The Dump

Dump the piece selected in the Stack here.

◼ To dump the piece, left-click the block where you want the upper left corner of the piece to go.

◼ Hold down the right mouse button and move the mouse to see a preview of the selected piece when dumped in that position.

◼ Hold down the Ctrl-key and move the mouse over a block for a numerical read-out of its age.

◼ The mouse cursor indicates if the selected piece can be dumped.

The Stack
Select a piece here.

- Left-click the block that you want as the upper left corner of the piece.
- Rotate using the right mouse button, according to the setting of single/multiple turns.
- To zap a piece, hold down the Ctrl-key, and use the right mouse button.
- Hold down the Ctrl-key and move the mouse over a block for a numerical read-out of its age.
- The selected piece is duplicated in Statistics.

Selected piece
The piece currently selected in the Stack is shown here. The ages of the blocks comprising the piece are disregarded. Dead blocks are shown as solid black.

Score
The current score. When the score exceeds the high score, it is indicated in the status bar. For easy access the score is also indicated in the frame of the Dump.

Pieces
The number of pieces played from the Stack to the Dump in this game.
For easy access the number of pieces is also indicated in the frame of the Stack.

Available zaps

The current number of zaps available for use. Each zap symbol represents one zap.
Zaps are not available during a strategy game.

Statistics
The score, number of pieces, available zaps and the currently selected piece are shown here.

Score factor
A weight used in conjunction with the ages of the blocks comprising the dumped piece. The higher this factor, the more you score per piece.

Free space in Dump
The number of locations at which pieces may still be dumped.
For timed games such a location will not contain a dead block in any of the 4 blocks comprising it. For strategy games such a location will not contain a dead block, nor a purple block in any of the 4 blocks comprising it.
When this number is zero, the game is over.

Live blocks in Stack
The number of live blocks in the Stack. When this number drops beneath 4, you cannot arrange a piece that may be dumped, and the game is over.

High score

The current high score for the type of game being played, be it the timed version or the strategy version.

When the current score exceeds the high score, a ✗ symbol appears next to the high score.

Paused game
Resume the game with *Resume* on the *Game* menu.

Size
Size the Dump and Stack to 3x3, 4x4, 5x5, 6x6, 7x7 or 8x8. The size does not affect the score factor.

Maximum available zaps

Select the number of zaps that may be available at any given time. The lower this setting, the higher the score factor. During a strategy game, zaps are not available, regardless of this setting.

Lives
Select the number of lives a block has. The age of a block is indicated by its colour, darker being older. When a block has aged as many times as it has lives, it dies. Dead blocks should be avoided. The fewer the number of lives a block has, the more difficult the game.The lower this setting, the higher the score factor.

White block frequency
Select the probability for a newly inserted block in the Stack to be white. The lower this setting, the higher the score factor.

New block in Stack or Dump
Select the age of a new block inserted into the Stack in the place of one that has been dumped, or a new block formed in the Dump by overlaying a block from the Stack with the underlying block in the Dump.
Brand new :   The new block has an age of zero.
Degree younger: The new block has an age dependent on that of the block it replaces, younger by as many lives (if possible) as selected.
The lower this setting, the higher the score factor.
The *brand new* option yields the lowest score factor.

Stack on the left side
Puts the Stack on the left side, and the Dump on the right. Use this setting if your mouse buttons are swapped, and the movement feels more natural from left to right.

Start game

Starts a new game in the mode selected, be it *timed* or *strategy*. The menu is not available when a game is in progress.

■ See also

Stop game

Stops the current game. If the score is among the 10 best for the type of game being played, details will be prompted for. The menu is not available if a game is not in progress.

■ See also

◨ **Pause game**

Pauses the current game. Only applicable to timed games. The Dump and the Stack are covered. The game may be resumed when you feel like it. The menu is not available if a game is not in progress.

The game is automatically paused if *STACK* is minimized.

◨ See also

◼ High scores

Lists the 10 best scores for the current game type. The menu is not available while a timed game is in progress.

◼ <u>See also</u>

▣ Clear high scores

Clears the 10 best scores for current game type. The menu is not available while a game is in progress.

▣ <u>See also</u>

◼ **Options**

Activates the **Options** dialog. The menu is not available while a game is in progress.

◼ <u>See also</u>

◼ About Stack

Activates the About dialog. The menu is available when no game is in progress, during a strategy game, and while a timed game is paused.

� **Exit**

Exits *STACK*. If a game is in progress and its score is among the 10 best, its score is saved as **Interrupted**. The score is saved with those of the same type, i.e. *Timed* or *Strategy*.

� <u>See also</u>

■ Resume game

Resumes the game that was paused. The menu will not be available when a game is not paused. Minimizing *STACK* will automatically pause a timed game, if one is in progress. When restoring the window, you must **resume** to carry on playing.

◼ Menus

◼ Start
◼ Stop
◼ Pause
◼ Resume
◼ High scores
◼ Clear high scores
◼ Options
◼ Exit

◼ About Stack

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◼ See also

◼ **Toolbar**

 Timed game
 Strategy game

 Levels

 Single turn in Stack
 Multiple turns in Stack

 Sound

_____

◼ See also

◲ **Timed game button**

Selects *timed* as the mode in which the next game will be played.

■ The button is not available while a game is in progress
■ The high score reflects the high score for timed games when this button is selected.

{button ,AL(`Version;Level',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ Strategy game button

Selects *strategy* as the mode in which the next game will be played.

◼ The button is not available while a game is in progress
◼ The high score reflects the high score for strategy games when this button is selected.

{button ,AL(`Version;Level',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◙ **Level buttons**

Select the **level** at which the game must commence. Once a game is in progress, you cannot decrease the level. The level will automatically increase during the course of a game, depending on the number of pieces played. You may, however, increase the level manually during a game.
As with the starting level of the game, it will not be possible to decrease the level below the new setting.

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◙ Once the game is over, or stopped, the level will reset to the last manually selected setting.
◙ Level buttons (and play levels) apply only to timed games.
◙ The higher the level, the higher the score factor, and the higher the average score for each piece played.

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{button ,AL(`Level;Version;Score per piece',0,`',`Small')} See also

◨ **Single turn option**

A <u>piece</u> in the <u>Stack</u>, when selected, will be turned anti-clockwise when right-clicked in any of the 4 <u>blocks</u> that comprise it.The mouse cursor stays the default.

◨ On slower machines, this option is preferable.

{button ,AL(`Turn;Stack',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◾ Multi-turn option

A piece in the Stack, when selected, can be turned in one of three ways. The mouse pointer indicates which action will be performed if the block under the mouse is right-clicked.

{button ,AL(`Turn;Stack',0,`',`Small')} See also

◨ Sound

Toggles sound on or off.

◨ Turning sound off on a slow machine is preferable.

◾ **How to size *STACK***

To size ***STACK***, drag the bottom frame of the window, or the thumb tag at the lower right corner. Dragging the right-hand frame has no effect.

Toolbar
Options that may be set during the course of a game, or must be visible for visual reference, are collected on the toolbar. Consult main help for details.

◨ **The Stack**

Both the **Stack** and the <u>Dump</u> are the same size, 3x3 to 8x8, depending on the setting.
The Stack is the front-end of the game, filling up as it is emptied out.
<u>Blocks</u> are grouped in the Stack, in a 2x2 formation called a <u>piece</u>, and played to the Dump. This can only be done at <u>spaces</u> in the Dump where the rules allow the selected piece to go.

◨ As a piece is played to the Dump, its blocks are replaced by <u>new blocks</u>.
◨ There is always a currently selected piece in the Stack.
◨ You may turn the currently selected piece, and by doing so with different selections, build pieces before they are dumped.
◨ During timed games the Stack ages at intervals depending on the current level of play. The higher the play level, the faster the Stack ages. This ageing is applied to all live blocks in the Stack.
◨ During strategy games the Stack ages as a piece is played. This ageing is applied to all live blocks in the Stack.
◨ When the Stack contains 3 or less live blocks, the game is over.

{button ,AL(`Dump;Block;Piece;Selected;Turn;Zap;Age;Colours;Legal',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ The Dump

The **Dump** is the back-end of the game. Unlike the Stack, which is controlled by the game, the Dump is used by you. By playing pieces from the Stack to the Dump you renew the blocks in the Stack whilst, if you are lucky, also opening up space in the Dump.

At the start of a game, all blocks in the Dump are white. When a piece is dumped during a timed game, all blocks contiguous to the space that it is played in, either diagonally, vertically or horizontally, age by 1 life.

Example: Contiguous blocks coloured gray
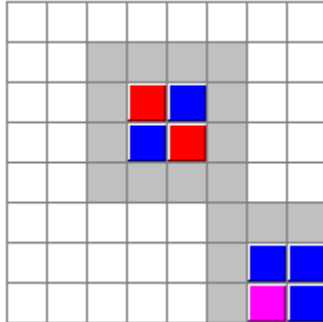
During strategy games the entire Dump ages as a piece is played.

◼ Blocks in the Dump cannot be moved.

◼ You may only dump the currently selected piece in a space where it is legal to do so.

◼ When the mouse is moved over the dump, the cursor indicates when it is over the upper left corner of a 2x2 cell where the current piece may be dumped.

◼ Holding down the right mouse button while the mouse is moved over the dump previews the result of selected piece played at that position.

{button ,AL(`Stack;Size;Age;Space;Legal;Colours',0,`',`Small')} See also

◨ **Level**

During a timed game the <u>Stack</u> is aged at regular intervals. These intervals are determined by the current **level**, ranging from 15 seconds (Level 1) to 1.5 seconds (Level 10).

■ The higher the level, the greater the average score per piece played.
■ You cannot decrease the play level during a game.
■ The play level increases automatically as landmarks are reached in the number of pieces that have been played. These landmarks are 75, 144, 207, 264, 315, 360, 399, 432, 459 and 480 for the increases respectively. In other words, after the first 75 pieces the level will increase, then after the next 69 (total of 144), and so on.
■ When Level 10 has been reached there is no change, and, you will agree, none needed.
■ Levels do not apply to strategy games.

{button ,AL(`Score per piece;Options;Age;Version;Piece;Block;Selected',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◨ Score per piece

When a <u>piece</u> is dumped from the <u>Stack</u>, it is **scored** as follows. The sum of the ages of the blocks that comprise the piece is taken, averaged, and weighted by the score factor.

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◨ The score factor is dependent on various settings, and is visible in the status bar.
◨ To view the effect of the settings on this factor, change a setting in the options dialog, and check the resulting score factor in the status bar.

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{button ,AL(`Level;Options;Age;Lives;Piece;Block',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ Colours and combinations

When a piece is played from the Stack to the Dump, the blocks of the piece are **combined** with the blocks underlying it in the Dump. This is called overlaying. If one of the blocks cannot overlay the corresponding block in the Dump, the piece cannot be played at all.
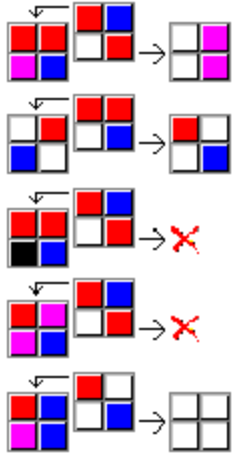The legal combinations are as follows.
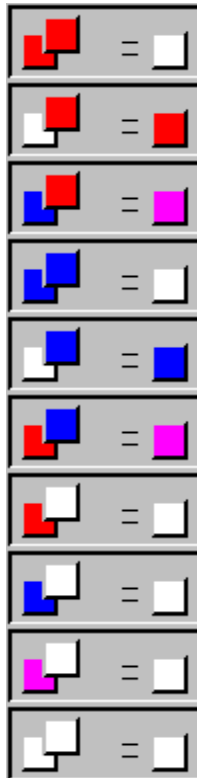
◼ A dead block cannot be played onto any other block.
◼ No block can be played onto a dead block.
◼ Only a white block may be played onto a purple block.
◼ The ages of blocks are not taken into consideration when their colours are combined.

{button ,AL(`Legal;Space;Selected;Piece;Block;Stack;Dump',0,`',`Small')} See also

◨ Legal play

A piece may be played from the Stack to the Dump when it is **legal** to combine, or overlay each of its blocks with the corresponding blocks in the 2x2 cell in the Dump. In other words, each pair of corresponding blocks must be capable of combining.

Depicted below are some examples of legal and illegal (disallowed) play.

For each block of the piece played, and of the space it is played into, the following actions are not allowed.

◨ A dead block cannot be played onto any other block.
◨ No block can be played onto a dead block.
◨ Only a white block may be played onto a purple block.

{button ,AL(`Colours;Block;Piece;Stack;Dump;Version',0,`',`Small')} See also

■ A Block

A **block** is a single element of the Stack or the Dump. Any 4 blocks selected together as a 2x2 square is called a piece.
There are essentially five types of blocks.

Above are listed:
■ A dead block
■ A red and blue block
■ A purple block
■ A white block
■ A penultimate red block.

These blocks differ in the following ways

■ Dead blocks cannot be dumped, nor overlayed.
■ Purple blocks can only be overlayed by white blocks. They are never found in the Stack.
■ White blocks can overlay any block, except a dead block. They are found in the Stack, or formed in the Dump by overlaying two matching blocks or legally playing a white block from the Stack.
■ A penultimate block has one life left. All white, red and blue blocks can become penultimate.

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{button ,AL(`Piece;Space;Colours;Legal;Selected;Zap;Stack;Dump',0,`',`Small')} See also

◧ **A Piece**

A **piece** is a group of 4 <u>blocks</u> selected as a 2x2 square in the <u>Stack</u>. The equivalent of a piece in the <u>Dump</u> is called a <u>space</u>.

A piece with two new red blocks, a new blue block, and an aged red block.

◧ There is always a currently selected piece in the Stack.
◧ You may turn the selected piece in one of a number of ways, then select another, and in so doing migrate any block anywhere.
◧ You may select a piece containing <u>dead blocks</u>, turn it and rearrange, but the piece that you dump cannot contain a dead block.

{button ,AL(`Block;Selected;Colours;Space;Legal;Stack',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◙ Lives

The number of **lives** with which the game is played determines how many times a <u>block</u> in the <u>Stack</u> or the <u>Dump</u> may age before it dies. The higher the number of lives, the easier the game, and the lower the average score per <u>piece</u> played.

■ At the start of a game, each block in the Stack has an age of 0, and as many lives left as the setting of *Lives*.
■ When blocks are played to the Dump, they are <u>replaced</u> with blocks which have either an age of 0 (brand new), or an <u>age</u> dependent on those of the blocks they replace.
■ As blocks age, red, blue and purple blocks darken in hue, and white blocks become gray.
■ A block with only one life left is marked with a yellow square at its center.

{button ,AL(`Age;Level;Version;Options;Block;Score per piece;Stack;Dump',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ Ageing

A block **ages** in the Stack

◼ at intervals during a timed game, or
◼ when a piece is played to the Dump during a strategy game.

A block **ages** in the Dump

◼ when it is contiguous to a space into which a piece is played during a timed game, or
◼ when a piece is played to the Dump during a strategy game.

As a block ages is becomes darker. A block can age until it has no lives left, in which case it dies. When a block is one age away from dying, it is marked with a yellow square in its center.

{button ,AL(`Lives;Age;Level;Stack;Dump',0,`',`Small')} See also

◾ **New block**

When a <u>piece</u> is played from the <u>Stack</u> to the <u>Dump</u>, the <u>blocks</u> comprising the piece in the Stack are replaced with **new blocks**, as are the resulting blocks in the Dump, in the <u>space</u> where the piece is played.
The age of the new blocks depend on the setting of *New blocks in Stack and Dump*.

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◼ Brand new: The blocks have an age of 0 in both the Stack and the Dump.
◼ Younger by degree: The blocks are younger than the blocks they replace by as many lives as the setting indicates. This holds in the Stack and Dump respectively.

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{button ,AL(`Block;Zap;Options;Stack;Dump;Lives',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ Turning a piece in the Stack

The selected <u>piece</u> in the <u>Stack</u> may be **turned** with a right-click of the mouse.
There are two ways of doing this, depending on your turn setting.

◼ Single anti-clockwise turns. The mouse pointer is the default of your system, and clicking on any of the 4 <u>blocks</u> of the piece, turns it once anti-clockwise.

◼ Mutliple turns. The mouse pointer changes as the mouse moves over the 4 blocks of the piece.
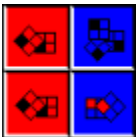
Turn once anti-clockwise

Turn once clockwise

Turn through 180 degrees

These actions become available as the mouse moves over different blocks of the piece, as illustrated below.

{button ,AL(`Select;Piece;Toolbar',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ Zap
◼

If the *maximum available zaps* setting is 1 or more, you may **zap** a <u>block</u> in the <u>Stack</u> once you have earned a zap.
Zapping the block replaces it with a *brand new* (Age=0) white block, regardless of the setting of *New block in Stack and Dump*. A zap is earned when

◼ you play a <u>piece</u> to the Dump that clears (whites) the <u>space</u> it is played to, and
◼ the number of available zaps does not equal the maximum allowed.

◼

To zap a block in the Stack

◼ Hold in the Ctrl-key and move the mouse over the block you wish to zap
◼ The mouse pointer will change to indicate that the block may be zapped
◼ Right-click the block.

Note:

◼ <u>Dead blocks</u> cannot be zapped.
◼ The block you zap does not have to form part of the currently selected piece.
◼ Zaps cannot be used in strategy games.
◼ Zapping a block decreases the number of available zaps.

{button ,AL(`Block;Lives;Stack;Version',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◨ Selected piece

In the <u>Stack</u> there is always one **selected piece**. This <u>piece</u> is framed and appears sunken. The selected piece is duplicated in the Statistics frame, where it is shown without ageing.

◨ You may select and turn any piece in the Stack, even if it contains <u>dead blocks</u>.
◨ To select a piece, click the block at the upper left corner of a 2x2 formation.

{button ,AL(`Piece;Stack',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

■ A space in the Dump

A **space** in the Dump is a 2x2 cell of blocks where the selected piece (in the Stack) may legally be placed.

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■ A space does not contain any dead blocks.
■ In addition, during a strategy game, a space does not contain any purple blocks, as no white blocks are present in the Stack.
■ In terms of the currently selected piece, one cell of 2x2 blocks might be a space whilst another is not, given that the first cell can accept the piece, and the second not.
■ When the mouse is moved over the blocks of the Dump, the pointer indicates when it is over a block that forms the upper left-hand corner of a space.

■ The term **free space** refers to the number of locations within the Dump where a piece, in terms of the type of game being played, could conceivably still be placed.

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{button ,AL(`Piece;Legal;Dump',0,`',`Small')} See also

■ Overview

STACK is a game of spatial skill, planning, and survival.

The Stack, a square formation of coloured blocks, is kept alive by selecting 2x2 formations of blocks, called a piece, and playing these out to the Dump.

A piece.

There are 3 types of live blocks in the Stack, blue, red and white. These blocks age in the Stack with the passage of time. Each block has a fixed number of lives, which you may set, and when these are used up, through ageing, the block dies.A dead block cannot be played out anymore.


A dead block.

The blocks that are played out are replaced, and revived. In this way survival hinges on having live blocks to play. Once there are not enough live blocks left in the Stack to form pieces, through turning and subsequent rearrangement, the game is over.

The Dump, dimensioned identically, provides the waste area for the Stack. Pieces may be played to the dump in such a manner that some, or all of the blocks comprising them cancel and leave free space. The more space there is in the Dump to which the Stack might be played, the easier it is to survive.

When a piece is played to the Dump, its blocks are combined, or overlayed with those underlying it at the position in the Dump. Corresponding blocks combine, as in the diagram below.
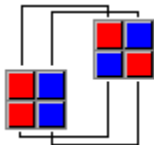
How blocks combine

The combination is based on colour. Some combinations are not allowed, and in such a case the piece cannot be played at that position.
The Dump can contain 4 types of live blocks: Red, blue, white and purple, the result of red and blue blocks played onto one another.
When a piece is played to the Dump, the blocks surrounding the space into which it is played, age. If the ageing blocks in the Dump are not revived, through playing onto them, they die when they have used up their available lives. Such a dead block in the Dump cannot be played onto.
When there is not a space left in the Dump into which a piece may be played, the game is over.

The way in which the blocks combine when a piece is played from the Stack to the Dump, is shortly as follows.

Legal combinations of colour

As more and more pieces are played, the tempo picks up and it becomes more difficult to stay ahead. Playing a piece in such a manner that all the resulting blocks are white, earns you one zap. You may use this zap to get rid of any live block in the Stack. It will be replaced with a brand new white block.

{button ,AL(`Stack;Dump;Block;Piece;Lives;Age;Colours;Legal;Zap;Turn',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

■ Playing a game : The basics

■ Start a new game.
Select *timed* or *strategy* on the toolbar. Start the game with the *Start* menu. You might want to change the size of the Stack and Dump before you commence a game. Do this using the Options menu.

■ Select a piece in the Stack
Click the block that you wish to be at the upper left corner of the 2x2 formation, or piece. This piece will be framed, will appear sunken, and is displayed enlarged in Statistics.
Turn the selected piece with a right-click of the mouse anywhere inside it. If you have selected multiple turns as the turning option, the piece will turn in a manner depending on where you click it, as indicated by the mouse cursor.

■ Play the selected piece to the Dump
Click the block in the Dump onto which you want to play the upper left corner of the selected piece. When the mouse is over a block where this may legally be done, the mouse cursor will look like this:

■

In other cases, where the piece may not be played, the mouse cursor will change to the "No-Entry" symbol.
If you want to preview the results of playing the selected piece at a given position, hold down the right mouse button.

■ Keep selecting a piece in the Stack, and playing it to the Dump. When you play the selected piece, its blocks are replaced. If you do not alter your selection, these blocks immediately form the next selected piece. It is thus possible to play a number of pieces without making a new selection.

■ Try to play older blocks first. You do not only score more in doing so, but ensure that they do not die in the Stack. In the Dump, try to play where you can form white blocks through the combination of the underlying blocks and those played from the Stack. This makes it easier to play a future piece, and, if you clear the space you play into completely, it earns you a Zap. In addition, try to play onto the older blocks, as they are revived in doing so.

■ If you have earned Zaps, zap a block in the Stack to form a brand new white block. Try to resist the temptation to zap blocks merely to form nice pieces. It is better to zap older or penultimate blocks.

■ To take a break, pause the game. You may do this with the *Pause* menu, or by minimizing **STACK**.

{button ,AL(`Select;Turn;Zap;Colours;Legal;Stack;Dump;Score per piece;Version;Option',0,`',`Small')} See also

◼ Game version

STACK may be played in two **versions**, Timed and Strategy.

During a timed game the Stack ages, in all its live blocks, at an interval dependent on the current level of play. During a strategy game the Stack ages when a piece is played.
The differences between Timed games and Strategy games are as follows:

Timed	Strategy
◼ The Stack ages at intervals dependent on the play level.	◼ The Stack ages with each piece played to the Dump.
◼ The blocks contiguous to those where a piece is played, age.	◼ The entire Dump ages as a piece is played.
◼ The Stack may contain white blocks.	◼ There are no white blocks in the Stack.
◼ A space in the Dump may contain a purple block, to be overlayed by a white block from the Stack.	◼ A purple block in the Dump cannot be overlayed, because there are no white blocks in Stack
◼ The free space in the Dump refers to all spaces not containing dead blocks.	◼ The free space in the Dump refers to all spaces not containing dead or purple blocks.
◼ You may zap a block in the Stack.	◼ Zaps not available.
◼ High scores kept with those of other timed games.	◼ High scores kept those of other strategy games.

{button ,AL(`Age;Level;Zap;Space',0,`',`Small')} See also

■ Options

The **Options** dialog allows you to change various settings. These setting all have a global scope, and can therefore not be altered while a game is in progress.

On the toolbar, press

✔ to accept the settings, and return to *STACK*,

▦ to select those settings yielding the easiest game, but the lowest score factor,

▦ to select those settings yielding the hardest game but the highest score factor, and

☒ to close without accepting the changes.

The settings are as follows.

Size
Select a size for both the <u>Stack</u> and the <u>Dump</u>. The range is 3 to 8.

Lives
Select the number of <u>lives</u> a <u>block</u> will have at the onset of the game. The range is 3 to 8.

Note :Altering this setting resets *New block in Stack or Dump* to *Brand new*.

White block frequency
Select the percentage of <u>new blocks</u> in the Stack that will be <u>white</u>. The range is 0 to 30. During a strategy game no new blocks are white, regardless of this setting.

New block in Stack and Dump
Select the age of a new block which
■ replaces a block that has been played out in the Stack, or
■ is formed in the Dump by a piece played from the Stack.

Brand new : The block will have an age of 0 in both instances.
Younger by degree: The new block in the Stack will have an age which is related to that of the block it replaces, at the moment of that happening. Selecting 4, for example, means that the new block will have an age of 3 if it replaces a block aged 7. In the Dump a block formed through the combination of the existing block and the block overlaying it, will have an age dependent on the age of the <u>overlaying</u> block, i.e. the block played from the Stack.

Maximum available zaps
Select the maximum number of <u>zaps</u> that may be available for use at any given time.
The range is 0 to 5.
Earning a zap when there are already the maximum available has no effect.

Note: During a strategy game zaps are not used, regardless of this setting.

Stack on the left side
Places the Stack on the left, and the Dump on the right. This is better for users who have their mouse buttons swapped.

{button ,AL(`Stack;Dump;Lives;New;Zap',0,`',`Small')} <u>See also</u>

◼ How to get Help

Use the *Contents* menu for general Help reference.

On the main screen you may

◼ Right-click a control to view a short pop-up help message,
◼ use the help button on the toolbar for an overview of ***STACK***, or
◼ press F1 for a summary of how a game of ***STACK*** is played.

On the Options dialog you may

◼ Right click a control to view a short pop-up help message,
◼ use the help button on the toolbar for help on the dialog, or
◼ press F1 for a summary of how a game of ***STACK*** is played.

■ **How to select a piece in the Stack**

Left-click the <u>block</u> at the upper left-hand corner of a 2x2 formation of blocks.

■ **How to play a piece to the Dump**

Left-click the <u>block</u> at the upper left-hand corner of the 2x2 formation of blocks that you wish to cover with the currently selected <u>piece</u>. When the mouse is over a block where the selected piece may be played, the cursor will look like this:
■

◼ How to preview

◼ Hold down the right mouse button.
◼ Move the mouse over the Dump.
◼ When the mouse is positioned at a legal play position, the Dump will reflect the blocks that would be formed should you play there.

Note:
When previewing, it must be remembered that the Dump shows the prospective blocks without reference to the ages they will have.

◨ How to turn a piece in the Stack

◨ Select a <u>piece</u>.
◨ Right-click inside it.
◨ Depending on your turning option, the piece will either turn once anti-clockwise, or as the mouse pointer indicates.

◼ **How to zap a piece**
◼

◼ Hold down the Ctrl-key.
◼ When the mouse moves over a <u>block</u> in the <u>Stack</u> that may be zapped, the mouse pointer changes to a thunder flash.
◼ Right-click the block.

◼ How to inspect the ages of blocks

Hold down the Ctrl-key as the mouse is moved over a <u>block</u> in the <u>Stack</u> or the <u>Dump</u>. The age of the block under the mouse cursor can be read in the frame as long as the Ctrl-key is down.

■ **How to use the mouse**

When playing *STACK*, only one key need ever be pressed. All other operations must be performed with the mouse.

In the Stack

■ Left-click the block to select a piece with that block at its upper left corner.
■ Right-click any of the 4 blocks comprising the selected piece to turn it.
■ Right-click any live block while holding down the Ctrl-key to zap it.
■ Move the mouse over any block while holding down the Ctrl-key to inspect its age in the Stack frame.

In the Dump

■ Left-click the block onto which you want to play, or dump, the upper left corner of the piece selected in the Stack.
■ Hold down the right mouse button over any block to preview the results should the piece selected in the Stack be played there.
■ Use the state of the cursor as the mouse moves over any block to determine whether the selected piece may be played at that position.
■ Move the mouse over any block while holding down the Ctrl-key to inspect its age in the Dump frame.

Note:
You may right click most areas of the *STACK* screen or the **Options** dialog for pop-up Help.

◼ How to pause a game

◼ Use *Pause* on the *Game* menu.
◼ Minimize **STACK**.

Quick reference : The Stack
Square area filled with red, blue and, in most cases, white blocks. A 2x2 selection, called a piece, is made in the Stack, and played to the dump, thus removing it. When this is done, 4 new blocks replace those that have been played.

Quick reference: The Dump
Square area where pieces selected in the Stack are played, or dumped. This process is dependent upon the rules. The Dump is like the sales floor for an overflowing store, the Stack.

Quick reference: A Block
A single element of the Stack or the Dump. A block ages, and turns darker. If not played from the Stack, or overlayed in the Dump, it eventually dies.

Quick reference: A penultimate Block
A block with only 1 life left. The block is the darkest hue of its colour, and marked in its center with a yellow square.

Quick reference: A dead block
A block that cannot be played from the Stack or overlayed in the Dump. A dead block is marked with the Jolly Roger.
Example: ◼

Quick reference: A piece
A 2x2 formation of blocks in the Stack.

Quick reference: A space
A 2x2 formation of blocks in the Dump which, in terms of the rules, may be overlayed by the piece currently selected in the Stack. In other words, a **space** is a legal play position for the current piece.

Quick reference: Free space
All 2x2 formations in the Dump that do contain dead blocks, and, in the case of strategy games, purple blocks. It does not mean that the current piece can be played at a given space, but only that *some* piece still can.

Quick reference: Lives
The number of times blocks may age before dying.

Quick reference: New block
When a piece is played from the Stack, its 4 blocks are replaced with **new blocks**. The same holds for the 4 blocks formed in the Dump where the piece is played. These blocks have an age dependent on the settings, and the ages of the blocks they replace.

Quick reference: New block age
The **age** a new block will have. This may either be zero, i.e. brand new, or a relative reduction in the age of the block it replaces.

Quick reference: Zap
To replace a block in the Stack with a brand new white block.

Quick reference: White block frequency
The probability of new block being white. During strategy games this is zero, i.e. there are no white blocks.

Quick reference: Overlay
The blocks of a piece dumped from the Stack in the Dump, are said to **overlay** the blocks in the Dump. This means that the upper left-hand corner of the piece combines with the upper left-hand corner of the 2x2 space the piece is played in, and so forth.
Example: ■