Taipei!
by Dave Norris

Welcome to the Taipei help system.   Click on a topic for help; or, click on the "<<" and ">>" buttons above to browse through the help screens.

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Keyboard
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[What is Taipei?](#)

       Taipei is a modern, solitaire version of the ancient oriental game, Mah-Jongg. Winning a game is much like solving an intricate puzzle.   One false move at the beginning could ruin your chances at victory.   And, while every game has a solution, finding it often takes hours of diligent play.

       Playing Taipei is simple.   The object of Taipei is to remove all of the <u>tiles</u> from the board.   Tiles are removed from the board in matching pairs.   Tiles can only be removed if they are "free."   A tile is "free" if: 1) it has no tiles on top of it, and 2) you can "slide" the tile out to the right or left.

Using the Mouse

To select two tiles, simply click on them with the mouse.   They will disappear and reveal any tiles that might have been hidden beneath them.   The mouse cursor turns into a little cross ✛ over tiles that are free.

Taipei Tiles

The tiles used in Taipei are taken from the ancient game of Mah-Jong.   There are seven different catagories or "suits" in the Mah-Jongg tile set:

The Numbers.

The Circles.

The Bamboos.

The Four Winds.

The Seasons.

 The Flowers.

 The Dragons.

For all of the suits except the Seasons and Flowers, tiles must match exactly to be removed.   Since there is only one of each kind of Season and Flower, any two in the suit may match (for example, Summer and Winter, or Plum and Mum).

Menu Commands

There are two menus in Taipei.   The one that is first displayed when you start the game is called the Play Menu.   The one that is displayed while you are creating new tile layouts is called the Edit Menu.

Play Menu
Edit Menu

Play Menu

There are four major pulldown menus in the Play Menu; File, Game, Options and Background.

The File pulldown menu presents these commands:

Load Layout - loads a new tile layout (see <u>Layouts</u>).
Edit - Go to the tile layout editing screen (see <u>Creating New Tile Layouts</u>).
Exit - When it is time to go to bed.

The Move menu presents the main game commands:

New Game - starts a new game.   A random game number is selected and the tiles are arranged according to the selected tile layout.
Backup -   allows you to take back moves all the way up to the start of the game.
Hint -   If you're stuck, you can ask Taipei for a hint.   Taipei will flash two matching tiles on the board.   Try the command again and it will show another matching set, and so on until all of the possibilities are exhausted.
Start Over -   If you want to try the same board over again, use this command.
Select Game - allows you to select a specific game number to play.   Each of the seven tile layouts has 65536 different games to play.
Autoplay - When in Autoplay mode, the computer will begin playing the board and removing tiles for you.   However, you will not get any nifty Confucious Say messages if the computer should win!

The Options menu allows you to set various parameters:

Color - Toggles the tiles from color to black and white.   Normally, Taipei automattically selects either the color or the black and white tile set base on the type of display you have.
Messages - If checked, gives yakity error messages.
Watch Builds - if checked, you can watch Taipei build the boards.

The Background menu lets you change the background of the Taipei screen.

Bitmap - Allows you to load your own custom bitmap.   The bitmap can be centered in the middle of the Taipei plaing field (this makes it nice when you win!), or can be repeated to create a pattern effect.   Many of the standard Windows background bitmaps such as PYRAMID.BMP can be used this way.   Taipei will automatically save this bitmap name in the WIN.INI file so you don't have to re-enter it every time you play.
Solid - Uses the standard felt green background.

Edit Menu

The Edit Menu has two pulldown menus; File and Level.   The File menu has the following commands:

Load - Load a previously saved tile layout.
Save - Save the current tile layout.
Save As - Save the current tile layout, prompting for a filename first.
Play - Go back to the play menu using the current tile layout.
Clear - Remove all tiles from the current tile layout.

Level - Selects the level (1-7) on which to place new tiles.

Layouts

This feature allows to to change the layout of the tiles.   There are several tile layouts provided with Taipei.   Each of these tile layouts is a file with the extension .TP:

Standard - The standard tile layout.
Pyramid - Beware the mummy's curse.
Castle - Destroy the castle and capture the King!
Bridge - An experiment in civil engineering.
Spiral - An intergalactic virus destroys the cosmos.
Cube - Rubik never had it this good.
Dragon - The most difficult layout.
Glyph - The Glyph of Bogosity (See The Glyph of Bogosity).

The Glyph of Bogosity

      Strange rune which makes its appearance at seemingly random places at random times. This glyph is often found in those places and at those times when normal laws do not seem to apply and expected results are not manifested. Although the nature of the Glyph is known and much historical information has been gathered on the subject, little is known about its origins and even the most arcane magicks have not revealed the nature of the power behind this rune. Legend has it that if anyone should discover the true nature of the Glyph, the known universe will come to an end.

      Excerpted from "Arcane Runes and Symbols" bu Mon Hu, at the Library of the University of Ten'Stor (by the Sea).

Using the Keyboard

A mouse is required to play Taipei.   The following keys may be helpful in addition to using the mouse:

F1 - Help
F2 - New Game
ESC - Minimize
H - Hint.   Taipei will flash tile pairs it thinks you should play.
backspace - backup one move

Strategy

Here are some hints if you are having difficulty solving the Taipei puzzles:

1.   Remove the end tiles as soon as you can, especially those tiles that block more than one tile.
2.   If all four tiles in a matching set are free, you can remove all four safely.
3.   Work from the outside in.

Creating New Tile Layouts

It's really easy to create new tile layouts with Taipei 5.0.   Just select the File/Edit menu item from the Play menu.   You can edit existing tile layouts, or create brand new ones.

Use the left mouse key to plop a new tile down, and use the right mouse key to remove a tile.   To start from scratch, use the File/Clear menu command.   Tiles can be placed on any of seven different levels, as selected by the Level menu.   Tiles don't have to have any other tiles beneath them; they can "float" in the air.

Use the File Menu commands to save and load your tile layouts.   Tile layout files all have the extension ".TP".

It is possible to create tile layouts which cannot be solved.   If you do this, then Taipei will give you an error message "I can't create a playable board!".   Also, you have to have an even number of tiles in your board layout.   A text message in the upper left hand corner of the playing area indicates the number of tiles you have left to place on your board (you start with 144).   You don't have to use them all.   Taipei will automatically choose random tiles to build your board.

Credits

Taipei was written by David Norris.

Thanks to Hans Spiller for ideas, nifty hacks and help on the artwork.

Thanks to Doug Boa for ideas.

Thanks to Microsoft, for being such a great place to work.

What is Shareware?

As a shareware author, I'm often asked a variety of questions about shareware from Taipei users.   Most people don't really understand the concept too well.   Here I'll try to answer some of the more common questions.

What is Shareware?

Basically, shareware authors retain all rights to their software under copyright laws and allow their distribution of their software to be done freely or with few restrictions. Usually, you may look at, try out, and keep the software, but if you use it you are expected to register your use with the author.   In all cases, the registration fee is far less than the selling price of comparable retail software.

Is Shareware free?

No.   Shareware authors often work extremely hard and long hours writing their programs.   Your support alone supports our continued efforts.

Why should I register?

If you are going to use the software, then sending the author(s) the requested registration fee is an inexpensive way to allow the author(s) to continue to improve their systems, and gives you the legal right to continue to use the software.

What do I get when I register?

It depends on the author of the shareware.   Sometimes you will get a disk of updates, sometimes a newsletter, and sometimes nothing at all.   In every case you get the satisfaction of doing the right thing.

What about user support?

Sorry, but most shareware authors (myself included) simply don't have the time or resources to provide customer support for their programs.   Almost all of them listen to user feedback, and try to incorporate suggested changes and improvements in to the next version of their software.

Why should I support Shareware?

The advantages of Shareware to you are real.   You get to test the software on your computer first to make sure it is compatible and that it suits your particular needs before you "buy" it with your registration fee.   Your registration fee ensures the continued success of the Shareware concept.

Selected Bulletin Boards

This section contains a list of computer bulletin boards I've found useful.   I usually try to keep the latest copies of my shareware available on these systems.

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A Note to Shareware Retailers

Permission is granted to copy and distribute the original Taipei archive file TAIPEI50.ARC without charge.   This program may be:
* freely given away
* made available on public access bulletin boards
* made available on fee-basis bulletin boards
* made available on disk for a nominal (<= $5) fee

Taipei 5.0 is shareware, and thus I encourage its wide distribution.

Dave Norris

Hans Spiller

Doug Boa

The Microsoft Blibbet