

One-Person Games

Peg Solitaire

Peg solitaire games have a long history, much of which remains unknown. The earliest confirmed mention of Triangle Peg Solitaire is in an 1891 American patent, but scholars suspect the game is much older than that. English Peg Solitaire was first described in 1779 by J. C. Wiegleb, but scholars again suspect the game is much older. French Peg Solitaire was pictured in an engraving by Claude-Auguste Bery dated 1697. Scholars such as John Beasley believe that because the rules of these games are so simple, the games were probably played in much earlier times.

What's the appeal of peg solitaire? We know it was used 300 years ago, yet you can purchase the same game today. If a game lasts 300 years without a change in the board, the pieces, or the rules, it must contain something of interest. Let's take a look.

Triangle Peg Solitaire (Indigestion at Cracker Barrel™)

If you ever ate at a Cracker Barrel restaurant, you probably found a Triangle Peg Solitaire game on your table. A game from Cracker Barrel is in the picture to the right. I assume the purpose of the game is to keep you amused until the food arrives. That seems like a good idea.

Here, however, is the reality for many Cracker Barrel customers. You place your order with a prompt and friendly waitress. Then, with the menu out of the way, you notice the game and begin to play. By the time your order arrives, your blood pressure has gone up and your good humor has vanished. The game of Triangle Peg Solitaire, a piece of wood and a handful of golf tees, has identified you as someone barely smart enough to feed himself. You tense, you eat, and you get indigestion from food that is very good.



Although Cracker Barrel has notably increased the popularity of Triangle Peg Solitaire, it is not the only source of the game. The picture on the left is of a deluxe version of the game made by Venture Manufacturing. The Cracker Barrel version sells for about \$3 and the Venture Manufacturing version sells for about \$7.