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Welcome to Double Deck Pinochle Version 3.0.

If you are an experienced Pinochle player, you may wish to review the default Meld Table that this program uses, and then begin play.

For first time players or those who are rusty, read the Overview and then move on to the concepts of the game. Enjoy your games!

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Overview

Double-Deck Pinochle is a card game for four people. Among common games, it is most similar to Contract Bridge. It is not as complex as Bridge, but requires an hour or two to learn. Many people who learn Pinochle find it to be an exciting life-long hobby.

There are many variations of Pinochle. This program plays Double-Deck Pinochle in one common variation, similar to versions that are widely played in the U.S. Armed Forces and many other places. If you have learned Pinochle differently, do not worry. The basics are the same. I have provided the [Meld table](#) for this program later in this Help file. Also, many rules and the meld table may be customized for your needs.

These notes are a poor substitute for a human teacher, but they will help you to learn Pinochle, with just a little practice. Once you have learned, teach your friends and family!

Newcomers: If you are new to the game, *take your time*. Do not try to learn everything at once. Read a little and then experiment with the computer partner and opponents. Return to this file later to learn more.

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Basic Concepts of Pinochle

The Cards

Double-deck Pinochle uses a deck of 80 cards, made from two Pinochle decks (or four regular decks) by discarding everything except the Aces, Tens, Kings, Queens, and Jacks. There are four of each card. In other words, there are four Aces of Spades, four Aces of Hearts, etc.

Each card has a rank. The highest ranking card is an Ace. The lowest is a Jack. As with some European games, the *Ten ranks just below the Ace, and above the King*. The rank of cards, then, is: Ace-Ten-King-Queen-Jack. The computer will automatically sort your cards into this order.

The Players

Double-deck pinochle is played by four people, in two sets of partners. It is customary to name the players North, South, East, and West. North and South are partners, as are East and West. Partners face one another.

In this program, the human player is South (you). The computer plays your partner (North), and plays both of your opponents East and West. No communication is allowed between players, and the computer personalities likewise do not communicate in the program. (For experienced players: This program plays the common variation without *announcements*.)

A Pinochle *hand* is one set of 20 cards played by each of the four players. A *game* consists of several hands, played and scored successively until one team reaches 350 points (default).

Each player is dealt 20 cards at random at the beginning of each hand. The dealer is chosen randomly for the first hand of a game, and then rotates clockwise to the successive player for each additional hand.

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More Concepts -- Tricks and Suits

Tricks

Pinochle is played in tricks, just like Spades, Hearts, and Bridge. A trick consists of one card from each player, played in a clockwise turn. One player leads by playing first. Then the person to his or her left plays, and so on until all four people have played. The highest card played wins the trick, and its player removes all four cards to be counted later.

Following Suit

The person who leads in each suit determines what card suit the other players must follow. For instance, if the person leads with a Spade, then each player must play a Spade, if possible. If you do not have a Spade, then you must play a Trump (described below) or card from another suit. Finally, you must always play to win the trick, if possible.

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Sample Tricks (basic)

First Sample Trick

1. South leads: Ten of Hearts
 2. West: Ace of Hearts
 3. North: Queen of Hearts
 4. East: Jack of Hearts
- West wins. His Ace beats all, so West leads next.

Second Sample Trick

1. West leads: King of Spades
 2. North: Queen of Spades
 3. East: Ten of Spades
 4. South: King of Spades
- East wins. 10 outranks a King.

In case of a tie (e.g., two Aces), the first one played is the winner.

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More Concepts -- Trumping

Trumps

In each hand, one of the four suits is selected to be the trump suit. The trump suit outranks the other suits. If you play a card from the trump suit, then you will win the trick, unless someone plays a higher ranking card from the trump suit.

Example

Suppose that Hearts are the trump suit. Look at these two tricks:

First Trick

South: 10 Spades
West: Ace Spades
North: Queen Hearts
East: Queen Spades.

Second Trick

S : 10 Spades
W : Ace Spades
N : Queen Hearts
E : King Hearts

North wins with
the trump

East wins with the
higher trump

Which suit is trumps? That is determined by the person who wins the bid, a topic that is discussed later in this concept sequence ([bidding](#)).

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Rules of Trumping

First Essential Rule of Trumping

The first rule is: *You may only trump if you cannot play in the lead suit.*

In the examples above, if you have a card from Spades, then you cannot play from the trump suit Hearts. You must always follow the lead suit, if possible.

Second Essential Rule of Trumping

The second rule is: *You must trump if you can legally do so.*

In other words, if you cannot follow the lead suit, then you must play a trump, if you have any. Even if you know that your trump card will be beaten by a higher trump, you still must play it.

If you cannot follow suit, and you have no trumps, then you may play any card you wish.

To break one of the trumping rules is to *renege*, in pinochle terminology. This is severely penalized in real games, but the computer simply prevents you from doing it at all.

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More Concepts -- Scoring and Meld

The winners of a Pinochle game are the team who first reach the score of 350 points, or some other amount that you set using the *Options | General Setup* command. Some people play to 450 or 500 or some other amount, and you may set this as you wish. 350 is the default.

Scoring is composed of two components: Meld and Counters

Meld

Meld refers to points you receive based on the cards you are dealt. It is therefore random.

Various combinations of cards have various values.

For example, if you have a King and Queen in the same suit (e.g., King of Spades and Queen of Spades), that is a marriage. It is worth two points.

Some other combinations include:

- Run (Flush): Ace-10-King-Queen-Jack of trumps (15 points)
- Aces: Ace in all four suits (Spades, Clubs, etc.) (10 points)
- Pinochle: Queen of Spades with Jack of Diamonds (4 points)

All possible meld values are summarized in the Meld Table, which is accessible at any time from the Pinochle 3.0 Help Menu. You do not need to memorize it.

Note: You may change the meld values by selecting *Options | Setup Meld Table*. This help file describes the default Meld values.

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Meld Table (Default)

(see *Options* | *Setup Meld Table* if you have changed any of these values)

Runs (A-10-K-Q-J of Trumps)

One Run	15 points
Two Runs	150
Three Runs	300
Four Runs	600

Pinochles (Q Spade+J Diamond)

One pinochle	4 points
Two pinochles	30
Three pinochles	90
Four pinochles	270

Marriages (K-Q of same suit)

In Trumps	4 points ea.
Other suits	2 ea.

Arounds (same card in all four suits)

	One set	Two sets	Three	Four	
A-A-A-A	10	100	200	400	
K-K-K-K	8	80		160	320
Q-Q-Q-Q	6	60		120	240
J-J-J-J	4	40		80	160

10s around have no value

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More Concepts -- Showing Meld

After the bid is over, each player must show the cards that comprise the meld that his or her team is claiming. In other words, if you want to claim the points from your meld, then you have to show those cards to the other players.

To do this, lay all of your meld cards on the table. Do not show your other cards.

Note that you do not have to show your meld cards if your team has less than 20 total meld. That is because you cannot claim them anyway. However, there is one exception: you must show Aces Around if you have them, even if you have less than 20 total meld.

Summary: Show your meld cards if you have 20 or more for your team
Show Aces Around if you have them, regardless of total meld points

Notes: The computer will automatically follow these rules and show all meld as required (you do not have to choose it yourself). If one team has less than 20 meld, but has Aces, then their Meld Summary score will say *0**. You can also click to see their Aces.

The 20 Meld requirement is a default setting. You may change this from *Options | Setup Meld Table*.

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More Concepts -- Counters

Counters are the following cards: *Ace 10 King*

At the end of each hand, the two teams look through the tricks that they have collected (won), and count 1 point for each Ace, 10, and King that they took.

Minimum amounts of Meld and Counters

In order to score either Meld or Counters, you must get at least 20 points of that category of scoring (i.e., 20 Meld or 20 Counters). These are default settings that you may alter from the *Options* menu.

Also, in order to score your Meld, you must get at least 20 counters (default) by the end of the hand.

Examples:

25 Meld	25 Meld	18 Meld	18 Meld
18 counters	20 Counters	18 Counters	22 Counters
-----	-----	-----	-----
no score	45 scored	no score	22 scored

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What to Play

Remember that two components are necessary to score: Meld and Counters. Whether you have much meld is determined by chance. Therefore, the point of playing tricks is to try to win as many counters as possible -- so that you may either save your meld by winning 20 counters, or prevent your opponents from saving by denying them the 20 they need.

There are a total of 48 counters in the deck, plus 2 (default) for winning the last trick of each hand.

In order to try to maximize the number of counters you win, you should do the following, whenever possible:

1. Whenever it appears that your team will win the trick, play a counter (A-10-K).
2. Whenever you will not win the trick, play a non-counter (Q-J).

For example, if your partner leads with an Ace, then you should play a King or a 10, since an Ace is likely to win. If the opponents lead with an Ace, then you should play a Jack or Queen if possible.

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More Concepts -- Bidding

Bidding makes Pinochle different from many other card games (and makes it similar to Bridge).

The main goal of bidding is:

If you have substantial meld, you wish to win the bid and choose a trump suit that will allow you to save that meld.

For instance, if you have a hand that contains, say 11 Spades cards, then you would likely find it easy to win 20 counters if you bid and chose Spades as the trump suit.

What is a Bid?

The bid is a promise to score a certain number of points in the hand, both from Meld and from the Counters you win.

Bidding starts at 50 (default). This means that if you bid, then your Meld and your Counters (including those of your partner, North) must have at least 50 points combined by the end of the hand. Of course, you must have at least 20 points minimum of each, as described above.

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Structure of the Bid

After the cards are dealt, the person to the left of the dealer begins bidding. For example, if West deals, the North will bid first. That person may either bid 50 or higher, or may Pass. Once a person has passed, he or she may not bid again. (Experienced players: Pinochle 3.0 plays the common variation that does not include *announcements*.)

The bid progresses clockwise around the table. As long as people bid, it keeps going around, skipping those who have passed. When three people have passed, the remaining person is said to have won the bid, and he or she picks the Trump suit.

After the bidding is over, each team declares its Meld by showing those cards to the others. If a team combines for 20 or more Meld, that is noted to be scored later (if they also take 20 or more Counters).

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Rules for Bidding

There are three principal rules that apply to bidding:

1. Your team must combine for at least 20 meld, if you win the bid. If you do not have 20 meld, you lose the number of points that you bid. (Losing after winning the bid is called *going set*.) This meld requirement is a default that may be changed from the *Options* menu.
2. You must have a marriage in your trump suit, if you win the bid. You cannot pick a trump suit unless it has both a King and Queen. If you win the bid and have no marriages, you are automatically set. Again, this is a modifiable default rule.
3. Bidding goes from 50 to 60 by 1s. Above 60, it goes by 5s. Therefore: you can bid 50, 51 ...59, 60, 65, 70, etc. You cannot bid 61, 62, etc.

Dropping the Bid

If no one bids, then the bid is *dropped* on the person who is dealing. This person must then make an automatic bid of 50. If he or she cannot bid in accordance with the requirements above, then his or her team is set, just as if a true bid had been made.

For this reason, if your partner is dealing and you have at least one marriage, it is customary for you to bid, so that you can save your partner from having the bid dropped on him or her.

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An Example Bid

Suppose you have the following hand:

Spade:	Ace	Ace	Ace	King	Queen		
Hearts:	Ace	Queen	Queen	Jack	Jack		
Clubs:	Ace	Ten	King	Queen	Jack	Jack	Jack
Diamonds:	Ace	Ten	Jack				

It is your turn to bid first.

Notice that you have the following meld:

Aces Around (Ace Spades+Ace Hearts+Ace Clubs+Ace Diamonds = 10 meld)

Two marriages (King+Queen in Spades and Clubs = 4 meld)

One Pinochle (Queen Spades+Jack Diamonds = 4 meld)

Also, you have a Run in Clubs, if you win the bid.

Since you bid first, you should bid: 51 to tell your partner of your Aces.

West passes after you bid.

Then your partner North bids: 53. This tells you that North has 20 Meld or more.

East passes.

You should then bid 54. This tells your partner that you want to choose trumps (because you bid again).

Finally, North passes.

You are asked to choose trumps. You pick Clubs, in order to score your Run.

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More Rules -- Passing

It is quite all right to Pass when you are asked to bid. However, once you have passed, you cannot bid again later (except to continue passing). There are many good reasons to pass:

- If you do not have much meld (less than 10 or so)
- You do not have any marriages (and thus could not pick trumps)
- Your hand is weak (not many high-ranking cards)
- The bid is too high for you
- Your partner seems to want the bid
- ... etc.

If you are just learning, you may wish to just Pass at first. Figure out how to play the tricks, and then worry later about bidding.

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Playing the Hand

After someone has won the bid, you will play out the hand, as follows:

1. The person who won the bid will lead with the first card. Everyone else must follow with the same suit, if possible.
2. Whoever wins each trick will lead for the next trick
3. If you are void in the suit that is led, you must trump, if you can.
4. Remember, you must always play to beat the cards shown, if you can.

Inside the program, you may select ***Play*** | ***Next*** from the menu to instruct the computer to play the next card that it believes is best. You may also right-click the mouse to access the popup menu while playing (to play the next card, finish the hand, or undo a play).

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End of Game -- Scoring

You begin scoring after all cards have been played (after the 20th Trick). The rules for scoring are as follows:

1. Whoever wins the last trick (20th) gets 2 extra points (default) for counters.
2. If the bidders do not get at least 20 counters, they are set. The final bid amount is deducted from their score. This is a modifiable default rule.
3. If the bidders are set, their opponents still get their meld and counters as usual.

Congratulations! This ends the introduction to playing Double-Deck Pinochle. You may wish to play a few games, then review the more Advanced Notes.

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Advanced Notes on Playing

Bidding Conventions

If you have Aces Around (an Ace in every suit), it is customary for you to bid 51 instead of 50, if you make the first bid. This lets your partner know that you have several Aces.

If you have 20 meld or more, then you should increase the bid by a factor of 1/10 of your meld. For example, if you bid first, and you have a total of 30 meld, then you should bid 53. If someone has already bid 54, for example, then you should bid 57. You only do this the very first time you bid. If you later bid higher, you should bid up by only 1 point.

Tips on Playing a Hand

Once you have mastered the basics, here are some techniques that you may find useful.

Examine the Meld of all players when it is shown. This may give you clues about how many Aces, Trumps, etc., that they have.

If you win the bid, play your Aces first. Play out all of your aces (except in Trumps) as soon as you can. Your partner will put counters on them, and they are unlikely to be trumped early in the hand. An optional strategy could also be **not** to play all of your Aces, but to hold some in reserve for later use, if you believe they might win later.

Once you have played your Aces, lead with the Queen of Trumps. The idea here is that you probably have more trumps than your opponents (otherwise you would not have picked that suit). If you can fish out one or more of the high trumps, then you will be ahead later in the hand. This is not an absolute rule, but it often works.

Other Scoring Rules

If the bidder is set before the hand is started (e.g., has no marriage, or has less than 20 meld), then the hand is not played. Instead, the bidding team loses the amount of the bid, and the opponents get their meld amount (if it is more than 20).

If you pull all 50 counters (generally speaking, if you win all 20 tricks), then you will score 350 points (or whatever winning score you've selected) and will win the game.

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Registration

Pinochle 3.0 is Copyright (c) 1994-96 by Christopher Chapman. All rights reserved, except that the program may be distributed in unaltered form for duplication costs only.

Unregistered versions of this program are fully functional in every way, except that only 25 unique game numbers may be played (instead of 1,999,998). When you register, your one-time code input will unlock the remaining game numbers.

This program is distributed as shareware. If you use it for more than 15 days, you must register it for \$15 (U.S.). You may print and complete the file REGISTER.TXT, or select ***File | Print now*** to print this help topic, or simply send a check for \$15 to:

Christopher Chapman
P.O. Box 555
Uniontown, AR 72955

E-mail: cnchapman@aol.com

I must be able to send your registration code, so please include:

Your name:

Address:

E-mail address:

Where did you find Pinochle 3.0?

Also, check out my web site, where you can download upgrades as they are released or find other news about the program. Connect to **<http://members.aol.com/cnchapman>**

When you register:

Besides the moral comfort you will receive, you will qualify for free registration of future upgrades (see [Upgrade Plans](#)). I will immediately send or e-mail you a registered name and number that you can input into the registration box in the program.

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Installing Pinochle 3.0

To install Pinochle 3.0, run the included program INSTALL from Windows. At the Windows 3.1 Program Manager (main screen), select **File | Run**, and then enter the *name of the subdirectory* in which the file is located, plus `INSTALL.EXE`. Then press enter.

Install will prompt you for a subdirectory into which to install Pinochle 3.0, and whether to create a program group. If you wish, you may drag the Pinochle 3.0 icon into any other program group, and delete the Pinochle program group.

Windows 95 Notes

Pinochle 3.0 works well under Windows 95. You may run the INSTALL program exactly as outlined above. I do not include detailed setup notes for Windows 95 because each user I know has different personal usage preferences. See [Using Pinochle 3.0](#) for information on changing the screen positioning for better play on some Windows 95 systems.

Advanced Installation Notes

The INSTALL program will copy the required .DLL and .VBX files to your \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory, and will notify you that it is creating a backup of any previous versions found. The files shipped with this product should not conflict with any other versions, to the best of my knowledge. If you prefer, you may copy these files manually instead of running INSTALL. See README.TXT for more information.

No changes are made to WIN.INI, CONFIG.SYS, or AUTOEXEC.BAT. If you ever uninstall Pinochle, simply delete the file PINOCHLE.EXE and other files in the installed subdirectory. Do not delete the .DLL files, since another program may use them, too.

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Using Pinochle 3.0

The program is relatively self-explanatory. Run it from Windows by adding the file PINOCHLE.EXE to any program group. The program works primarily with the mouse. If you do not know how to play Pinochle, or if you play it differently, check out the [Overview](#) and [Meld Table](#) included in this help file.

Game Numbers

Each unique set of hands has an identifying number between 1 and 999,999. This number is shown in the title bar during play (the :xx part refers to a particular hand within the game set). You may replay a game at any time by selecting **File | Select Game** and entering the unique number. Unregistered users are limited to games 1 - 25 only.

Note that cards dealt for particular Game Numbers in Pinochle 3.0 will differ from the same numbers in Pinochle 2.1 (see [Options](#) for more information).

Shortcuts

Two menu commands are useful while playing. First, you may choose **Play | Next** to have the computer select the next card for you automatically. Second, you may choose **Play | Finish All** to have the computer finish all remaining tricks automatically (you just click between tricks). These also appear on the right-click popup menu described below.

Undo

You may select **Play | Undo** whenever it is your turn to play, in order to take back a previous card. Note that if you Undo and then replay a trick, the cards played the second time may vary from what they were before. This is because some plays are made randomly, when there is no reason to select a particular card. Undo only functions during playing, not during bidding.

Popup Menu (right click)

Click the right button on the mouse to activate the popup menu during playing. This menu allows you easily to choose one of the shortcut plays or Undo.

Rotate Deal

When Pinochle 3.0 deals a particular game number, it always deals the same cards to the same players. With the **Options | General Setup | Rotate Deal** command, you can alter this deal so that the hands are deal starting with other players. For example, if you rotate by 90 degrees, then all of the hands for *East* will be given instead to *South*. This option is included so you can examine hands from different perspectives, and also because some users suspected that East and West got superior hands (they do not; the hands are random).

Options Setup

Select **Options | General Setup** from the menu, and you can change many aspects of the program. You may alter the program's behavior in many ways, and may change many of the scoring and rules defaults. (See [Using the Options Dialogs](#).)

Windows 95 Option

If you select ***File | Windows 95 Mode***, the vertical spacing of the screen elements will be modified. This may be useful for people who wish to play Pinochle under Windows 95 on a 640 x 480 screen; without this option, the Windows 95 task bar may obstruct some of the program buttons. Note that this option actually has nothing to do with Windows 95 as such, and may be used or not used by persons with either Windows 3.1 or Windows 95.

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Upgrade Plans

Double-Deck Pinochle is an evolving program. My plans for upgrades include the following ideas. You are welcome to write me at any time at: cnchapman@aol.com.

- Modifiable personalities for the computer players
- Different scores and setups for different human players
- A four card kitty exchange
- Two or three player version (will be a while, I'm afraid)
- A network version

Registered users will be notified about upgrades when they are available, and they will be free for them.

Also, check out my web site, where you can download upgrades as they are released. Connect to **<http://members.aol.com/cnchapman>**

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What is New in Version 3.0

Double-Deck Pinochle Version 3.0 is the third released version for Microsoft Windows. Versions 2.0 and 2.1 were earlier Windows versions. Version 1.0 ran in DOS.

Thanks to all the users of 2.0 and 2.1 who sent me suggestions (see [Credits](#))! This upgrade is intended in part to be a tribute and thank you to my users.

You may explore most of the new features from the *Options* menu. It will lead you to two multi-paged Setup and Meld options windows. (See [Options](#).)

Improvements of 3.0 over 2.1 are:

- Most rules are now modifiable defaults (see [Options](#))
- Customizable meld table
- May use different card backs, name players
- Can view the cards played in the previous trick (*Play* menu or **right-click**)
- Can Save a game when exiting, and resume later
- Rules options for scoring, marriage requirements, etc.
- Option to give South the best hand on every deal
- Improved Undo feature
- North responds better to power bids from South
- Improved computer bidding and playing
- New shuffling and dealing routines, better card distribution
- May now bid by 10s: 500, 510, etc. (see [Options](#))

Note: Game Numbers have changed in Version 3.0. You may either use the newer routines or use the Version 2.1 dealing method. (see [Options](#))

I hope you enjoy this program!

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Using the Options Dialogs

Overview

Most Pinochle 3.0 rules and requirements can now be modified by using the Options menu to set up the program. For example, you may change the requirement to have 20 meld, or to have a marriage in order to bid, and you may change the Meld Table.

This document does not describe every option, since most of them are self-explanatory once you know how to play Pinochle. However, following is one important general note.

Troubleshooting

If you alter the *Options* settings willy-nilly, Pinochle 3.0 will continue to function, but it may produce an incomprehensible game. For example, choosing the option to bid by 10s (500, 510, etc.), but using the default 50-based meld table will result in unwinnable games. Use common sense!

When confused, choose the Restore button in each dialog set to reset back to the original program defaults.

Notes About Some Options

3.0 / 2.1 Dealing Method. Pinochle 3.0 uses a different card shuffling and dealing algorithm. This means that each Game Number will be different in 3.0 than in 2.1. In other words, game 123456 will differ in 3.0 from what it was in 2.1. However, you may use the 2.1 method if you wish (which effectively doubles the number of available games). The 2.1 method is faster on slow computers. The 3.0 method is more consistent across all hands in a game sequence, and has better card distribution.

Bid by 1s / Bid by 10s. Bidding by 1s goes 50, 51, etc. Bidding by 10s goes 500, 510, etc., according to the amount at which you have chosen to begin bidding. If you bid by 10s, you should alter the Meld Table accordingly in *Options | Setup Meld Table*. Also, be sure to change the *Options* for *Score Needed to Win* and *Begin Bid At*.

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Credits

User suggestions are very helpful to me. When I receive user suggestions, I often put them immediately on my improvements list. Some ideas are more difficult, and some may not be feasible at all within the current program framework, but all are worth my attention.

To everyone who wrote about Pinochle 2.0 and 2.1, thank you! Following are some users I would like to recognize for their ideas that prompted me to action:

B. Anderson
R. Bryan
R. Carter
D. Dauksas
M. Diefendorf
R. Exline
R. Hadley
K. Kelly
J. LaBelle
M. Lego
C. Miller
J. Munroe
W. Otterbein
D. Rothermel
E. Sanner
J. Schott
B. Sherwood
W. Stanley
R. Wheeler
J. Wiseman
P. Yelton
S. Young
and Others, whose names were unclear in their e-mail

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