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## **Montana Minus**

A clone of traditional solitaire game

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# Indroduction

## Implementation and Requirements

The application implements a traditional solitaire game known as *Montana* or *Montana Aces* with the following differences from standard rules:

Number of cards is reduced to 36 (ranks 6 to A)

You can select select number of deals in a game from 3 (standard rules) to 6.

Minimum Requirements:

Screen size: 96 x 64

Midlet suit size: 50KB

Screen height 128 and colour is a substantial advantage. The application works fine with a large screen (like Nokia 3650/7650, Motorola A830, Sony Ericsson P800). *For Nokia devices it is recommended using a special release which operates full screen mode.*

The application keeps table of best results: wins obtained with minimum number of moves. It allows to undo and redo unlimited number of moves within current deal.

Developed by *Michael Glickman* for *Palmcrust* (Australia). Released in July 2003.

## Rules

The cards are shuffled and dealt in 4 rows 9 cards in each, after that all Aces are removed leaving four gaps. The objective is to rearrange the cards using gaps, and get a position where each row contains cards of same suit in increasing rank order from left to right: 6–7–8–9–10–J–Q–K. The Aces do not participate in the rearrangement, they are just placed instead of gaps to complete the family as soon as all other cards are arranged.

Each time when you move a card to a gap, the gap is filled, but a new gap is created at the former position of the moved card.

- A 6 (being the lowest rank card) can be moved to any gap located at start of a row (i.e. leftmost column)
- Any other card can be moved to a (non–starting) gap after a card is of the same suit and one rank lower than the moving card; for example 7 of clubs can be moved to a gap after 6 of clubs, J of diamonds can be moved after 10 of diamonds.
- In case of consecutive gaps (one gap after another), only left gap can be used for a move. Each consequent gap is *unusable*, but becomes usable as its left neighbour is filled.
- No card can be placed after a King (the highest rank card), a gap after a King is a *dead spot*. The only way to get rid of a dead spot is moving a King so that it is no longer followed by a gap.

The deal stops as soon as all gaps are *dead*. This implementation also allows to cancel a deal prematurely. After a deal is over, the cards are removed from each row starting from first non–arranged card. The Aces are added to removed cards, which are shuffled and redealt to unoccupied places. This continues until either all cards are arranged, or maximum number of deals allowed for a game is reached.

# Operating the Application

## Starting the application

After the application starts, you get to the main screen, You can start the game straight away by pressing FIRE key. The location of FIRE key is device specific. Here are some indications:

Nokia Series 30 and 40, or Motorola models – usually a key with a green handset picture on it (also named SEND or OFF-HOOK)

Nokia Series 60 and Ericsson P800 – joystick press, or the middle of arrow pad

Siemens – the left of two command keys (*command keys* are located below the screen).

Alternatively you can bring up the menu by pressing *Menu* command key (named *Select* or *Options* on some models). The following menu options are available:

**Play** – same as pressing FIRE

**Settings** – customize application (see Settings )

**Best results** – show top score table

**Game rules** – brief explanation of game rules

**About** – links to company site and email

**Exit** – terminate the application

(**Exit** is often implemented with a separate key)

On some models you can also exit application by pressing Clear key (a key used marked as C or Clear).

## Settings

To operate settings: use UP and DOWN arrows to highlight the item you wish to modify, then press FIRE to change the value. You can also use *Next* and *Previous* menu items to increase/reduce Deals/game value. Press Done command key to complete the changes and get back to main screen.

### Explanation of settings:

**Animate: On/Off**

Whether or not to animate each deal and card collection.

**Auto-move: On /Off**

If On, the computer moves for you in case a single move is available.

**Show srce: On/Off**

If Off (default) , the sources (cards that can be placed at current gap) are highlighted only if there are several sources available, if On – the sources are always highlighted.

**Deals/game: 3/4/5/6**

Maximum number of deals allowed for a game (default 3).

## Game Control

Use UP and DOWN key to highlight the gap (target) you wish to place the moved card. If the target does not start a row, only one card can be placed after it – just press FIRE to move. For a target starting a row, you also need to select a source (6 card) using LEFT and RIGHT keys, before you press FIRE.

To undo a move press ASTERISK (\*) key, to redo the move press HASH (#) key. With any new move all undone moves become unavailable. Once there are no moves, the application waits for a while, before the cards are collected, so that you can press \* to undo last move and avoid losing the deal.

To stop animation, or auto-moves press *Stop* key.

Menu options:

- Quit game** – abandon the game and get to main screen
- Status** – show status window (only for a small screen height)
- Game rules** – brief explanation of game rules
- How to play** – brief instruction on using keys
- Redeal** – terminate current deal prematurely  
(**Redeal** is often implemented as a separate key)

## Status Bar and Status Window

Where screen height allows, the application locates *status bar* above the board. The status bar contains the following information:

**Deal\_No** / **Deals\_max** **Message** / **Undone** **Move\_deal** / **Moves\_game**

where

- Deal No** – current deal in the game (1, 2, 3, etc)
- Deals\_max** – maximum number of deals allowed for a game
- Message / Undone** – a message (e.g. *Dealing*, *No moves*) During the game this field may contain the number of taken back moves (i.e. the moves that can be redone)
- Moves\_deal** – number of moves in current deal (the number is decremented with Undo)
- Moves\_game** – total number of moves in the game (including current deal)

If screen height is too small for placing the status bar, you can use **Status** menu option to bring up *status window*. Status window shows same information as status bar, but in a separate window:

Deal **Deal No** of **Deals\_max**  
 Moves:  
   this deal – **Moves\_deal**  
   this game – **Moves\_game**  
 Moves undone: **Undone**

# Registration and Support.

The application can be downloaded and purchased for the following sites:

<http://www.handango.com> (standard and Nokia releases)

<http://softwaremarket.nokia.com> (Nokia release only)

*Don't forget to specify **user name**.* User name affects registration code and appears on the main page.

Latest release can also be downloaded from the application site:

<http://montana.palmcrust.com>

Even if you are a non-registered user, don't hesitate to send your comment (of any kind) to [palmcrust@yahoo.com](mailto:palmcrust@yahoo.com) . *Please don't use this address for any irrelevant material – your message will be simply ignored.*

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