

RULES OF EUCHRE

BASICS Euchre is played with a deck of 24 cards - nine through ace in each of the four suits. The standard game is played by 4 players in 2 partnerships, with partners sitting across from one another. The object of the game is to be the first partnership to score 10 points.

DEALER For the first hand of each game the dealer is decided by shuffling the cards then dealing them face-up one at a time to each player in turn, going clockwise around the table. The first player to receive a jack becomes the dealer. After the first hand the deal progresses clockwise around the table.

DEALING After shuffling the dealer must offer the deck to the player on his or her right for the cut. That player has the option of cutting the cards once or not at all. After the cut, if any, he or she must place the 2 parts back together before returning the cards to the dealer. 5 cards are dealt to each player in bundles of 2 or 3, starting with the player to the left of the dealer and going clockwise. The 4 remaining cards (the kitty) are placed face-down on the table. The top card of the kitty is turned face-up. This card is referred to as the up-card.

MISDEAL If the dealer fails to offer a cut or any player does not have the correct number of cards after the deal is complete, the deal is forfeited and passes to the next player. It is considered complete as soon as the up-card is revealed. If an error is caught before the up-card is revealed, the dealer may start over.

NAMING TRUMP Starting with the player to the left of the dealer and going clockwise, each player in turn either passes or calls the suit of the up-card as trump. If everyone passes there is a second round of bidding in which any other suit can be named as trump.

STICK THE DEALER If everyone else passes on the second round of bidding the dealer, who is the last to bid, must name a trump suit.

UP-CARD If the suit of the up-card is named as trump, regardless of which partnership names it, the dealer wins the up-card and discards an unwanted card from his or her hand.

FAILURE TO DISCARD If the dealer fails to discard the opposition scores 2 points (or 4 points if the hand was called alone).

GOING ALONE The player who chooses the trump suit, either by accepting the suit of the up-card as trump or by naming a different suit, is called the maker. Before the play of the hand begins the maker may go alone by saying "alone" (or anything recognized by the other players as having the same meaning). If this happens the maker's partner places his or her hand face-down and does not participate in the play.

THE PLAY The player to the left of the dealer leads any card by placing it face-up on the table. Each player in turn, going clockwise around the table, must play a card of the same suit led, if able. If unable to follow suit a player may play any card. The trick is complete when all 4 players have played a card and is won by the person who played the highest ranking trump or, if no trump cards were played, by the person who played the highest ranking card of the suit led. The winner of each trick leads to the next one. The maker's partnership must take at least 3 of the 5 possible tricks to score points.

CARD RANKING The trump suit is special in Euchre. The jack of that suit, called the right bower, is the highest-ranking trump. The jack of the suit that's the same color, called the left bower, is the second highest ranking trump. After that, the trump suit ranks, from highest to lowest, A, K, Q, 10, 9. Non-trump suits have conventional rankings (high to low): A, K, Q, J, 10, 9.

RENEGE A player who fails to follow suit when able, or plays out of turn, forfeits the hand and the opposition scores 2 points (or 4 points if the hand was called alone). This rule may be waived, or a lesser penalty imposed, at the sole discretion of the opposing partnership.

LEADING Cards must be led one at a time except when a player holds only certain winners. At that time, all the cards in his or her hand may be placed face-up on the table. If any player disagrees that the cards are certain winners the cards must be led out one at a time.

THROW-INS A hand may be thrown-in (not played out) if all players agree that the outcome of the hand is certain.

SCORING The maker's partnership scores 1 point for taking 3 or 4 tricks, or 2 points if they take all 5 tricks. If they take fewer than 3 tricks they are Euchred and score nothing, instead, the opposition scores 2 points. A maker who goes alone and takes all 5 tricks scores 4 points. A maker who goes alone and takes only 3 or 4 tricks scores 1 point. When the maker goes alone and takes less than 3 tricks the opposition scores 4 points.

3-HANDED GAME The above rules apply with the following exceptions: (1) In addition to the 3 normal hands a dummy hand of 3 cards is dealt, leaving 6 cards in the kitty. (2) Going alone means announcing that intention, then attempting to take 5 tricks without looking at the cards in the dummy. (3) Unless going alone the maker should use the cards in the dummy to improve his or her hand, discarding any 3 unwanted cards. (4) If the dealer is also the maker and calls the suit of the up-card, he or she must take the up-card and discard before touching the dummy hand. (5) There are no partnerships - on a hand-by-hand basis, the defenders cooperate in an attempt to defeat the maker. (6) If the maker fails to take at least 3 tricks the defenders each score 2 points (or 4 points if the hand was called alone). (7) If the maker reneges the defenders each score 2 points (or 4 points if the hand was called alone). (8) If a defender reneges the maker scores 2 points (or 4 points if the hand was called alone).

2-HANDED GAME The same rules apply as for 3-handed with the following exception: (1) The nines are removed from the deck, resulting in a 7 card kitty.