

Big 2

Players: Ideally 4 but more acceptable

Type: Shedding

Card rank: 2 A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

Suit rank: ♠ (Spades) > ♥ (Hearts) > ♣ (Clubs) > ♦ (Diamonds)

Objective

Shed all of your cards to earn points in a round. The highest scoring player at the end of play is the winner.

The Deal

The dealer deals out the cards one at a time, starting with the person to his right, in a counter-clockwise manner around the table. The cards are dealt out among the players as far as they can go while retaining an equal number of cards for each player. Any leftover cards are then given to the player holding the 3♦. If this card is one of the leftover cards, the holder of the next lowest card adds them to his pile.

The Play

At the beginning of each game, the player with the 3♦ starts by either playing it singly or as part of a combination, leading to the first trick. Play proceeds counter-clockwise. Each player may only play the **same number** of cards as previously played and they must be of **higher value**. Players may choose to pass, thus declaring that they do not want to play (or do not hold the necessary cards to make a play possible). A pass does not hinder any further play in the trick.

When all but one of the players have passed in succession the trick is over, the cards are gathered up and moved out of play and a new trick is started by the last player to lay.

The game ends when one player runs out of cards.

Scoring

After a game, each player with remaining cards scores -1 point for each, unless they have 10 or more remaining, in which they score -2 for each. If they didn't get to play any cards at all, they score -3 for each. The winner of the hand scores +1 for every -1 the opponents get.

As an example, if North won, and East, West, and South respectively still had 3, 11, and 8 cards left, East would score -3, West would score -22, South would score -8, and North would score +33.

Valid combinations

Cards may be played as singles or in groups of two, three or five, in combinations which resemble poker hands. The number of cards played on the opening move of the trick defines the number of cards that must be played on all subsequent turns of the trick. The highest ranking card is 2 instead of Ace. The combinations and their rankings are as follows:

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- **Single cards:** Any card from the deck, ordered by rank with suit being the tie-breaker. (For instance, A♠ beats A♥, which beats K♠.)
- **Pairs:** Any two cards of matching rank, ordered by the card of the higher suit. A pair consisting of the K♠ and K♣ beats a pair consisting of K♥ and K♦.
- **Three-of-a-kind:** Three equally ranked cards, three twos are highest, then aces, kings, etc. down to three threes, which is the lowest triple.
- **5-card hand:** There are five different valid 5-card poker hands, ranking, from low to high, as follows (the same ranking as in poker):
 - **Straight/run:** Any 5 cards in a sequence (but not all of the same suit). Rank is determined by the value of the biggest card, with the suit used only as a tie-breaker. Therefore 3-4-5-6-7 < 2-3-4-5-6, since 2 is considered the largest card in the 2-3-4-5-6 straight. The largest straight is J-Q-K-A-2, while the smallest straight is 3-4-5-6-7.
 - **Flush:** Any 5 cards of the same suit (but not in a sequence). Rank is determined by highest suit and then by highest rank.
 - **Full House:** a composite of a three-of-a-kind combination and a pair. Rank is determined by the value of the triple, regardless of the value of the pair.
 - **Four of a kind + One card:** Any set of 4 cards of the same rank, plus any 5th card. A 4 of a kind cannot be played unless it is played as a 5-card hand and rank is determined by the value of the 4 card set, regardless of the value of the 5th card.
 - **Straight Flush:** Five cards in sequence in the same suit. Ranked the same as straights, suit being a tie-breaker.