



Montana Solitaire for Windows

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Overview

Montana Solitaire for Windows is a single-deck solitaire card game involving both luck and strategy. While every game is winnable, the challenge is to win in the fewest number of moves and shuffles.

All 52 cards are dealt face-up into four rows. The Aces are then removed, leaving four random gaps in the layout.

The game is played by moving cards into the gaps. A Deuce can only move to a gap in the leftmost column. Any other card can only be moved to a gap following the next smaller card of the same suit. No card may be moved to a gap which follows a King.

To find the card that will play in a gap, position the pointer on the gap and hold down the RIGHT mouse button. The card that plays in the gap will be highlighted.

To move a card, just click on it with the left mouse button. Except for Deuces, you can also move a card by clicking on a gap with the left mouse button.

To win the game, arrange each row in ascending rank order from Deuce to King of the same suit, with a gap at the far right of each row. As cards are moved into this position, they are shaded to mark your progress.

If you get stuck with no good moves remaining, you can Shuffle. The cards that are out of position will be picked up, shuffled together with the Aces, and redealt. The Aces are removed again and the game resumes.

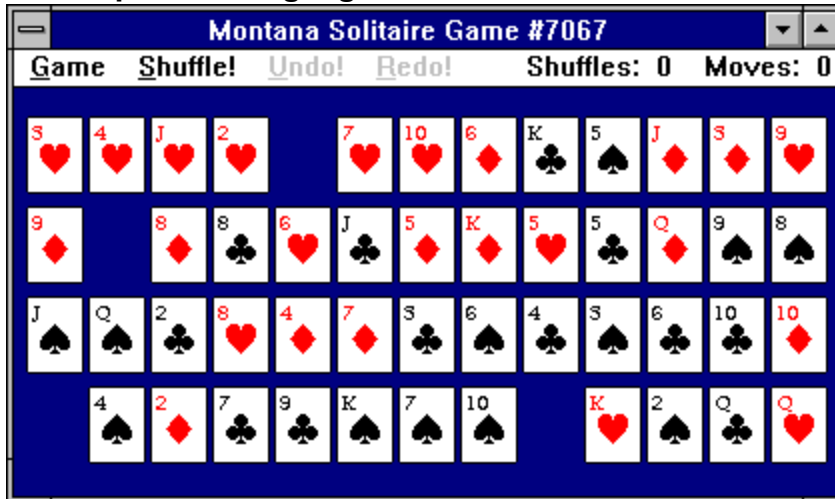
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Example: Starting a game



In the example above, the following moves exist:

- Any of the Deuces may move to the gap at the left side of row 4
- The 3 of hearts will move behind the 2 of hearts
- The 10 of diamonds will move behind the 9 of diamonds
- The Jack of spades will move behind the 10 of spades

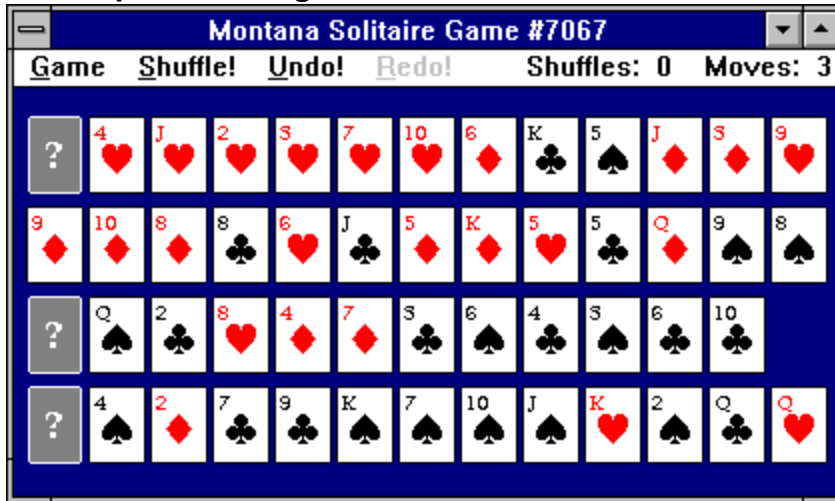
To find the card that will play in a gap, position the pointer on the gap and hold down the right mouse button. The card that plays in the gap will be highlighted.

To move a card, just click on it. The card will move to the appropriate gap, leaving behind a new gap into which a card may be moved.

Once a Deuce is moved to the first column, it is considered in home position. As cards of the same suit are moved in unbroken sequence behind a Deuce, they are also in home position. The game is over when all cards are in home position.

[Example: Moving a Deuce](#)

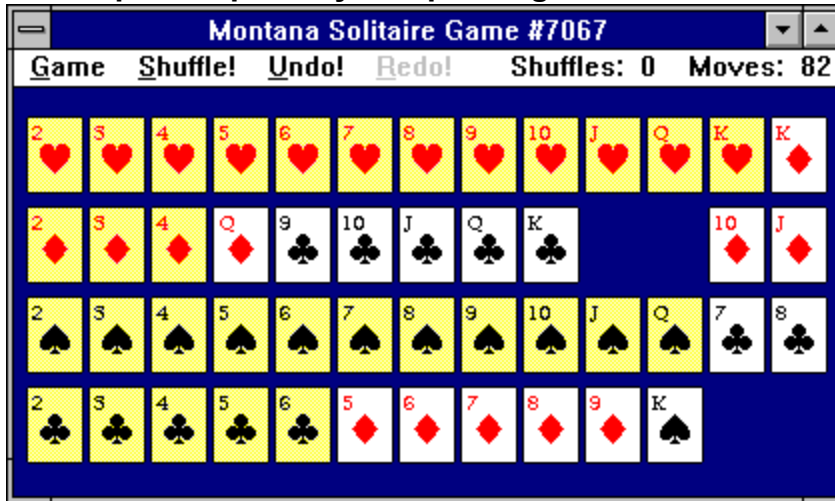
Example: Moving a Deuce



In the example above, a Deuce is being moved, but there is more than one gap in which it can play. When the Deuce is clicked, the question mark cards appear, indicating that you must choose one. To complete the move, click on the appropriate question mark card.

[Example: A partially completed game](#)

Example: A partially completed game



In the partially completed game above, the shaded cards are in home position. The only remaining gaps follow Kings, so no further moves are possible. Clicking the Shuffle! command on the menu bar will cause the cards that are not in home position to be picked up, shuffled together with the Aces, and redealt. The Aces will be removed, leaving four new gaps, and the game continues until all cards are in order by suit.

Rules of the Game

- The deck is dealt into 4 rows of 13 cards each. The Aces are removed from the table, leaving four random gaps.
- A gap may only be filled by the card which is next higher in rank and of the same suit as the card to the left of the gap. For example, a gap following a 7 of Hearts may only be filled by the 8 of Hearts.
- A gap in the first space on the left side of a row may be filled by any Deuce.
- A gap following a King cannot be filled. If all four gaps follow Kings, no moves are possible and you must Shuffle.
- When a Deuce is in the first space at the left side of a row, it is in Home position. Cards of the same suit which follow it in unbroken ascending rank order are also in Home position.
- At any point in the game, the cards may be Shuffled. Cards that are not in Home position will be picked up, shuffled together with the Aces, and redealt. Then Aces will again be removed, leaving four new gaps.
- A maximum of 15 Shuffles is allowed.
- The game is won when all cards are in Home position.

Playing the game

Using the mouse:

- To move a card, click on it with the mouse. If the card can be played, it will move to the appropriate gap.
- You can also move a card (except for a Deuce) by clicking on a gap. The appropriate card will be moved to the gap.
- To find the card that plays in a gap, position the pointer on the gap and hold down the right mouse button. The card that plays in the gap will be highlighted until you release the mouse button.
- Positioning the pointer on a card and holding down the right mouse button will highlight the next higher card of the same suit.
- To shuffle the cards that are not in home position, click on the Shuffle! menu item.
- To take back a move, click on the Undo! menu item.
- To take back an undo, click on the Redo! menu item.

Using the keyboard:

- Use the arrow keys (left, right, up, down) to position the pointer on a card.
- Press Enter to move the card on which the pointer is positioned.
- Press the Space Bar to find a card. If the pointer is positioned on a gap, the card that plays in the gap will be highlighted. If the pointer is positioned on a card, the next higher card of the same suit will be highlighted.
- To Shuffle, press S.
- To Undo a move, press U or the minus sign.
- To Redo a saved move, press R or the plus sign.

Strategy

While it's not required, using a strategy can improve your chances of attaining a good score. Here's some general guidelines to help you get started:

- Look ahead several moves. Look for a series of moves that will open up gaps on the left side for cards to be moved into home position. Avoid moves that will result in a dead-end gap following a King.
- Don't automatically play a Deuce as soon as a gap opens up in the leftmost column. Playing other cards may result in multiple deuce spots being open, giving you more choices in which suit goes on which row.
- Look for cards which are already in the correct position. For example, a three in the second column, a four in the third column, and so on. When a gap opens up in the first column, choose the Deuce that takes advantage of cards that will not have to be moved.
- Look for opportunities to move the Kings to the last column on the right. In the same way, a Queen in the 2nd to last column is in a favorable position, and so on.

Remember, these are just guidelines. Every game is different. As you play, you will develop a feel for what works. The best strategy is to have fun!

Scoring

- Scoring is based on the number of Shuffles and Moves used to complete a game.
- The Best Scores screen keeps track of both the Fewest Shuffles and Fewest Moves.
- Fewest Shuffles keeps track of the games with the least number of shuffles. If the number of shuffles is the same, the game with the least moves is considered better.
- Fewest Moves keeps track of the games with the least number of moves, regardless of the number of shuffles. If the number of moves is the same, the game with the least shuffles is considered better.
- If a score qualifies for both Fewest Shuffles and Fewest Moves, it will appear under both headings.

[What's a good score?](#)

[Montana Hall of Fame](#)

What's a good score?

What constitutes a good score? Here's a suggestion for a rating scheme. There is no scientific basis for this, but it will give you an idea of what to expect:

Fewest Shuffles

| Shuffles | Rating | Chances |
|----------|---------------|----------------------|
| 0 | Genius | Dang Near Impossible |
| 1 | Master | Extremely rare |
| 2 | Expert | 1 in 100 |
| 3 | Above average | 1 in 20 |
| 4 | Competent | 1 in 5 |

Fewest Moves

| Moves | Rating | Chances |
|-------|---------------|---------------|
| 70 | Genius | Slim and None |
| 80 | Master | Rare |
| 90 | Expert | 1 in 100 |
| 100 | Above average | 1 in 20 |
| 120 | Competent | 1 in 5 |

[Montana Hall of Fame](#)

Montana Hall of Fame

The best reported Montana scores, as of February 1996:

Fewest Shuffles

| Game | Shuffles/Moves | By | From |
|-------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 20908 | 0 61 | John Gouldie | Raleigh, NC |
| 24503 | 0 73 | Kelley Schroedl | Clayton, NC |
| 10353 | 0 78 | Tim Bodill | Burton-on-Trent, UK |
| 13306 | 0 86 | Steve Schroedl | Clayton, NC |
| 7385 | 0 95 | Heather Alexander | High Wycombe, UK |
| 19346 | 0 95 | Stephen Weiss | Bethlehem, PA |

Fewest Moves

(does not include Fewest Shuffles scores listed above)

| Game | Moves/Shuffles | By | From |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 26992 | 56 1 | Tom Woodhouse | Waterford, MI |
| 3516 | 66 13 | David Jackino | Cary, NC |
| 10675 | 68 3 | Dale Cotton | Pickering, ON |
| 22173 | 72 1 | Kelley Schroedl | Clayton, NC |
| 11598 | 74 1 | R. T. Radford | Stillwater, OK |
| 22824 | 77 4 | Phil Alexander | High Wycombe, UK |

What are your best scores?

What scores can you achieve? You too can make it into the Montana Solitaire Hall of Fame! Just save your best games to disk, then copy or attach them to an email and send them to me. Or print the game file and send it to me via snail mail.

[Contacting the author](#)

Contacting the author

Please send questions, comments, and good game reports to the author:

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Clayton, NC 27520

CompuServe: 75533,3601

E-mail: 75533.3601@compuserve.com

Saving, Loading, and Replaying Games

At any time during a game, or after completing a game, you can save the game to disk. Later, you can load the game from disk and replay some or all of the saved moves and shuffles.

Saving a game

To save a game in progress, select Save Game from the Game menu. A standard Windows "Save As" dialog will be displayed, allowing you to specify a name and location for your game file. A suggested name of "nnnnn.GAM" will be supplied, where "nnnnn" is the game number, but you may give the file any valid DOS file name.

To save a completed game, press the Save button on the You Won! dialog box.

Montana Solitaire games are saved as individual text files. You can easily save your good games and email them to a friend as proof of your brilliance!

Loading a saved game

To retrieve a saved Montana Solitaire game from disk, select Load Saved Game from the Game menu. A standard Windows "Open" dialog will be displayed, allowing you to specify the name of the saved game.

After you have loaded the game file, the saved game will be started in Replay Mode, at 0 shuffles and 0 moves. If the Messages option is turned on, a message will be displayed informing you that the game has been started in Replay Mode (see below).

Replaying a game

At any point in a game, you can restart the game by selecting Replay Game from the Game menu. The current game number will be restarted in Replay Mode (see below). You can Redo some or all of your moves and shuffles, up to the point at which you selected Replay Game.

Replay Mode

When you select Replay Game or Load Saved Game, the game will be started in Replay Mode, at 0 shuffles and 0 moves. The Redo! menu item will be enabled, indicating that saved moves may be replayed.

To replay a move or shuffle, click Redo! on the menu or press the + (plus sign) key. One move or shuffle will occur for each Redo. Holding the + key down continuously will cause multiple moves to be redone (on slower systems, the results of multiple moves may not display until the + key is released).

You can interrupt Replay Mode at any time by clicking on any card. The Redo! menu item will be disabled and you can resume normal play from that point in the game.

Options

Montana Solitaire options allow you to customize the look and feel of the game.

Cards

- Small Cards are the default. They use the standard suit emblems (clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades). Small cards will fit on a 640x480 resolution screen without overlapping..
- Big Cards are the same size and design as those in the solitaire game that comes with Microsoft Windows™. This option requires that you have the CARDS.DLL file that is distributed with the Microsoft Entertainment Pack™, Windows for Workgroups™, or Windows 95™. If CARDS.DLL is not installed on your system, the Big Cards option will be disabled.
- Alternate Cards use colored text (red, black, green, blue) instead of standard suits. Many hard-core Montana players find these cards to be the easiest on the eyes (especially in the wee hours of the the morning).

Colors

You can customize the look of your Montana Solitaire for Windows screen using the standard color dialog box. You may select from 48 basic colors, or choose the Define Custom Colors button to create your own color.

- Background will allow you to select the color of the background (i.e., the table on which the cards are played).
- Home Card Shading will allow you to select the color which is applied to the cards that are in Home position. Note that many colors are not suitable for this purpose, as they will interfere with the card design.
- Reset Factory Defaults will restore the Background and Home Card Shading colors to their original settings.

Messages

This option allows you to suppress information messages, such as the "Replay Mode" message that appears when you select Replay Game or Load Saved Game. If a check mark appears by this option, information messages are enabled. If no check mark appears, messages will be suppressed.

Beeps

This option allows you to suppress the beeps that indicate an error, such as clicking on a card that does not play. If a check mark appears by this option, beeps are enabled. If no check mark appears, beeps will be suppressed.

Keyboard shortcuts

- S Shuffle!
- U Undo!
- R Redo!
- - Undo!
- + Redo!
- F1 Help
- F2 New game
- F3 Replay current game
- Ctrl+L Load saved game
- Ctrl+S Save game
- Alt+F4 Exit

Registering

Montana Solitaire for Windows is shareware. Try the game for a few weeks. If you decide to keep it, please register.

[Registering by mail](#)

[Registering on CompuServe](#)

[Benefits of registering](#)

Registering by mail

If you have a printer:

- 1 Select "Print Registration Form..." from the Game menu. This starts Windows Write and opens REGISTER.WRI, which is included as one of the files with this game.
- 2 Fill in your name, address, and other information.
- 3 Print the registration form.
- 4 Enclose a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank, payable to Steve Schroedl in the amount of \$8 in U.S. funds.
- 5 Mail the form and check to the address listed on the form.

If you don't have a printer:

- 1 Write a note indicating that you're registering Montana Solitaire. Include the following information:
 - Your name as you would like it to appear on your registration
 - Your mailing address
 - Your Email address, if applicable
 - The version of Montana Solitaire you have
 - Where you obtained it from
 - Any comments or suggestions you might have.
- 2 Enclose a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank, payable to Steve Schroedl in the amount of \$8 in U.S. funds.
- 3 Mail your note and check to this address:

Steve Schroedl
2328 Hemlock Circle
Clayton, NC 27520

Registering on CompuServe

As a convenient alternative to snail mail, CompuServe members may use the online shareware registration service. CompuServe will bill you the registration fee of \$10, and your registration code will be sent to you via E-mail, usually within 24 hours or less.

Just GO SWREG and specify registration ID 4878.

Benefits of registering

When you register, you will receive a personal code which will convert your existing copy of Montana Solitaire to the full-featured, registered version.

Registering provides you with the following benefits:

- Additional winning quotations (150 in all!)
- A fully enabled Best Scores screen
- Suppression of the registration reminder screen
- Full product support
- Automatic registration of future versions
- A warm fuzzy feeling for doing the right thing.

deuce

A Deuce is a two of any suit. A two may only be played in the leftmost column (home position).

gap

A gap is an open space into which a card may be played. There are always four gaps available. No card may be played in a gap which follows a King.

home

Cards of the same suit which are arranged left to right in unbroken ascending rank order, starting with a deuce in the leftmost column, are in home position. Cards in home position will be shaded a different color to distinguish them from the others.

Move

A move consists of placing a card into a gap. A deuce can only move to a gap in the leftmost column. All other cards can only be moved to a gap following the next smaller card of the same suit.

Redo!

Click Redo! on the menu or press the + key to replay saved moves. Redo! is available whenever you replay a game, load a saved game, or Undo! a move.

Replay Mode

When a game is restarted, or a saved game is loaded, saved moves can be replayed by clicking Redo! or pressing the + key. Each time you click Redo!, another saved move will be played. At any point, normal play may be resumed by clicking on any card.

Shuffle!

A shuffle consists of picking up all cards which are not in home position, mixing them together with the Aces, and dealing them back into the open spaces. The Aces are then removed and play resumes.

shuffle

A shuffle consists of picking up all cards which are not in home position, mixing them together with the Aces, and dealing them back into the open spaces. The Aces are then removed and play resumes.

Undo!

Click Undo! on the menu or press the - key to take back unwanted moves (quick, while nobody's looking!).

