

# Card Games

A collection of card game rules based on a standard deck of cards.

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# Single Deck of Cards

Single Deck of Cards

# Trios

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**36 cards** (Three each of 1-12)

## OVERVIEW

**Three is the magic number!** Be the first player to collect a certain number of trios (*three identical number cards*) depending on the mode of play:

## SIMPLE MODE

- **Any three trios.**
- or*
- **The 7 trio.**

## SPICY MODE (Advanced)

- **Two connected trios.** The connected numbers are shown in the bottom corners of the cards.
- or*
- **The 7 trio.**

## SETUP

1. Shuffle and deal cards face down to each player according to the number of players. Place the remaining cards **face down** in the middle, next to each other.

Number of players	3	4	5	6
Cards per player	9	7	6	5
Cards in the middle	9	8	6	6

2. All players pick up their cards and sort them into numerical order, lowest to highest, without showing anyone.
3. Decide if you are playing **SIMPLE** or **SPICY** mode. (*We recommend **SIMPLE** if this is your first time playing.*)

## HOW TO PLAY

Whoever most recently ate something with avocado goes first and play continues to the left. On your turn, try to find three of the same number card. To do this, **reveal cards one at a time in one of two ways:**

1. **Reveal the LOWEST or HIGHEST card from any player's hand, including yours.** Ask an opponent to reveal either their lowest or highest card. (*You could also reveal your lowest or highest card.*) Place the card face up for all to see.
2. **Reveal a card from the middle.**  
Turn any card in the middle face up for all to see.

### Continue playing until one of the following happens:

- You reveal a card that doesn't match the previous one. In this case, all revealed cards are then put back where they came from: either face down in the middle and/or returned to their owner(s).

*or*

- **You complete a trio by finding all three matching cards.** Congratulations! Take the trio and place it face up in front of you.

**In either case, your turn is over.**

## IMPORTANT:

- You can perform the same action several times.  
***For example:** ask an opponent to reveal their highest card, then ask again for their highest remaining card.*
- When you reveal a card from your own hand, it **must be the lowest or highest** number. (**NEVER** a number from the middle or your hand.)
- If you don't have any cards left in your hand, you may still play using the cards in the middle and your opponents' cards.

## WINNING

A player immediately wins as soon as they collect:

- Three trios (**SIMPLE** mode)  
*or*
- Two connected trios (**SPICY** mode)  
*or*
- **The 7 trio** (which always beats everything else!)

## TEAM VARIANT

*(for 4 or 6 players)*

*Make the following adjustments to the main rules:*

## SETUP

1. Form teams of two players: Two teams if there are four players and three if there are six.  
Sit opposite your partner, not side by side.
2. Shuffle and deal all the cards face down evenly to all players. No cards go in the middle.

3. After secretly sorting cards, you may **swap one with your partner**. All teams do this at the same time.

## Swapping:

If two partners wish to swap cards, they secretly select one of their cards, exchange them facedown at the same time, and put them discreetly in the correct place in their hands.

## Communication:

**Swapping is the only form of communication allowed between partners.** All other forms of communication are prohibited (*eye signals, kicking under the table, showing where a swapped card was placed, etc.*).

## HOW TO PLAY

- Each time a team wins a trio, the opposing team(s) can make a new swap.
- Partners share any trios they won. (*Keep them together in front of one partner.*)

## WINNING

**A team wins as soon as they have collected:**

3 trios or 2 connected trios depending on the game mode (**SIMPLE** or **SPICY**) or **the 7 trio**.

# Gin Rummy

## The Pack

Gin Rummy is played with a 52 card deck, the wild cards (jokers) are not used. It is best to use two decks, so that while one player deals the cards, the opponent can shuffle the other deck.

## Rank of Cards

The order of the cards, from highest to lowest, is: king (K), queen (Q), jack (J), ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, deuce and ace. As for the value of the cards, the figure cards are worth 10 points and the other cards are worth the value indicated by their pips.

## Object of the Game

Each player uses their hand to form combinations of three or more cards, to get more than the 100 points required to win the game before their opponent does so when played over several hands.

## The Deal

The deck is spread out on the table and each player takes a card. The player who draws the highest card chooses where to sit and deals out ten cards to each player, one by one, leaving the deck with the remaining cards in the center of the table. The top card of the stock deck is placed face up next to it to start the discard pile. In the following games, the player who wins the previous game becomes the dealer.

## The Play

The player who did not deal the cards starts the game, with the option to pick up the upturned card next to the stock deck, meaning that one of their cards must be discarded. If the said card is of no interest, the player passes without discarding. The opponent may, in turn, take that card and discard another, and if they are not interested, they pass without discarding. Then the first player can now take the top card off the stock deck, discarding another. The game continues, with each player in turn being able to take the top card off the stock deck or the discard pile, then discarding a card, but which may not be the same card that they just picked up from the discard pile.

The game consists of players grouping the 10 cards in their hand to make minimum combinations of three cards of the same rank or runs of the same suit. The ace can be combined with the deuce but not with the king (K). A player can fold when their hand contains only unmatched cards worth a total value of no more than 10 points, making a Knock. As soon as a player discards their last card, they show all of their cards, announcing the number of points that are left without combining. It is not compulsory to Knock, a player can prolong the game in order to improve their hand. The best hand is to make Gin, consisting of placing down the ten cards combined.

In either case, when a player folds, exposing all of their cards, the opponent does the same, having the opportunity to get rid of those cards that were left unmatched and being able to combine cards with those exposed by the player who Knocked or announced Gin.

When a player announces Gin they win the partial game, whereas if a player Knocks, either that player or the opposing player can win it. The player wins if the value of their unmatched cards is less than the value of the opponent's unmatched cards and the opponent wins if the value of their unmatched cards is equal to or less than that of the one that Knocked.

The cards of the opponent to the one who announced Gin or Knocked are valued after having discarded the cards that they have not combined and that link with combinations of the hand laid down by the one declared Gin or Knock.

## How to Keep Score



A game ends when sufficient partial games have been played to allow one player to get 100 or more points. The player who makes Gin, scores 20 points plus the value of the opponent's unmatched cards. If the player who Knocks wins the game, they score the difference in the value of their unmatched cards with those of their opponent, while if the opponent wins, they score 10 points plus the difference in the value of the unmatched cards between both players. If there is no difference, the 10 point bonus remains.

Once the game has finished, the players note down the following bonuses: 100 points for winning a game, 20 points for each partial game won and 100 points for winning all the rounds of a game without the opponent having won any.

Single Deck of Cards

# Hearts

**OBJECTIVE OF HEARTS:** The objective of this game is to have the lowest score. When a player hits the pre-determined score, the player with the lowest score wins the game.

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 3 to 7

**NUMBER OF CARDS:** Standard 52-card pack

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## OVERVIEW OF HEARTS RULES

Hearts was first found to be played in America in the 1880s, but was born from a game played in the 1600s in Spain! You can play Hearts with 3 to 7 players. But it is most commonly played with four players. In this article, we will explain the basic Hearts rules and lay out several variations for you to try! Let's get straight into it!

## SETUP

The first thing to do when setting up a game of Hearts is to choose a dealer at random. You will use a standard deck of 52 cards. However,, in a 3-player game, remove the 2 of clubs. In a 5-player game, remove the two of clubs and diamonds. The dealer will shuffle the deck, and another player will cut the deck.

There is also a [2-Player Hearts](#) version, that follows slightly different rules.

## HOW TO DEAL IN HEARTS

The dealer deals clockwise and face down. In a four-player game, all players receive 13 cards (pictured above). In a five-person game, all players receive ten cards; in a three-person game, The dealer deals players 17 cards.

## HOW TO PLAY HEARTS

Once the dealer deals all cards and players have arranged their hands accordingly, the player with the two of clubs goes first. If the two of clubs has been removed, lead with the three of clubs.

All players must follow suit if capable. In hearts, there is no trump suit. The highest card played of the leading suit wins, and the winner gets to begin the next trick. Players who cannot follow suit can throw out any other card. This is a great opportunity to eliminate high cards and prevent winning unwanted suits. The only exception is that players cannot play either hearts or the queen of spades in the first trick. However, they can be thrown in any trick afterward, as long as the player has none of the leading suit.

Players can only lead with a heart once either a heart or the queen of Spades has been played. However, the queen of Spades can lead at any point in the game.

Players can determine how many points they are playing to, and the player with the lowest score at the end of the game wins!

## HOW TO SCORE

This is a trick-taking game like [Spades](#), but the goal is to win a minimal number of tricks, or better yet, the goal is NOT to win tricks that contain hearts or the queen of spades. At the end of each round, players add up the number of hearts they've won that round and the queen of spades to their score. Remember, the objective is to have the lowest score.

Hearts = 1pt/each

Queen of Spades = 13 points!

## SHOOTING THE MOON

To Shoot the Moon, you must win all the hearts and the Queen of Spades during the round. If you win all the needed cards, you will score 0 points instead of scoring points yourself. All other players score 26 points.

## PENALTIES

If a player does not follow suit, even if able to, they have until the end of the trick to fix it. If it is not fixed but noticed by any player before you finish scoring, the player who misplayed scores for all the hearts from that round.

# HEARTS STRATEGIES

There are many good strategies and playstyles you can take on in Hearts. They will even help you in other games such as [Complex Hearts](#) or even [Bridge](#)! Below we explore some of the basic strategies to improve your game.

## KEEP WATCH

Always pay attention to what cards players are using in tricks. Knowing what is still available for play will increase your ability to play around your opponents.

## HIGH CARD TRICKS

If it becomes apparent that you will win a trick, play your highest card of the suit to be less likely to be caught in the same situation again. Remember what you pass to the other player and what you got from that pass.

## NEVER LEAD ACE

Leading an ace to a trick almost guarantees you will win the trick. This is especially problematic if the Queen of Spades is still in play.

# COMMON HEARTS VARIATIONS

There are many variations you can use for the standard Heart rules. Below, we will cover some of the most commonly used variations.

- Instead of having the player with the 2 of Clubs starting each round, you can also choose to have the player to the left of the dealer start.
- Players cannot play point cards during the first trick.
- If hole cards, cards that the dealer does not deal during the dealing phase, remain, they can be given to the first player to win a trick.
- Players must pass three cards after each deal. Players pass left, then right, then across the table. Finally, for the fourth round, no cards are passed.
- Shooting the Moon allows players to subtract 26 points from their score instead of all other players earning 26 points.
- In each round, the dealer deals 12 cards to each player. The dealer deals four cards to a kitty. The player to win a trick first gets the kitty!

# Two Decks

# Eleusis

## Objective

Players take turns playing cards to a central row. The dealer (rule-maker) declares each play as "valid" or "invalid" based on the secret rule. The goal is to be the first to correctly guess the rule or earn the most points by making valid plays.

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## Setup

1. **Players:** 3–8 people. One player acts as the dealer.
  2. **Deck:** Two standard 52-card decks (no jokers).
  3. **Dealer's Role:** The dealer secretly creates a rule for valid card plays (e.g., "Alternate colors" or "Prime numbers only").
    - Rules must be **consistent, non-arbitrary**, and possible to follow with the deck.
  4. **Starting Cards:** Deal 14 cards to each player (adjust based on group size).
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## Gameplay

The game is played by creating a row of cards in sequence. At the start of the game the dealer (known as "God") invents a secret constraint for how these cards must progress: for example, "each card played must be higher than the last, unless the last card was a face card, in which case any numeral card may be played".

Two decks of cards are shuffled and 14 cards dealt to each player except the dealer. One card is dealt face-up to start the row and a random player chosen

to start.

On a player's turn they must add one or more cards from their hand to the row (max 4), in sequence. The dealer judges this play: if the entire play fits the dealer's rule, the cards are left in place as part of the row. Otherwise, they are removed from the row and "sidelined", as to be put below the card that they attempted to follow, and the player is dealt a number of penalty cards equal to twice the number of cards they attempted to play that turn. If the play had multiple cards and only some were incorrect, the entire play is declared invalid, without the dealer specifying the invalid cards.

One player may elect to be a "prophet". A player who believes they have worked out the rule may request to become one at the end of their turn, if there is not already a prophet among the players, by placing a black marker on the card they just played. The prophet puts down their hand and skips their turns during their time as prophet. The prophet takes on the role of judging valid and invalid moves; if the dealer catches them making a mistake, the prophet is overthrown and receives five penalty cards (with the player who made the play receiving no penalty cards for that turn, if the play was invalid). An overthrown prophet takes their hand back up, takes all black markers off the row, and becomes a regular player again.

If at any time a player thinks they cannot play a legitimate card, they may declare a "no play", and show their hand to everybody. If the dealer confirms that no cards in that hand can be played, the player discards the hand and draws a new hand four cards smaller. If the player's call was incorrect, the dealer plays the correct card for them and gives the player five penalty cards.

A white marker is placed on each tenth card played, and a black marker on each tenth card after a prophet's marker. After the fourth black or white marker is placed, any invalid plays result in that player being eliminated from the game, and their hand remains intact for scoring. If both white and black markers are present, the black markers take precedence.

A round ends when a player empties their hand, or when all players (excluding the prophet, if any) have been eliminated. Players score 1 point for each card in the hand of the player with most cards, minus the number of cards in their



own hand. If a player has an empty hand they gain a further 4 points. If there is a prophet at the end of the game, they receive an additional 1 point for each card in the row following their first black marker, and 2 points for each sidelined card following that marker.

The dealer's score equals the highest score of any player, unless there was an active prophet. If there is a prophet, count the cards (right and wrong) played up to and including the card with the prophet marker and double this number. Dealer's score is the smaller of the high count and the doubled card total. The winner is determined by the total of all rounds, and if the game ended before all players have had a chance to deal, every player who has never dealt get 10 more points in compensation.

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## Example Rules

### 1. **Simple:**

- "Alternate between red and black cards."
- "Each card must be higher than the previous one."

### 2. **Complex:**

- "Prime numbers only (2, 3, 5, 7, J=11)."
  - "Each card must be either one rank higher or two ranks lower than the previous."
  - "Alternate suits in the order ♥ → ♣ → ♦ → ♠."
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## Tips for the Dealer

- Test your rule beforehand to ensure it's solvable.
  - Avoid overly broad rules (e.g., "All red cards") or rules requiring memorization.
  - Start with a simple pattern to help players learn the game.
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## Variation: Eleusis Express

A streamlined version where:

- The dealer writes the rule secretly before the game.
- Players have 3 lives (invalid plays cost a life).
- The first to guess the rule wins.

Eleusis is a fantastic game for logic lovers and makes a great party challenge! □

Two Decks

# Cockroach Poker

You'll need **2 standard decks of cards numbering 1 to 8**

## The aim of the game

To win, you'll need to collect as few cards face up in front of you as possible, by deceiving your friends into taking them instead, because if you get 4 of the same, you lose!

## Setup

Cockroach poker consists of 64 cards valued from 1 to 8.

Shuffle the deck.

Deal the cards equally between each player.

Pick a starting player.

## Gameplay

To begin the game, the starting player chooses a card from their hand, slides it face down in front of another player and states what creature is on it, telling either the truth, or a lie.

For example: 'This card is a two'.

The player the card is in front of has 2 options:

1. Accept the card, by stating whether they think the statement is true or false, before revealing the card. If they guess correct: The card is passed back to its owner who must keep it face up in front of them. If they guess wrong: They must keep it face up in front of themselves. The player who keeps the card starts the next round.
2. Pass the card - by peeking at the picture on it and then either confirming or making a new claim as to what creature is depicted and sliding it in front of someone else. Now that player must pick between the same 2 options. A card can keep being passed around to any player who hasn't seen it yet. If you are the last player to see the card, you have just one option, accept the card and guess if the claim is true or false

## Game End

The game ends when a player has 4 of the same card in front of them - they lose and everyone else wins. Alternatively, if a player starts a round with no cards in their hand - they're the loser.

## 2 Player Rules

In a two player game, remove 10 cards from the deck at random. You cannot pass the card, only accept it and make a guess as to whether the statement is true or false. The loser is the first with 5 of the same card in front of them, or the one to start a round with no cards in their hand.

That's cockroach poker, a card game for sneaky little creatures.

# Poker Chips Required

Poker Chips Required

# Ricochet Poker

Poker Without Bluffing Players: 3-8. Needs cards and chips.

## Basic Rules

Everyone plays with face-up hands. Each player antes one chip and is dealt one card. After that, play always passes to whoever has the worst hand. When you play, ante 0 to 4 chips. Then draw cards one at a time based on the number of chips. If you still have the lowest hand, then you are out. If at any point you no longer have the lowest hand, stop flipping. (You don't get the extra cards. No refunds.)

Whoever has the best hand gets the pot.