

Spades '97 Version 1.2 Release Notes

What's New in version 1.2?

Everything!

Well, not everything, but at least 4 pages full of minor touch ups, bug fixes, cosmetic changes, slight redesigns and addition of some new features such as Autosave and a built-in Challenge Ladder (explained below). Also now using a much more reliable Internet connection method which such vastly improve connections and end any program-related connection problems you may have been having.

Below are some new features which are not included in the online documentation. Please look over these before asking any questions about the challenge ladder or saving games, chances are you will find your answer right here.

Internal Challenge Ladder

Ok, we will have a million questions about this one. Here is the basic explanation.

You must first set up an account on IPLAY.NET by using a web-browser and going to **www.iplay.net**. Once you are set up with a name and a password, you then need to go to your Spades '97 OPTIONS menu and enter that password in the field that reads **IPLAY PASSWORD**. This will help IPLAY.NET recognize you in the future.

When you are hosting a new game, your game will automatically contact IPLAY.NET to see if this game is capable of being a challenge match. It determines this by looking at who is playing, and checking records on IPLAY to see if these are two official ladder teams. If it sees that the two teams playing are actual teams set up on IPLAY.NET, then the game will automatically report the results of the game to IPLAY.NET once the game is over. All players will be notified in the game if the match is an official ladder match or not.

If you wish to play just a casual match and do NOT want an attempt to be made to see if it should be considered a challenge ladder match, you may select "Disable Ladder Checking" in the House Rules menu when first setting your game up.

The challenge ladder is automatically maintained by IPLAY.NET based on the information it receives from the games, and uses that information to establish rankings. We feel this is the most efficient and convenient way to have a very organized and competitive system without troubling users to visit a web page to report the results of every match they play.

Reloading Lost Games

The game host automatically stores the current scores and status of the game at the end of each hand. This guarantees that a game will not be lost should the host crash for some reason. For example, if you play a full hand, then get about mid-way into the second hand and all the sudden the host crashes, the game will be stored on the host system. When the host resumes the game, play will resume from the beginning of the second hand again (yes you may have been mid-way through the second hand before the crash, but the host stores the game at the beginning of each round, so at most you may lose a couple played tricks).

How to Resume a Saved Game

First, the person who was hosting needs to be the game host. Next, the host begins a NEW game, seats the players in the positions (usually its a good thing to seat them in the same positions they were in before). Once you have started the game and have the ability to bid, next go to FILE and select LOAD SAVED GAME. This will then restore the last round and play may continue.

New Scoring Features

You will notice up top, when playing with partners, that the total team score, sandbags, bid and caught values are listed. The addition of bid/caught will make it easier to quickly determine how you are doing in a hand.

Top Ranked Spades Players

With the built-in challenge ladder, an up-to-the-minute update of the top rankings may be viewed at any time by going to FILE and choosing "Top Ranked Spades Players".

"Where are my shifting cards?"

Before you may have played a card, and it conveniently slipped out of the deck and the remainder of the deck moved in closer together. Without going into a lot of explanation, this little feature has been removed. When you play a card, the card goes away, the rest of the deck stays as it was.

"Where is my RESYNCH button?"

Resynch is no longer needed.

"Do I have to play in this ladder system?"

No. The ladder is designed for fun. If you do not wish to form a team and compete with others on the challenge ladder, then that is your decision. These features were simply built-in to Spades '97 to make the whole system much easier to use.

"Is this still free?"

Yes. The game will forever be a freeware game with the option to register. Those who have registered so far are a lot of the reason why this release has made it out. We strive to supply gamers with the best Spades game while not taking advantage of their bank accounts.

"Are there any more games coming?"

Yes. Currently in the works are Hearts, Euchre and Trivia. There is also interest in developing other games such as UNO, Skip-Bo, Yahtzee, Dominoes, Gin, Bridge, Cribbage, and multiplayer games for children. The order in which they are done depend a lot on the demand we receive for a game and the existing availability of that game already on the Internet.

Special Thanks Go Out To:

ZmbiWoof, supplying the site for all of us to meet and play Spades '97 at, designing the server side of the challenge ladder system, and motivating me to get this version completed.

Pam, who has been on this project almost longer than I have, for helping get the word out and helping us get to where we are now.

Lilangel, for putting up with just about a little bit of everything because of me! Also for helping maintain The Spades Room on a daily basis.

All Registered Users of Spades '97, and yes there are actually enough of you where I wouldn't want to type each and every name! :) The encouraging letters that accompany many of the registrations really help keep me going and striving for better ideas and games. Each and every one of you are **BIG** part of the reason why this game has made it this far. Thanks again!

All the people who have helped test Spades '97 throughout the different versions, Baracuda, Bruno99, Eanne, Hrs49er, Iseeyou, Jackiel, Jazzyv, Joyce, Lainer, Lennon, Lilangel, Little2, Nautilus, Pam, Remorse, Riskynilr, Ronf, Ssy, Wmont, Xfiler, Yowza, ZmbiWoof and anyone else I may have left out here, you are not forgotten!

Dolphin Systems, designer of the Winsock Control which helps makes all this possible

And last but not least to God for my health, my wonderful family, for the air I breathe, for the food I eat, and for the love in which He has given me.

Pokah
help@onramp.net
<http://rampages.onramp.net/~Pokah>