

# Penguin

1 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

**Build four foundations up by suit from a base rank, wrapping King to Ace.**

## SETUP

- 1 player with a standard 52-card deck.
- Place 4 base-rank cards on foundations.
- Deal remaining 48 cards into 7 tableau columns. 7 empty flippers available.

## SCORING

- Win by placing all 52 cards on foundations.
- Over 95% of deals are solvable with optimal play.

*Tip: Keep flippers empty as long as possible to preserve flexibility for sequence moves.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Build tableau columns down by suit.
- Move cards to foundations (up by suit from base rank).
- Use flippers for temporary single-card storage.
- Empty columns accept only the rank one below the base rank.

*Penguin is a FreeCell-style solitaire card game invented by David Parlett. It features seven tableau columns, seven free cells (called flippers), and foundations that begin at a specific rank determined by the first card dealt. With a high win rate and elegant design, it rewards careful planning and is considered one of the finest modern solitaire games.*

## Objective

Build four foundation piles up by suit, each starting from the rank of the first card dealt, wrapping from King to Ace as needed, until each foundation contains 13 cards.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 1 player (solitaire).
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Beak card:** Deal the first card to the first foundation. This rank is the foundation base.
4. **Other base cards:** Find the other three cards of the same rank and place them on the remaining foundations. These are available immediately.
5. **Tableau:** Deal the remaining 48 cards into 7 columns. The first column gets 7 cards, and the remaining 6 columns get 7 cards each (with the last column receiving 6).
6. **Flippers:** 7 empty free cells (flippers) are available for temporary card storage.

## Gameplay

1. **Tableau building:** Build down on tableau columns by suit (not alternating colour). Sequences of cards in suit may be moved together if enough free cells permit.
2. **Foundation building:** Build up by suit from the base rank, wrapping King to Ace as needed.
3. **Flippers:** Any single card may be placed in a free cell. Cards in free cells can be moved back to the tableau or to foundations.
4. **Empty columns:** An empty tableau column may only be filled by a card one rank below the foundation base rank (or a sequence starting with that rank).

## Scoring

1. **Win condition:** All 52 cards are assembled on the four foundations.
2. **Win rate:** Penguin has a very high win rate, estimated above 95% with optimal play.
3. **Speed scoring:** Some digital versions track time and moves for competitive scoring.

## Variations

- **FreeCell:** The classic free cell game with 8 columns, 4 free cells, and foundations always starting from Ace.
- **Penguin with fewer flippers:** Reduce the number of free cells to 5 or 6 for increased difficulty.
- **Relaxed Penguin:** Allow any card to fill empty columns, not just the specific rank.

## Tips and Strategies

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- Use flippers sparingly; keeping them empty preserves your ability to move long sequences.
- Build in suit on the tableau to create movable sequences that can be transferred efficiently.
- Plan the order in which you empty and fill columns carefully; the restriction on which rank fills an empty column is critical.

## Tips & Strategy

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Preserve free cells for emergencies. Build in suit on the tableau to enable group moves. Empty columns are powerful but restricted — only one specific rank can fill them.

The in-suit building requirement on the tableau means sequences are directly transferable to foundations, making the game more streamlined than FreeCell once you master the planning aspect.