

CardShark-Hearts (tm)

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For context-sensitive help on menu items during play, select the menu heading, cursor down to desired menu item, and press F1 for help on that item. Or you can press F1 at any time and use the list below:

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You should have received this program free from a friend or BBS or for a low fee through a shareware disk vendor for evaluation purposes only. You may use the program for a reasonable evaluation period. Payment to the author of the program is required for use beyond simple evaluation. Print out the order form when you exit the program for more information.

This program may be copied for others to try, so long as no changes are made to the program nor any of the accompanying files, including this one. If you charge for distribution of the program on diskette or CD-ROM, you must write for permission to distribute.

CS-Hearts is written in Visual Basic. The Visual Basic runtime module, VBRUN300.DLL, is Copyright by Microsoft Corp.

VBCARDS.DLL, which contains the card faces and backs, was written by Richard R. Sands and is public domain. Programmers wanting to use this DLL in their own card games may contact Sands on CompuServe: 70274,103. Please do NOT call Nelson Ford for information about VBCARDS.DLL.

CARDSHARK HEARTS and the CARDSHARK card game name prefix are trademarks of Nelson Ford, PsL.

Installation of Shareware Version

CS-Hearts requires Windows (3.1 for sounds) and is written for VGA color, although it may be possible to use it on EGA. (If you still have EGA, you may want to consider getting a SuperVGA card, which is less than \$100.)

You can put the CS-Hearts files in any directory; HOWEVER, the VBCARDS.DLL file should be copied to your Windows directory. If you already have a VBCARDS.DLL in your Windows directory, compare the size, date and time of that file to the one in this package. If they do not match, you may have to remove or temporarily rename the other file to use this one. You might try running CS-Hearts before doing so to see if it works with the files already in place.

CS-Hearts also requires VBRUN300.DLL. VBRUN is used by dozens (maybe hundreds) of pd/shareware programs and is widely available. If you already have VBRUN, you do not have to do anything else. If you do not have it, you can get it from the address on the order form by sending \$4 to cover shipping and handling to the address on the order form. You can also download it from CompuServe. GO MSBASIC, enter DL-5 at the Forum prompt, and BRO VBRUN*.* to find it. VBRUN300.DLL must also be in your Window's directory or other directory in your PATH.

After copying the CS-Hearts files to the directory of your choice, use Program Manager File-New menu options to add CS-Hearts' EXE file to one of your Program Groups, if you wish to have it readily available. Otherwise, you can run it with the File-Run option of Program Manager.

Sounds:

Not all program comments have sound files for them. Only a few sound files are distributed with the shareware version due to space limitations.

If you see a speech balloon instead of hearing sounds, it means that there is no sound file for that comment or that the sound file for that comment is not located in your CSHEARTS directory.

See the Ordering information for details about how to get all the sound files.

Colors:

If you have selected one of the alternative system color setups from the Windows Control Panel, CardShark Hearts may not display properly. There is nothing I can do about this. Try changing the colors back to "Windows Default".

If you get strange colors in CardShark Hearts, it is because another program has changed the Windows palette and will not give up control of it. If quitting other programs does not help, you may have to restart Windows.

Overview

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Introduction

Hearts is an addictive and interesting four-handed game (no partners). You play one hand and the computer plays the other three hands individually. "Individually" means that the computer does not "cheat" -- it does not look into other hands or play any differently against the human opponent than it does against the other computer hands. (Why would I waste time writing a game for my own enjoyment which cheats me?)

While there are MANY variations of the game of Hearts, the variation and rules options in this program are the most popular ones.

The goal in Hearts is to have the low score. You get one point for each Heart that you take and 13 points for the Queen of Spades ("QS"). Since you want to have the low score, the goal is to avoid taking Hearts and, at almost all costs, avoid taking the QS. (Also see [Scaled Scoring](#).)

Shooting The Moon

One exception to the principle of avoiding taking points is that if you take the QS and all 13 of the Hearts, each of your opponents gets 26 points. This is called Shoot the Moon ("Shoot"), but it is difficult to do if playing good opponents. (It is very easy to end up with 25 points against you rather than giving everyone else 26 points, and a 51 point swing is difficult to overcome in a game to 100.)

Alternatively, if you Shoot, you can elect to have 26 points deducted from your score rather than added to everyone else's. Be sure to select this option from the Options menu before the final trick of your Shoot.

If another player's score is more than 26 points below yours, the program will automatically deduct the 26 points from your score whether you have selected that option or not. This reduces the chance that someone else will go over 100 while another opponent is still below your score.

Ten of Diamonds

This rule causes ten points to be deducted from the score of the player who takes the 10 of Diamonds. Some people play the Jack of Diamonds is -10, but Hoyle says the 10, so I went with that as the default. You can change it to the Jack with a menu option. (See [Deduct 10 for JD/TD.](#))

Taking Tricks

Unlike Bridge, Spades, and other games, there is no "trump" in Hearts. The high card played in the suit led always takes the trick.

You can elect to play to any number of points, but the default is 100. When one player goes over 100, the person with the lowest number of points at that time is the winner.

Why Another Hearts Game?

I wrote CardShark Hearts out of frustration with the weak play of existing Hearts games.

In writing it, I gained a deeper respect for the problems faced by the authors of the other games. Although tests have shown that CardShark Hearts can beat the other games, it is not as sophisticated as I had originally intended.

On the other hand, does anyone really want a game they can't possibly beat? Over 100+ games, most good players should have a winning percentage in the 30-40% range against the best skill level (#4 - "Aggressive").

If you have trouble ever winning a game, you may want to choose some less-skilled computer players. If you somehow manage to win too easily - quit cheating! - or play against 3 Cheatin' Chucks.

Mechanics of Play

CSHearts may be played with a mouse or keyboard. In the Mouse mode, cards are selected to pass or play by clicking on the card, then clicking the Ok button. At the end of each trick, also click the Ok button when prompted or wait for the specified Pause period (0 to 7 seconds) to time-out.

See Keyboard Play for information about playing CSHearts with just the keyboard.

When you click on the card, it will rise up above the rest. If you change your mind before clicking on Ok, simply click on the card again to lower it.

If the selected Pause period expires before you click Ok, the card will be played automatically.

Rules of Play - Passing

After each of the four hands is dealt 13 cards, you must select three cards to pass to an opponent. The passing direction rotates on each deal: to the right, across, left, and no-pass ("hold"). Some people play other passing patterns, but this is the most widely used one. See [Change Pass Order](#) to set other passing orders.

Cards are passed "face-down", so the other players do not see what you are passing.

Selecting the three cards to pass is AT LEAST as important as the actual play of the hand, if not more so. For example, if you are dealt the lone Queen of Spades ("QS") and do not pass it, then the first time Spades are led (and the other players WILL attack Spades right away), you will be forced to play it. The other players will play low (if they can) and force you to win the trick, thus taking 13 points.

Novices are often afraid to ever hold onto the QS, but you normally will want to hold it when you can adequately protect from having it led out of you.

Holding the QS gives you two advantages: nobody can drop it on you, and you can choose whom to drop it on -- normally the person with the lowest score.

How many Spades is considered "adequate protection"? You will find that out through experience. (I don't want to spoil all your fun!)

Other considerations include passing low cards so that you can [Shoot](#), passing low Hearts to keep other players from Shooting, and so on. Again, experience is the best teacher, but when you pay for CS-Hearts, the manual you get has a section that tells you how to get the most out of your passing game.

In addition, you can use the [Hint Button](#) and [Duplicate Play](#) options to see how the computer would pass and play the cards you are dealt. This is also a good way to learn.

Rules of Play - Playing

If Club Lead Required is turned on, then the person with the Two of Clubs starts play by leading it; otherwise, the lead rotates and any card may be led except the Heart suit (unless the Break Hearts Before Leading option has been turned off).

Play goes clockwise and each player must follow suit, if possible.

You can play the QS or a Heart at any time that you cannot follow suit, except that you cannot LEAD a Heart until they have been "broken" (unless that rule has been turned off). Hearts are broken when someone discards a Heart or the QS. Other than that, you can lead any suit. You CAN lead the QS before Hearts are broken, if you want to.

Some people play that if you only have Hearts and the QS left, you must lead the QS. In this game, you can lead a Heart if you wish. Also, some people play that you cannot play the QS on the first trick; in this game, you can unless the Queen of Spades Allowed option has been turned off.

Strategy

Many people argue that computers cannot think or make independent judgments. I believe that this is exactly what they are doing in this and similar types of programs.

There are two ways to write a program which must interact with humans. One is to have a specific response for every possible input. I would agree that in that case, the computer is not making "judgments", just making canned responses.

The other way is to give the computer a set of general rules which it must apply to ever-changing, unforeseen circumstances. I personally do not see how this is any different from how humans think and make judgments. This is how this program is written.

How the Computer Plays

Ganging Up on the Low Hand

Stopping the Shoot

When NOT to Shoot

Panic Mode

The Computer Players

How The Computer Plays

CS-Hearts' main strength is that it never forgets what has been played. It usually knows (statistically) the best time to play a high card or a low card.

However, what makes card games both interesting and difficult to program is that the statistically correct play can backfire at times, which can make the game look really stupid, when it really has chosen the correct line of play.

The game's main weaknesses are that it is not programmed for every possible situation that can arise, nor does it attempt to make inferences about card holdings based on how other hands play, other than trying to infer who has the Queen of Spades.

This means that a human player with a good understanding of strategy and an excellent memory for what has been played should be able to beat the game, since you are better able to adapt to different situations as they arise.

It also means that like a human player, the computer may make a blunder some times (not very often, hopefully). If you would like to help with the improvement of this game, you can report blunders to me at the address on the order form or via CompuServe.

To report gross playing errors, load the file CSHEARTS.TMP into NOTEPAD and print it out, or send a copy of it to me on disk, or email it to me on CompuServe. See [View Deal Record](#).

If you are a paid-up user with the current version and report a gross blunder or program error, you will be sent a corrected version for free.

No Cheating:

The computer plays each hand individually (except for Cheatin Chuck, obviously). Each computer player keeps track of its own personal knowledge of what's going on based on what that player has passed, played, and seen others play.

When deciding what to pass or play for one hand, the computer never "peeks" into the other hands. It uses only its own knowledge.

Again, if you feel like the computer has cheated, send me the game record and I will be able to look at the code and tell you exactly why the computer made the play it did. (This service is for fully licensed users only.)

The manual you get when you pay for CSH contains many tips on playing. You do NOT need these tips to play and enjoy the game, but they can help you win more, both against the computer and against human opponents. Here are a few of the more important ones:

Ganging Up on the Low Hand

One basic strategy is that if you are holding the QS with sufficient protection for it, then you should not just throw it at the first opportunity. Instead, try to give it to the low hand (assuming one player's score is at least 13 points lower than the others).

If you are low scorer, then

- If someone else is within 13 points or so of your score, try to give the QS to them. If more than one player is within 13 points of your score, give it to the first one of the two hands that you can.

- If you can give the QS to a hand that will then go over the Goal, do it. (Remember to do this only if YOU have the low score, obviously.)

- If everyone's score is well above yours, dump the QS on the first person you can. There is no point in taking risks in that situation.

Even if you do not hold the QS, you may be able to control who gets it. If you are leading Spades, for example, and have enough Spades to force the QS out of the hand holding it, but that hand is not the one you want to get the points, then try leading a suit in which you have a lot of cards with good low ones to give the other player a chance to dump the QS on someone else. You may not want to risk this unless you have a very safe hand (ie: low cards in every suit).

Stopping the Shoot

Although taking the QS is costly, it is TWICE as costly to let someone Shoot the Moon, so stopping the Shoot is an important part of your strategy.

One way is to try to discard Hearts when you cannot follow the suit that has been led, trying to give a Heart to two different players ("splitting" Hearts). Until Hearts have been split, you should not discard your highest Heart, since you may need it to stop a Shoot. Once Hearts are split, discard your highest Hearts.

Another way is to try to take a trick that someone has discarded a Heart on, if Hearts haven't already been split. Novices are often afraid to take even a single point, but taking one point is a cheap way to insure that nobody else can Shoot and give you 26 points.

Once someone takes the QS, you should not rest easy until someone else has taken a Heart; otherwise, there is a risk that the person could Shoot. Because the penalty for allowing someone to Shoot is so large, it is worth taking a few Hearts to prevent it, if necessary.

If the computer detects that you are always playing low on Hearts when you could play high and stop a Shoot, then the next time, it may play low too, and the other hand could get away with Shooting and you will lose, so don't just rely on the computer hands to stop other computer hands from Shooting.

However, if the hand on your right leads, say, the Four of Hearts and you have the Two and the Three in addition to some higher ones, it is usually all right to play low, since there is a strong probability that one of the other hands will be forced to win the trick.

If the hand on the right leads, say, a Ten of Hearts and you have a higher one and don't play it and the other hands cannot beat it, that may have been the leader's only losing Heart and he may Shoot.

As you can see, stopping the Shoot is a major part of the game.

On the other hand, a popular ploy by someone who has taken the first Hearts is to then lead a high Heart, expecting someone to take it to keep him from possibly Shooting. To counter this strategy, the computer hands will duck a Heart lead a certain percentage of the time. However, there are many times when taking the Heart is good strategy apart from stopping the Shoot. So don't count on the computer hands ducking!

The Worst Way to Stop the Shoot:

...is to take the QS. Say that someone has taken all the Hearts and the only points left are the 13 assigned to the QS. Whether or not you should take 13 yourself to avoid having to take 26 (along with everyone else) has to be decided by the score situation.

When NOT To Shoot

Poorly written Hearts games are frustrating, because one computer hand may make bad plays that let another computer hand win. It doesn't matter how good a player you are if the program is so poorly written that one computer hand gives the game away to one of the other computer hands.

A common flaw is for one hand to Shoot the Moon when Shooting lets another hand win the game. PsL Hearts' computer hands are designed not to try to Shoot if doing so will let another computer hand win. For example, say the scores for the hands are:

#1 - 80 (you)

#2 - 90

#3 - 50

#4 - 70

Some computer Hearts games would let player #2 Shoot the Moon. This would cause you to lose, but player #3 would be the winner since adding 26 to his 50 points would still leave him low hand. So in this case, player #2 would not try to Shoot in "real life", since the object is to be the low scorer when someone else goes over 100.

However, if player #4 Shoots, he would win the game, since his 70 points would be low after adding 26 to everyone else's score. And of course, player #3 would be happy to Shoot.

In fact, player #3 would make no attempt to stop players #1 and #2 from Shooting, since he wins if they Shoot!

[Note: Now that Deduct Shoot is available, the computer WILL try to Shoot in the above situation if the Deduct Shoot option is turned on.]

Panic Mode

#1 - 80 (you)

#2 - 90

#3 - 50

#4 - 70

The computer players are designed with a Panic Mode. Given the scores shown above, if faced with either having to take the QS or having to let player #2 take it, player #4 would take it. Otherwise, #2 will "go out" (get over 100 points) and player #3 would win with the low score.

If #3's score were only a few points below #4's, and there are plenty of Hearts left, #4 may let #2 take the QS in the above situation, hoping to stick #4 with enough Hearts to make up the difference.

The Panic Mode is turned off when Scaled Scoring is used.

The Computer Players

NOTE: Any Playing Style can be assigned to ANY PLAYER using the configuration program, which can also change players' names. As a default, players have been given names to reflect their playing styles (e.g.: Novice Nellie), but the Novice playing style COULD be assigned to the CardShark, if you wished.

There may be times when you would like a little variety or just don't want to play the strongest possible play of the computer. For example, a beginner or a child may get discouraged at losing to the computer all the time and would prefer someone of their own skill level.

Or you may just want to see how well other playing strategies work. Using the drop-down list boxes, you can select a different playing style for each hand or the same style for each hand. (Try playing against three Vicious Vickys and see how you make out.) You *can* change the playing style at any time during play, but the effects may be bizarre. I recommend NOT changing during play.

The playing styles at the start of the game are recorded in the Game Record as are any changes to the playing styles during the game.

If you really like surprises, let the computer pick opponents for you by selecting "Mystery Guest" from the list. Just like in real life, it will be up to you to figure out each opponent's style and adjust your play accordingly.

Playing Styles:

Novice

Timid

Cautious

Aggressive

Wild

Vicious

Cheater

Surprise

Players' Names

Novice

Novice - has trouble keeping track of the cards that have been played. Sometimes passes low Spades. Should be pretty easy to beat, but sometimes it doesn't work out that way. Try playing a few games against three Novice Nellie's.

Timid

Timid - is afraid of holding high Spades or Hearts and afraid to take a trick if it can be avoided, even if it looks like someone is Shooting the Moon, and he's afraid to try to Shoot, himself. Timid *is* easy to beat.

Cautious

Cautious - like ever style except Novice, remembers everything that's been played. Won't try to Shoot the Moon if it looks at all risky, and will always take a trick (even the QS) to stop a possible Shoot.

Aggressive

Aggressive - the best overall playing style. Will USUALLY take a Heart to stop a possible Shoot, but may duck every now and then just to keep the other players honest. Will pass to Shoot if possible (eg: if able to get rid of all low Hearts), but will not take foolish risks such as taking the Queen of Spades hoping to Shoot while still holding something like the King of Hearts with the Ace out.

Wild

Wild - tries to Shoot whenever he can. He won't try if he is holding a LOT of low Hearts, of course. (He's crazy, not stupid!)

Vicious

Vicious - is out to get YOU! Will try to stick you with the Queen and with Hearts every time, even if it lets someone else win. Just wants to see YOU lose! Won't try to stop anyone else from Shooting the Moon but you.

Cheater

Cheater - peeks at everyone's cards! He can't always remember who had what, but he usually knows who has the Queen of Spades. If you are so good that no computerized card game can give you a challenge, invite Cheatin' Chuck to play.

Surprise

Surprise - the computer assigns a playing style at random. It's up to you to figure out the style and adjust your play accordingly.

Players' Names

The following are the default player names. You can tell their playing style by their names. See [Changing Player Names, Styles, Sounds](#)

Novice Nellie
Fraidy Frank
Cautious Cal
Smooth Sam (aggressive)
Crazy Charlie (wild)
Vicious Vickie
Cheatin' Chuck
Mystery Guest
Sneaky Sue (aggressive)
Wiley Willie (aggressive)
The CardShark (aggressive)

NOTE: Any Playing Style can be assigned to ANY PLAYER using the configuration program, which can also change players' names. As a default, players have been given names to reflect their playing styles (e.g.: Novice Nellie), but the Novice playing style COULD be assigned to the CardShark, if you wished.

Most people will want to play against the Aggressive style, because it is the best non-cheating style of play. So that you do not have to play three instances of the same player (e.g.: Smooth Sams) four different characters have, as a default, been assigned the Aggressive style.

File Menu

The following options are available on the File menu:

View Deal Record

View Previous Deal

Keep All Deal Records

Change Scores

Zero Game Score

Zero Out Total Points

New Deal

Replay Same Deal

Exit Game

View Deal Record

At any time during a deal, you can use this menu option to view a record of the current deal. (The Window's NOTEPAD.EXE program is required, or a substitute editor of the same name.)

The current deal record, is stored in CSHEARTS.000 and the prior deal is in CSHEARTS.001. (Also see Keep All Deal Records.)

In the Duplicate Play mode, the Computer's deal record is appended to the end of yours.

You can use Notepad to view, add comments to, and print the deal. You can also save it permanently by using the File-Save As menu in Notepad.

You can view a deal record with "View Deal Record" up until the passing has been done for the next game. Then it is copied into CSHEARTS.001 (which you can view with the View Previous Deal option) and the new game is written to CSHEARTS.000.

If you have a problem with CSHEARTS or wish to report what you think is a playing or passing weaknesses, save/print the deal record and mail or fax it to me. (If possible, please email it so that I can use the automatic Load/Setup feature to set up the deal. Email address on Compuserve is 71355,470 and on Internet is "nelson.ford@psl-online.com".) The deal record will let me recreate the deal and fix the problem.

View Previous Deal

Lets you view the previous deal's record. (See comments for [View Deal Record](#).)

When you click on View Previous Deal with the [Keep All Deal Records](#) option selected, a window will pop up showing a list of the files in your _DEAL directory.

Click on View to view the highlighted file in the list in NOTEPAD.

Click on Delete to delete the highlighted file in the list.

When viewing a deal record, you may wish to save it permanently with a different name. To do so, after bringing it up in NOTEPAD, use Save-As in NOTEPAD's File menu to save the file in the WINDOWS_DEAL directory with whatever name you choose. The file will appear in the list the next time you select the View Previous Deal option and you can select it the same way you select the CSH_DEAL.### files. You can, of course, add notes to the file in NOTEPAD before saving it if you wish.

Deleting or renaming a file may leave a gap in the CSH_DEAL file numbers, reducing the total number of files you can save. To close up the gap and use all the numbers, click on Renumber.

If you would like to replay the deal shown in the deal record, click on Load/Setup Deal Record. This will change the rules settings, the computer opponents' playing styles, the starting scores, and the passing direction to match those in the Deal Record.

After replaying an old deal, if you want to restore your original settings, click on the Restore button.

Keep All Deal Records

Let's you save and view up to 999 of the most recent deal records, rather than just the default of saving/viewing the current and previous deals.

The first time you select this option, a directory by the name of CSH_DEAL will be created in your WINDOWS directory so that the deal files can be stored there.

If you have this option selected, the files will be stored as CSH_DEAL.### where ### is a number from 001 to 999 with the largest number being the latest deal. The current deal is saved during play as CSH_DEAL.000.

To help reduce the accumulation of unnecessary files, at the end of each game, you will be given the chance to delete all the CSH_DEAL.### files. Note that this will delete all CSH_DEAL.### files, not just those for the game just finished; however, it will not delete deal records which you saved under a different name with NOTEPAD, only those which start with "CSH_DEAL."

Change Scores

Lets you change all the scores.

When replaying a deal, to get the computer to play the same, the scores must be changed to match those at the start of the game to be replayed, since starting scores affect the computer's play.

If you use the Load/Setup option (See [View Previous Deal](#).) to replay a deal saved to disk, the scores are changed automatically.

Zero Game Score

This will zero out the current game scores, allowing you to start a new game.

Zero Out Total Points

This will zero out the running total of points in Scaled Scoring. This does NOT zero out the running total of games won. The reason for this option is that the running total of Scaled Scoring points can get to be too big to fit on the Score Board. (See [Scaled Scoring](#).)

New Deal

This allows you to abort play and get a new deal.

Replay Same Deal

This allows you to replay the same deal. The scores you got on the first deal will be the ones added into your total, so you cannot improve your score by playing the deal again, but you can see if you could have done better by playing differently.

The exception to using the first scores is that if you choose Replay before you have finished playing out a deal (i.e.: before all the points are in), the points received so far will NOT be used. Instead, the scores from the replay will be used. This can let you recover from accidentally playing the wrong card.

When you replay a deal, your original scores will remain on the score board and the replay scores will appear in the "Dup" column. If you are playing in the Duplicate mode, after you have finished replaying a deal as much as you want, the scores in the Dup column will be erased and your original scores will remain in the "Hnd" column unless all the points were not in, in which case the scores from the Dup column will be copied to the Hnd column. Then the Duplicate scores will be displayed in the Dup column.

The Replay Same Deal option is turned off during CardShark play in the Duplicate mode. When the Shark is done, you can click Replay to see the Shark play his hand again. This is primarily for those who have Pause set to "0" (in the Interface menu) and click on the Zip Button so that the Shark's turn goes by at top speed. If you are curious about the resulting score, you can click on Replay to see the Shark play the cards again with ZIP turned off.

Scramble Cards

Scramble Cards

When you select the Replay Same Deal menu option, you will be asked if you want to scramble the opponents' cards.

If you say yes, all the cards in the deck which are not in YOUR hand will be reshuffled and dealt to the other three players.

The main purpose of this is to let you see how your strategy would have worked against different distributions of the cards in the opponents' hands.

For example, say that you try to Shoot the Moon and don't make it. Was it a bad idea, or was it just a bad break in the distribution of the cards?

Try replaying your same hand a couple of times with different distributions of the remaining cards in your opponents' hands. If you NEVER make it, then you can conclude that it was a bad idea. If you make it more often than not, then it was a good idea, but bad luck.

Exit Game

This quits the game of Hearts completely. The game-record files remain on your disk in the `_DEAL` directory and you can view those with NOTEPAD without having to reload CardShark Hearts.

All options you have selected during the session are saved, as well as your scores, and are used when you start the game again.

Note that if the program is terminated abnormally due to a system error, power failure, etc., the options file will not be updated and you will lose the settings of any options you have selected, as well as the current scores.

Interface Menu

The following options are available in the Interface menu:

Sounds

Pause

Move Cards

Background

Card Backs

Colors

Faces

Text Width

Keyboard Play

Ok Button Click

New Name

Sounds

Computer players make various types of comments. Some of the comments have sound files (*.WAV) to go with them; others do not. (The configuration program that you get when you pay for CSH lets you add, remove, and reassign sounds and comments.)

If All Sounds Off is checked, you will hear no sounds no matter which types of comments you have checked.

The following are comment-related options:

Lip Sync

Pass Comments

Lead Comments

Take Comments

Razz Comments

Card Sounds are the sounds the cards make when you click on them and they pop up.

Deal Sounds are the sounds of shuffling and dealing the cards. Note that having these on slows down the deal of the cards.

Lip Sync

For added realism, the characters' lips move when they are talking, even if there are only speech balloons and no sound is being played.

This animation makes the program a little less responsive. If you feel it is slowing you down, you can toggle off Lip Sync.

Since the animation does not slow things down when a WAV file is being played at the same time, turning off Lip Sync only stops the animation when there is not an associated sound file or when Sounds are turned off.

Pass Comments

The Pass Comments let you know to whom you are passing and who is passing to you. Pass direction is shown in the bottom left corner of the playing area, so if you want to cut down on computer comments, this is a good place to start. (Note: No sound files have been made for these comments. As with all comments, you can add your own sounds using the configuration program.)

Razz Comments

These are comments made when you take a Heart or when you give the opponents a Heart. There are sound files available for almost all of these comments. Most people say they had a lot of entertainment to the game. ("Makes me want to choke the computer some times", says one user.)

Lead Comments

These comments let you easily spot who is leading and what suit is being led. No sound files have been made for these comments.

Take Comments

These comments let you easily see who took the trick. If Move Cards is on, the Take comments are not used, since you can see from the card motion who took the trick. (Note: No sound files have been made for these comments except for when points are taken or given.)

All Sounds Off

This is the master on/off switch for sounds. If this option is NOT checked, you will hear comments from the computer players based on the categories you have checked in the Sounds option list.

If this option IS checked, you will hear NO sounds even if you have categories checked in the Sounds option list.

If you do not have the sound file for a particular comment, you will see the text of the sound file displayed in a "speech balloon" instead, assuming that you have checked the appropriate comment category in the Comments option list.

There are no sound files available for the Passing, Suit Led, and Took Trick comments, so only speech balloons are shown for those comments. Using the Configuration program, you can add your own sound files if you wish.

Due to space limitations, we have only been able to add one sound file for each sound category in the shareware distribution files/disks. Unfortunately, this gets old quickly and doesn't give you a true feeling for the fun that a large variety of sound files can add.

If you pay the license fee for CardShark Hearts, you can get dozens (over 4 megabytes) of additional sound files as part of the registration package. (These WAV files can also be used as Windows system sound files.)

If you are not ready to pay for this program, but would like the complete set of sound files to try, you can get this multi-disk set of WAV files with the order form which you can print when you exit the program or by calling PsL at 713-524-6394 or 800-2424-PSL.

You can also add wave files of your own. Many BBS's and shareware vendors have WAV files for Windows 3.1.

If you do not have a sound card, or if you experience bizarre problems with sounds turned on, turn them off. Unfortunately, Windows 3 can be flakey and such problems are outside of this program's control.

Pause

You normally have to click Ok after selecting a card, at the end of each trick, and after some other prompts to let the computer know that you are ready to continue, but if you don't like having to click the button, you can set the pause time limit for 0, 1, 3, 5 or 7 seconds.

After selecting a card, for example, you will have the selected number of seconds to click on it again to change your mind, or you can click on Ok or press Enter right away to play it.

You can also elect to HAVE to click the Ok button to continue after selecting a card and at the end of each trick. This assures you of not having a selected card played before you have a chance to change your mind and of not having a trick "picked up" before you have a chance to see all the cards that were played.

The final option is to pause after each card is played. This is mainly of use when View All Hands is on and you want to study the hands to see if you can figure out which card the computer will play before it plays it.

It is interesting to turn on AutoPlay, View All Hands, and Pause and see how the computer plays each hand. Also see Duplicate Play.

Move Cards

With this feature on, at the end of each trick, the cards will move across the "table" to the player who took the trick. This slows things down on older machines, but it makes it even more obvious who took the trick.

With a 486-50+ and/or a fast video card, the movement of the cards is quick and smooth; otherwise, this is an option best left off.

Background

Some people have complained about being able to see other things on the screen in the background when CSHearts is running. Although this would seem to be just the way Windows is designed to work, this option has been added to put up a solid green background behind CSHearts.

Card Backs

Lets you cycle through the available decorative card backs.

Colors

Due to screen color differences in different systems which are beyond the programmer's direct control, the background colors behind the players' faces may not match the overall background color.

This option brings up a scroll bar at the bottom of the screen with which you can adjust the background color until the two match.

Faces

Some people prefer a non-cluttered playing board. This option hides the faces.

Text Width

CSHearts attempts to adjust to different types of video drivers. However, some systems have eluded our best efforts to adapt to them and, in particular, the Score Board may have difficulty showing all the scores.

If this happens, the Text Width menu option puts up a scroll bar which can adjust the width of the text in the Score Board until you can see it all.

Keyboard Play

You can play CardShark Hearts without using the mouse. All of the menu options and buttons can be selected by holding down the Alt key and pressing the letter underlined in the menu or button caption.

To select cards using the cursor keys, click on the Interface menu and the Keyboard Play option. When turned on, a rectangular black mark will appear on your card layout.

Select a card by moving the marker with the left and right cursor keys and pressing the up cursor key for the card you want to play. If you have Pause set to 0, the card will be played immediately; otherwise, you have until your specified Pause period is up to press the down cursor to deselect the card, or you can press Enter to play the selected card without further waiting (for Pause periods longer than 0).

When the Pause period is up, the card will be played. When passing, you can lower and raise (up to three) cards at will. The cards are not passed until you press Enter.

If it is your lead and Hearts have not been broken and the Rule is still set that requires Hearts to be broken (or QS played) before they can be led, the marker will skip over Hearts when you move it.

If you are following someone else's lead, the marker will only scroll in the suit that was led to force you to follow suit.

Ok Button Click

In order to try to avoid problems which arise from clicking the Ok button when it should not be clicked, it will be grayed out during such times. Because this is a complex program with a lot going on, it is conceivable that it could remain grayed out some time when you DO really need it. In such a case, you can click on this menu option instead.

New Name

This menu option only shows up for paid users. In the unlicensed version, the computer players refer to you as "USER". When licensed, your first name is used. This feature allows you to change the name the other players refer to you by.

Options Menu

AutoPlay

Cash Out

Deal Number Prompt

Duplicate Play

Network Play

View All Hands

AutoPlay

The Computer plays your hand too. This is a good way to study the strategy. AutoPlay should be selected at the start of the deal. It may not always work otherwise.

When Duplicate Play is chosen, Autoplay is automatically toggled on for the computer's turn.

Cash Out

Toggles the Automatic Cash-Out option on and off. When checked, the option is on and the following takes place:

At the end of each Trick, the program checks to see if all the points have been played or if the person with the lead has all winning cards left. If either of these is true, the program stops play, displays the remaining cards, and in the latter case, gives the remaining points to the person with the lead.

After all, if all the points are in, there is no reason to continue play. And if the person with the lead doesn't have a card left that is lower than those held by the other hands, there is likewise no point in playing it out.

One exception is that if only one trick is left, the program will not cash in, since it is faster just to play the last trick.

Deal Number Prompt

If you select this option, you will be prompted before each deal for a deal number. This allows you to replay a particular deal, but please keep in mind that to get the computer to play the same way again, both the passing direction and the starting game scores must be the same as in the original deal. To set the scores back, select Change Game Scores.

The easiest way to replay a prior deal if you have the deal record on disk is to use the View Previous Deal menu option in the File menu. To replay the deal you just finished, click on Replay Same Deal before the scores have been added in and the next deal started.

The deal number is always shown at the start of the game record, which you can view at any time. It is also displayed at the bottom left of the playing window.

Having a deal number does not mean that the deals are pre-defined. The deals are randomly generated, but once generated, the deal number allows the computer to generate the same deal again.

Note that if you manually replay a deal, the score will still be added to the totals. (The exception is if you replay the last deal, totals don't change.) If you want the scores restored, look at the game record to see what the scores should be, then use the Change Scores option.

If you use the Load/Setup option under View Previous Deal, you can restore the original settings and scores when you are done by clicking on a button.

The Novice level uses random factors in playing and will probably not play the cards the same way the next time. All levels use a random factor in deciding whether or not to take a Heart that has been led when Hearts are not split yet and they may not play the same way the next time. A new version of the program very probably will not pass and play exactly the same as an older version.

Duplicate Play

Duplicate Play lets you compare your score to the score the computer gets when it plays the same cards. In the Duplicate Play mode, after you play each deal, the computer will replay the same deal with The CardShark playing your cards.

After The CardShark is through playing the same deal you just played, your "Dup Game" score will be increased or decreased by the difference in your score and the CardShark's score on the same hand.

At the end of the regular game, the "Dup Total" score is increased by one if you have outscored the computer in duplicate play (ie: "you done good") or decreased by one if the computer outscored you for the game.

If you are interested in learning from the The CardShark's play of the same cards you just played, try to figure out what the computer will play before clicking Ok for each card.

If instead you just want to generate the The CardShark's score as quickly as possible to compare to your score, set Pause to 0 and click on the Zip Button. If you are curious about the resulting score, you could then click on Replay Same Deal before the scores are added in to see the Shark play at a slower speed.

Why a Duplicate Mode?

In card games, luck can greatly influence the outcome of the game, particularly when the skill of the players is very close. Bridge players have gotten around this problem by devising a method of playing called "Duplicate".

In Duplicate Bridge, every pair of players plays the same cards that every other pair does (basically). Your score for the tournament is not the sum of the scores you get against the opponents at your table; instead, your score is based on how the score you got against your opponents compares to the scores that every other pair got when they played the same cards.

In Hearts, you may lose or win games because of bad luck in the lay of the cards. By playing in the Duplicate mode, even if you get bad cards, you can still have fun by seeing how your score compares to the computer's when it has to play the same bad cards.

Network Play

(NOTE: Because each player must have a different name in Network play, and because changing the name is a function reserved for fully licensed users, the unlicensed version of CSHearts cannot be used to play a Network game. However, if you order CSHearts and it does not work in the network mode to your satisfaction, you can return it within 30 days for a refund of the \$25 license fee.)

CardShark Hearts can be played with any network or any computer hook-up which allows multiple computers to access the same disk drive as a normal drive with a normal drive letter and directory, such as Z:.

From 2 to 4 people can play over a network. If less than 4 people play, the computer will play the missing hands.

To start a game, each player should start CardShark Hearts and select Network Play in the PlayOptions menu. The Network Play configuration window will come up.

Each player must select the same drive and path, but only one person (the "Starter" has to select the rules (agreed upon by the other players). This person selects the PostRules menu option after setting the rules; the other players select the Logon menu option. The cursor will turn into an hour glass until the Starter has posted the rules and everyone has logged on.

IMPORTANT: Before specifying a network drive and path to use, be sure that it is not already being used by someone else to play CSHearts. Look for files with persons' names and extensions like ".T1", ".T2", ".T3", and look for the files "CSHSETUP" and "CSH_DEAL". (Only the Starter should check for these files; otherwise, another player may delete files created by the Starter.)

After selecting Logon, each player will be sent the rules and starting deal number. Players should review the rules to make sure they are as agreed. If there is a problem, have the starter repost the rules and have EVERYONE Logon again.

When everyone has agreed on the rules and logged on, each player must click on Exit and the game will begin. Certain menu options in the game will be disabled during network play, including the Hint button, viewing all hands, and viewing current game record.

If you wish to change the rules after exiting the Network Play configuration window, each player will have to click on the Network Game menu option to de-select network play and then click on it again to restart network play and bring the Network Play menu up again. Any scores will be lost when a Network Game is restarted.

If you play solo CardShark Hearts and do not wish to lose your personal score history when a Network Game is played, write down the scores and the current deal number before starting a Network Game. When done with the Network Game, you can use the Change Scores menu option (under File) to reenter your personal score history.

If have selected Logon and some problem prevents logging on, click on the Exit menu option to abort the Network Game.

NOTE: When selecting the drive and path, be sure to double-click on the desired directory. If network setup does not seem to work (hangs up), try using a new, empty directory.

View All Hands

This is a good way to learn the game or to study the computer's strategy. Like the other options, it can be toggled on or off at any time, so you could turn it on if you feel a need to see the other hands for some reason, then turn it back off.

Rules Menu

Use All Vegas Rules (*)

Break Hearts Before Leading

Hearts Allowed On Trick 1

Queen of Spades Allowed on Trick 1

Opening Lead

(*) Shooting Not Allowed

Deduct 26 For Shooting

Deduct 10 for JD/TD

(*) Play QS First Chance

(*) Queen of Spades = 7 Points

Scaled Scoring

Show Winning %'s

Hide Scores

Show Suit Counts

Change Game Goal

(*) Play A Tournament

Change Pass Order

Next Pass Direction

NOTE: The quickest and easiest way to review and change the rules is to select Network Game under PlayOptions. A window will pop up for reviewing and setting the rules for Network Play, but if you click on Exit without executing a network link-up, the rules changes will still take effect. You can also see how the rules are set by viewing a deal record.

Use All Vegas Rules

The rules marked with an asterisk on the prior page are used in a Hearts tournament in Las Vegas. The rules can be selected or deselected individually, but by clicking on "Vegas Rules", you can select them all at once.

NOTE: When you select "Use All Vegas Rules", you actually start a tournament. See [Play A Tournament](#) for more information about the "tournament" mode.

The Vegas rules may be necessary to allow for a fair tournament, but this set of rules also removes a great deal of the skill of Hearts and reduces it more to the luck of the deal.

For example, Shooting the Moon is prohibited, but that means that instead of having to use your judgment and expertise to decide the right mix of low cards to hold to keep from getting stuck with the Queen and high cards to hold to stop a possible Shoot, you simply discard your high cards at every opportunity. This greatly simplifies the strategy of the game and thus increases the element of luck.

The Vegas rules also do not allow passing, yet passing is at least half of the strategy of the game. On the other hand, not being able to Shoot the Moon (and not having to pass "stoppers") significantly reduces the importance of passing.

The nature of the tournament, in which your score is compared to everyone else's in the tournament and not just the opponents at your table, means that it is never right to take a chance of getting more points for the sake of trying to get the low scorer at your table.

Because of this, the rule that you must play the Queen of Spades the first chance you get makes sense, but again, the inability to try to hold the Queen for the low scorer removes another element of skill from the game.

Finally, the Queen of Spades counts 7 instead of 13. This changes the strategy in that taking a lot of Hearts can be more costly than taking the Queen of Spades. This reduces the effectiveness of a strategy the computer normally uses when holding the QS and not enough Spades to protect it. In such a case, the computer will usually lead high cards in other suits to give opponents a chance to discard Spades. Then the computer will exit with a low card. In the Vegas mode, this is not as effective because you might pick up more than 7 points in Hearts while leading out high cards.

Break Hearts before Leading

The default is that you cannot lead a Heart until a Heart or the Queen of Spades has been played on some other trick. By turning this option off, you can lead Hearts whether Hearts/QS have been played or not.

Hearts Allowed on Trick 1

If "Hearts Allowed on Trick 1" is turned ON, a person who has no cards in the suit led on the first trick may play a Heart if so desired. With this option turned OFF, Hearts may not be played on the first trick.

Queen of Spades Allowed on Trick 1

If "Queen of Spades Allowed" is turned ON, a person who has no cards in the suit led on the first trick may play the Queen of Spades if so desired. With this option turned OFF, the Queen of Spades may not be played on the first trick.

Opening Lead

If "Club Lead Required" is turned ON, the player with the 2 of Clubs must lead it.

If "Club Lead Required" is turned OFF, any suit but Hearts may be led on the first trick. Since the 2 of Clubs is no longer required to be led, the lead rotates clockwise among the four players.

You can select the player to lead first. This function is primarily of use when you are setting up a previously played game and you need to have the same player lead first again.

(*) QS-TAKER DEALS:

In the Vegas Rules mode, when a game starts, the player in seat 1 deals and the player to his left leads. After that, whoever took the Queen of Spades deals the next hand and the player to his left leads.

This rule helps the high scorer a little since it is almost always an advantage to be the last to play.

As with all other "Vegas Rules", this rule option can be selected individually without playing all of the Vegas Rules.

Shooting Not Allowed

With this option turned on, Shooting the Moon is not allowed. This removes a lot of the strategy of the game, since you can simply discard high cards every chance you get instead of having to hold back some high cards to stop a potential Shoot.

As with all other "Vegas Rules", this rule option can be selected individually without playing all of the Vegas Rules.

Deduct 26 for Shooting

If you Shoot the Moon, you can elect to have the 26 points deducted from your score instead of added to everyone else's. You must select this option before the last trick is taken to be able to use it on the current deal.

If another player's score is more than 26 points lower than yours, this option will automatically be selected.

Deduct 10 for JD/TD

This option subtracts 10 points from the score of the player who takes the Ten of Diamonds. Because some people prefer the JACK of Diamonds, although Hoyle says the Ten, both options are offered.

If neither option is checked, there is no ten-point deduction in effect.

Play QS First Chance

This rule requires that the Queen of Spades be played the first time the player holding it cannot follow the suit led. (It does not mean that the player holding it must lead it.)

As with all other "Vegas Rules", this rule option can be selected individually without playing all of the Vegas Rules.

Queen of Spades = 7 Points

This rule changes the penalty for taking the QS from 13 to 7.

As with all other "Vegas Rules", this rule option can be selected individually without playing all of the Vegas Rules.

Scaled Scoring

Scoring in Hearts is relatively bizarre in that getting points is a BAD thing (except for "Win" points for winning a game) and that the game ends not when the winner reaches a certain number of points but when one of the LOSERS does.

One result of this strange scoring method is that unlike any other game that I can think of, ganging up against the winning player and taking it easy on the "losing-est" player is not only considered acceptable, it is considered downright poor play NOT to do so.

However, this strategy taken to extremes can spoil the game since a poor player will always be getting a break from the other players and the best player will find that the others are constantly ganging up on him - hardly a fair way to play any game.

Since this strategy stems from the traditional scoring method, it would seem that a different scoring method should be offered which would reduce the effectiveness of this strategy. That is what Scaled Scoring attempts to do.

Scaled Scoring gives the each player points equal to the difference between that player's score and the scores of those players higher than him/her.

For example, if the final scores for players 1-4 are 70, 80, 95, 105, respectively, then player 1 would get $(80-70)+(95-70)+(105-70)$ for a total of 60 points. Player 2 would get $(95-80)+(105-80)$ for a total of 40 points. Player 3 would get $(105-95)$ for a total of 10 points. And player 4 would get nothing.

Here is how Scaled Scoring can change the game:

1. Scoring versus playing skill -

Traditional scoring - only the low scorer for a game gets a "win" point, even if his score is only one point lower than the second-low scorer. Also the low scorer gets only 1 "win" point whether he wins the game by 1 point or by 99 points.

Scaled scoring - the second-low scorer (and even the third-low) get points reflecting how low they scored. And the lower their game scores, the greater the number of "win" points the low scorers get.

2. Going for broke -

Traditional scoring - since being low scorer is all that matters (it doesn't matter if you are high scorer or 2nd-low when only the low scorer gets a "win" point, and it doesn't matter if you lose by 1 game point or by 25), the non-low scorers can take foolish risks to try to stick the low scorer or to try to Shoot.

Scaled scoring - even if it seems like you have no hope of winning, you have to continue to play your best game in order to hold down the number of "win" points the lower scorer(s) will get.

3. Ganging up on the low scorer, helping the high scorer -

Traditional scoring - as already mentioned, it makes sense for the players to gang up on the low scorer and help the high scorer.

Scaled scoring - again, since your game points carry forward to the "win" points column (in effect), you cannot afford to take risks to nail the low scorer, nor does it make sense to help the high scorer since you are going to get more points the larger the difference in your score versus the high(er) scorer(s).

The "Play A Tournament" is another way to stop players from ganging up on the low scorer. In this Vegas Rule, the assumption is that more than one table of players is competing and the lowest scores in the room win, not just the lowest at your table, so it does not make sense to risk taking points to try to stick it to just the low scorer at your table.

Show Winning %'s

This menu option converts the scores in the "Wins" column to percentages. If you have selected "Scaled Scoring", you will be shown the percentage of total points that each player has won; otherwise, you will see the percentage of total games won.

You can toggle the Percents display off and on by pressing Ctrl-P or by clicking "Show Winning %'s" in the "Rules" menu.

Hide Scores

Some people prefer to play by rules that do not allow you to see the scores (mainly who has already taken Hearts) during play. This menu item will toggle the score display off and on.

Scores will be displayed at the end of each hand, even if the score box is toggled off during play.

Show Suit Counts

This option will display the number of cards remaining in each suit during the play of a deal.

The ability to remember the number of cards out in each suit is a significant advantage which the computer players have, as you know if you have ever led a suit and taken points when nobody else could follow suit.

If you have trouble beating the computer and you cannot keep count in your head the number of cards out in each suit, turn this display on. You can toggle it on/off by pressing Ctrl-F9.

Change Game Goal

Lets you change the score to which the game is played. Default is 100.

Play A Tournament

Instead of playing to a specific score (such as 100) against just the scores of the opponents at your table, you play a specific number of deals against the scores of all the other opponents in the tournament.

Under Vegas Rules, a field of 64 players is divided into 4 people to a table. Ten rounds of 16 deals each are played, with high scorers in the field (not necessarily 1 from each table) being eliminated after each round until only 4 are left to play the 10th round.

These conditions cannot be duplicated exactly in this program, obviously, so a tournament takes this form: 10 rounds are played, with a different combination of computer players in each round. The skill of the players gets higher with each round.

(Note: Under Vegas Rules, most of the playing styles which are supposed to be weaker than the Expert style turn out not to be much weaker, if any. For example, Fraidy Freddie and Cautious Cal are timid when it comes to Shooting the Moon, when holding onto the Queen of Spades, when ducking Hearts to stop a Shoot, etc.

None of these are allowed under Vegas Rules, so these players play just as well as the Experts. Vicious Vickie can't even hold off playing the Queen on others to try to stick it to the human, since the QS must be played at the first opportunity under Vegas Rules.

Only Novice Nellie, who plays card pretty much at random, and Cheatin' Chuck, who knows what cards you have in your hand, still play the same way.)

In the 9th round you play against all experts. In the 10th and final round, you play against "Mystery Guests". If you are the high scorer in any round, you are eliminated. The goal is to make it into the final round and then win that round to win the tournament.

In the tournament mode, since you are competing against the scores of all the players in the tournaments, not just the players at your table, it does not make sense to risk taking points to try to stick it to just the low scorer at your table.

As with all other "Vegas Rules", this rule option can be selected individually without playing all of the Vegas Rules. For example, you could have a tournament in which Shooting is allowed and the Queen of Spades does NOT have to be played at the first opportunity and is worth 13 points instead of 7.

For example, by just clicking on Play A Tournament, you can play a tournament with Shooting turned on,

Change Pass Order

The following passing order options are available:

Right, Across, Left, Hold (no pass)

Left, Right, Across, Hold

Left, Across, Right, Hold

Left Only

"No Hold" is a separate option. You must select one of the four options above (#1 is the default). You may modify any of the first three options by doing away with the Hold option.

For example, if you select order #1 (Right, Across, Left, Hold) and turn on "No Hold", the order will be Right, Across, Left, and then Right, Across, Left again.

Not having a Hold turn removes some of the luck of the game and increases the skill element, but few people play this way among human players.

One of the Vegas Rules is No Passing which does not allow any passing at all.

Next Pass Direction

This menu option lets you change the pass direction. It is primarily for use when replaying a specific deal.

In particular, if you are setting up a previously played deal from the deal record, use this menu to make sure that the direction of passing is the same.

No Passing

This option does away with passing. Since passing is at least half the strategy of the game, we do not like this option, but it is one of the Vegas Rules.

Zip Button

The Zip Button replaces the Hint Button when in the AutoPlay mode.

This option will cause the program to zip straight through a deal without any pausing until the end. It plays all four hands. This can be used to generate a game record for a particular deal number.

Zip can also be used during The CardShark's turn at Duplicate Play if you are not interested in studying the play of The CardShark and just want to generate its scores.

This option is turned off at the end of each deal to prevent unintentional playing into the next deal.

When Zip is turned on, the button caption appears in all caps ("ZIP"). When it is turned off, it appears as "Zip".

Hint Button

The Hint Button replaces the Zip Button when not in the AutoPlay mode.

If you would just like to see what The CardShark would play or pass in a particular situation, click the Hint button at the bottom of the screen.

The card that the computer selects will pop up. You can put it back in your hand by clicking on the card, then click on the card you want. To accept the computer's suggestion, click the Ok button.

You cannot ask for a hint if you have already clicked on a card to raise it up.

Changing Player Names, Faces, Styles, Sounds, etc.

Skill level assignments, player names, the text of players' comments, and WAV file assignments can easily be changed with the CSH-CFG program, which you get when paying for CardShark Hearts.

Since this is a cosmetic feature not required for playing the game, CSH-CFG has not been included with the shareware version and is provided as bonus for paid-up users. Once you are licensed, the "Configure" option appears in the "File" menu.

See Also:

[Drawing New Faces](#)

Drawing New Faces

The faces for CSHearts are stored in the file FACES.BMP. If you want to try your hand at creating new faces, you can edit the file with any 256-color bit-mapped graphics editor. Shareware programs of this type include VGACad, Desktop Paint 256, Improces, and 256 Draw and are available from PsL (713-524-6394), BBS's, and other shareware sources.

Before editing the FACES.BMP file, be sure to have a backup copy stored somewhere else.

There are 11 faces with two poses for each - one with mouths closed and the other with mouths open. Animation is created by alternating between the two poses. In order for this to work, you can neither decrease nor increase the overall size of the BMP file and the faces must be perfectly aligned.

As a rule, you should confine new faces to the rectangular space used by the present ones, top-to-bottom and side-to-side. Tip: drawing programs let you cut-and-paste areas of a graphic, so you can draw the top face and copy it to the space for the bottom face and then make your changes to it, such as re-doing the mouth.

The easiest way to try out your new faces is with the CSH-CFG program that comes on the Bonus Disk. (See [Benefits of Paying for CardShark Hearts.](#))

If you make a new set of faces, I would be interested in seeing them and possibly distributing them with the program.

Reporting Problems

CardShark Hearts is a very complex program that must allow for even the most unlikely distribution of cards and plays. All known bugs have been fixed and traps have been put in to try to capture and fix unknown bugs on the fly.

However, if you do run into a problem of any kind, the most important thing to do is View the Deal Record as soon as possible. You can print the record and mail it to me or email the file to me on CompuServe. This will allow me to reproduce and fix the problem.

Licensed users reporting problems will receive free fixes if there is a program error in the current version. If you still have an old version, you can order the latest version for \$5 plus shipping with the order form at the end of the file, or you can download new versions from BBS's.

Your registration number will let you convert shareware versions to fully licensed versions; however, when you order updates from PsL, you can be assured of getting the very latest (to-the-minute) version of CSHearts.

Benefits of Paying for CardShark Hearts

To pay for CardShark Hearts, print the order form when you exit the program, or call PsL at 800-2424-PsL or 713-524-6394 or FAX: 713-524-6398 or CIS: 71355,470.

Several benefits are provided for those who pay, although as with all shareware, use of the program beyond a reasonable evaluation period REQUIRES payment be made whether you want the extra benefits or not.

When you order, you will also receive the following:

The latest version

Printed manual with tips on passing and playing

Bonus disk with the configuration program and other programs

Option to get sounds disks at reduced rates

The Latest Version

I play this game almost every day. If I find weaknesses during play, I correct them, as well as any problems reported by users. So the game is constantly being improved.

When you order, you will, of course, be sent the very latest version. You will also be notified of major upgrades with a chance to upgrade for a nominal fee. You also get free updates when reporting bugs or playing errors.

Printed Manual

When you order, you will also receive a printed manual with a section on how to win at Hearts. There is a lot of strategy involved in passing and playing Hearts, and this booklet explains it in a clear and concise way.

Bonus Disk

The Bonus disk includes the CardShark Hearts Configuration Program.

Also on the Bonus Disk is a utility for changing Wallpaper, manually or at a specified interval, a file and text finder, a Windows "pause" button utility, CardShark Bridge Tutor, and more.

Sounds Discounts

If you do not have a large variety of WAV files, the sounds can get old quickly. But if you DO have a lot of different sounds, they add a lot of enjoyment to the game.

You can easily add your own WAV files to CardShark Hearts with the [Configuration Program](#). However, for just \$4 (when you order the licensed version of CardShark Hearts), you can get over 5 MB of WAV files especially selected for use with CardShark Hearts. Of course, you can also use these sounds in Windows or anywhere else you would use WAV files. They make great system response sounds.

The sound files come compressed onto 3 high-density disks with a program for installing them. If you are not ready to order CSHearts, but would like to get the WAV files to try, they are \$9.99 for the three-disk set plus \$4 shipping.

You can also order CardShark Spades on CD-ROM, pre-installed with all the sound files plus thousands of the latest freeware and shareware programs. When ordering CardShark Spades for \$15 plus shipping, you can get this CD at the same time for just \$10 - only \$6 more than just getting the sound files alone on floppies.

What About "Store Versions"?

You may see versions of this program offered at retail locations for prices which are lower than the license fee shown on the order form.

To date, all such retail versions are NOT as powerful and full-featured as the shareware version you now have. These are basic versions of the program which usually include offers to upgrade to the version you now have, or they may be shareware versions for which payment must be made for continued use.

In addition, I am constantly improving the shareware version while these retail versions may not be updated due to the logistics of in-store marketing.

I mention this only to avoid a situation where a shareware customer buys a retail version and then gets mad when he finds out that it is not as advanced as the version he already has.

Try CardShark SPADES!!?

If you like CardShark Hearts, you should also like CardShark Spades. It has the same look and feel as CS-Hearts, plus it can use the same sound files that are in your CSHEARTS directory.

Like CS-Hearts, we guarantee that CS-Spades is the toughest competitor on the market or your money back.

CS-Spades plays 4-handed, cutthroat Spades with many rules options. To improve your game, you can see explanations of every bid and play that the computer players make.

To try out CS-Spades, get the shareware version for just \$6 + s&h, or or save money in the long run by ordering the fully licensed version for just \$15 + s&h with our money-back satisfaction guarantee.

Order CS-Spades the same time as CS-Hearts and pay only one \$4 s&h charge for the entire order. You save even more!

