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Contents lists all Cal's Brain Strain help topics.

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For Help on Life, [click here](#)

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Introduction

Solitaires differ widely in the opportunities they afford for the exercise of skill. Some are purely mechanical, while others torture the mind. Cal's Brain Strain is a variation of Calculation Solitaire.

[Calculation stands at the top of the list of games that give opportunity for skill.](#)

So says the worlds leading authority on cards & gambling, John Scarne, in his classic work *Scarnes Encyclopedia of Card Games*. With sufficient skill, patience, and foresight an experienced player will win 4 to 5 times more often than a beginner. Some players of this game actually believe that two games out of three can be won with proper application and patience.

Related Topics

- [How To Play](#)
- [Contents](#)

How To Play

Foundations. The Ace, Two, Three, and Four that appear in a column on the right side of the play table constitute the foundations. The foundations are to be [built up](#) in arithmetical series as follows, regardless of suit:

A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, J, Q, K (interval = 1)
2, 4, 6, 8, 10, Q, A, 3, 5, 7, 9, J, K (interval = 2)
3, 6, 9, Q, 2, 5, 8, J, A, 4, 7, 10, K (interval = 3)
4, 8, Q, 3, 7, J, 2, 6, 10, A, 5, 9, K (interval = 4)

To assist you, the next card value needed in the sequence appears to the left of each foundation. More comprehensive assistance can be obtained by clicking on a foundation

Wastepiles. The four piles that appear in a row at the top of the play table constitute the wastepiles.

Play. Turn up cards from the [stock](#) one at a time by clicking on the face down deck of cards. Place the dealt card either on a foundation or on any one of the four wastepiles. Only the last card placed on each wastepile is [available](#). It can be moved to either a foundation or to an empty wastepile. Cards may be moved to foundations at any time. Once placed on a foundation they may not be moved.

The game is won when all four foundations have been built up to kings. If no legal moves remain the program will notify you.

There are no re-deals in Cal's Brain Strain .

Related Topics

- [How To Move a Card](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [Tips & Strategies](#)
- [Contents](#)

Menu Options

Game

[New Game](#)
[Select Game](#)
[Replay Game](#)
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Options

[Undo Last Move](#)
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[Peek](#)
[Help, I am Stuck - mode](#)
[Preferences](#)
[Delete Won Games](#)

View

[Toolbar](#)
[Move List](#)
[Score History](#)
[Refresh](#)

Related Topics

- [Contents](#)

Tips and Strategies

The correct handling of the kings is of paramount importance. As a general rule, one wastepile should be dedicated to the kings. To cover any other card with a king can be dangerous, since it can only be removed when a foundation is completed or a wastepile is emptied. But when two or three kings have been laid in wastepiles, it may be advisable to use all four wastepiles for lower cards and hope that the remaining kings do not show up too soon.

The policy for the remaining cards is to try to [build](#) them in descending sequences on the wastepiles, corresponding to the foundation sequences.

As a general rule, avoid placing more than one card of a particular rank on each wastepile, although this may sometimes need to be disregarded in order to maintain a sequence.

The ability to move an available wastepile card to an empty wastepile is not a valid move in traditional Calculation Solitaire but has been added by Dartcy Productions in this computerized variation as an aid to winning. Make liberal use of this feature!

Use the [Undo Last Move](#) and [Redo Next Move](#) features to step back a few moves and try alternate solutions. The [Move List](#) feature is extremely powerful and convenient. Use this to go back to an exact point in the game where, in retrospect, you might have played the cards differently than you did.

It goes without saying that the [Peek](#) feature will get you out of many jams. However, we will not go so far as to sanction this as a legitimate strategy. While were on the topic of cheating...the [Help, I am Stuck](#) feature will get you out of every possible problem. Use this feature to free up those cards that you need which are buried beneath other wastepile cards.

Related Topics

- [Undo Last Move](#)
- [Redo Next Move](#)
- [Move List](#)
- [How To Play](#)
- [Contents](#)

How To Register

Cal's Brain Strain is shareware. If you wish to keep this game, you need to register it. To register your copy, send the paltry sum of \$7.00 U.S. dollars to:

DARTCY Productions
P.O Box 714
Carmel, NY, 10512
USA

You will find a registration form called REGISTER.TXT in the same directory as Cal's Brain Strain, which can be viewed and printed from any text editor. This form can be accessed from within the game by selecting the Show Registration Form option from the Registration Info menu. Please send the completed form along with the registration fee.

Registering will provide you with free upgrades to any future upgrades of Cal's Brain Strain, as well as to unlimited free technical support. Most importantly, registering will give you that warm fuzzy feeling you get when you know you've listened to your conscience and done the right thing.

A workman is worthy of his hire -- This quote from the Bible teaches that a person should be justly compensated for their labors.

If you like the game but do not think that it is worth the \$7.00, then send whatever you feel the game is worth. If you really like the game, but money is tight right now, send us one dollar. Later on, when your financial situation gets better, you can send the difference. Fair enough?

Thanks for your support!

Related Topics

- [Contents](#)

Legal Issues

CAL'S BRAIN STRAIN

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Use of this product for any period of time constitutes your acceptance of this agreement and subjects you to its contents.

Related Topics

- [Contents](#)
- [How To Register](#)

New Game

Select this option to start a new game with a deck randomly chosen by the program. The new games number will appear on the caption bar in case you wish to replay it at a later time or pass it on to a friend.

Related Topics

- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Select Game

Select this option to start a new game with a deck of your choosing. If you find a game that is particularly enjoyable or particularly difficult that you wish to come back to or share with your friends, use this option. There are 32,000 possible games!

Not all the games are winnable. This is in contrast to some of the new computerized solitaire games in which all games are winnable. When playing any card game you have to play the cards as they happen to fall. Some decks are more difficult than others, and other decks, despite the most skilled of play are not winnable. We at Dartcy Productions decided not to remove the Lady Luck aspect of card games.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Replay Game

Select this option to replay the same deck of cards. When you select the Replay Game option the game is counted as a new game thereby decreasing your winning percentage. Therefore you may wish to use the [Move List](#) or the [Undo](#) feature to go back to the beginning of the game instead.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Exit

Self Explanatory.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Undo Last Move

Undoes the last move. This is an unlimited depth undo, in that you can undo all the way back to the beginning of the game if you wish. You can stop Undoing at any point and begin playing the game from there. Or you can advance forward through the moves you have already made, using the [Redo Next Move](#) feature. This is a very useful option when you are trying to solve a difficult game. If you will be undoing many moves you may want to consider using the [Move List](#).

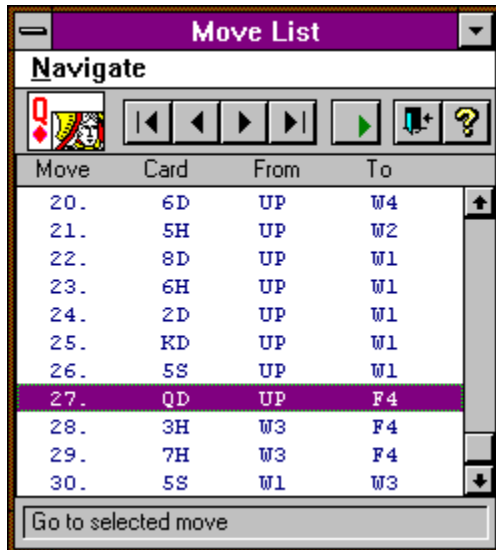
Five ways to undo the last move:

- 1 Select Undo from the Options menu.
- 2 Single-click the right mouse button anywhere on the play table and select Undo from the popup menu.
- 3 Press the Delete key on the keyboard
- 4 Click the appropriate toolbar button
- 5 Use the Move List

Related Topics

- [Redo Next Move](#)
- [Move List](#)
- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
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Move List



The Move List is an extremely powerful and convenient feature not seen in any of the famous computerized solitaire games. Use it to go backward or forward to any point in the current game by selecting the desired move from the move list.

Scroll thru the moves in the list using the navigation toolbar buttons, the up & down arrows on your keyboard, or the options in the Navigation Menu. The card which was moved will appear above the list of moves, to the left of the toolbar buttons. When you have selected the move that you wish to go to, press the Go toolbar button, or dbl-click the selection from the list, or dbl-click the picture of the card, or select the Go To... option in the Navigation menu.

The information in the list tells you the move number, the card which was involved, the source pile, and the destination pile.

The Move List Headers:

Move -

Move Number

Card -

Cards are notated with two characters. The first character represents the card value and the second is the first letter of the suit. So the Ace of Clubs would be notated as AC.

From & To -

UP - the upcard (the card just dealt)

W1, W2, W3, W4 - The four wastepiles

F1, F2, F3, F4 - The four foundations

Related Topics

-
- [Undo Last Move](#)
 - [Redo Next Move](#)
 - [The Toolbar](#)
 - [Menu Options](#)
 - [Contents](#)

Score History

Show

Your won/lost history is kept for you, and your winning percentage calculated for you. The fastest time is also recorded. Use this option to view the score history.

Clear

Reset the score history statistics.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Preferences

The Preferences window is comprised of three tabs. Select the appropriate help topic from the list which follows:

[General Tab](#)

[Appearance Tab](#)

[Popup Menu Tab](#)

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Contents](#)

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my most heartfelt appreciation to the following people, to whom I am most deeply indebted.

[John Scarne](#) for introducing me to Calculation Solitaire.

[Neil J. Reubenking](#) who wrote a portion of the About Box code.

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[Eric F. Himmer](#) for his TAB code example, which I use in the Preferences window.

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Elizabeth Duryea
Mike Goetchius
Heather Browning
Lori Lee
Cary Archiere
My son [Joshua](#)

Graphics:

[Darcy Araya](#) - daWife - A special thanks to you honey for your patience and support. I Love You!

Programming:

[Art Araya](#) - Me!

Universe Creator and Sustainer:

[Jesus](#) -

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)

To all of you who have registered your copy of Cal's Brain Strain I say -Thank You!

Related Topics

- [Contents](#)

Redo Next Move

Steps forward to the next move in the games history , or in other words, replays any moves you have undone. This is an unlimited redo in that you can redo all the way forward to the current point in the game if you wish. You will use Redo to advance forward in a game after having used either [Undo Last Move](#) or the [Move List](#) to go back to some earlier point in the game.

Five ways to redo the next move:

1. Select Redo from the Options menu.
2. Single-click the right mouse button anywhere on the play table and select Redo from the popup menu.
3. Press the Shft+Delete keys on the keyboard simultaneously
4. Use the Move List
5. Click the appropriate toolbar button

Related Topics

- [Undo Last Move](#)
- [Move List](#)
- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

How to Move a Card

The mechanics of moving a card. To accommodate the great diversity of our users preferences, we have made it possible to position the cards in various different ways. Some users prefer to use the keyboard, others prefer the mouse. Some users prefer dragging a card to a location and others want the convenience of dbl-clicking on a card only. Although it increased our programming burden we attempted to accommodate all of these preferences. If you have played computerized solitaire before then you probably wont need to read this next section, just move the cards as you have in the other games.

The Mouse:

To deal the next card from the deck:

1. Position the cursor over the deck of face down cards and click it with the left mouse button.

To move a card:

1. Drag the card to the desired location. If the location dragged to is not a legal move then the card will return to the pile it came from. OR
2. If you wish to place it on a foundation then dbl-click on it with the left mouse button. It will then go to the first foundation from the top where it can legally be moved to. Hold down the SHFT key while dbl-clicking to send it to the second matching foundation, CTRL for the third, and ALT for the fourth. If there is no legal foundation for it to go to then nothing will happen when you dbl-click on it.

For example, suppose the second, and third foundations both needed a queen as the next card and that the dealt card happens to be a queen. To send the queen to the second foundation just dbl-click on it because it is the first foundation from the top where the queen can legally be moved to. If you wish to send the queen to the third foundation then hold the SHFT key while dbl-clicking on the queen. SHFT is used because the third foundation is the second foundation from the top where the queen can legally be moved to.

Related Topics

- [How To Play](#)
- [Contents](#)

Building

Playing cards in a legal sequence is referred to as building.

The Stock

The remainder of the deck is referred to as the stock. It is represented on the play table by the face down card. The number of cards remaining in the stock appears to the right of it.

Available Cards

Cards that may be played onto a foundation pile or an empty wastepile are *available*. The last card played on each wastepile, as well as the dealt card, are the available cards. [Released Cards](#) are also available.

Released Cards

Cards that have become playable, by virtue of the fact that they have become exposed by having other cards removed, are known as released cards. This term only applies to wastepile cards since these are the only piles where cards can be moved elsewhere.

Won Games

All won games and their solutions are automatically saved to your hard disk in the same directory from which Cal's Brain Strain is run, in a subdirectory called WonGames. If you win the same game more than once each solution will be saved to the same file. The filename is the number of the game preceded by the letters GAM. The files are relatively small, most will be only about 1K to 2K in size. They are text files so they can be viewed in most word processors as well as Notepad, and Write either of which come with all versions of Windows.

The winning time is the first item listed in the file, followed by the games complete move history. The same notation is used as in the [Move List](#). Share the solutions with your friends, or send them along to us at Dartcy Productions so that when some frustrated player writes us, we can provide some assistance. Feel free to delete them if you so desire. An easy way to delete all saved won games is to select [Delete Won Games](#) from the Options menu.

Related Topics

- [Contents](#)

Peek

Use this option to see all the cards remaining in the [stock](#). Yes, this is cheating - solitaire rules strictly prohibit peeking. Regardless of the prohibition, many solitaire players choose to peek so we are allowing individuals to make their own decision on this issue.

Related Topics

- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [Tips and Strategies](#)
- [Contents](#)

Delete Won Games

Use this option to delete all [Won Games](#) from your hard disk.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Auto Move

This is an option where the game will automatically play available cards to foundation piles if such a legal move(s) exists.

Warning! Cal's Brain Strain is a game of strategy - the auto move feature will always make legally correct moves but the moves may not necessarily be strategically wise ones. For instance, there may be two foundations where a card can be moved to. The game will not attempt to determine which is the better of the two foundations. Another problematic scenario is one where there are two different wastepile cards which could both legally be played to one foundation. Here again, the game will arbitrarily select one of the two cards.

Well, perhaps I am exaggerating a trifle when I say that the source and destination cards will be arbitrarily selected. There is a method to its madness...

For those of you interested in such things... When searching for a card to automove, the game will look first at the dealt card, and then at each of the available wastepile cards (left to right). Once a card has been automoved, the game will look at the next card in this same waste pile to see if it can also be automoved. This process will continue until the next available card in the pile cannot be moved.

When determining which foundation to move the card to, the game will do the following: It will locate all of the possible foundations where the card could legally be moved to. It will then see, if the last foundation that a card was played onto, is one of the possibilities. If so, the card will be moved to this foundation. If not, the first legal foundation from the top will be selected. In other words, if you have been building up a sequence in a foundation, the game will attempt to continue this for you, otherwise, it will just choose the first legal move which it finds.

Four ways to Auto Move:

- 1 Select Auto Move from the Options menu.
- 2 Single-click the right mouse button anywhere on the play table and select Auto Move from the popup menu.
- 3 Click the appropriate toolbar button
- 4 Press CTRL + A on the keyboard

Related Topics

- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Pop-up Menu

This menu appears on screen at the location of the right mouse click. The contents of the popup menu are configurable. You can add or remove any menu items in the popup menu. Go to the Preferences screen to make changes to the popup menu configuration.

The Toolbar

Click on the Toolbar button which you would like more information for.



The Toolbar can be hidden from view, if so desired. To show the toolbar place a check mark before the Toolbar menu option. To hide the toolbar remove the check mark.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Refresh

If for some reason the cards, play table, etc... do not display themselves properly, use this option. It will refresh the display.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Help, I am Stuck - mode

This mode will get you out of any pickle. What this mode allows you to do is to move any waste pile card to any other waste pile. Try not to use this too often though or the game will not be any fun.

Related Topics

- [Menu Options](#)
- [Contents](#)

Other Games From DARTCY productions

Be sure to check out our other freeware and shareware games. All of these are available on CompuServe and America OnLine. If you have difficulty locating any of these, just e-mail us and we will point you in the right direction.

Cribbage Squares - A fun new solitaire game based on cribbage scoring rules.

Cal's Brain Strain - A solitaire game based on the classic, Broken Intervals. This card game is the king of skill requiring solitaires. Cal's Brain Strain has received highly flattering reviews from both Ziff-Davis publishing and WinOnLine magazine and will soon be available on several CD-ROM collections.

FreeJack - A freeware version of Black Jack. Double Down, Split the Pair, and Insurance features are included. Professional black jack advice is available via a Hint feature. Best of all, you cant beat the price!

Codebreaker - A logic game based on the game MasterMind. Try to crack the computers secret color code within ten guesses. Codebreaker is another freeware game of ours!

Nine Men's Morris - This board game is now going on its 3,000th year of popularity - making it the earliest known board game. It has been mentioned in both the Talmud, and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. If ever there were an all-time classic game, this would have to be it.

NimSim - An adaptation of the mathematical game Nim. Nim is one of the oldest of all mathematical games. Enjoyed by children and adults around the world. Are you good enough to beat the NimMaster?

Help On Life

Help files are great! Whenever you need a bit of information or assistance, it is only a click away. Do you wish that life came with a help file? When ever you were stuck,...click...you could get some help? Ahhh that would be great you say.

Well, we at DARTCY productions believe that there is such a help file . We have personally tested it and its Author for over 30 years collectively. To date, we have not found any bugs - except those that are user generated. Because we have found it to be a very reliable source of help, we want to share it with you. If you come across an awesome "Freeware" program you just have to share it with others!

We all come across situations that generate the questions: How do I deal with this? What is going on here anyway? What is the purpose of my life? This help file for life deals with those questions & more! More importantly, you will have a new dimension added to your life by having your relationship with your Creator restored! There is nothing more exciting than cultivating that relationship! It is not old time religiosity, it is more like ...adventures with God!

[Tell me more about this help file.](#)

Tell me more about this help file.

The Bible has 66 different books, written by at least 39 different authors over a period of 1500 years. Yet it all fits together and makes sense about God. Different people for over 2000 years have found that God speaks to them through the pages of the Bible. (That is amazing!) What is also amazing, is that when we compare our modern version of the Bible to the ancient scrolls archeologists dig up, they say the same thing! Imagine that! Just think of the game telephone you know... you start at the front of a line and whisper a secret, it is then passed down to the end and when the last person speaks it out it barely resembles what it originally was! That alone proves it took divine intervention to keep the message straight!

[Which version should I read?](#)

[Where is a good place to start?](#)

[How can I contact you to talk to some more about this?](#)

Which version should I read?

There is no magic in a particular version. Get a version that is easy for you understand & examine it yourself! Ask the Author for help as well! (That is true On-line Help!)

Where is a good place to start?

You do not have to start from the beginning and read to the end. It is less of a novel and more of a handbook. We enjoy the Gospel of John as a starting point in the New Testament.

Ways to contact us

Contact us using any of the following means:

Mail

DARTCY Productions
PO BOX 714
Carmel, NY, 10512
USA

E-mail

America Online:	DARTCYpro@aol.com
CompuServe:	104336.1735@compuserve.com
ISP:	DARTCY_productions@juno.com
Internet:	http://aol.members.com/dartcypro/

Appearance Tab

Card Back.

Click on the card back image to change card back designs. Choose from 6 different card back designs. The designs are displayed against the same background color as the play table so you can see in advance how the table color and card back design will look together.

If you desire, you can specify any bitmap to be used as a card back design. Yes, you heard me correctly - you can use any bitmap file that you want as a card back. Are we good, or what? The card back dimensions are 96 pixels high by 71 pixels wide. Bitmaps not matching these dimensions will be resized to fit. To specify a custom card back, select the Custom button.

Table Color

Allows you to change the color of the play table. Click on the area around the card back image to change the table color. If a game is currently in progress it will need to be restarted in order for you to be able to change the table color.

Font Color

Allows you to change the color of the font. Click on the number 48 to change the font color.

Related Topics

- [Preferences](#)
- [Menu Options](#)
- [The Toolbar](#)
- [Contents](#)

General Tab

Show Dartcy Screen at Startup

To have our beautiful logo not be shown at startup, remove the check mark.

Show Tips at Startup

The Tips form that appears at startup is a very effective way to learn the program, one fact at a time. To show the Tips form at startup place a check mark before the Show Tips at Startup option. To have the form not be shown remove the check mark.

Enable Sounds

The game contains many different sound effects. These can be turned off, or on by selecting the appropriate radio button.

Configure Right Mouse Button

In prior versions of Cal's Brain Strain the right mouse button was not configurable but always served to Undo the last move. In this version you, the user, can determine the behavior of a right mouse click.

Three choices are available:

[Undo](#)

[Auto Move](#)

[Pop-up Menu](#)

Note that the Popup menu is totally user configurable. You can display any of the menu options which appear in Cals Brain Strain, in the Popup menu. To find out more about this, just skip down four paragraphs.

Animate Card Move

Selecting this option will animate the movement of a card from its original pile to its new pile. The animation will occur when a card is moved by the [AutoMove](#) feature, and also when a card is moved by double-clicking on it.

Adjust Animation Speed

The default speed settings for the animation may, or may not, be optimal for the speed of your computer. This feature allows you to find the optimal animation speed. Five default settings have been provided for you; Snail, Tortoise, Homo Sapien, Hare & Cheetah. You should be able to find a setting from among these which is good for your computer. If you want to create your own settings, select the Custom option. The two values that determine the animation speed are Pixel Per Move and Delay. Pixel per Move is the number of pixels to move towards the destination on each move. Delay is how long (in milliseconds) to delay between moves. You can try out the various settings with the test button.

The smoothest possible animation will occur with a Pixel per Move value of 1, and a Delay of 0. The animation speed will be very slow though unless you have a Pentium or better. The smaller you can get the Pixel per Move value, the better the animation effect will be. The larger you set the Pixel Per Move value, (Max = 64), the faster the card will arrive at its destination pile. Play around, dont be afraid or intimidated by the terms. You wont break anything.

Save Settings on Exit

Allows all of your preference options to be saved when you exit the program. Next time the game is played it will display with all your preferences as you last left them. To use this feature place a check mark before the Save Settings on Game Exit option. Remove the check mark to disable this feature.

-
- [Preferences](#)
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Popup Menu Tab

This tab allows you to configure the [Popup Menu](#). The tab contains two lists of menu options. The list on the right shows the items that currently appear in the popup menu. The list on the left shows the other menu options that can be added to the popup menu.

To add a menu item to the popup menu, first select the item from the left-side list, then click the arrow which points to the right. Another way is to dbl-click a menu option on the left-side list. Yet another way is to drag the item to the other list. This will add the menu item to the end of the list on the right. To reposition the menu item in the popup list, first select the item to be repositioned, then press either the Shift Up or Shift Down button. To group your popup menu items together, separate like items from the others by using a separation line. To insert a separation line into your popup menu, press the Insert Separation Line button. The separation line will be added to the end of the list on the right. Reposition it as stated above.

To remove a menu item from the popup menu, first select the item from the right-side list, then click the arrow which points to the left. Another way is to dbl-click a menu option on the right-side list. Yet another way is to drag the item to the other list. This explanation applies both to menu options and separator bars.

-
- [Preferences](#)
 - [Menu Options](#)
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