

Willie's Wonky Computer Factory

Windows 10? Can't find Solitaire?? You won't, it's not there, but all is not lost, not even your money.

Microsoft moved all the Windows games to the Apps Store with Win 8. That's not as bad as it sounds. 'Store' conjures an image of a shop, and that means buying things, as in paying for them. Not so, think of it as a library of thousands and thousands of Apps (short for Applications, which was plucked out of a thesaurus by some genius somewhere as a more modern word than Program). A huge number of these Apps are free and all the old favourites; Minesweeper, Hearts and Freecell are still available, in fact if you search the Store for 'Solitaire' or type 'Solitaire' in the Windows search box – both will produce the same results - you will get about 730 hits.

There's always a catch though, isn't there, and with 'free' Apps you get some sort of advertising bundled in free as well. However, it doesn't cost anything to try the free versions that are on offer. If you find the adverts too distracting, try some of the many clone versions available for download and for online play. You will probably find at least one where both the design and the amount of advertising are acceptable, or simply pay the small charge – and they are surprisingly small, compared to the days when you had to drive down to the nearest computer games shop and buy it on a CD, in a fancy box. Any wonder you don't see many games shops any more. Just remember to check if your payment is a one off, or monthly, the latter can add up over time.

Interestingly, the 'old favourites' were not actually intended as entertainment.

The oldest, Microsoft Solitaire, was first added to Windows 3.0 in 1990. Its real aim was to teach a generation of command line input computer operators how to drag and drop with a mouse, without even realising that's what they were doing.

Minesweeper was introduced to Windows 3.1 - not to demonstrate that Windows was an adept gaming system, but to make the idea of left and right clicking second nature, and to teach speed and precision in mouse movement.

Hearts was introduced with 1992's Windows for Workgroups 3.1 - the first network-ready version of Windows - and allowed players to compete with other Hearts players on a local network. It wasn't just a card game. It was a way to get people interested in (and hopefully impressed by) the networking capabilities of the new Windows.

FreeCell was released with Windows 3.1 as part of the Microsoft Entertainment Pack Volume 2. It was bundled with the Win32s package which allowed new 32-bit applications to run on the 16-bit Windows 3.1. Its purpose was actually to test the 32-Bit data processing subsystem, which had been introduced as part of Win32s. If improperly installed, FreeCell wouldn't run. So not a game, but actually a stealth test of software systems.

Explore the Windows Store, there are lots of great apps and like I said, many are free. You will be asked to sign in with your Microsoft Account. This is the e-mail and password you used when you first installed or upgraded to Windows 10. The e-mail appears when you first boot up windows and depending on how you initially set it up, may or may not ask for your PIN. Your PIN is not your password. If you were overcome with excitement when you opened Windows 10 for the very first time and skipped setting up an account, that's no problem, there is an option to create an account. When you go to the store, select Sign in. In the Sign in page you will see the option 'No account? Create one!' Select that and follow the simple instructions. You can use any e-mail address you have; it doesn't need to be a Microsoft one. Just make sure you use one that is both valid (they will send a verification e-mail) and one that you do check regularly.

So, now that games have been removed from Windows 10, and when you go looking for them in your search bar you are instead shown search results from the Windows Store, where you can download the latest versions. Maybe that's intentional, what better motivation do you need to learn how to use the Windows Store, than to get your hands on your favourite games? Microsoft still teaching by stealth then?

Willie

Willie's Wonky Computer Factory

Windows 10? Can't find Solitaire?? You won't, it's not there, but all is not lost, not even your money.

Microsoft moved all the Windows games to the Apps Store with Win 8. That's not as bad as it sounds. 'Store' conjures an image of a shop, and that means buying things, as in paying for them. Not so, think of it as a library of thousands and thousands of Apps (short for Applications, which was plucked out of a thesaurus by some genius somewhere as a more modern word than Program). A huge number of these Apps are free and all the old favourites; Minesweeper, Hearts and Freecell are still available, in fact if you search the Store for 'Solitaire' or type 'Solitaire' in the Windows search box – both will produce the same results – you will get about 730 hits.

There's always a catch though, isn't there, and with 'free' Apps you get some sort of advertising bundled in free as well. However, it doesn't cost anything to try the free versions that are on offer. If you find the adverts too distracting, try some of the many clone versions available for download and for online play. You will probably find at least one where both the design and the amount of advertising are acceptable, or simply pay the small charge – and they are surprisingly small, compared to the days when you had to drive down to the nearest computer games shop and buy it on a CD, in a fancy box. Any wonder you don't see many games shops any more. Just remember to check if your payment is a one of, or monthly, the latter can add up over time.

Interestingly, the 'old favourites' were not actually intended as entertainment.

The oldest, Microsoft Solitaire, was first added to Windows 3.0 in 1990. Its real aim was to teach a generation of command line input computer operators how to drag and drop with a mouse, without even realising that's what they were doing.

Minesweeper was introduced to Windows 3.1 – not to demonstrate that Windows was an adept gaming system, but to make the idea of left and right clicking second nature, and to teach speed and precision in mouse movement.

Hearts was introduced with 1992's Windows for Workgroups 3.1 – the first network-ready version of Windows – and allowed players to compete with other Hearts players on a local network. It wasn't just a card game. It was a way to get people interested in (and hopefully impressed by) the networking capabilities of the new Windows.

FreeCell was released with Windows 3.1 as part of the Microsoft Entertainment Pack Volume 2. It was bundled with the Win32s package which allowed new 32-bit applications to run on the 16-bit Windows 3.1. Its purpose was actually to test the 32-Bit data processing subsystem, which had been introduced as part of Win32s. If improperly installed, FreeCell wouldn't run. So not a game, but actually a stealth test of software systems.

Explore the Windows Store, there are lots of great apps and like I said, many are free. You will be asked to sign in with your Microsoft Account. This is the e-mail and password you used when you first installed or upgraded to Windows 10. The e-mail appears when you first boot up windows and depending on how you initially set it up, may or may not ask for your PIN. Your PIN is not your password. If you were overcome with excitement when you opened Windows 10 for the very first time and skipped setting up an account, that's no problem, there is an option to create an account. When you go to the store, select Sign in. In the Sign in page you will see the option 'No account? Create one!' Select that and follow the simple instructions. You can use any e-mail address you have; it doesn't need to be a Microsoft one. Just make sure you use one that is both valid (they will send a verification e-mail) and one that you do check regularly.

So, now that games have been removed from Windows 10, and when you go looking for them in your search bar you are instead shown search results from the Windows Store, where you can download the latest versions. Maybe that's intentional, what better motivation do you need to learn how to use the Windows Store, than to get your hands on your favourite games? Microsoft still teaching by stealth then?