

Oh Hell!

Oh Hell! is also known by many other names, including **Blackout**, **Nomination Whist**, **Elevator** (l'Ascenseur in France), **Oh Shit!**, **Bust** and **Up and Down the River** (in Australia and New Zealand), **Boerenbridge** or **10 op en neer** in the Netherlands, **German Bridge** in Hong Kong.

Players

From 3 to 7 people can play. The game is best when played with 4 to 6.

Cards

A standard 52 card deck is used. The cards in each suit rank (from high to low) **A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2**.

Sequence of Hands

The **game** consists of a series of **hands**. The first hand is played with 7 to 10 cards dealt to each player, depending on the number of players:

- 3 to 5 players, 10 cards each;
- 6 players, 8 cards each;
- 7 players, 7 cards each

(because of the limit of 52 cards available). Each successive hand is played with one card fewer, down to a hand of just one card each, then one card more per hand back up to the starting level.

Example: With 7 players, the hands are: 7 cards, then 6,5,4,3,2,1, then 2,3,4,5,6,7, for a total of 13 hands to the game. A game should take approximately 45 minutes.

Object of the Game

The object is for each player to **bid** the number of tricks he thinks he can take from each hand, then to take exactly that many; no more and no fewer. Points are awarded only for making the bid exactly, and are deducted for missing the bid, either over or under (see [scoring](#) below).

The **hook** is that at least one player will fail on each hand, because the total number of tricks bid by the players may not equal the number of tricks available on that hand.

Deal

To determine the first dealer, draw cards. The player with the highest card deals first. The turn to deal rotates clockwise with each hand.

The cards are shuffled and cut and the dealer deals the cards singly until everyone has the [appropriate number of cards](#) for the hand being played. The next card is turned face up and the suit of this card is the **trump suit** for the hand. The trump suit beats any of the other three suits played in that hand. The remaining undealt cards are placed in a face down stack with the turned trump on top of it.

Bidding

The bidding in each hand begins with the player to the left of the dealer, then continues clockwise, back around to the dealer, who bids last. Each bid is a number representing the number of tricks that player will try to take. Everyone must bid - it is not possible to pass, but you can bid zero, in which case your object is to take no tricks at all. A bid may be changed only if the next player to the left has not yet bid. Remember the **hook**: the dealer may not bid the number that would cause the total number of tricks bid to equal the number of tricks available; a hand will always be "over-bid" or "under-bid". Keep in mind when bidding that not all cards in the deck are in play in any hand.

Play

The play begins with the player to the dealer's left, who leads the first card. The lead may be any suit (including trump). Play follows clockwise. Each player must follow the suit led, if he can. If not, he may play any other card in his hand, including trump. The player who has played the highest trump card, or if no trump was played, the highest card of the suit led, wins the trick. That player then leads to the next trick. Continue until all tricks have been played and won.

Scoring

The **scorekeeper** is designated prior to each game according to house rules. The scorekeeper, needless to say, has a distinct advantage, and should be monitored closely for "inadvertent" errors. The designated scorekeeper notes each bid and resulting scores on a score sheet. There are many different ways to score Oh Hell!

In the simplest version, a player who wins the exact number of tricks bid scores 10 plus the number of tricks bid (10 points for zero tricks, 11 for 1 trick, 12 for two tricks, etc.) Players who take more or fewer tricks than they bid score nothing. This method has the advantage that the scorekeeper, having written down the bids at the start of the play, can simply write a figure "1" in front of those that were successful and delete those that are not.

Perhaps the most widespread scoring method is to award 1 point for each trick won plus a bonus of 10 points for players who win exactly the number of tricks they bid. So for example a player who bid 2 would score 12 points for winning exactly 2 tricks, but only 1 for 1 trick and 3 for 3 tricks. This gives a player whose bid fails a slight incentive to win as many tricks as possible.

Some other scoring methods are given in the [variations section](#) below. Whatever method is used, the score keeper keeps a cumulative total of each player's score. The final cumulative scores determine the result. If the game is played for money, players pay or receive amounts corresponding to the difference of their scores from the average.

Variations

Sequence of Hands

There are a lot of variations of this. Some people start from 1 card each, go up to the maximum number of cards and then back down to 1. Some just go from the maximum down to 1 and then stop, or vice versa. If there are four people the maximum number of cards dealt may be 13 rather than 10, with three people you can go up to 17. Some people go up to some other maximum, such as 7 cards, irrespective of the number of players.

Dan Strohm describes a version, called **Devil's Bridge**, in which the hand size increases and then decreases. On the final 1 card hand, the players must each hold their card on their forehead, so each player can see all the other player's cards but not their own.

Bryce Francis reports that in Australia, when playing Bust with 5 players, they add 13 low cards from a second pack to make a 65 card pack, so as to deal 13 cards each on the first hand as with 4 players. When there are six players they add a further 13 low cards, so that the bottom half of the pack is duplicated. If duplicate cards are played to a trick, the second played beats the first.

Determining Trumps

Some sequences include hands in which all cards are dealt (for example 13 cards each to 4 players). There is of course then no card left to determine the trump suit. These hands are played without trumps.

Instead of turning up a card, some people go through the possible trump suits in a fixed sequence. This sequence may or may not include "no trumps".

Brad Wilson describes a version called "Oh Shit!" in which Spades are always trumps.

Jean-Pierre Coulon reports a variation in which after the appropriate number of cards have been dealt to the players, the next card is turned face up. If the rank of the turned up card is from 2 to 6, there are no trumps for the deal; if it is 7 or higher, the suit of the turned up card is trumps.

Bidding

Some people play without the **hook** rule, so the dealer is allowed to bid in such a way that everyone can win. There was a lively discussion in [rec.games.playing-cards](#) as to which version is more skilful, with strong advocates of each. Some think that hands where the bids add up are too easy; but others say that forcing the bids not to add up removes a tactical option from the dealer.

Some play with **simultaneous bidding**. When the players are ready to bid, they put a fist on the table. When everyone's fist is out, the group says "One, Two, Three" while bouncing their fists on the table. On Three, everyone must stick out some number of fingers (possibly zero) to indicate how many tricks they will try to take. Of course, with this method, there's no restriction against the total number of bid tricks being equal to the number of cards dealt. Since players cannot adjust their bids based on the other players' bids, the total tricks bid can be wildly different from the tricks available - for example it is not uncommon for three or four players to bid "one" when only one card was dealt. Several correspondents report that in Australia, most groups use simultaneous bidding rather than bidding in turn.

Play

Some play that the dealer, rather than the player to dealer's left, leads to the first trick.

David Wuori (of Maine, USA) reports a variation in which a player who has no card of the suit led must trump. Only if you have no cards of the suit led and no trumps can you discard from a different non-trump suit. Although this rule is uncommon in English speaking countries, it is actually the usual way of playing [La Podrida](#) (the Spanish equivalent to Oh Hell playefd in Latin America and in Spain) as well as the equivalent Romanian game of [Whist](#).

Mark Brader suggests a variation in which two jokers (big and little) are included, to make a 54-card deck. These jokers are a suit of their own containing only two cards. If a joker is turned up the other joker is the only trump.

Scoring

There are many alternative systems.

- Some players give the usual 10-point bonus for a successful positive bid but award only 5 points for a successful bid of zero. Others award 5 plus the number of cards dealt to each player for a successful zero bid, recognising the fact that zero is more difficult when more cards are dealt.
 - Some score 10 points for each trick bid and won for a successful bid. A successful "zero" bid wins 10 points. A player whose bid is unsuccessful (over or under) loses 10 points times the difference between the number of tricks won and the number of tricks bid.
 - Another system is that you win 5 points if you are right plus 10 for each trick taken, and you lose 5 points if you are wrong plus an extra 5 for each trick difference from your bid.
 - Yet another system: if you make your bid exactly you score 10 points plus the **square** of the number of tricks you bid (i.e. 10 points for none, 11 for one, 14 for two, 19 for three, 26 for four, etc.); if you fail you **lose** the **square** of the difference between the number of tricks you bid and the number of tricks you took.
 - Some play for a single winner, who is the player with the highest score when the whole series of hands has been played. In case of a **tie** after the last hand, some deal further hand(s) with the maximum number of cards until a clear winner is determined. The winner may not be any of those involved in the original tie - any player can win until the end.
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Ten Thousand

Commercially known as *Farkle* and sometimes by its French name *Dix Mille*. This is an absorbing game for any number of players using six dice. There are many variations of this game. The basic version is described first followed by a series of additional rules under the heading *Variations*. It is left to you to decide which alternative rules, if any, you wish to play.

Play:

Each player takes it in turn at rolling the dice and must set aside at least one scoring die (1s, 5s, triples, 3 pairs, or a run of 6. See score values below). Their turn continues, rolling the remaining dice, as long as they have thrown and set aside a scoring number or combination. Players announce their progressive score for their turn after each roll.

A player's turn ends when they either decide to stop and score their accumulated points or until they have a scoreless throw and score nothing for that turn. Should all six dice be set aside as scoring then the player may roll them all again and continue their tally.

Scoring combinations only count when made with a single throw. For example a player who rolls and puts aside a 1 and then throws two 1s with the next throw may only score 300 not a 1,000.

The first player to score a total of 10,000 or above, wins the game, provided any subsequent players, with a turn left, don't exceed their score.

Score Values

1 = 100 points 5 = 50 points 1, 1, 1 = 1,000 points #, #, # = # x 100 e.g. 2, 2, 2 = 200 points: 6, 6, 6 = 600 points 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 = 3,000 points 3 pairs = 1,500 points (including

four-of-a-kind and a pair)

An example turn might go something like this: A player rolls the six dice and they come up 1, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6. He could set aside the two 1s and the 5 scoring 250 points, but instead sets aside the 1s, scoring 200 and rolls the remaining four dice. They come up 1, 6, 6, 6 and the player decides to set aside all four dice and his score is increased by 700 points (1 = 100 + 6, 6, 6 = 600) giving a total of 900 so far. All six dice are scoring so the player decides to continue his turn by rolling them all again. This time he is unlucky and rolls 2, 3, 3, 4, 6, 6. A scoreless throw which means he scores nothing for this turn and the dice pass to the next player.

Variations:

A player may not begin to score until he has first scored at least 500 points in a turn.

A player may take up the scoreless dice of the previous player who has had a scoreless throw and forfeited their points. Should he then throw a scoring number or combination he takes the previous player's forfeited score, in their last turn, as their own. Worth risking if they have accumulated a high score.

A player who throws a scoreless first roll, three times in successive turns, loses 1000 points.

If five dice are counted as scoring, the remaining die may be thrown twice in an attempt to roll a 1 or 5. If successful, the player is allowed to continue rolling with all six dice and receives a bonus of 500 points. The bonus increases by 500 points for every time the last die is rolled and scores in a single turn.

Four or more 2s cancels a players entire score.

Six-of-a-kind made with a single throw wins the game outright.

Sometimes a target total of 5,000 is set to make for a shorter game.

There is a commercial version of *Ten Thousand* called *Cosmic Wimpout* that is played with only 5 dice and without the three pairs scoring category. Some states in the USA play a version using 7 dice.

Crazy Eights

Introduction and Alternative Names

Crazy Eights is a game for two or more players, in which the object is to get rid of the cards in your hand onto a discard pile by matching the number or suit of the previous discard.

There is a huge number of variations of this game, and many alternative names. It is sometimes called **Crates**, **Switch**, **Swedish Rummy**, **Last One** or **Rockaway**. In Germany it is **Mau-Mau**; in Switzerland it is **Tschausepp**; in the Netherlands it is **Pesten**. Some British players call it **Black Jack**, which is unfortunate as it can lead to confusion with the well-known American banking card game [Blackjack](#).

Basic Game

The basic game of Crazy Eights uses a standard 52 card pack, or two such packs shuffled together if there are a lot of players. The dealer deals (singly) five cards to each player (seven each if there are only two players). The undealt stock is placed face down on the table, and the top card of the stock is turned face up and placed beside the stock to start the discard pile.

Starting with the player to dealer's left, and continuing clockwise, each player in turn must either play a legal card face up on top of the discard pile, or draw a card from the undealt stock. The following plays are legal:

1. if the top card of the discard pile is not an eight, you may play any card which matches the rank or suit of the previous card (for example if the top card was the king of hearts you could play any king or any heart);
2. an eight may be played on any card, and the player of the eight must nominate a suit, which must be played next;
3. if an eight is on top of the pile, you may play any card of the suit nominated by the person who played the eight.

The first player who gets rid of all their cards wins, and the other players score penalty points according to the cards they have left in their hands - 50 for an eight, 10 for a picture, and spot cards at face value (one point for an ace, two for a two and so on).

Variations

Crazy Eights is one of the easiest games to elaborate by adding variations, and is rarely played in its basic form. There are variations in the number of cards dealt, the rules about drawing cards and the scoring system. Usually, special meanings are given to particular cards; when played these cards affect the sequence of play, or have other effects.

Drawing Cards

In the normal game, you may always use your turn to draw a card. However, some people play that you may only draw if you are unable to play - if you can play you must.

Some allow the drawn card to be played immediately if it is a legal play.

Some allow more than one card to be drawn - either up to a fixed number of cards, after which if you still cannot (or will not) play the turn passes to the next player. Others require you to continue drawing until you can play.

Last Card

There may be a rule that you must alert the other players when you have just one card left. If you fail to do so you must draw cards (usually two) from the stock as a penalty.

Cards requiring special actions

Change suit

Traditionally an eight can be played at any time and the player can nominate any suit. Some play that you can only play an eight that matches (either the same suit or another eight). Some play that you can play an eight at any time but cannot nominate another suit - the next player must

match the suit of the eight you played or play another eight. Szu Kay Wong suggests that you can play an eight at any time, but can only nominate a different suit if the eight matches the rank or suit of the previous card. Some players use jacks or aces rather than eights as the cards which have the power to change suit.

Skip

Some play that when a queen (or some other designated rank) is played, the next player in rotation misses a turn, and the turn passes to the following player.

Reverse direction

Some play that when an ace (or some other designated rank) is played, the direction of play reverses, becoming anticlockwise if it had been clockwise, or vice versa.

Draw cards

Some play that when a two is played the next player must either draw two cards or play another two. If several consecutive twos have been played the next player must either play another two or draw two cards for each two in the sequence.

Gin Rummy

The Deck

One standard deck of 52 cards is used. Cards in each suit rank, from low to high:

Ace 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Jack Queen King.

The cards have values as follows:

Face cards (K,Q,J) 10 points

Ace 1 point

Number cards are worth their spot (index) value.

The Deal

The first dealer is chosen randomly, and the turn to deal alternates between the players. Each player is dealt ten cards, one at a time. The twenty-first card is turned face up to start the discard pile and the remainder of the deck is placed face down beside it to form the stock. The players look at and sort their cards.

Object of the Game

The object of the game is to collect a hand where most or all of the cards can be combined into sets and runs and the point value of the remaining unmatched cards is low.

- * a run or sequence consists of three or more cards of the same suit in consecutive order
- * a set or group is three or four cards of the same rank

A card can belong to only one combination at a time - you cannot use the same card as part of both a set of equal cards and a sequence of consecutive cards.

Note that in Gin Rummy the Ace is always low. A-2-3 is a valid sequence but A-K-Q is not.

Play

A normal turn consists of two parts:

1. The Draw. You must begin by taking one card from either the top of the stock pile or the top card on the discard pile, and adding it to your hand. The discard pile is face up, so you can see in advance what you are getting. The stock is face down, so if you choose to draw from the stock you do not see the card until after you have committed yourself to take it. If you draw from the stock, you add the card to your hand without showing it to the other players.
2. The Discard To complete your turn, one card must be discarded from your hand and placed on top of the discard pile face up. If you took the top card from the discard pile, you must discard a different card - taking the top discard and putting the same card back is not permitted.

For the first turn of the hand, the draw is done in a special way. First, the person who did not deal chooses whether to take the turned up-card. If the non-dealer declines it, the dealer may take the card. If both players refuse the turned-up card, the non-dealer draws the top card from the stock pile. Whichever player took a card completes their turn by discarding and then it is the other player's turn to play.

Knocking

You can end the play at your turn if, after drawing a card, you can form sufficient of your cards into valid combinations: sets and runs. This is done by discarding one card face down on the discard pile and exposing your whole hand, arranging it as far as possible into sets (groups of equal cards) and runs (sequences). Any remaining cards from your hand which are not part of a valid combination are called unmatched cards or deadwood. and the total value of your deadwood must be 10 points or less. Ending the play in this way is known as knocking, presumably because it used to be signalled by the player knocking on the table, though nowadays it is usual just to discard face down. Knocking with no unmatched cards at all is called going gin, and earns a special bonus.

A player who can meet the requirement of not more than 10 deadwood can knock on any turn, including the first. A player is never forced to knock if able to, but may choose instead to carry on playing, to try to get a better score.

The opponent of the player who knocked must spread their cards face-up, arranging them into sets and runs where possible. Provided that the knocker did not go gin, the opponent is also allowed to lay off any unmatched cards by using them to extend the sets and runs laid down by the knocker - by adding a fourth card of the same rank to a group of three, or further consecutive cards of the same suit to either end of a sequence.

If a player goes gin, the opponent is not allowed to lay off any cards.

Note that the knocker is never allowed to lay off cards on the opponent's sets or runs.

The play also ends if the stock pile is reduced to two cards, and the player who took the third last card discards without knocking. In this case the hand is cancelled, there is no score, and the same dealer deals again. Some play that after the player who took the third last stock card discards, the other player can take this discard for the purpose of going gin or knocking after discarding a different card, but if the other player does neither of these the hand is cancelled.

Scoring

Each player counts the total value of their unmatched cards. If the knocker's count is lower, the knocker scores the difference between the two counts.

If the knocker did not go gin, and the counts are equal, or the knocker's count is greater than that of the opponent, the knocker has been undercut. In this case the knocker's opponent scores the difference between the counts plus a 10 point bonus.

A player who goes gin scores a bonus 20 points, plus the opponent's count in unmatched cards, if any. A player who goes gin can never be undercut. Even if the other player has no unmatched cards at all, the knocker gets the 20 point bonus the other player scores nothing.

The game continues with further deals until one player's cumulative score reaches 100 points or more. This player then receives an additional bonus of 100 points. If the loser failed to score anything at all during the game, then the winner's bonus is 200 points rather than 100.

In addition, each player adds a further 20 points for each hand they won. This is called the line bonus or box bonus. These additional points cannot be counted as part of the 100 needed to win the game.

After the bonuses have been added, the player with the lower score pays the player with the higher score an amount proportional to the difference between their scores.

Variations

Some players begin the game differently: the non-dealer receives 11 cards and the dealer 10, and no card is turned up. The non-dealer's first turn is simply to discard a card, after which the dealer takes a normal turn, drawing the discard or from the stock, and play alternates as usual.

Although the traditional rules prohibit a player from taking the previous player's discard and discarding the same card, it is hard to think of a situation where it would be advantageous to do this if it were allowed. The Gin Rummy Association Rules do explicitly allow this play. The Game Colony Rules allow it in one specific situation - "action on the 50th card". When a player takes the third last card of the stock and discards without knocking, leaving two cards in the stock, the other player has one final chance to take the discard and knock. In this position, this same card can be discarded - if it does not improve his hand, the player simply turns it over on the pile to knock.

Some people play that the bonus for going gin is 25 (rather than 20) and the bonus for an undercut is 20 (rather than 10). Some play that the bonus for an undercut, the bonus for going gin, and the box bonus for each game won are all 25 points.

Some play that if the loser failed to score during the whole game, the winner's entire score is doubled (rather than just doubling the 100 game bonus to 200).

Six Card Cribbage

Introduction

Six Card Cribbage is basically a game for two players, but adapts easily for three players, and for four players in fixed partnerships - a very useful feature. It is now the standard form of Cribbage and widely played in English speaking parts of the world.

Cribbage in England is primarily a pub game - indeed, it is one of the few games allowed by Statute to be played in a public house for small stakes. A game of low animal cunning where players must balance a number of different objectives, remain quick witted enough to recognise combinations, and be able to add up, it is perhaps not the most obvious of games to be so firmly associated with the English pub. It is a game where experience counts for a great deal - though luck, of course, has a large part.

It is also a game where etiquette is important. The rituals associated with cutting and dealing, playing and pegging, as well as the terminology, all serve the useful purpose of keeping things in order - and they help to give the game a flavour of its own. In card playing, as with food, authenticity matters.

Two-handed play

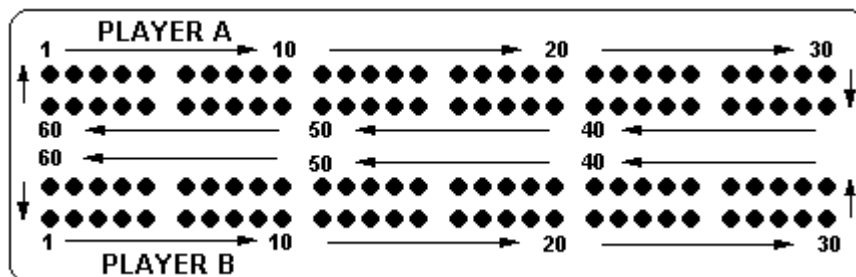
Two players use a standard 52 card pack. Cards rank K(high)Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 A(low).

Object

To be the first to score 121 points or over (**twice** round the usual British design of board) accumulated over several deals. Points are scored mainly for combinations of cards either occurring during the play or occurring in a player's hand or in the cards discarded before the play, which form the *crib* or *box*.

Board and Pegs

The score is kept by means of a board and pegs. Starting at one end of the board - usually to the left of the first dealer - players peg their scores as they occur using their two pegs alternately: the forward peg shows the player's latest score, and the rear peg shows the previous score.



When a player scores, the rear peg is moved in front of the forward peg by the same number of holes as the score to show the new total. This enables scores to be easily checked and acts as a visible statement of the progress of the game. Players peg up on the outside of the board and back on the inside. The winner is the first to *peg out* by exceeding 120.

The exact design of the board is not critical. The diagram shows the type of board most commonly used in Britain. In North America they come in a great variety of shapes. The essential feature is a track for each player with holes representing the numbers from 1 to 120.

Deal

The first deal is determined by cutting the cards. The player cutting the lower card deals and has the first box or crib. If the cards are equal - and that includes both players cutting a *ten card* (10, J, Q or K) - there is another cut for first deal. The deal then alternates from hand to hand until the game is over.

It is usual to play best of three games. The opponent of the first dealer in the first game deals first and gets the first box in the second game. For the third game - if a decider is needed - there is a fresh cut to decide who deals first.

The dealer shuffles, the non-dealer cuts the cards [but see [variations](#)], and dealer deals 6 cards face down to each player one at a time. The undealt part of the pack is placed face down on the table. At the end of each hand, the played cards are gathered together and the whole pack is shuffled by the new dealer before the next deal.

Discard

Each player chooses two cards to discard face down to form the crib. These four cards are set aside until the end of the hand. The crib will count for the dealer - non-dealer will try to throw cards that are unlikely to make valuable combinations, but must balance this against keeping a good hand for himself. Dealer, on the other hand, may sometimes find it pays to place good cards in the box - especially if they cannot be used to best advantage in hand.

Start Card

Non-dealer cuts the stack of undealt cards, lifting the upper part without showing its bottom card. The dealer takes out the top card of the lower part, turns it face up and, after non-dealer replaces the upper part, places it face up on top of the pack. This turned up card is called the *start card*. It is not used during the play of the cards but in the [show](#) it will count for combinations as part of both players' hands as well as of the dealer's box.

If the start card is a jack, the dealer immediately pegs 2 holes - this is called *Two for his heels*.

Play of the cards

Beginning with the non-dealer, the players take turns to play single cards. You play your own cards to form a face-up pile in front of yourself, keeping them separate from the other player's cards. In this stage of the game the total pip value of the cards played by both players is counted, starting from zero and adding the value of each card as it is played. This total must not exceed 31. When no more cards can be played without going over 31, the count is restarted from zero. The pip values of the cards are:

Ace = 1; 2 to 10 = face value; jack = 10; queen = 10; king = 10.

As each card is played, the player announces the running total - for example the non-dealer plays a king and says "10", the dealer plays an 8 and says "18", the dealer plays a jack and says "28", and so on. If a card is played which brings the total exactly to 31, the player pegs 2 claiming *Thirty one for two* as he does so.

A player who cannot play without exceeding 31 does not play a card but says *Go*, leaving his opponent to continue if possible, pegging for any further combinations made (see below). Bringing the total to exactly 31 pegs 2, but if the total is 30 or less and neither player can lay a card without going over 31, then the last player to lay a card pegs *one for the go* or *one for last*.

The cards that have been played are turned over and a fresh round of play starts with the cards remaining in the players' hands in exactly the same way. The opponent of the player who played last in the previous round (scoring *Thirty one for two* or *One for last*) plays first in the new round. This second round of play starts again from zero and again continues until neither can play without going over 31. The last player again scores "1 for last" or "31 for 2", and if either player has any cards left there is a further round. Play continues for as many rounds as necessary until both players' cards are exhausted. Towards the end, it may happen that one player has run out of cards but the other still has several cards. In that case the player who still has cards simply carries on playing and scoring for any combinations formed until all his cards have been played.

Example: Player **A** has **king-king-2-2**; player **B** has **9-8-7-6**.

First round: **A** plays **king** - "10"; **B** plays **6** - "16"; **A** plays **king** - "26"; **B** says "go"; **A** plays **2** - "28"; **A** plays **2** - "30 for 3". **A** pegs 3, namely 2 for the pair of twos and 1 for playing the last card of this round.

Second round: **B** plays **8** - "8"; **A** has no cards left so cannot do anything; **B** plays **7** - "fifteen two" (**B** pegs 2 points); **B** plays **9** "24 for 3 and 1 for last" (**B** pegs 4 points: three for the run **7-8-9** and one for playing the last card).

Please note: it is **never** possible to score "one for last" and "31 for 2" at the same time. They are **alternatives**. If you make exactly 31 for two points just peg those two points - you do **not** get an additional "one for last" in this case.

Tactical note: It is often worth keeping low cards in hand for this phase of the game, especially when there is a strong possibility of being able to peg out before one's opponent.

Scoring during the play

A player who makes any of the following scores during the play pegs them immediately.

15:

If you play a card which brings the total to 15 you peg 2 claiming *Fifteen two*.

31:

As mentioned above, if you play a card which brings the total to exactly 31 you peg 2.

Pair:

If you play a card of the same rank as the previous card (e.g. a king after a king) you peg 2 for a pair. Note that (for example) a 10 and a queen do NOT make a pair even though they are both worth 10 points.

Pair Royal:

If immediately after a pair a third card of the same rank is played, the player of the third card scores 6 for *pair royal*.

Double Pair Royal:

Four cards of the same rank, played in immediate succession. The player of the fourth card scores 12.

Run:

A *run* or *sequence* is a set of 3 or more cards of consecutive ranks (irrespective of suit) - such as 9-10-jack or 2-3-4-5. Note that ace is low so, for example, ace-king-queen is not a run. The player of a card which completes a run scores for the run; the score is equal to the number of cards in the run. The cards do not have to be played in order, but no other cards must intervene.

Example: cards are played in the following order: 4-2-3-5-6. The player of the 3 scores 3 for a run, then the player of the 5 scores 4, and the player of the 6 scores 5.

Another example: 4-2-3-4-3. The player of the first 3 scores 3 for the run 4-2-3. Then the player of the second 4 score 3 for the run 2-3-4. The player of the second 3 scores nothing because the 3 does not complete a run.

Another example: 4-2-6-5-3. The final 3 scores 5 points for a 5-card run. Nothing is scored before then, because there is no run until the 3 is played.

Last Card:

If neither player manages to make the total exactly 31, whoever played the last card pegs 1.

Note that to score for pair, pair royal, double pair royal or run, the cards must have been played consecutively during a single round of play. If **one** player had to say "go" while the combination was being formed, the combination is still valid, but if **both** players are unable to play, causing a new round of play to be started from zero, all combinations are started afresh.

Example 1: Player **A** has 10, 10, 9, 6; player **B** has 7, 6, 5, 4.

A plays 9, **B** plays 6 (scoring fifteen two), **A** plays 6 (scoring two for a pair), **B** plays 5. The total is now 26; **A** has to say "go", so **B** plays 4, scoring three for a run, plus one for last. The **A** begins again with 10, **B** plays 7, and **A** plays the other 10, scoring one for last.

Example 2: Player **A** has 10, 8, 7, 5; player **B** has 7, 6, 5, 4.

A plays 8, **B** plays 7 (scoring fifteen two), **A** plays 7 (scoring two for a pair), **B** plays 6. The total is now 28; neither can play, so **B** scores one for last. If **A** now begins again with a 5, **A** does **not** score for a run, because the 7 and 6 were played in the previous round of play (before the total was reset to zero).

The Show

Players now retrieve the cards that they put down during the play and score for combinations of cards held in hand. First the non-dealer's hand is exposed, and scored. The start card also counts as part of the hand when scoring combinations. All valid scores from the following list are counted.

15:

Any combination of cards adding up to 15 pips scores 2 points. For example king, jack, five, five would score 10 points altogether: 8 points for four fifteens, since the king and the jack can each be paired with either of the fives, plus 2 more points for the pair of fives. You would say "*Fifteen two, fifteen four, fifteen six, fifteen eight and a pair makes ten*".

Pair:

A pair of cards of the same rank score 2 points. Three cards of the same rank contain 3 different pairs and thus score a total of 6 points for *pair royal*. Four of a kind contain 6 pairs and so score 12 points.

Run:

Three cards of consecutive rank (irrespective of suit), such as ace-2-3, score 3 points for a run. A hand such as 6-7-7-8 contains two runs of 3 (as well as two fifteens and a pair) and so would score 12 altogether. A run of four cards, such as 9-10-J-Q scores 4 points (this is slightly illogical - you might expect it to score 6 because it contains two runs of 3, but it doesn't. The runs of 3 within it don't count - you just get 4), and a run of five cards scores 5.

Flush:

If all four cards of the hand are the same suit, 4 points are scored for flush. If the start card is the same suit as well, the flush is worth 5 points. There is no score for having 3 hand cards and the start all the same suit. Note also that there is no score for flush during the play - it only counts in the show.

One For His Nob:

If the hand contains the jack of the same suit as the start card, you peg *One for his nob* (sometimes known, especially in North America, as "one for his nob's" or "one for his nibs").

Nineteen:

It is impossible to score nineteen in hand or in box. If you think you have, then you should either stop playing or stop drinking. *Nineteen* is proverbially used as a term to indicate a worthless hand.

Note that when scoring a hand, the same card may be counted and scored as part of several different combinations. For example if your hand is 7 8 8 K and the start card is a 9 you score *Fifteen 2, fifteen 4, and a pair is 6, and a run is 9 and a run is 12* - 12 holes to peg, with each of your 8s forming part of a fifteen, a pair and a run.

After non-dealer's hand has been shown and the score pegged, dealer's hand is shown, scored and pegged in the same way. Finally the dealer exposes the four cards of the crib and scores them with the start card. The scoring is the same as for the players' hands except that a flush in the crib only scores if all four crib cards and the start card are of the same suit. If that happens the flush scores 5.

Muggins (optional rule). If a player, when scoring his hand or the crib, overlooks some points, then after the player has announced the total and scored it, his opponent can call "muggins", and peg the points himself. Some people apply the same rule if a player fails to claim a combination scored during the play. Some Americans call this version of the game "cutthroat" cribbage, and play that you don't have to say anything - you just wait until the opponent finishes pegging the points they have noticed and then silently peg the rest of their points yourself.

Winning the game

As soon as someone reaches or passes 121, that player wins the game. This can happen at any stage - during the play or the show, or even by dealer scoring *two for his heels*. It is not necessary to reach 121 exactly - you can *peg out* by scoring 2 more when you were on 120 and still win. All that matters is that your opponent's pegs are both still on the board.

Four-handed play

All the scoring features are identical to the two-handed version. Partners sit opposite each other. One member of the partnership is elected to peg and these two players cut for first box. Dealer offers the pack to the opponent on his right for the first cut (or not, if you pay the rule that the cards are not cut). Cards are dealt clockwise one at a time, five to each player. (So this is six card crib with five cards each - the logic of the game is the same since hand and box always contain the same number of cards.)

Each player puts one card in the dealer's box. Dealer then offers the undealt stack to the opponent on his left to cut for *start*. ('Cut back for box, forward for start.') Partners may help each other keep score and will try to assist each other with a good discard if possible (putting a 5 in partner's box on occasion, for example) and will co-operate during play to trap their opponents or to improve each other's chances of pegging. But they may not overtly advise on play or indicate the cards they hold. When three players are forced to say "go", the fourth player earns the point for last card. In the show, counting begins at the dealer's left and ends with the dealer.

Three-handed play

Again, all the main features of play are identical. Dealer deals five cards to each player and one into the box. Each player discards **one** card, so that everyone has a four card hand and there are four cards in the crib. The player to the dealer's left cuts the deck to reveal the turn-up card. This player also begins the play, playing the first card. When two players are forced to say "go", the third player earns the point for last card. In the show, counting begins at the dealer's left and ends with the dealer. Each player acts completely independently, although the two trailing players may temporarily conspire to do down the leader. This form of the game really requires a special board with either three sides or some other arrangement to accommodate three sets of holes.

Variations

Dealing Sequence

According to the American Cribbage Congress rules, in a match consisting of a series of games, the loser of each game deals first in the next game.

No cutting

In some circles, the non-dealer does not get the opportunity to cut the cards before the deal. For example, David Dailey writes:

Dealer shuffles the deck (and may cut it himself [though some disagree]) but does **not** place it on the

table to be cut. If he does, the opponent may pick up the deck and deal, giving himself the "crib" and a slight advantage.

I think this version without a cut is played only in some informal circles in North America. The American Cribbage Congress rules require the cards to be cut, as do the rules normally used in Britain. Those who omit the cut is sometimes justify this by asserting that Cribbage is a gentleman's game in which cutting (seen as a device to make it more difficult for the dealer to cheat by stacking the deck) is out of place.

Lurching or Skunking

When playing to 121 points, some play that if the loser scores 60 or fewer points he is **lurched** and loses a double stake.

Some play that if the loser scores 61-90 points he is **skunked** and loses a double stake; if he scores 60 or fewer he is **double skunked** and loses a triple (or quadruple) stake.

91-Point Cribbage

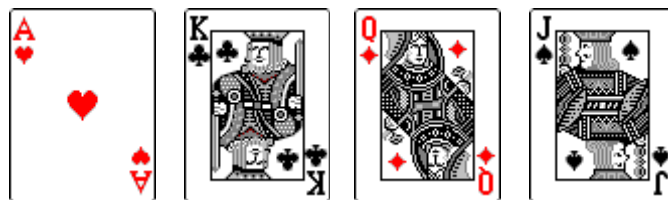
Mike Tobias reports that in and around Manchester, England it is usual to play Cribbage to 91 points rather than 121 - that is up, down and up a standard 30-point long cribbage board.

Newmarket / Michigan / Boodles

Cards and Layout

A standard 52 card deck is used. The cards in each suit rank from lowest to highest: **2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-J-Q-K-A**.

During the game stakes are placed on a layout. This can be a board or cloth, or can be made by laying out cards from a second deck on which the stakes are placed. The layout consists of areas representing the following cards:



These are sometimes called the **pay cards** or **boodle cards**.

Placing Stakes and Dealing

Before the deal, the dealer places two chips on each boodle card and the other players put one chip on each.

The deal is clockwise, and the turn to deal passes to the left after each hand. The dealer deals one hand

to each player and one spare hand. All of the cards are dealt out one at a time; some players will have one card more than others, but this does not matter. The players look at their cards, and the spare hand is left face down and not used in the game.

The Play

All plays are made by placing a card face up on the table in front of you. The different players' cards are not mixed together but are kept in front of the person who played them until the end of the play.

The person to the left of the dealer begins. They can play any suit, but must play the lowest card they hold in that suit. Whoever has the next higher card of the same suit **must** now play it, followed by the holder of the card after that, and so on until either the ace is reached or no one can play because no one holds the next higher card of the suit (it might be in the spare hand or have been played earlier). A card which no one can follow, because no one has the next higher card in that suit, is called a **stop card**.

The last person who played a card (the ace or the stop card) now starts again. Again they can play any suit but must play the lowest card they hold in that suit.

During the play, anyone who manages to play a card which matches one of the boodle cards takes all the chips on that card.

As soon as any player runs out of cards, the play ends. All the other players must pay one chip for each card remaining in their hand. The player who ran out of cards collects all of these chips.

Any chips remaining on the layout stay there for the next hand.

Variations

Free placement of chips

Some play that at the start of the hand you must put a fixed number of chips on the layout (say 6), but you can distribute them as you like among the boodle cards. For example you could put all 6 chips on one card if you wanted to. As this happens before the deal, there is of course no way of knowing which cards are the best investment.

Dealer exchanges or auctions the spare hand

Some play that if you are the dealer, after you have dealt and looked at your cards, you have the option of exchanging your hand for the face down spare hand. You are not allowed to look at the spare hand before deciding to exchange. Alternatively, if you do not want to exchange, you can auction the unseen spare hand to the highest bidder. The person (if any) who buys the spare hand discards their own original hand face down and pays the dealer in chips the amount bid for the spare hand.

Compulsory change of suit

Some play that when starting again after a stop or an ace, you must if possible play a card of a **different** suit from the one that was just played. If you can't play a different suit, there are two views as to what happens:

1. If you have no option, you can play the same suit.
2. If you have nothing but cards of the suit that was just played, the turn to play passes to the next player to your left. If no one has any other suit the play ends at this point, and there is no payment for the cards players have left in their hands.

Three-in-one

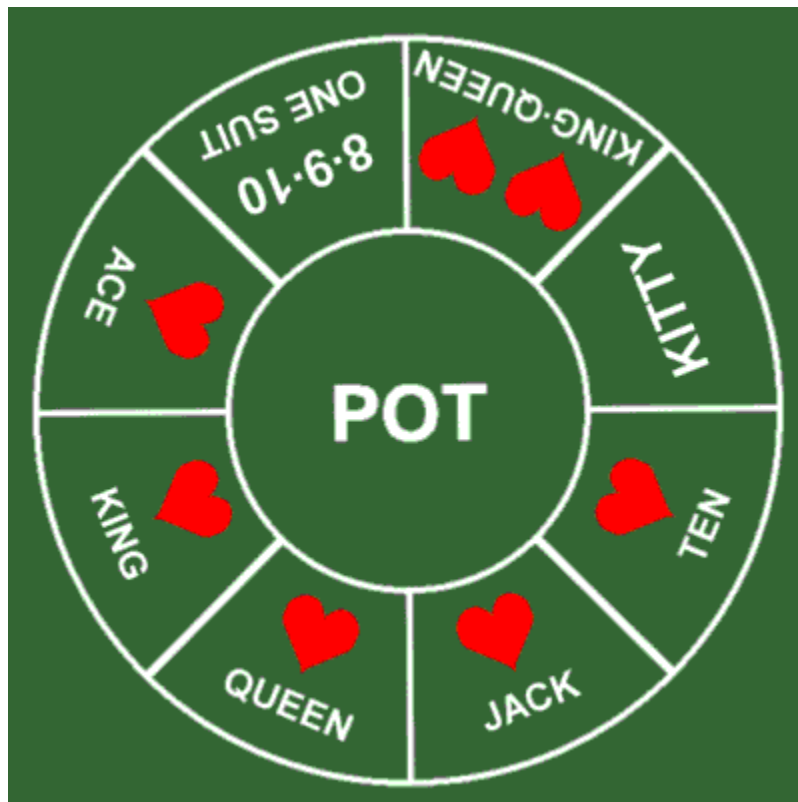
Introduction

This game, also known as **Tripoli**, is a modern version of the ancient European game **Poch** or . In North America equipment for the game is sold under the names **TRIPOLEY®**, [Rummoli](#), [Michigan Rummy](#) and **Royal Rummy**. In Australia, I am told it is known as **Calliente**, and in Germany it is still possible to buy a board for the game under the original name **Poch**.

The game is in three stages: in the first stage, the holders of particular cards collect the relevant stakes; the second stage is similar to [Poker](#), and the final stage is a Stops game similar to [Michigan](#) or Boodle.

Players and Equipment

Three in One is best for 4 to 7 players (and is possible for 2 to 9). It requires a standard deck of 52 cards, the cards ranking in each suit, from low to high: **2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-J-Q-K-A**. You also need a supply of chips for betting, and a board or cloth marked out to receive the various stakes. The layout looks something like this:



The Deal and Placing the Stakes

Before the deal, each player must place nine chips on the board - one on each of the labelled spaces: ace of hearts, king of hearts, queen of hearts, jack of hearts, ten of hearts, king-queen of hearts, 8-9-10, kitty and pot. It may be that some of these spaces already contain unclaimed chips from previous deals;

in this case the new chips are added to these.

The dealer then deals out the cards one at a time, clockwise, to form one hand for each player plus a spare hand. The spare hand does not belong to anyone. Some players will have one more card than others.

If as dealer you do not like your hand you can exchange it for the spare hand. You are not allowed to look at the spare hand before deciding whether to swap. If you do swap, your whole original hand is discarded face down and becomes the spare (you cannot combine cards from the two hands).

Alternatively, the dealer can offer the spare hand unseen for sale to the highest bidder. The person (if any) who buys the spare hand discards their own original hand face down and pays the dealer in chips the amount bid for the spare hand; if you auction the spare hand and no one wants to buy, you still have the option to swap your hand for the unseen kitty. Another possibility is to exchange your hand for the spare and then auction your old hand to the highest bidder. What you cannot do is exchange your hand for the spare and then exchange back - once you look at the spare hand you have to keep it.

Players will keep the **same cards** for all three stages of the game - there is no new deal before the second and third stages.

First Stage - collecting stakes for pay cards

Anyone who holds the ace, king, queen, jack or ten of hearts takes all the chips from that space.

If a player has the king **and** queen of hearts, that player takes the chips from the king-queen space, in addition to the chips from the king and queen spaces.

The chips in the 8-9-10 space can be taken by a player who has an 8-9-10 sequence in one suit (for example **♠8-♠9-♠10**). The 8, 9 and 10 must all be in the same suit, but the suit does not have to be hearts. If two or more players have 8-9-10 in different suits they share the chips in the 8-9-10 space equally, leaving any remainder on the layout for the next winner.

Usually the chips in some of the spaces are unclaimed - these are left on the layout to be won in a future hand. Since more chips are added to each space at the start of each hand, the king-queen and 8-9-10 spaces, which are less often claimed, tend to produce higher winnings when someone does have the right cards.

Second Stage - Poker

Before the stops play begins, there is a round of poker. Everyone selects five cards from their hand that they wish to play poker with, separates them from the rest of their hand, and temporarily puts the other cards aside. You do not necessarily have to select the cards that form your best poker hand (you may have cards that you do not want to reveal until the stops part of the game, especially if you play the variation where stakes are collected from the layout in stage three rather than stage one).

All poker bets are placed in the **pot** space of the layout. The player to dealer's left begins the betting, and can either bet (putting an additional chip or chips in the pot) or check. If the first player checks, the next player can bet or check, and so on clockwise around the table. If everyone checks, all the poker hands are exposed and the player with the highest hand takes the pot.

If a player bets, it is no longer possible for subsequent players to check. After a bet, players have three options:

1. **Pass** or **fold** - they drop out of the betting and can no longer win the pot. Any chips they have already placed in the pot will go to the winner.
2. **Call** or **see** - the player puts into the pot enough chips so that the total amount of chips they have placed in the pot is equal to the total number put in by the last player who bet or raised.
3. **Raise** - the player puts in the number of chips that would be needed to call, plus some additional chips.

The betting continues clockwise around the table for as many rounds as necessary until one of two things happens:

1. All the players except one have folded. The sole remaining player takes all the chips in the pot. In this case none of the players' cards are exposed - it does not matter who actually had the best hand.
2. All the players who have not folded have put in equal stakes. This will happen when after a bet or raise, all the other players either fold or call. In this case there is a showdown between these players - they expose their hands and the highest wins all the chips in the pot. The players who have folded do not expose their cards - they cannot win the pot even if their hands were actually better than those taking part in the showdown.

Note that after you have passed / folded, you cannot take any further part in the betting.

If in the showdown, two or more players have equal hands, the pot is split equally between them. Any remainder of chips is carried over for the next deal.

It is usual to agree, before the start of the game, a limit for bets and raises in the poker stage. For example, if you agree a limit of 10, no one is allowed make an initial bet of more than 10, or to raise the bet by more than 10 chips in addition to the number needed to call the previous bet or raise.

Third Stage - Michigan

All players pick up their cards, putting their poker cards back together with the remainder of their hand, and play a game of [Michigan](#). The winner of the pot in the poker stage begins the play by leading a card face up in front of them. If there was a tie for the pot, the first of the winners in clockwise order starting to the left of the dealer will begin. The card led can be of any suit, at the player's choice, but must be the lowest card that they hold in that suit (it need not be the absolute lowest card in their hand - they might have a lower card in another suit).

The player who holds the next higher card of the led suit must play it, placing it face up on the table in front of them. Then the player with the next higher card of the suit must play that, and so on until either the ace is reached or no one can play because no one holds the next higher card of the suit. A card on which no one can play is called a **stop card**; this can happen because the next higher card of the suit is in the spare hand, or because it has been played previously.

When the end of the sequence is reached, the player who played the ace or stop card begins again. They can lead any suit **except** the suit just played, and they must play the lowest card they hold in the suit they choose. The player with the next higher card of the suit led plays it, and so on until another stop is reached.

The play continues like this until someone runs out of cards, at which point the play ends immediately. The player who played all their cards wins all the chips in the "kitty" space on the layout, and in

addition wins from each other player a number of chips equal to the number of cards they had left in their hands.

If a player who has just played an ace or stop cannot lead again, because all their remaining cards are in the same suit that was just played, then the turn to play passes to their left hand opponent. If that player also has nothing but the suit just played, the turn to start passes around the table until a player is reached who has some other suit to lead. If no one has any other suit the play ends, and everyone puts into the kitty a chip for each card they have left in their hands. These chips stay on the layout to be won by the winner of stage three of the next deal.

Ending the Game

The game can continue for as long as the players want. When you decide to stop, there will probably be unclaimed chips in some of the areas of the layout (often on the **king-queen** and **8-9-10** spaces). Rather than just sharing these chips out among the players, it is usual to play for them. This can be done by playing an extra round of poker: do not place any new chips but deal just five cards to each player and play as in [stage two](#); whoever wins takes all the chips from the layout. If there were a lot of chips left over you may prefer to divide these into several pots and play a game of poker for each.

Variations

A popular variation is to omit stage one, and instead to play that the layout stakes are collected by anyone who plays the relevant card during the [Michigan stage](#). To collect the king-queen stake you have to play the queen and king of hearts consecutively. To collect the 8-9-10 stake you have to play the 8, 9 and 10 of any suit consecutively. This makes the game slightly more interesting, in that if you are dealt a high heart or a sequence, there is no guarantee that you will collect the stake for it - someone might run out of cards before you have a chance to play it. [Rummoli](#) is played this way.

Some play that the suit of the pay cards on the layout is decided by whoever is prepared to pay the largest amount. Players bid in turn, starting with the dealer, and going around the table as many times as necessary until all except one player have passed. The high bidder then adds the amount of the bid to the kitty and chooses the paying suit. In this version the stakes on the pay cards are collected during the [Michigan stage](#), as in the variation described above.

Some play that the sequence on the layout is **6-7-8** or some other specific sequence, rather than **8-9-10**.

Some play that the poker betting is begun by the dealer, rather than by the player to dealer's left. Some play that the Michigan stage is begun by the dealer, or by the player to the dealer's left, rather than by the winner of the poker.

Some play that everyone must play with their original cards - there is no swapping or auctioning of the spare hand.

All the variations given on the [Michigan page](#) are possible for stage three.

Some play that the first lead in stage three must be the **lowest** card in the player's hand. They have no choice unless they hold equally low cards in two or more suits. Subsequent leaders can choose the lowest card of any of the other three suits as usual.

Pitch

Pitch is also known as **Setback** or **High-Low-Jack**. There is also a set of very similar games known as **Smear**, which are described on [a separate page](#).

Introduction

Pitch is a North American game, derived from the old English game of [All Fours](#) (which was also known in America as Seven Up or Old Sledge). Pitch is All Fours with bidding added. Some of the newer versions of Pitch include other features such as extra points and an opportunity to improve one's hand by taking extra cards and discarding.

There are two main types of Pitch game: Partnership Pitch (played with partners, obviously) and Cutthroat Pitch (in which everyone plays for themselves). Whereas card game books tend to concentrate on Cutthroat Pitch, most of the e-mail I get is about Partnership Pitch, and this preference is reflected in the balance of information on this page. I have the impression that Cutthroat Pitch is more often played on the coasts, and usually for money. The various types of Partnership Pitch are most popular in the mid-west and are family or social games played to a score. There are many variations of pitch, mostly involving increasing the number of points from four to five, ten or more by introducing extra scoring trumps.

Partnership Pitch

Players and Cards

The deck is a standard American deck of fifty-two cards, ace high. The game is usually for four players in two teams, partners sitting across from each other. The game is played clockwise.

Deal

Each player receives six cards, dealt three at a time. The turn to deal rotates clockwise after each hand.

Bidding

There is one round of bidding. The possible bids are **two**, **three**, **four** and **smudge** (smudge is really a bid of five). Each player in turn either passes or bids higher than the previous bid if any, except for the dealer, who, having last bid, may "steal the bid" by bidding the same as the highest bid. The final bidder becomes the **pitcher**, and has the right to name trump and lead to the first trick.

If the first three players pass, the dealer must bid at least the minimum bid of **two**. This is called a "force bid".

The bids represent how many of the following four items will be won when the tricks of the game are played out:

High

awarded to the team which holds the highest card in the trump suit in play, i.e. the ace if it has been dealt;

Low

awarded to the team which wins the trick containing the lowest trump card in play, i.e. the two if it has been dealt. If the two is not dealt in play, the three may be low. If the three was not dealt either, the four, and so on;

Jack

awarded to the team which wins the trick containing the jack of trumps. If the jack of trumps was not dealt no one gets this point;

Game

awarded to the team which has the higher total value of cards in its tricks. Card values are as follows:

each ace	4
each king	3
each queen	2
each jack	1
each ten	10

The total value of all the cards in the deck is 80, and whichever side has the higher total in its tricks gets the point for game. In case of a tie, no one gets this point.

The bid of **smudge** requires all six tricks to be won by the declaring side, in addition to the four items listed above. (Sometimes a team can win all the tricks, but if the jack of trumps was not dealt, that is not sufficient to win a smudge bid.)

The play

The pitcher leads a card to the first trick, and the suit of this card becomes the trump suit. The winner of each trick leads the next, and may lead any card. A player who has a card of the suit led must either follow suit or trump. Players may play trump on any trick, **even if they can follow suit**. A player who has no cards of the suit led can play anything - either a trump or a card of another suit. Each trick is won by the highest trump card played, or if there are no trumps in it then by the highest card in the suit led.

Scoring

Each of the items High, Low, Jack and Game is worth one point. If you bid and make your bid, you get the number of points you make (in other words, if you bid two and make four, your team scores four points). However, to score five points (smudge), you need to actually bid smudge - if you bid four, and actually win all the tricks, including the jack of trump, you still only score four. The opposing team makes whatever number of points they earn. For example if the declarer's team bid two, but the opponents capture the 2 of trump, the opponents score one for Low.

If a team fails to make its bid is said to be **set**. It loses (or is **set back**) the value of the bid, while the other team again scores whatever points it makes.

Note that if a side that bids smudge loses a trick, the bid has failed and they will be set back 5 points no matter what happens after that. However, the play must be continued to the end to give the other side a chance to score points.

A cumulative score is kept for each team. A team's score can be negative.

Winning the Game

In order to win, a team needs at least 21 points, but they can **only** win at the end of a hand in which they **made their bid**. A team which reaches 21 or more on a hand where they are against the declarer - nor do they win if they bid and lose a contract, but still have 21 or more points.

It is therefore possible for the winning team to have fewer points than the losing team. For example, suppose that we have 18 points and they have 24, but they have not yet won because they acquired their last 4 points playing against our bids. If we now bid 3 and make it, and they take 1 point, **we win**, even though we have just 21 points while they have 25.

Partnership Variations

Draw

After trump is declared, players discard any cards they don't want face down, and the dealer replenishes their hands to six cards from the undealt portion of the deck. It is illegal to discard trump, and normally, players will discard all their non-trump cards in the hope of replacing them with trump. This makes it more likely that the ace, two, and jack will end up in play.

Pitching

A player may lead (or "pitch") a card instead of bidding. Pitching in this way is equivalent to a bid of four with the led suit as trump. If someone pitches, none of the other players can bid, except for the dealer, who still has the option to take the bid by pitching or announcing a smudge. If the dealer does take the bid in this way, the original bidder must take back the card they pitched. Some play that if the dealer does this and is set, the loss is doubled.

Six players

The six player game is two against two against two, all sitting opposite their partners. Instead of six cards, each is dealt eight. There is no draw, but everyone discards two cards after trump is announced.

Cutthroat Pitch

Pitch can also be played by two or more players, each playing for themselves. The rules of bidding and play are the same as for the partnership game. In the game with more than two players, the opponents will tend gang up against the bidder to try to prevent the bid being made.