

Rules *Card*



The deal

- Two decks and four jokers. The scorekeeper cuts, and the player on their left deals **13 cards** each.
- The scorekeeper sets 8 cards aside under a sideways **turn card**, and the rest go on top. Whoever draws that card says so: 8 cards left.
- Nothing is turned up: the discard pile starts empty. Left of the dealer starts, clockwise.

A turn

- Draw** one card, or take the whole discard pile.
- Meld** if you can, keeping at least two cards unless you go out.
- Discard** one card face up.

NEVER DISCARD

- A **3**, ever.
- A **wild card**, unless it is your last card going out or you hold nothing else.
- A **7, ace, wild card or dead card onto an empty pile**: the first turn of a hand, and the turn after a pickup. The League calls these SWAD cards.

TAKING THE PILE

- Show a **natural pair** matching the top card, meld the three, then take the rest. Meld more, then discard.
- You can't take it once your team has five or more cards melded in that rank.
- To open this way, lay your clean triple and the whole minimum from your hand first. The top card counts toward neither, and no bonus cards come with it.

Threes

- Lay every three face up as it comes, and draw a card to replace it.
- Never melded, never discarded, never your last card.
- If the last card drawn is a 3, the hand ends at once, and that 3 costs 5.
- At the end of the hand**, each color counts on its own: 100, 300, 500 or 1,000 for one to four. Against your team with no canasta, nothing with one, for it with two or more.

Canasta bonuses

Natural 7s or aces	2,500
Natural, other ranks	500
Mixed canasta	300
Wild, 1 to 3 jokers	2,000
Wild, 4 jokers and three 2s	2,500
Wild, all 2s	3,000
Going out	100

COUNT Card values

Joker	50
Ace or 2	20
K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8	10
7, 6, 5, 4	5
Melded cards count for a team with a canasta, and against a team with none.	

Penalties

Unfinished natural 7s or aces	minus 2,500
Unfinished wild meld	minus 2,000
Three or more 7s in hand	minus 1,500
Three or more aces in hand	minus 1,500
Every card left in hand	minus value

Melds and canastas

- A meld is **three or more cards of one rank**, shared by the team. Never play on the other team's melds.
- Seven cards make a **canasta**, and no meld grows past seven.
- Wild cards**, two per meld at most, go in with your team's first meld, which needs two naturals, or later only into a meld holding five naturals. A meld of wild cards is the one exception.
- Once either team finishes a canasta in a rank, that rank is **dead**: nobody starts or adds to it.

YOUR TEAM'S FIRST MELD

Team under 3,000

125

3,000 to 4,995

155

5,000 or more

180

- It must include a **clean triple**: three or more naturals of one rank, not a dead rank. Melds can go down together to reach it.
- Once either partner opens, you both meld freely.
- Bonus cards**: with 9 or more cards left to draw, whoever opened draws 4, or 3 if the other team opened first, to play next turn.

Sevens, aces and wild cards

- 7s never take a wild card**. A natural canasta of 7s is worth 2,500.
- Aces stay natural** once the meld starts that way. A natural canasta of aces is worth 2,500. Aces laid with a wild card in your team's opening are just a mixed meld.
- A **wild card meld** is three to seven jokers and 2s. While one is open, no wild card joins your other melds.
- Your team can't go out with any of the three unfinished.

Going out

- Your team needs **two finished canastas**, and no unfinished natural 7s, natural aces or wild card meld.
- Meld all but one card, then discard it. Never a 3.
- Going out scores 100. Many tables ask their partner first.
- The hand ends too when the draw pile runs out.