

## Cribbage Instructions #1

**Object:** The object of Cribbage is to be the first player to move from his start position to home, at the same time being the first to accumulate 121 points for 2 players. There are variations for 3, 4, 5, and 6 players.

**Game Content:** A Cribbage board with a self-container for 6 pegs. You will also need a standard 52-card deck. The cards have the following values: King (High), Queen, and Jack worth 10 points. Cards 9-2 worth their face value. Ace worth 1 point.

**To Begin Play:** Players cut for deal. Low deals 6 cards facedown to each player alternately one at a time beginning with his opponent or Pone. Dealer has the advantage. Loser deals the next hand.

After looking at his hand, each player discards 2 cards facedown to form the Crib. The Crib belongs to the dealer but is not touched until the hand is finished. Pone tries to discard cards that are least likely to score for the dealer – balking cards.

After the Crib is formed, Pone cuts the deck. Dealer takes the top card –Starter– and places it face up on top of the deck (the deck is not used during play.) When the hand is completed, the dealer scores any point in the Crib combined with Starter. Starter is not counted until after the hands are played unless it is a Jack – **His Heels** – in which case the dealer immediately scores 2 points.

The board is placed between the 2 players. Each player uses 2 pegs. At one end of the board are 2 **Game Holes**. To begin play each player places 1 peg in his game hole. After his first move, he places his other peg in the Game Hole.

Each player keeps track of his own score on his own track. When a player scores he moves – pegs – a single peg one hole per point. The second score is pegged by moving the second peg the appropriate number of holes away from the first peg. For the third score the first peg would be moved and so on. The distance between the 2 pegs will always show the amount of the last score.

There are two sections at either end of the board for each player to keep track of the amount of games he has won.

**Play:** Pone plays first. They take a card from their hand, places it face up in front of them and announces its point value. Dealer continues to play in the same manner announcing the new point total. Play alternates between the players until the player who is taking his turn is unable to play without going over 31. At this time he must say **“Go.”** and his opponent pegs 1. Before pegging however he must lay down any cards they have without exceeding 31. If he brings the total exactly to 31, he pegs 2.

Players may also peg for certain combinations during play. These combinations can be played alternately or by one player because of a Go. But the combination is not scored if interrupted by a Go. The combinations are:

**Fifteen:** Bringing the point total to 15, pegs 2.

**Pair:** Each pair of cards of the same rank scores 2.

**Pair Royal:** Playing a third card of the same rank pegs 6.

**Double Pair Royal:** Playing a fourth card of the same rank pegs 12.

**Run:** Adding a card, which with 2 or more previously immediately played cards makes a sequence of 3 or more and pegs 1 for each card in the run. Runs are determined by rank not suit. Score for the run does not depend on strict sequence as long as the 3 or more last cards played can be arranged in a run. For example: 3, 4, 5 or 4, 3, 5 would both score 3.

When play has ended, the hands are shown. Nondealer shows first, followed by dealer and then the Crib. Nondealer counts first. Therefore, they may win the game even if dealer has a greater total. So it is very important to peg scores in order as follow. His Heels, pegging with all three hands so that each hand has 5 cards.

Scoring combinations are as follows:

**Fifteen:** Each combination of 2 or more cards that total 15 scores 2.

**Pair:** Each pair of cards of the same rank scores 2.

**Run:** Each combination of 2 or more cards in sequence scores 1 for each card in the run.

**Double Run:** A run with a card duplicated such as 4-3-3-2 A double run of 3 cards scores 8 of 4 cards, 10.

**Triple Run:** A run of 3 with 1 card repeated 3 times such as Q-Q-Q-J-10. This scores 15.

**Quadruple Run:** A run of 3 with 2 different cards duplicated such as 8-8-7-6-6. This counts as 16.

**Flush:** Four cards of the same suit in hand score 4; 4 cards in hand or Crib the same suit as Starter score 5. There is no count for a 4-Flush in the Crib.

**His Nobs:** Jack of the same suit as the Starter in the hand or Crib scores 1.

Every separate grouping of cards that makes a pair, run or 15 counts separately. Thus, a card may be used in more than 1 combination.

The customary counting order is fifteen first, then runs and finally pairs. For example, a hand with Starter of 9-6-5-4-4 would be counted: fifteen 2, fifteen 4, fifteen 6 and a double run makes 14 (pair is counted in the double run).

The highest possible hand is J. 5. 5. 5 with a Started 5 the same suit as the Jack. There are 4 fifteen by combining the Jack with the 5. 4 more by combinations of the 3 fives – a total of 16 for the fifteens a double pair royal adds 12 for a total of 28; His Nobs adds 1 for a maximum of 29.

**Muggles:** Hands and the Crib are counted aloud. If a player claims a greater total than he has, his opponent may correct him. If a player overlooks any points, his opponent may call out “muggins” and claim those points.

**Skunked:** If a player pegs out –wins the game – before the other player has reached 91 (the second skunk on the board). He is skunked or loses double. If the game is won before the other player reaches 61 or the halfway point (the first skunk), his is double skunked or loses triple.

**Strategy:** The best balking cards are Kings and Aces since they have the least chance of making sequences. Tenth cards are good provided that if two are laid away in the Crib they are not too close together and possibly

make a sequence. If unable to lay away any of the above. It is best to discard cards that are at least 3 apart in rank.

The safest lead is a 4 since the next card cannot make 15. Lower cards are also safe from this standpoint, but they are usually saved for Go and 31. The most dangerous leads are 7 and 8.

**Three-Handed Cribbage:** Each player is dealt 5 cards and the Crib is dealt one. Each player discards 1 card to the Crib. Play and turn to deal pass to the left. When a player says Go play passes to player on his left. If he plays, the player to his left must also play if able. Go is scored by the last to play. Each player pegs his own line.

**Four-Handed Cribbage:** Each player is dealt 5 cards and they each discard 1 to the Crib. Players sitting opposite each other are partners. Partners peg the same line. After a call for each Go, every succeeding player in turn has a chance to play and to score for Go.

**Five-Handed Cribbage:** Dealer deals himself 4 cards and the other players 5 cards. The 4 players each discard 1 card in the Crib. The first man out is the winner and collects from the other 4. Each player pegs his own line.

**Six-Handed Cribbage:** Each alternate player is a partner so there are 3 players on each team. Only 2 people peg. Five cards are dealt to the first four players. The dealer and the player to his right receive only 4 cards. The players who are dealt 5 cards each discard one in the Crib.

## **Rules of Two-Handed Cribbage #2**

Like pinochle, cribbage is scored in two ways—in the play of the hand and in the count or “meld” of the hand. In cribbage, players deal, play out their cards, then pick up their hands again and make their additional “count scores”. Cards are then shuffled and dealt over again and another hand is played, this continuing until one of the other player reaches game.

### **The Deal:**

- 1) A full pack of 52 cards is used including all cards from King (high to Ace, which is always low.) Each card has counting or “pip” value. King, Queen, Jack and 10 have the value of 10 and all other cards their face value. Aces are one.
- 2) At the start of the first game, players cut for deal, lowest card winning; thereafter, at the start of each new game, the loser of the previous game deals. Six cards are dealt to each player one at a time, beginning with the dealer’s opponent or “pone”.
- 3) After the deal, each player discards 2 cards from his hand face down on the table; these 4 cards form the Crib. Nothing is done with these cards until after the hands are played.
- 4) After the Crib is formed, pone cuts the deck and dealer takes the top card of the bottom section and places it face up on the reunited deck; this card is the Starter. It has no significance unless it is a Jack, in which case the dealer scores 2 points immediately for “His Heels,” the card being known by this name. After the deal and the turning of the starter, nothing more is done with the pack.

### **The Play**

- 5) After the Starter has been turned, pone plays any card he wishes face up on the table on his side of the cribbage board and announces its pip value 7, 10 or whatever it may be as described in Rule 1. Dealer then plays any card, but on his side of the board, and announces the sum of the two cards this continuing until 31 points is reached or the nearest possible score to 31. Neither player may play a card if it makes the total sum greater than 31.
- 6) Whenever either player is unable to lay down a card without passing 31, he says, “Go” and his opponent must then play, if he can do so, until 31 or the

nearest possible number to 31 is reached. Player laying down the last card possible below 31 points scores 1 point for “last card” unless the sum is exactly 31, when he scores 2 points.

- 7) After every “last card” has been scored, players turn down the cards they have already played and the one whose next turn it is begins play with his remaining cards exactly as at the start of the hand. This continues until all cards are played, 1 point being scored for “last card” each time the nearest possible number to 31 is reached, even if the opponent has no more cards and cannot play for this reason; 2 points, of course, are scored if the number is exactly 31.
- 8) Points in Play – Points in play can be scored in the following ways; each score must be pegged as soon as made:
  - a. Fifteen—If a player plays a card which makes the total announced value of the cards exactly 15 he scores 2 points.
  - b. Pairs – If either player lays down a card which pairs the card just played by his opponent (another 4, for example) he scores 2 points, providing no “31” or “last card” has intervened.
  - c. Triplets and Fours – The player who lays down the third card of a kind in succession (as 4, 4, 4) scores 6 points and the player who lays down the fourth scores 12 points, providing in either case no “31” or “last card” has intervened.
  - d. Runs – When 3 or more cards (regardless of suit) have been played in succession which can be arranged in numerical order, the player who plays the last card scored one point for each card in the “run,” provided no “31” or “last card” has intervened. The cards do not have to be played in order, but no run is scored, if a duplicate or other card “breaks” the sequence – 4, 2, 3 for example, is a run of three and counts 3 points, but 4, 2, 3, 2, and 4, 2, 7, 3 are not runs for four because reading backwards, no run cards player in succession can be arranged.

### **The Count:**

- 9) After the hands have been played, one “counts” his hand and pegs whatever points he scored; dealer then counts his hand, pegs its value, and

then counts and pegs the crib. In both hands and in the crib, the Starter is used as though it were the fifth card in the hand.

10) Points, in Counting – the following are values of the various combinations in counting:

- a. Pair.....2 points
- b. Triplets.....6 points
- c. Fours.....12 points
- d. Runs of 3 or more.....1 point for each card
- e. Fifteen.....2 points
- f. His Nobs.....1 point
- g. 4-card Flush.....4 points
- h. 5-card Flush.....5 points

“Fifteen” is scored when 2 or more cards are found in the hand whose value adds up to exactly 15 points; “His Nobs” is the Jack of the same suit as the starter. A 4-Card Flush is 4 cards of the same suit. In the case of the crib, only the 5-card flush can count.

In counting, the same cards can be used over and over again so long as either a new card is added or the same cards form different combinations. The 4, 5, and 6, for example, form a run of three for 3 points; at the same time, they also form a “15” for 2 more points, as the 3 cards added together equal 15.

After cribbage becomes familiar, four different combinations of pairs and runs will be recognized at once, which always score the same except for whatever 15’s they may contain. These are as follows:

“Double Run of Three” – any three card sequences in which one card is paired, such as K, Q, J, J-counts 8 points, 2 for pairs and 6 for 2 runs of three.

“Double Run of Four” – any four card sequence in which one card is paired, such as K, Q, J, 10 – counts 10 points, 2 for pair and 8 for 2 runs of four.

“Triple Run” – any three card sequence in which one card is a member of Triplets, such as K, Q, J, J, - J-counts 15 points, 6 for Triplets and 9 for three runs of three.

“Quadruple Run” – any three card sequence, in which two cards are paired, such as K, K, Q, J, J—counts 16 points 4 for pairs and 12 for 4 runs of three.

### **Examples of Counting**

Below are listed some of the possible cribbage hands which can be made—by checking back to Rule 10, “Points in Counting”, the cribbage novice will be able to see for himself how each is made. In practically all of the counts below, one of the above four combinations will be found together with “15’s” and other counts.

Hand	Score
1-1-2-2-3	16
1-2-3-3-3	15
1-4-4-4-1	12
2-3-4-4-4	17
2-3-3-3-4	17
3-3-4-4-5	20
3-6-6-6-6	20
4-4-5-6-6	24
4-5-6-6-6	21
5-5-5-5-10	28
5-5-10-J-Q	17
6-6-9-9-9	20
1-1-6-7-8	13
5-5-N-J-J	21
2-6-7-7-8	16

6-7-8-9-9	16
3-3-6-6-6	20
3-3-3-6-6	18
3-3-6-6-9	14
5-5-5-N-J	23
4-5-6-Q-K*	14
1-4-4-N-4	13
5-5-10-N-Q	18
4-4-7-7-7	14
5-5-5-4-6	23
5-N-5-5-5	29

N – His Nobs, or Jack of Trump

\*---All of Same Suit

19, 25, 26, and 27 are impossible hands.

29 is best possible hand.

- 11) Game consists of 121 points (occasionally, 61 points). The first player to finish wins, even if the opponent is waiting his turn to peg or if there are additional cards to play. If a player reaches 121 points before his opponent reaches 91, he scores a “Lurch” or “Skunk” and receives credit for two games won (If the game is 61, then the opponent’s score must be less than 31).
- 12) Occasionally, the rule of “Muggins” is enforced, whereby a player may announce “Muggins” and score for himself, any points his opponent may have overlooked.