

Create Your Perfect Solitaire Game

The 1990s saw a resurgence of interest in solitaire, due mainly to the availability of games on computers. Both FreeCell (created in 1991 by Jim Horne for the Windows OS) and Seahaven Towers (created in 1988 by Art Cabral for the Mac OS) are excellent games — more accurately, “logic puzzles” — for the computer interface. When actually manipulating physical cards, however, both these games are far too tedious and time consuming to lay out and too cumbersome to play.

As shown in the table below, there are essentially ten parameters that determine the level of difficulty in a solitaire game.

Parameter	Easier \leftrightarrow More Difficult
Number of Cards	Few \leftrightarrow Many
How Matched	Rank \leftrightarrow Color \leftrightarrow Suit
Single Moves	Sequences \leftrightarrow Runs \leftrightarrow One Card
Visibility	All Revealed \leftrightarrow Most Hidden
Fill Spaces	Any Card \leftrightarrow Single Rank
Number of Columns	More \leftrightarrow Fewer
Length of Columns	Short \leftrightarrow Long
Number of Talons or Parking Spaces	Several \leftrightarrow One or Two \leftrightarrow None
Number of Cards per Talon or Parking Space	Unlimited \leftrightarrow One
Number of Moves to Talon or Parking Space	Unlimited \leftrightarrow One

Cheer (described elsewhere) was created as follows:

Number of cards: Fewer than standard (32) to allow for playing on a smaller space in less time.

How matched: By suit; so that a 7♠ can only be moved to an 8♠.

Single moves: May be done with runs; so that the sequence 9♥, 10♥, J♥ may be moved as a unit to the Q♥ or to a parking space.

Visibility: All cards may be seen.

Fill Spaces: Only with kings.

Number of columns: Seven.

Length of columns: Some short, some long.

Number of parking spaces: From none to three. The more you need, the lower your score.

Number of cards per parking space: One card or run of cards.

Number of moves to parking space: As needed if space is empty.

If you are not happy with the length, difficulty, or whatever of *Cheer*, try adjusting one or more of the parameters to create the perfect game for you. ■

