

Solitaire Terms

Learn the words once, then read any solitaire rulebook with confidence.

24 terms

4 zones

4 games



A card's journey: stock to waste, into the tableau, then home to a foundation.

01 The four places cards live

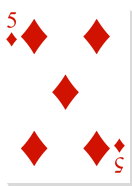
01



Stock

Face-down supply not yet in play.

02



Waste

Face-up pile beside the stock.

03



Tableau

Main working columns.

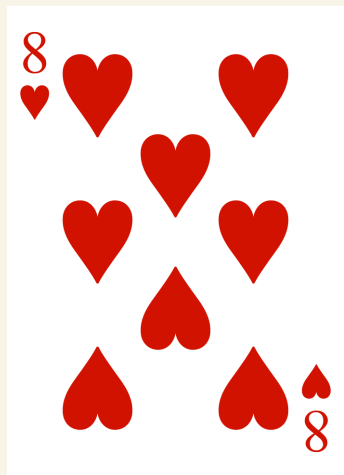
04



Foundation

Suit pile, Ace through King.

02 Read one playing card



RANK

8

Position in the order

SUIT

Heart

One of four families

COLOR

Red

Pairs with black

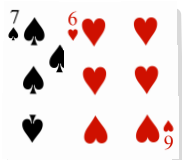
Face up means rank and suit are visible. Face down means only the patterned back is visible. A visible card can still be blocked.

03

Eight verbs describe nearly every move

From the opening deal to the final foundation, these are the actions rulebooks repeat.

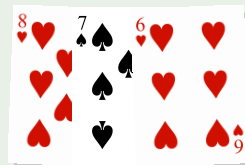
01



Build

One lower card lands on the next rank.

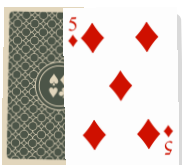
02



Run

A legal sequence can sometimes move together.

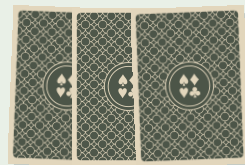
03



Draw

Stock turns into a newly available card.

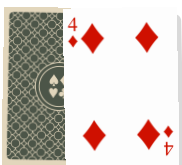
04



Deal

Cards enter the layout in a set pattern.

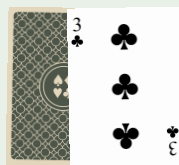
05



Flip

Turn a hidden card face up.

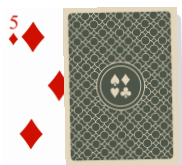
06



Reveal

Remove a blocker and expose information.

07



Recycle

Waste becomes a fresh stock.

08

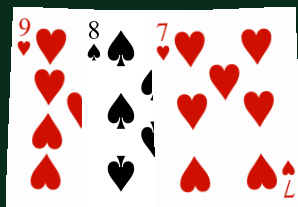


Undo

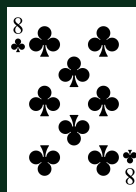
Reverse one move and test another line.

04

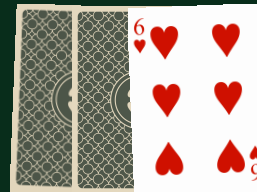
Space and position words



EMPTY COLUMN



FREE CELL



RESERVE

S1

Column

One vertical pile in the tableau.

S2

Empty column

A cleared tableau position available under the game rules.

S3

Cell

A temporary one-card holding place in FreeCell.

S4

Reserve

Cards held outside the tableau, often exposed one at a time.

S5

Available card

A card with no covering card or rule blocking its use.

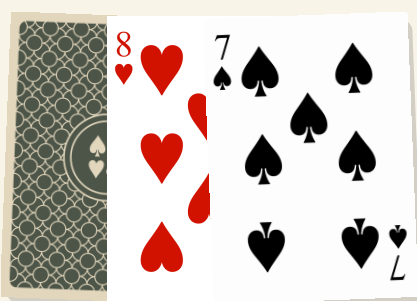
S6

Buried card

A card trapped beneath or behind other cards.

05

Available is not the same as visible



BURIED - BLOCKERS ABOVE



Available card

Nothing covers it, and no rule prevents its use. A card may be face up and still be buried beneath another face-up card.

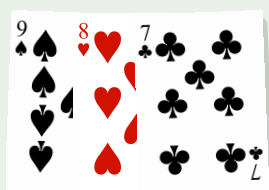
Working rule: look at the card nearest the bottom of a column first. It is normally the available card.

06

How rules describe the cards

Rank, suit, color, face, and direction tell you whether one card may legally follow another.

C1



Rank

The card value: Ace, 2 through 10, Jack, Queen, or King.

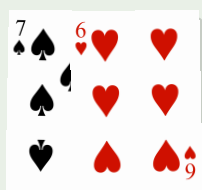
C2



Suit

Spades, hearts, diamonds, or clubs.

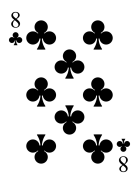
C3



Color

Red for hearts and diamonds; black for spades and clubs.

C4



Face up

The rank and suit are visible.

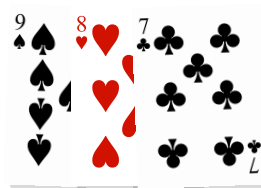
C5



Face down

Only the patterned back is visible.

C6



Ascending / descending

Rank goes up toward King or down toward Ace.

DIRECTION IS THE SHORTCUT

Ace - 2 - 3 ... King

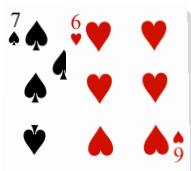
King - Queen - Jack ... Ace

Ascending means rank goes up. Descending means rank goes down. Alternating colors means red follows black, or black follows red.

07 Four familiar vocabularies

7-COLUMN CLASSIC

Solitaire Draw 1



Stock and waste feed an alternating-color tableau and four foundations.

Tableau

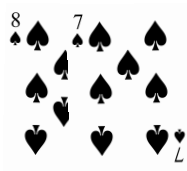
Waste

Foundations

playsolitaire.io/

10-COLUMN SUIT BUILDER

Spider Solitaire



There is no waste. A deal adds a row; clean King-to-Ace runs leave the table.

Stock row

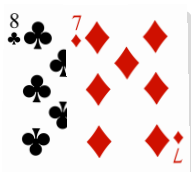
In-suit run

Sequence

playsolitaire.io/spider-solitaire

OPEN-INFORMATION PLANNER

FreeCell



Cells and empty columns create the temporary space needed to move longer runs.

Free cell

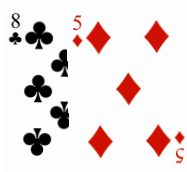
8 columns

Supermove

playsolitaire.io/freecell

PAIR-CLEARING GAME

Pyramid Solitaire



There are no foundations. Remove exposed pairs totaling 13 to clear the pyramid.

Exposed

Pair

Total 13

playsolitaire.io/pyramid-solitaire

08 Decode a rulebook sentence

RULEBOOK SAYS

Build down in alternating colors.

1 BUILD

Place one card onto another.

2 DOWN

The next rank is one lower.

3 ALTERNATING

Red follows black, or black follows red.

CITATION: NM MEDIA. (2026). SOLITAIRE TERMS - VISUAL GLOSSARY.

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