



CRIBBAGE RULES OF PLAY

I. Object of the Game:

To be the first player or team to score 121 points.

II. Number of Players:

2 or 3 players for individual play
4 players for team play, 2 against 2
Recommended age is 10+

III. Playing Cards:

A standard 52-card deck is used for play.
Remove all Madd Capp Fun Facts and company information cards from the deck before play begins.

IV. Rank and Value of Cards:

| | HIGH → → → → → → → → → → → → | | | | | | | | | | LOW | | |
|-------|------------------------------|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|
| Rank | K | Q | J | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | A |
| Value | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

V. Determining the First Dealer:

Each player cuts a card from a shuffled deck and the player with the lowest card deals the first hand.

VI. The Deal:

For 2-player cribbage, the dealer distributes 6 cards face down beginning with the opponent.
For 3-player and 4-player cribbage, the dealer distributes 5 cards face down beginning with the opponent on the left.
In 3-player and 4-player games, the dealer deals one final card to their "crib" face down.

VII. The Crib:

Each player privately looks at their 6 cards (in 2-player cribbage) or 5 cards (in 3-player or 4-player cribbage), and lays away 2 cards face down (in 2-player cribbage) or 1 card face down (in 3-player or 4-player cribbage) to reduce each player's hand to four cards. The 4 cards laid away together constitute "the crib" and belong to the dealer. The crib cards remain face down with the dealer and are not exposed or used until after the hands have been played.

VIII. To Start the Play:

After the crib is laid away, the opponent (or player to the left of the dealer) cuts the deck. The dealer turns up the top card on the lower portion of the deck as the "start card" and places it face up on top of the deck for players to see. If the start card is a Jack, the dealer scores (pegs) 2 points immediately. The start card is not used in the play phase of cribbage, but is used after the play round to score points with the hands.

IX. The Play:

The opponent (or player to the left of the dealer), takes the first turn and chooses one of the cards from their hand (hidden from their opponent or partner) to set face up on the table and states the value of the card to start the "count" for the round. (Note: face cards have a value of 10 and Aces have a value of 1). As each person plays, they announce a running total of each card reached by the addition of the last card to those previously played in the round. (For example, the non-dealer starts with a 2, saying "2." The next player plays a 7, saying "9." The next player puts down a Queen, saying "19." And so on...) Each player keeps their cards separate from those of their opponent.

X. The Go:

During "play," the running total of cards can never be carried beyond 31 points. If a player cannot play a card without going over the limit of 31 points, they say "Go" and the opponent pegs 1 point. Besides the point for Go, a player may score additional points that can be made if the total value of cards does not exceed 31. Note that a player must play a card(s) if it will be under or equal to 31 points – they cannot withhold a card(s). If a player reaches 31 exactly, they peg 2 points for Go.

The player who called Go leads the next series of flipping cards and the count starts over at zero. Play continues with a new round until all cards from players are flipped over in the round. Note that a player receives a point for having the last card played.

In a 3 or 4-player game, if a player says Go, the next person gets a chance to play a card (or cards) if they do not go beyond 31 points.

XI. Pegging in Play:

The object of the Play sequence is to score points by pegging. In addition to a Go, a player may score by the following combinations:

- When a played card brings the count exactly to 15, score 2 points.
- When a played card makes a subsequent pair, score 2 points.
- When a played card makes for a subsequent triplet (3 of a kind), score 6 points.
- When a played card makes for a subsequent double pair (4 of a kind), score 12 points.
- For any "run" or sequence of 3 of any rank, score 3 points.
- For any "run" or sequence of 4 of any rank, score 4 points.
- For any "run" or sequence of 5 of any rank, score 5 points. And so on . . .

Note that runs are independent of suits and earn 1 point for each card in the run, no matter what order the cards were played. For example, a 9, 10, J sequence and a J, 9, 10 are the same run, and both worth 3 points, played either way.

XII. Counting the Hands:

After the Play is over, players gather their own hands (4 cards) and combine with the "start card" so all hands are comprised of 5 cards – these cards are interchangeable when counting their points.

Hands are counted in order:

- Opponent first
- Dealer's hand second
- Crib last

This order is key, because the opponent/non-dealer may "count out" and win before the dealer has a chance to count, even though the dealer's total is higher than the opponent's.

Players count their points from their hands, face up and visible, so all players can verify the point count.

The scoring combinations are as follows:

- Cards totaling 15, 2 points
- Pair, 2 points
- 3-of-a-kind, 6 points
- 4-of-a-kind, 12 points
- Run of 3 or more cards, 1 point for each card
- Flush (4 cards of same suit in hand only), 4 points
- Flush plus start card in same suit, 5 points
- Jack of the same suit as start card, 1 point

The dealer counts crib points last, using the start card to make combinations. However, the dealer cannot earn a flush from the crib unless the 4 crib cards match the suit of the start card for 5 points.

XIII. The Winner

Players keep playing rounds until a player or team reaches the 121 point mark on the cribbage board. A player or team does not need to land exactly on 121 and can win whether they scored winning points by pegging during Play or by counting their hand at the end of a round, as soon as they cross the finish line. If the losing player or team scores below 90 points, they are considered "skunked!"

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