

Pinochle Game Rules

The Pack

A 48-card Pinochle pack is used.

Object of the Game

The goal is to win tricks, so as to score the value of cards taken in on tricks, and to meld certain combinations of cards having values in points.

Rank of Cards

A Pinochle pack consists of: A (high), K, Q, J, 10, 9 (low) in each of the four suits, with two of each card. Less frequently, a 64-card Pinochle pack is used, which includes 8s and 7s as well.

Card Values/Scoring

The values of cards taken in on tricks are:

Each ace 11

Each ten 10

Each king 4

Each queen 3

Each jack 2

Last trick 10

Nines (and 8s and 7s, when the 64-card pack is used) have no point value.

The values of the melds are:

Class A

A, K, Q, J, 10 of trump suit (flush, or sequence) 150

K, Q of trump (royal marriage) 40

K, Q of any other suit (marriage) 20

Dix (lowest trump; pronounced "deece") 10

Class B

A♠, A♥, A♦, A♣ (100 aces) 100

K♠, K♥, K♦, K♣ (80 kings) 80

Q♠, Q♥, Q♦, Q♣ (60 queens) 60

J♠, J♥, J♦, J♣ (40 jacks) 40

Class C

Q♠, J♦ (pinochle) 40

(The dix is the nine of trumps if the 48-card pack is used; it is the seven of trumps if the 64-card pack is used.)

The Deal

Deal 12 cards to each player, starting from the left, three or four cards at a time. The next card is turned up and placed on the table; it is the trump card and every card of that suit is a trump. The remainder of the pack forms the stock and is placed face down.

The Play

Each trick consists of a lead and a play. The non-dealer leads; thereafter the winner of each trick leads next. When a trump is led, it wins the trick unless the opponent plays a higher trump. When any other suit is led, the card led wins unless the opponent plays a higher card of the same suit or a trump. The leader may lead any card, and the opponent may play any card. It is not necessary to follow suit.

After each trick, each player draws a card from the top of the stock to restore their hand to 12 cards; the winner draws first.

Melding

Upon winning a trick, and before drawing from the stock, a player may meld any one of the combinations that have value, as previously described. A player makes a meld by placing the cards face up on the table, where they remain until the player wishes to play them, or until the stock is exhausted.

Melding is subject to the following restrictions:

- 1) Only one meld may be made in a turn.
- 2) For each meld, at least one card must be taken from the hand and placed on the table.
- 3) A card once melded may be melded again, only in a different class, or in a higher-scoring meld of the same class.

Ex. A player may not put down K♠, Q♠, J♦ and score both for the marriage and for the pinochle; only one meld may be made in any turn. The player may put down Q♠ and J♦ for 40 points; and, after winning a subsequent trick, they may add the K♠ and score for the marriage.

Once a card has been melded and placed on the table, it may be played to a trick as though it were in the holder's hand; however, after it has been played, it may no longer be used to form a new meld.

Melding the dix. If the dealer turns a dix (pronounced "deece") as the trump card, they score 10 points immediately. Thereafter, a player holding a dix may count it merely by showing it upon

winning a trick. They may count the dix and make another meld in the same turn. The holder of the dix has the right to exchange it, upon winning a trick, for the trump card.

The Playoff. The winner of the twelfth trick may meld if possible, and then must draw the last face-down card of the stock. They show this card to their opponent, who draws the trump card (or the dix, if the exchange has been made). The winner of the preceding trick now leads, and the rules of the play are as follows: each player must follow suit to the card led if possible, and must try to win when a trump is led (by playing a higher trump). A player who cannot follow suit must trump if they have a trump. In this manner the last 12 tricks are played, after which the players count and score the points they have won in their tricks and melds.

How to Keep Score

The score may be kept with pencil and paper, or chips may be used. If chips are used, there may be a central pile from which each player draws enough chips to represent the number of points he scores. Alternatively, each player may be provided with chips representing 1000, from which the appropriate chips are removed as points are scored.

Melds are scored when they are made. Scores for cards taken in tricks are added after the play is complete and the cards are counted. In this count, 7 points or more count as 10. Example: 87 points count as 90. If one player scores 126 and the other 124, or if each scores 125, they count only 120 each; the other 10 points are lost.

Game. Every deal may constitute a game. The player who scores the most points wins.

Alternatively, a match can be played to 1,000 points, playing a series of deals. When one player has scored 1,000 or more, and the other player less than 1,000, the former wins the game. If at the end of the play of any hand each player has 1,000 or more, play continues for a game of 1,250, even if one player has, for example, 1,130, while the other has only 1,000. If both players go over 1,250 at the end of the hand, the play continues for a 1,500-point game, and so on. However, this seldom happens because either player has the right, during the play, to "declare himself out."

Declaring Out. At any time during the play, a player may "declare out." At that point, play stops and his tricks are counted. If, in fact, the player has 1000 points or more, he wins the game - even if the opponent has more. If the claimant has fewer than 1,000 points, he loses the game. If the game has been increased to 1,250 points, 1,500 points, or a higher score, a player may declare out at that figure.

- See more at: <http://www.bicyclecards.com/how-to-play/pinochle-2/#sthash.kLrF5SVY.dpuf>