game. Subsequent boxes show the addition of one tile per box.   Notice you are trying to match the colors on the bottom right tiles and the pattern on the top left tiles.
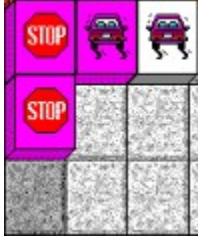
Making a Center 4-Way

Making a corner 4-Way

In a corner it is a little bit different.   At the start of the game there is a tile in the corner as shown in the first box here.   This strategy involves the color and the symbol of the single tile.   Here the tiles on the left and bottom all have the same color, while the tiles on the top and right match in pattern. Of course the tile placed in the third box here establishes the pattern.

(Question ?   Why couldn't the tile placed in the second box (to the left bottom) be used to establish the pattern instead of the color? -- This IS an advanced question at this point..., Because then the   pattern for the 4way position (center) would be the same as that of the original tile and there are only two of each tile.   There is no third pink stop sign to be placed in the 4way position !

Shih Dao   Shareware and Registration

SHIH DAO
Requires VGA Card, Mouse, and Microsoft Windows 3.1
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Thanks

Thanks to all those who stayed up long nights and those who complained, critiqued, and showed us the light at the end of the tunnel.

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