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Overview

Welcome to the game of Cribbage. This like many other programs is not very original, but it does play a good game and it looks good.

The rules I have adopted are from what I have found researching the Game on the Internet. If, however you find a rule that plays differently to the way you like it and would like it included feel free to contact me at keith.s.westley@ac.com and I will be happy to consider it for inclusion in a <u>future release</u>. Most of the changes in this release come from just such suggestions.

<u>Rules Of The Game</u>

<u>Strategy And Hints</u>

<u>Playing The Game</u>

Game Menu Commands

The Game Menu consists of the following menu items:

New

Deal

Player

Statistics

Exit

New Menu Item (Game)

This menu item is available at all times. When selected it will reset all players scores back to zero so you can restart the game. If the current game is incomplete the computer will confirm your intentions before starting the new game. If you do abandon a game it will count as two losses in the statistics.

NOTE: When the program is first started no game has started so you will need to start one before dealing.

As an alternative to accessing the menu you may use the F3 key.

Deal Menu Item (Game)

This menu item deals a new set of cards to the two players.

Each player receives 5 or 6 cards (see <u>options</u>) and one extra card will be displayed as the   start card after players have played cards into the crib.

You may only deal a round if the previous round is complete including scoring.

As an alternative to accessing the menu you may use the F2 key. With the deal button option selected you may also deal via a button on the playing surface.

Player Menu Item (Game)

This menu item invokes the Player Dialog box to let you tell the computer your name. The computer will manage player statistics by name so if you have more than one player using this game you can compare statistics.

Statistics Menu Item (Game)

This menu item invokes the <u>Statistics Dialog box</u>   to view the statistics the computer collects as you play.

As an alternative to accessing the menu you may use the F9 key.

Exit Menu Item (Game)

This menu item shuts down the Cribbage application. Unfinished games are lost.

Options Menu Commands

The Options menu consists of the following menu items.

[Cards](#)

[Scoring and Play](#)

[Reset Statistics](#)

Cards Menu Item (Options)

This menu item invokes the <u>Select A Deck Dialog box</u>   to change the picture on the back of the deck of cards being used. You can change the deck at any time, even in the middle of a round.

Scoring and Play Menu Item (Options)

This menu item invokes the Scoring and Play Options Dialog box   to allow the player to set various play options. Options that are changed do not come into effect until a new game is started.

Reset Statistics Menu Item (Options)

This menu item zeros out all the statistics the computer tracks as you play.

Select A Deck Dialog Box

This dialog box presents you with twelve alternative card backs that you can use. Selecting a card back is a totally decorative decision and has no impact on the way the game plays. To select a card back click on the image and select OK. The selected image appears above the OK button.

Message Log

This window contains a dialog box which keeps a running list of the messages sent to you by the computer. The message log is reset each game. The messages are detailed enough so that the game play can be analysed after the event. By double clicking on a row in the log the program will write out the log to CRIB45.LOG in the current directory. Each time you write the log it replaces any previously saved log. Please include a copy of the log when reporting any scoring problems you might find.

Player Dialog Box

This dialog box allows you to enter the name of the player who is playing cribbage, The computer will track scores and statistics by player. Select cancel to cancel your change to the players name. Player names can only be changed before a game is started and after a game has ended.

Statistics Dialog Box

This dialog box presents you with statistics on your play. Statistics are kept individually by player name.

Wins
> The number of games you have won. Games won by more than 60 count as four wins. Games won by more than 30 but less than 60 count as two wins.

Losses
> The number of games you have lost. Games lost by more than 60 count as four losses. Games lost by more than 30 but less than 60 count as two losses. Forfeits and abandoned games count as two losses.

Current Winning Streak
> Number of games you have won since your last loss.

Current Losing Streak
> Number of games you have lost since your last win.

Longest Winning Streak
> Largest number of games you have won without a loss.

Longest Losing Streak
> Largest number of games you have lost without a win.

5 Card Best Hand
> When playing the 5 card version of the game the best score you have achieved on a hand.

6 Card Best Hand
> When playing the 6 card version of the game the best score you have achieved on a hand.

5 Card Average Hand
> When playing the 5 card version of the game the average score you have achieved on each hand.

6 Card Average Hand
> When playing the 6 card version of the game the average score you have achieved on each hand.

Scoring and Play Options Dialog Box

This dialog box presents you with scoring and play options that let you customise the way the game is played:

Display Options

Display Cribbage Board
> When not selected the play score is only displayed in the status bar. When selected a graphic image of a cribbage board is used to display the players scores.

Float Cribbage Board
> This option is irrelevant if Display Cribbage Board is not selected. When not selected the cribbage board is displayed at the top of the main cribbage window. When selected the cribbage board is moved to a floating window which lets you move it to where you like it.

Display DEAL button
> This option when selected displays a DEAL button on the desktop under the play button. This is for those of you that do not like using F2 or the deal menu item to deal between hands.

Display Message Log
> For those who want to be able to trace through message history this option displays a floating <u>message log</u> which traces all messages received during a game. Before writing to me to point out scoring problems please run the game using this option to double check the existence of a problem. All messages are discarded before starting a new game.

Play Options

Play to 31 only Once
> When this option is selected it stops the play to table phase of the game after either both players have passed or the score has reached 31. Any unplayed cards remain unplayed and the game moves into its scoring phase. This option is typically used when playing the 5 card version of the game.

Reshuffle between deals
> When this option is selected each deal is done with a fresh deck. Otherwise the desck is only shuffled when there are insufficient cards in the deck to play the hand.

Cut cards to determine dealer
> This option causes the computer to display the <u>Cut For Dealer</u> dialog box when a new game is started.

Cut cards to determine start card
> This option causes the computer to display the <u>Cut For Start Card</u> dialog box after both players have discarded to the crib but before the first player plays to the table.

Cards To Deal

5 Cards
> This option causes the computer to only deal 5 cards to each player. 2 cards are still discarded to the crib.

6 Cards
> This option causes the computer to deal 6 cards to each player.

Play To

61 Points
> This options plays the game to only 61 points. This is more common in the 5 card game.

121 Points
> This option plays the game to 121 points or twice around the board.

Scoring Options

Crib flushes can be scored on hand alone
> When selected this option allows 4 card flushes to be scored on the crib. I have put this in because I have seen some people who allow this and some who do not.

Credit non dealer with 3 points on 1st hand
> Selecting this option automatically credit the non dealer with three points at the start of the game before the cards are dealt. This is sometimes used as compensation for not being dealer first.

Autoscore humans hand
> Selecting this option removes the need for you to do any thinking when it comes to scoring your hand. A useful option when your feeling a little lazy.

Computer takes Muggins
> Selecting this option causes the computer to automatically to take from you any points you miss when scoring your hand. This definitely encourages you to score correctly.

Computer takes overcount
> Selecting this option causes the computer to automatically to take from you any points you overcount when scoring your hand. You are only scored the correct amount. This definitely encourages you to score correctly.

Player forfeits on overcount
> Selecting this option causes you to forfeit a game if you happen to claim too many points when scoring your hand.

Computer Player Skill

The computers play is governed by a set of rules which I have coded which suggest preferences in selection of cards to play. The computer never ever cheats. To get an idea of the way the computer thinks try clicking the right mouse button on the playing surface when you are required to select a card to play or to discard to the crib and the same algorithm will select a card for you to play. If you feel it has not made a good suggestion please feel free to write to me with a list of the cards in your hand and why you feel the computer did not make the best possible suggestion and I will see if I can improve the computers play in the next version.

The play levels supported are:

> *Dumb*

> *Competitive*

> *As Good As I Can Make It*

5 Card Default

This button automatically selects the options that I believe are best suited to the 5 card version of this game.

6 Card Default

This button automatically selects the options that I believe are best suited to the 6 card

version of this game.

Rules Of The Game

The Deck

The deck is a regular 52 card deck.

The game is played in three stages.

Starting the Game

Before we can start the game and to do this we typically cut a card each and the person with the lowest card deals the first hand. So when you start the game the Cut For Deal dialog box is displayed.

Playing to the Crib

After the cards are dealt the two players must select 2 cards to place into the Crib. On each round the ownership of the crib will changes between the players. The owner of the crib is shown below the cards in the crib.

To play your two cards into the crib select the cards and press the play button .

To get the computer to help you select the cards to play press the right mouse button anywhere on the play area but be warned if you have lowered the computers skill via the scoring and play options then you will also have lowered the value of the computers advice.

Playing The Hand

Before we go on we now cut the deck and turn up the starter card. This is completed by the player who did not deal. This card is not actually used in this phase of play but this is the time to do it. Assuming you have selected the option to cut for the starter card the Cut Start Card dialog is displayed.

The player who does not own the crib leads (i.e. not the dealer).

Each player now takes turns playing cards from their hand onto the table. As the cards are played each player can earn bonus points .

To play a card select the card and press the play button . Alternately just double click on the card you wish to play.

To get the computer to help you select the card to play press the right mouse button anywhere on the play area but be warned if you have lowered the computers skill via the scoring and play options then you will also have lowered the value of the computers advice.

Once both players can no longer play because the value would exceed 31 the cards are turned over and the last to play leads (Unless the play to 31 once option was selected in the scoring and play options). If the last player to play has run out of cards then the other player plays out his hand.

Once all cards have been played the game moves into the next phase.

Scoring The Hands

The player who does not own the crib always counts his cards first. followed by the crib owners cards and finally the cards in the crib.

The computer will always inform you of his score and how it was broken down between the scoring categories. You enter your score using the score dialog box which will be displayed automatically at the appropriate time. For learners you may chose to have the computer automatically score you hand via a scoring and play options.

Strategy And Hints

<u>Playing The Game</u>

The Score Dialog Box

The score dialog box consists of the following:

1. An entry field where you may type in the value of the cards displayed.

2. A set of spin buttons which can be used to increment/decrement the score by 1. You may alternately use the up and down arrow keys.

3. Four cards which represent the cards either from your hand or from the crib depending on what is being scored.

4. The starter card.

You must evaluate the cards presented and enter the score   you believe they are worth. You may be penalised for over or underestimating your score depending on the options selected via the scoring and play options.

The Cut for Deal Dialog Box

This window is used to cut the deck to determine the first dealer in the game. The person to cut the lowest card becomes the dealer. When the dialog box is first displayed the computer has already cut its card. Press the cut button to cut your card and then press OK to go on.

If you both cut the same face value card then press cut again and you will both receive a new card.

To control where in the deck the card is cut from use the scroll bar. You may use the left and right arrow keys to move the bar if you wish.

If you do not wish to cut for dealer and trust the computer to randomly decide this you can turn off this dialog box via scoring and play options.

The Cut Start Card Dialog Box

This window is used to cut the deck to determine the starter card.

It runs in two modes. When the computer dealt then you need to move the scroll bar and click on OK to cut the deck. If you deal then the computer randomly moves the scroll bar and then automatically dismisses the window after approximately 2 seconds.

To control where in the deck the card is cut from use the scroll bar. You may use the left and right arrow keys to move the bar if you wish.

If you do not wish to cut for the start card and trust the computer to randomly decide this you can turn off this dialog box via scoring and play options.

Strategy And Hints

On playing to the crib.

Be very aware who owns the crib. If it is yours it does not hurt to throw in a pair or some cards of value. However if it belongs to the computer you do not want to give him the opportunity to score easy points.

Generally however you focus on the cards you will have left and try to maximise their value and anticipate which cards will be useful during play.

On playing the cards.

While there are not usually a lot of points on offer in this phase of the game, they are bonus points and can make a difference. So always be on the lookout for pairs, runs and totals of 15 and 31.

On counting the cards.

Unfortunately players of cribbage can never be trusted to count their hand properly. However to encourage you to get it right the following rules can be put in place via the <u>scoring and play options</u>.

1. If you undercount your hand then you will receive the value you counted and the computer may take the remaining points.

2. If you overcount your hand then you will receive the correct value for the hand and the computer may take the number of points you overcounted by.

3. If you overcount your hand then you will forfeit the game and it will count as two losses.

For your education if you count incorrectly the computer will not only display the correct count but also break the count down into the various scoring categories.

<u>Counting Rules</u>

The Cribbage Window
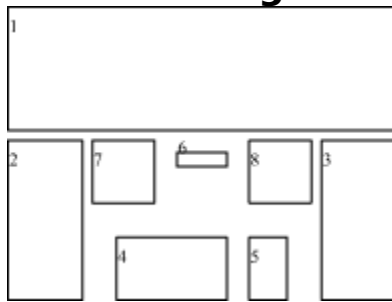
1. This is the peg board which shows each players score. The red holes are your score and the blue is the computers. 2 counters are shown in the board representing the immediately previous score and the current score. On a computer this is rather unnecessary but it keeps with the spirit of the game. Via the scoring and play options you may opt to use a floating board or no board at all.

2. Your playing cards. At the base of the cards is the word YOU to remind you they are yours. The background of this text is in red to remind you your score is shown in the red on the peg board.

3. The computers playing cards. At the base of the cards is the word COMPUTER to remind you they belong to the computer. The background of this text is blue to remind you the computers score is shown in the blue on the score board.

4. These cards are the cards in the crib.

5. This card represents the card turned face up during the cut of the cards. This card is not displayed until after both players have played two cards into the crib. This card is used when evaluating the value of the crib and each players hand.

6. The total of cards played is displayed here.

7. The cards played by the human are displayed here. After a play has reached 31 or both players have passed the cards played to that point will be turned face down.

8. The cards played by the computer are displayed here.

Playing The Game

To play the game select the Deal menu item   off the Game menu ..

If the deal menu item is disabled it may be because:

1. The game is over as a player has scored 121 (or 61) points. Select New   to start a new game.

2. You have not finished playing the current hand.

Rules Of The Game

Strategy And Hints

Selecting A Card

To select a card click anywhere on the visible cards. The only cards that are selectable are those that are face up in your hand. A card signifies that it is selected by being moved slightly to the right the other cards in your hand. Alternately you may type a number between 1 and 6 and the appropriate card will be selected/deselected if it is present in you hand. Cards are numbered from top to bottom.

If you double click on a card this is equivalent to selecting the card and pressing play.

The number and type of cards that can be selected vary according to the stage of the game. The computer will not allow you to select an invalid card and play it.

Scoring

Scoring occurs both during play and during the card counting phase of the game. The scoring can be broken down into a number of categories.

Playing the Hand

Runs

Runs occur when the two players play consecutively cards whose face value either increase or decrease on each play. A run is scored at one point per card in the run for each player who adds a card to the run after the second card in the run.

> Eg. player 1 plays a 4
> player 2 plays a 6
> player 1 plays a 5 - player 1 earns 3 points for the run (+2 points for 15).
> player 2 plays a 7 - player 2 earns 4 points for the run
> player 1 plays a 5 - no points scored

Pairs

Pairs occur when the two players play cards consecutively with the same face value. Pairs are scored at 2 points for a pair, 6 for a pair royal (three of a kind) and 12 points for a double pair royal (4 of a kind).

15

When the total of the cards played exactly adds up to 15 the player who played the card to reach this total is awarded 2 points. Note Aces are scored as 1 and Jack, Queen and King are scored as 10.

31

When the total of the cards played exactly adds up to 31 the player who played the card to reach this total is awarded 2 points.   Note Aces are scored as 1 and Jack, Queen and King are scored as 10.

Last Played

If no player can play on a hand either because it would exceed 31 or they have run out of cards then the last player to play on the hand is awarded 1 point. If the cards total 31 then no last card point is awarded.

Scoring the Hands and Crib

Runs

Runs occur when a hand or crib contains at least 3 consecutive cards of any suit by face value. Runs are scored at 1 point for each card in the run. It is impossible for a run to include both an Ace and a King.

Pairs

A pair is counted whenever 2 or more of the same face value card exists in the players hand or crib. Pairs are scored at 2 points per pair. Three of a kind is worth 6 points and 4 of a kind is worth 12 points.

Fifteens

A fifteen is counted for every combination of cards in the players hand or crib that add up to 15. For each 15 the player earns 2 points. When totaling cards to 15 an Ace is worth 1 and Jack, Queen and King are all worth 10.

Flushes

A flush occurs when a player has 4 or more cards of the same suit in his hand. A flush is

scored at 1 point for each card in the flush. If the starter card is also the same suit then an additional point is scored. When scoring the crib flushes must include not only all the cards in the hand but also the starter card but this can be controlled via the scoring and play options

The Nob

The Nob is the jack of the suit of the cut card. If the Nob is held in either a players hand or in the crib then 1 point is credited to the player owning the hand or crib. If the starter card is a jack then the dealer is credited with two points for his heels at the time the card was cut. No player may claim a point for starter card being a jack when scoring their hand or crib.

The Play Button

The play button is situated on the main window. The play button is used whenever you wish to:

      o   Play cards into the crib

      o   Play a card

      o   Pass on play. (you can only pass if you cannot play) When the button is behaving
               in this way its caption changes to Go.

If the Play button is disabled then it is safe to assume that you are not in a position to play or you have not selected appropriate cards.

Pressing the space bar or the return key will usually work faster than the mouse.

About

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What Has Changed In Release 4.5

The following changes have been made in this release:

1. My copyright statement has been tightened. I am sick of magazines (especially English magazines) publishing my software without first seeking my permission. Its not that much to ask is it?
2. In the last release I added shuffling after each hand. I have now made this optional.
3. I now allow the player to enter there name and use that name whenever refering to them. I also store player statistics by name so many players can use it on one machine without mixing their statistics up.
4. I have added an option for a deal button on the desktop. Unfortunately I have not yet worked out an elegant way to disable it when it shouldnt be pressed so it is always enabled. It beeps if you push it when you shouldnt.
5. The Play button now changes to Go when there are no valid moves you can make.
6. I fixed the problem where the computer would always ask the player to cut for the top card regardless of whose deal it was. Now when you deal the computer automatically cuts the deck.
7. I fixed the problem where the dealer would sometimes have to play first.
8. I have provided an option to display a floating messages log while playing. This makes it possible to see messages that otherwise would be overwritten almost immediately by subsequent messages. Before you report a scoring problem please double check using this mechanism that the problem actually occurs.
9. You can now double click on a card to play it.
10. I believe I have fixed the problem some people were experiencing on the score dialog box where the text would overwrite the cards. If you are still having problems please let me know.
11. A number of people have reported scoring anomalies that I have been unable to reproduce. With the message window I now ask that anyone that thinks they have identified such a problem include a copy of the log with the email you send reporting the bug.

As you can see from this list of fixes providing feedback does lead to the problems/features you find or desire being fixed. If you have any comments on the game, the way it plays or just would like to be notified when a new release made please drop me a note on keith.s.westley@ac.com.