

Spades

THE PACK

The standard 52-card pack is used.

RANK OF SUITS

The Spade suit is always trump.

RANK OF CARDS

A (high), K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

To win at least the number of tricks bid before play of the hand begins. A trick is defined as a round, or all cards played in a round.

THE DEAL

The first dealer is the person who draws the highest card, with the deal passing clockwise after. The entire deck is dealt, face-down, one at a time beginning on the dealer's left. The players pick up their cards and arrange them by suit.

THE BIDDING

Each player decides how many tricks they think can take. The player to the left of the dealer says how many tricks they think they will win, then the next player makes their bid, and so on. There is only one round of bidding and the minimum bid is 1. Every player must bid. No suit is named in the bid because spades are always trump.

THE PLAY

The game is scored by hands, and the winner must make a certain number of points, decided before the game begins. 500 points is common, but 200 points is better for a short game. The player on the dealer's left leads, and the other players must play the same suit. If they cannot play the same suit, they may play a spade or discard. The trick is won by the player who plays the highest trump or the highest card from the leading suit, an ace being the highest card. The player who wins the trick leads next. Play continues until each of the players have no cards left. Spades cannot be led unless the player leading has nothing but spades in their hand.

HOW TO KEEP SCORE

For making the number of tricks bid, the player scores 10 points for each trick bid and one point for each overtrick. If the player's bid is 7 and they make 7 tricks, the score would be 70. If the bid was 5 and the player won 8 tricks, their score would be 53 points (50 points for the bid and 3 for the overtricks). The object is always to fulfill the bid exactly. If the player "breaks contract" and takes fewer tricks than they bid, they receive 0 points. One of the players is the scorer and writes down the bids. When a hand is over, the scores are recorded next to the bids. A running score is kept so the players can easily see each other's points. If there is a tie, then all players participate in one more round of play.

