

ROOK

AGES
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Family

CONTENTS: 57 CARDS

The Original ROOK Partnership Game for 4 Players



If you're new to bidding and trick-taking card games, refer to the "Card-Playing Terms for New Players" on the back page before reading the ROOK rules.

You could also try the "Beginner Game (for 4 Players)". See over.

Object of the Game: To be the first partnership to reach 300 points by capturing "Counters" in tricks. If both sides exceed 300 points at the end of the same hand, the higher total wins. In the case of a tie, play another hand to determine the winner.

Note: Some players may prefer to decide how many hands they will play, then declare as winners the partnership that has the higher score when they've played the pre-designated number of hands.

Choose partners: If you wish, draw for partners. High cards play against low cards.

Choose the dealer: Players draw cards for first deal. Highest card deals.

Dealing: The basic deck consists of 56 cards, numbered 1 through 14 in each of four different colors (green, red, black and yellow). For this game, remove the 1's, 2's, 3's and 4's from the deck and add the Rook Bird card, for a total of 41 cards.

Shuffle and cut the deck, then deal out all cards one at a time, including a five-card nest. To deal the nest: Deal around the table until everyone has received his or her first card, then place one card facedown in the center of the table as the first nest card. Repeat until there are five cards in the nest, then deal out the remaining cards.

Players must keep their hands secret from **all other players**.

At the start of each hand, the player to the left of the previous dealer deals.

Misdeal: If any card as high as a 10 is exposed during the deal, a new deal is required. If any card, even though it is lower than a 10, is exposed, it is the right of any player to demand a new deal. In either case the same dealer re-deals.

Counters: Only certain cards in the deck, called "Counters," have point values:

Each 5	5 Points
Each 10	10 Points
Each 14	10 Points
Rook Bird Card	20 Points

The Counters are the only cards that have value for scoring. Each partnership's score is the sum of all the Counters in the tricks they captured. Note: If the declarer and his or her partner do not capture enough Counters to make a score equal to the bid, the partnership is set back the **full** amount of the bid, and they get **no credit** for the Counters they captured. If they capture more than their bid, full credit is given for all Counters. If your partnership did not win the bid, you still receive points for your Counters.

Bidding: Players bid for the privilege of choosing the trump color. There is a great advantage in being the player who chooses trump color, since a trump card can capture any card of any other color. Your opening bid must be at least 70 points. Bids must be divisible by 5, such as 70, 75, 80. You are bidding the number of points (from Counters) you think you and your partner will be able to capture with your hands provided you are able to name the color that will be trump. If you captured all Counters you would score 120 points. You should remember, there's always a risk when you take the bid!

To calculate what you could bid, add up the value of the Counters in your hand and look at the number of high cards you have. Also look at the distribution of colors; if you have no cards of one color, you can trump in (with the color you named) when that color is led and win the trick.

Bidding starts with the player on the dealer's left and passes clockwise.

You may, but need not, bid on your turn. Either bid at least 5 points higher than the last bidder or say, "I pass." Having passed, you may not bid again for that hand. Bidding continues in turn until no player will bid higher.

Bidding example: Four people (A, B, C, and D) are playing. B has six high green cards (including Counters) and some each of the other colors. A, on the dealer's left, examines his hand and bids 70. B bids 80. C, having a poor hand, passes. D bids 85. Player A then has a chance to bid again, and bids 90. B, having a strong hand, bids 95. C, having already passed, may not bid again. Next, D passes. Now A passes. B takes the bid at 95, then collects the nest.

The nest: The highest bidder adds the five cards in the nest to his/her hand, then lays down any five cards to one side. You may bury Counters in the new nest if you wish, or take this opportunity to discard one or two colors completely so you can trump these colors when they are led against you. The player who takes the last trick captures the nest as well; for this reason, you may want to put "eggs" into the nest, such as unprotected 10's and 5's, if you think you'll take the last trick.

After adding the nest to his or her hand and discarding five cards, the high bidder announces trump color, usually the color in which he or she holds the most cards.

Playing: After trump color has been announced, the player to the left of the dealer (who may or may not be the highest bidder) "**leads**" any card of any color faceup to the center of the table. Play passes to the left, each player in turn playing one card faceup. After each player has played, the highest card of the color led takes all the cards played. This is called "**taking a trick**".

Note: Unless you play the Rook Bird card, you must "**follow suit**" if possible. If you have a card of the color led, you must play that color. If you can't follow suit, you may throw away a worthless card, play the Rook Bird card or play a trump. The highest card of the color led takes the trick unless this trick is trumped, in which case the highest trump takes the trick. The Rook Bird takes any trick on which it is played --- it trumps trump! Remember, you and your partner will add your Counters together so, if you think your partner may take the trick, play a Counter.

The person who takes the trick makes the next lead. When you take a trick, place it facedown on the table. With the exception of the one just played, tricks may not be reviewed until the hand is completed.

The player who takes the last trick captures the nest and scores any Counters found in it.

Rook Bird card: The Original ROOK Game uses the powerful Rook Bird card, which is used as the highest trump card no matter what color is named as trump.

- You may play the Rook Bird card at any time, regardless of the color led and regardless of the other cards in your hand. It is the only card that has this privilege.
- If the Rook Bird card is led, all other players must play a trump, if they have one.
- If trump color is led and you have no other trump card, you must play the Rook Bird.

Scoring: When all cards in the hand have been played, each partnership adds up the Counters it captured. The partners' scores are added together. Play until one partnership reaches 300 points and wins.

Scoring example: The partnership that took the bid at 95 (see Bidding example) captured only 75 points in Counters. The full 95 points are deducted from their score (or they're given -95, if it's the first hand); they do not score the 75 points they captured. Their opponents, who captured the remaining Counters, score 45 points.

Penalties: A penalty of 40 points is deducted from the score of the partnership of any player who discards the incorrect number of cards to the nest, or makes any "**table talk**" suggestions to affect the partner's play. If a player "**reneges**" by playing a card of a different color when he or she could have followed suit, the error may be corrected if discovered before the next trick is taken. If the error is not discovered until later, the hand is ended, and the side that made the error is set back the full amount of the bid, regardless of who made the bid for that hand. The opponents score all the Counters they captured before the error was discovered.

For individual scoring: If players want to record their individual scores instead of partnership scores, they should change partners after every four hands, and record each individual score separately. Thus, at the end of 12 hands, each player will have played game hands with each of the other players.



Variations on the Original ROOK Game

The Beginner Game (for 4 Players)

Play ROOK without bidding for trump or using the nest to get into the swing of things! Perfect for introducing people to the game.

Object: Be the first player to score 40 points at the end of a hand.

Get started: All draw a card at random. The person with the highest-value card deals. Follow the Dealing instructions for the **Original Game**.

Counters: The following cards (called “Counters”) have these points values:

Each 5	1 point
Each 10	2 points
Each 14	2 points
Rook Bird card	4 points

How to determine Trump: Turn over the top card of the nest – that color will be trump. If it's the Rook Bird card, put it on the bottom of the nest and turn over the next card.

You don't use the nest in the Beginner game, so leave the card turned over as a reminder of the trump color.

Play: The player to the left of the dealer starts by 'leading' with the first card. The card they play determines the lead color for this trick. Play continues clockwise.

On your turn:

- Play one card, faceup, into the middle of the table. If you have a card of the 'lead' color, you must play it. If you don't, play a worthless card, the Rook Bird card or a trump card.
- When every player has played one card, the person who played the highest card of the color led takes all of the cards UNLESS someone has played a trump card, in which case the highest number trump card wins. If anyone played the Rook Bird card, that trumps everything! Taking all of the cards is called 'taking a trick'.

If you took the trick, place all the cards facedown on the table. You lead the next round.

The Rook Bird card: This is the most powerful card in the game and trumps everything.

- If the first player leads with the Rook, all other players must play a trump card.
- If the first player leads with a trump card but you have no cards in the trump color, you must play the Rook.
- You can play the Rook card on any turn, regardless of the color led. You can play it even if you have cards of the color led and/or trump cards in your hand.

Scoring: At the end of each hand, all add up the number of points you scored and make a note of it. Total up your points after each hand.

Winning: Play until someone's total reaches 40. If more than one player reaches 40 at the same time, the highest total wins. If there's a tie, play again!

The Game for 2 Players

Dealing: Remove all 1's, 2's, 3's and the Rook Bird card, for a total of 44 cards.

Shuffle and cut the deck, then deal out 12 cards into three piles – one for your opponent, one for you, and a dummy hand that is to your right. Deal half of the dummy hand cards **faceup** and the other half **facedown**. At the end, take the remaining eight cards, put five into a nest, and **put the other three aside, out of play**.

Object: 300 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 50 points. Note that the three cards out of play may be Counters!

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. The score could be as low as 70 or as high as 100.

Playing: After trump is called, turn the facedown half of the dummy hand faceup, so that all of the cards in the dummy hand are now faceup. The player who did **not** win the bid will play the dummy hand in addition to his or her own, effectively playing for two players. The dummy hand leads the first card. All tricks won by the dummy hand should be placed next to that hand so the players remember to lead **from** the dummy hand on the next trick. At the end of the hand, the Counters scored by the bidder are compared to the Counters scored by the other player and the dummy hand combined.

The Game for 3 Individual Players

Dealing: Same as the 2-player game, except do not deal a dummy hand.

Object: 200 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 50 points. Note that the three cards out of play may be Counters!

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. The score could be as low as 70 or as high as 100.

Playing: See the Original Game for 2 Players, except that the person who wins the bid plays against the other two players, who automatically become partners. These two players' scores are combined at the end of the hand.

The Game for 5 or 6 Individual Players

Dealing: Use the basic deck of 56 cards; do not use the Rook Bird card. For five players, deal a 6-card nest. For 6 players, deal a two-card nest.

Object: 150 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 30 points.

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. Total points for each hand are 100.

Playing: See the Partnership Game.

Card-Playing Terms for New Players

Trick: One player "leads" a card faceup on the table from his/her hand, and each other player in turn lays a card on it. The highest card of the color led "takes the trick" unless someone plays a trump; then the trump (or highest trump) card takes it.

Trump: The player who bid highest "picks trump," naming one of the four colors to be trump for that hand. Now any card of the trump color is more powerful and beats any card of another color.

Bid: Before the trick-taking play begins, all players bid (as in an auction) for the privilege of naming the trump color. During the hand, the player who bid the highest and thus "took the bid" must win enough tricks to capture Counters worth enough points to equal or exceed the amount of the bid.

Scoring: At the end of the hand, players count up the Counters in the tricks they have taken in order to calculate their scores for the hand. A high bidder who does not capture the number of points at least equal to his/her bid "goes down" and subtracts the total amount of that bid.

Nest: A number of cards dealt to the table and "won" by the highest bidder. These cards may be exchanged for the same number of cards in the high bidder's hand. The high bidder is the only player who knows which cards are in the nest and therefore out of play.



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Hasbro Inc., Pawtucket, RI 02862 USA.

Hasbro Australia Ltd., Level 2, 37-41 Oxford Street,

Epping NSW 2121, Australia. Tel: 1300 138 697.

Hasbro NZ (a branch of Hasbro Australia Ltd.),

221 Albany Highway, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel: 0508 828 200.

HASBRO CANADA, LONGUEUIL, QC, CANADA J4G 1G2.

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Hasbro Games, Consumer Affairs Dept.,

P.O. Box 200, Pawtucket,

RI 02862 USA. Tel: 888-836-7025

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