

Thirteens

This interesting and unusual game was invented by programmer Randy Rasa, who kindly gave us permission to include Thirteens in Solitaire Till Dawn. Randy also calls this game “Tetris Solitaire,” for obvious reasons. If your non-Mac friends are jealous of Solitaire Till Dawn, tell them to look for Randy’s excellent shareware solitaire programs for DOS and Windows computers. His Web site, The House of Cards, is at <http://www.sky.net/~rrasa>, or you can e-mail him directly at rrasa@sky.net.

Layout Size: Fits nicely on a medium-size screen.

Difficulty: Some games of Thirteens are simply unwinnable, but it’s not too hard to win one game in five and the author reports that he can win around one in four.

Rules: Shuffle the deck and lay out fifteen cards, face up, in a matrix of five rows and three columns; this is the tableau. Place the remainder of the deck face down to form the stock.

Adjacent pairs of cards in the tableau may be discarded if they sum to thirteen. For example, an adjacent 8 and 5 could be discarded, or an adjacent Jack and 2. Kings may be discarded singly. “Adjacent” means above or below, or to the left or right, or diagonally. For example, the cards in the middle of the tableau are each adjacent to eight other cards, while the cards at the corners are each adjacent to only three others.

When a card is discarded, all cards above it in its column will “fall” down to fill the empty space. This in turn leaves an empty space at the top of the column, which is immediately filled from the stock. When the stock is empty, the spaces at the top of the column remain unfilled.

Towards the end of the game, one or two columns may become empty. You are then permitted to bring a card down from the top of another column to fill the single space at the bottom of each empty column. (This is an important rule—without it, Thirteens becomes a much harder game to win.)

(See picture: Thirteens. The Jack of Diamonds and 2 of Spades can be matched and discarded, after which the 3 of Hearts will drop down into the space vacated by the 2, and two new cards from the stock will fill the empty spaces at the tops of both

columns. Similarly the 10 and 3 of Hearts can be matched and discarded. The King of Clubs can be discarded singly.)

On the Screen: Solitaire Till Dawn will lay out the cards for you as usual. Make a match by dragging a card within the tableau and dropping it on the matching card. The rest is done by Solitaire Till Dawn automatically: the matched cards are discarded, cards above are dropped down, and the empty spaces at the top are filled from the stock. Kings can be discarded by dragging them straight to the discard pile. Empty columns can be filled by dragging cards from the tops of other columns.