

4 Towers Help Index



4 Towers is Shareware. Please read the section on Registration Information!

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Overview

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4 Towers is a solitaire card game in which the entire deck is dealt initially face-up. The object of 4 Towers is to place all cards in order onto their home stacks. The game is won when all cards have been placed in their home stacks (sorted by suit), in rank order from ace to king.

Related Topics

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- ♦ [Playing the Game](#)
- ♦ [Rules of the Game](#)

Playing the Game

4 Towers is a solitaire game. Like most solitaire games, the goal is to play all of the cards onto the foundations. The foundations can be thought of as the home position for the cards. A card may be placed on a foundation only if the suits match, and if the ranks are sequential. For instance, the 5 of clubs may be played only to the Club foundation, and only on the 4 of Clubs. The game is won when all cards have been played onto their foundations (sorted by suit), in rank order from Ace to King.

To Start a New Game:

Select the Game menu, and choose New.

To Move a Card:

Click with the left button on a visible card. While holding down the left button, drag the card to the stack where you wish to place it. If the move is not legal, 4 Towers will replace it on its original stack for you.

To Move Several Cards:

Click on the visible portion of the card which is at the bottom of the stack you wish to move, and drag the stack to where you wish to place it. It is possible to move portions of a stack by clicking at the place in the stack where you wish to break it.

In order for a stack move to be legal, all cards which are to be moved must be in descending rank order, and must be of the same suit. Also, there must be enough empty Towers available; dragging a stack is shorthand for moving each card in the stack to a Tower, and then moving them back down.

Rules of the Game

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This section describes the appearance of the 4 Towers window, and the rules which govern the game.

Layout of the Playing Field:

The 4 Towers window shows 18 stacks where cards may be placed. The ten stacks which occupy the lower half of the window form the tableau. The four stacks at the top of the window (in groups of two, near the edges of the window) form the foundations. Each of these stacks, when empty, shows a picture of the suit which is to occupy the stack. Finally, the four stacks which are centered at the top of the window are the 4 Towers. These stacks, when empty, show a picture of a night-time countryside occupied by four Towers.

The cards are initially dealt face up into the 10 tableau stacks. Each tableau stack has 5 cards in it. The remaining two cards occupy two of the Towers.

Object of the Game:

The object of the game is to play all of the cards onto the foundations. A card may be placed on a foundation only if the suits match, and if the ranks are sequential. For instance, the 5 of clubs may be played only to the Club foundation, and only on the 4 of Clubs. The game is won when all cards have been played onto their foundations (sorted by suit), in rank order from Ace to King.

Legal Moves:

Any card which is fully visible may be moved, but it may be placed only on the card of the next highest rank and of the same suit. In other words, the three of diamonds may be placed only on the four of diamonds. There are two exceptions to this rule: kings may be placed on an empty space, and any single card may go onto an empty Tower. However, once a card is placed into a Tower, it must be replaced in the playing field only by the normal rules! This means that if the three of diamonds is moved into a Tower, it may be replaced on the playing field only upon the four of diamonds!

Since you will never need a given card once it is available to be placed on a foundation (i.e. all the cards of that same suit and lower rank have already been played to a foundation), the game will automatically move cards to the foundations when they may legally be played there.

Related Topics

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- ♣ [Playing the Game](#)
 - ♣ [Strategy Tips and Shortcuts](#)

The Game Menu

The Game menu contains several choices which allow the user to control the flow of a game.

New

When this item is selected, the current game is aborted, and a new game is started. The user will be asked to confirm this action if a game is underway.

Restart

This item will cause 4 Towers to restart the current game with the same initial card setup. Afterwards, the user may choose Redo to replay as much of the previous attempt as desired.

Undo

Selecting this item causes 4 Towers to undo the users most recent move. Any number of moves (up to 1000 moves) may be undone, back to the beginning of the game.

Redo

This item causes 4 Towers to redo a previously undone move by the user. Redo may be chosen repeatedly, up to the final move made by the user. If a new move is made, all moves beyond the current one will be lost.

Load

Normally, 4 Towers saves the users game position; only one game may be saved at any time. the Load option allows the user to load in a previously saved game. This option is available only to registered users.

Save

This option allows the user to save games without penalty, so that they may be finished at a later date. This option is available only to registered users.

Quit

This option exits 4 Towers.

The Options Menu

There are several options available to the user. They are all selected (or deselected) by choosing an item from the options menu. Active options have a check next to the corresponding word in the menu

Sound

If selected, 4 Towers will make sounds when the player picks up a card, correctly places it, wins a game, and in several other places. If this option is not selected, 4 Towers will run completely silently.

Slide Cards

If selected, 4 Towers will 'slide' cards from the playing field to the home positions. This allows the player to follow automatic moves as they occur. If not selected, 4 Towers will cause cards to 'jump' to the home row. This will go much faster, but can be rather abrupt!

Background Color

This option brings up a dialog box which allows the user to select from 16 pre-defined background colors, selected by clicking on the box of the desired color. Optionally, the user may drag the slider bars for Red, Green and Blue to define new colors. The large box in the lower left-hand corner of the dialog shows a sample of the color to be used. The selected color is activated when the user presses OK, but no change will be made if the user presses Cancel. Colors which appear as a solid block (not dithered) in the sample window work best with 4 Towers.

Card sizes

This menu choice brings up a popup menu containing three choices. These choices (small, medium, and large) allow the user to choose between card sets to be used in the game. If a card set is inappropriate (i.e. too large) or if 4 Towers cannot find the bitmap file for a particular card set, the corresponding menu choices will be greyed (inactive). When a new size is chosen, the playing field window will automatically resize to an optimal size for the game and the chosen card size. The shareware version of 4 Towers always does not allow the user to select medium or large cards.

Scores

Selecting this menu choice will bring up the 4 Towers score history, which tracks your wins and losses over time.

Reset Scores

Selecting this option will allow you to zero out your score history, starting from 0. You will be asked to confirm this option!

Strategy Tips and Shortcuts

4 Towers is a game that, in principle, always has a solution. Finding that solution is often not easy, though! There are several basic strategy tips that might increase your chances of winning.

Don't build big sequential piles which bury other cards...Remember that you can move a maximum of 5 cards (and then only if you have 4 Towers free!), so if you bury any low card under a 6-card pile, you might as well start over. Sometimes it is possible to dig out from under a deep pile, but not always. Big piles are good, but only when they start 'on the ground.'

Don't try too hard to place cards in the home positions early on. This can often lead to trouble.

It's best to try to keep your Towers free. You can always put any cards you want back in the Towers, but you can't always move cards from the Towers to the playing field! If you try not to move cards to the Towers unless you already see how to get them down, you'll do much better.

Explore! You have an 'undo' key, and a 'redo' key...you can use them to figure out how to get out of tight jams. 4 Towers stores up to 1000 moves, which is about 5 times more than you'll ever need!

There is a shortcut which is handy while playing: if you want to move several cards from a pile to the Towers, grab them as if you were picking them up to move them...and move them to a free tower. If enough towers are free to hold them, each card will be placed in a tower!

Registration Information

4 Towers is shareware. This means that the software is not free, but that you are invited to use it for a while before you pay for it. You are, however, expected to pay for it if you want to keep using it.

Gradient Computing knows that most people never pay for shareware. It annoys us to no end, because we spent our time and effort writing this game in the hopes that we would make some money from it. Before you say well, it was only your time..., we would like to point out that everyone on our development team is a professional software developer in some capacity. When we spend our time developing a game like this one, we are spending time that we might have spent in our day jobs. Thus, we have in a sense invested money into developing this software.

We invite you to use this game, to copy it, and to give copies of it to everyone you know. We also invite you to pay our minimal registration fee if you like the game! **Registration for 4 Towers is just \$5, plus \$3 shipping** if you would like to receive the upgrade on a diskette.

Registration gets you several things. The first of these is a version of 4 Towers which can use our larger card faces. We have developed two other sets of card faces which can be used by 4 Towers, both of them larger than the cards you get with the shareware version. The cards in the shareware version are 50x70 pixels in size, but the larger ones are 70x100 and 80x115, respectively. These large cards make seeing and playing the game much easier!

Registration also gets you a version which can load and save multiple games, It also gets you a version with all the latest bug fixes, upgrades, etc. Registration also delivers -- right to your doorstep -- the warm fuzzy feeling of having done [the right thing](#).

Gradient Computing also offers several other games for people who have played and enjoyed 4 Towers, and would like more. **We are currently offering our Gradient Solitaire Premium Package**, which consists of the upgrade to the registered version of 4 Towers, plus five other Gradient games. We are also at work every day, writing new games which will be included in the Premium Package at no extra cost. If more games are ready when we receive your order, you will receive them as part of the deal! **The cost for this package is \$15, shipping included.** Right now, that means that your cost is just \$2.50 per game!

If you would like to register your copy of 4 Towers or order the Gradient Premium Package, you can get a printed order form by [clicking here](#) and then picking Print Topic from the File menu of this help screen. Alternatively, you can print the text file **order.txt** which should accompany 4 Towers.

Thank you for supporting the Shareware concept!

Gradient Solitaire Order Form

Product Ordered (circle one):	Cost:
4 Towers registered version	5.00
Ship on Diskette?	3.00
Gradient Solitaire Premium Package	15.00

Total _____

Ship To:
Name: _____

(e-mail address if you wish to receive the order electronically)

Address: _____

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State: _____ ZIP: _____

Please make all checks out to **Gradient Computing**, All checks should be is \$US, drawn on either a United States bank or an international bank.

Send your order to:
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Austin, TX 78765-4549

Gradient Computing is a small Austin--based software development firm which writes Windows games and other applications. The developers at Gradient feel that too much of today 's software (most especially shareware) is horrendously overpriced. Gradient tries to develop software which is inexpensive, carefully crafted, and fun to use.

If you would like to contact us with suggestions, comments, or even complaints, we would love to hear from you. Drop us a line at

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