

How to Play Pyramid Solitaire

Pair exposed cards to make 13, open the seven-row pyramid, and choose removals that create the next useful move.

52 cards

28 in pyramid

Target: 13



13

The goal: remove all 28 pyramid cards. Pair exposed cards to total 13; an exposed King leaves alone.

01

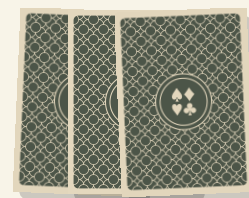
Set up the seven-row deal

28 FACE-UP PYRAMID CARDS

24-CARD STOCK



Bottom row: seven exposed cards

**Stock**

Turn one card at a time

**Waste**

Only its top card plays

02

Read the four board zones

PYRAMID



Seven overlapping rows

Remove blockers from the exposed edge to open higher cards.

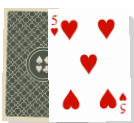
EXPOSED CARD



Nothing overlaps it

Only uncovered pyramid cards can pair with another card or the waste.

STOCK AND WASTE



Twenty-four extra cards

Check the board before covering a useful waste card with the next draw.

WIN CONDITION



Clear the pyramid

Stock cards may remain. The game ends when all 28 pyramid cards are gone.

03

Every legal pair



TOTAL 13

Ace + Queen

1 + 12



TOTAL 13

2 + Jack

2 + 11



TOTAL 13

3 + 10

3 + 10



TOTAL 13

4 + 9

4 + 9



TOTAL 13

5 + 8

5 + 8



TOTAL 13

6 + 7

6 + 7



TOTAL 13

King leaves alone

13 - no partner

13

One-card move
No second card is
selected.

04

Four rules that decide every move

RULE 1



Use only uncovered cards

A card plays only when no pyramid card overlaps it. The bottom seven begin exposed.

RULE 2



Remove pairs or one King

Two available cards must total exactly 13. An exposed King leaves by itself.

RULE 3



Turn stock one at a time

Only the top waste card is available. Scan every exposed rank before drawing again.

RULE 4



Win by clearing 28 cards

You win when the pyramid is empty, even if cards remain in the stock or waste.

Redeal rules vary. Use the displayed rule online. For physical cards, agree on the number of stock passes before dealing.

05 Choose the move that opens the board

1

Read upward from the blockers

Prefer a removal that exposes a new card or clears the second blocker beneath one.

2

Protect scarce partners

If a buried 6 still needs the last useful 7, that 7 already has a job.

3

Remove exposed Kings

A King needs no partner and usually gives free progress without spending another card.

4

Work both sides

Balanced progress creates more exposed choices and keeps the center from locking.

5

Pause before the next stock card

Scan every newly exposed rank before covering the current waste card.

06 Look past the obvious pair

BEFORE



AFTER



One legal pair, two questions

Does the removal uncover a new card? Does it preserve the partner a buried card will need later? If two pairs are legal, choose the one that increases future options.

07 Know what the solver number means

65.8%

EXACT SOLVER RESULT / 1,520 RANDOM DEALS

This is a solvability result, not a player win rate. The playable game uses a curated pool of solver-verified deals, so its observed results are not comparable with an unfiltered random sample.

08 Four traps that quietly remove options

TRAP 1

First pair seen

Legal is not always best.

TRAP 2

Spend last partner

Count scarce ranks first.

TRAP 3

Draw too quickly

Scan the waste pairings.

TRAP 4

Clear one edge

Keep the center opening.

09 Practice four removals with a plan

01 PAIR  Make 13 Name the card this pair uncovers.	02 PRESERVE  Save a partner Keep a scarce rank for a buried card.	03 CLEAR  Take the King Remove exposed free progress promptly.	04 SCAN  Draw last Check every exposed rank before stock.
---	--	--	--

10 Before every stock draw

✓ Scan every exposed pyramid rank.	✓ Check whether the waste makes 13.
✓ Prefer a pair that uncovers a card.	✓ Protect a scarce future partner.
✓ Remove any safe exposed King.	✓ Draw only after useful removals end.

11 Choose the clearing game you enjoy

PYRAMID  Pairs total 13 Arithmetic, blockers, scarce partners	TRIPLEAKS  One rank up or down Long chains and opening peaks	GOLF  One rank up or down Planning across seven columns
---	--	---

12 Reference, data and reuse

Keep the maintained guide with this handout

The online guide adds an interactive fixed deal, complete FAQ answers, and the maintained solver note. When sharing this printable online, link readers to the original guide.

playsolitaire.io/how-to-play-pyramid-solitaire

playsolitaire.io/pyramid-solitaire

PDF AS RENDERED: CC BY 4.0 - STANDALONE CARD ART EXCLUDED

Data note

The 65.8% figure is an exact solver result from 1,520 random deals. It is not a player win rate. The playable game uses a curated solvable pool.

Suggested citation

NM Media. (2026). How to Play Pyramid Solitaire - Rules and Pairing Guide. PlaySolitaire.io.