

How to Play = CANASTA

The Exciting New Game from SOUTH AMERICA

The game of CANASTA originated many years ago in South America. Enthusiastic Americans carried the game to the United States and on to Great Britain. Now the game has become firmly established in Australia. . . . As in all games that are widely played throughout the world there are many variations in the Rules. The following Rules have been carefully compiled by experts, and cover all the essential features of the game.

The Fundamentals of CANASTA

1. Canasta may be played by any number of Players from two to six.
 2. With two or three Players each plays for himself. With four or more Players two partnerships are formed, but only four Players (two from each partnership) take part in any one hand.
- Partners sit opposite one another across the table, except in the case of six handed games, when the opponents sit alternatively around the table.

The CANASTA Pack of Cards

3. Two Packs each of 52 Cards, plus four Jokers, are used. It is best to have two Packs of identical back design. The whole 108 Cards are all shuffled together.
- All Jokers and Twospots are wild. Wild Cards may be given any rank at the option of the owner.

COMMENCEMENT PROCEDURE

4. Partnerships may be arranged mutually or by drawing cards. Jokers are void in the draw. Suits rank in the order Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs.
- Cards rank in the suits Ace high, King, Queen, etc.
- The Players who have drawn the two or three highest Cards form a partnership against those drawing the lower Cards.
5. The Player drawing the highest Card has the right to play first. Thereafter the Player on his right becomes the first dealer. Thereafter the deal rotates to the left (clockwise).
- The Cards may be shuffled by any Player who wishes to do so.
- The Player on the right of the Dealer cuts the Pack. The Dealer deals the correct number of Cards (one each round) to each Player, commencing with the Player on his left and finishing with himself.

- Players may not look at their Cards until the deal is complete.
- Each Player receives:—
- 2 handed Games 15 Cards
 - 3 handed Games 13 Cards
 - 4, 5 and 6 handed Games 11 Cards
6. The remainder of the Pack, after dealing all hands, is placed face downwards in the centre of the table, and becomes the Stock Pile.

The top Card of the stock is then turned face upwards and placed alongside the stock.

- This Card is called the Upcard.
- If the first Player does not take it up, subsequent Discards are placed face up on the Upcard, so that only the top Card of the Discard Pile may be seen.
 7. If the Upcard is a Red Threespot or a Wild Card it must be covered immediately by another Card from the top of the Stock; repeat the process if further Red Threespots or Jokers are turned up.

The Discard Pile is now considered Frozen. (See Para. 33).

The Play

8. As sequences do not count in Canasta, the Cards in hand should be arranged by the Player in pairs or three or more of a kind.

Wild Cards should be placed together.

9. The Player on the left of the Dealer has the first turn to play.

First the Player is entitled to draw the top Card of the Stock or alternatively (subject to various restrictions, see Para. 33) the top Card of the Discard Pile if he can use it to make a Meld. If the Player takes the top Discard he must also take the balance of the Discard Pile and add it to his hand or his Melds.

Second. The Player at his option makes one or more Melds. This is the principal object of the play.

Third. The Player must always discard from his hand unless he is going out.

A discard can never be made from a tabled Meld.

The act of discarding completes the Player's turn.

RED THREESPOTS

10. Each Red Threespot has a Bonus value at the end of the Hand of 100 points.

If all four Red Threespots are held by the same side, the values are doubled, e.g., 200 points each.

At the finish of the Hand a side that has made at least one Meld scores the Bonus as a Plus.

A side that has not made a Meld scores the value as Minus.

The Bonus value of any Red Threespots cannot be taken to account when valuing a Hand for an Initial Meld.

The Red Threespots must not be retained in any Player's Hand.

A Player to whom a Red Threespot is dealt must withdraw the Card from his hand at his First turn and place it face upwards before him.

He then draws a replacement Card from the top of the Stock before proceeding to make the three parts of his ordinary turn.

A Player drawing a Red Threespot from the Stock must face it on the table immediately and then draw a replacement Card from the top of Stock.

A Player taking a Red Threespot in the Discard Pile must immediately face it, but a replacement Card is not taken.

MELDS

11. A Meld comprises three or more Cards of the same rank, e.g., 9-9-9.
12. A Meld must contain at least two natural Cards of the same rank and Not More than three Wild Cards (Jokers and Twospots). Thus Jokers and Twospots cannot be Melded separately from natural Cards.
13. Black Threespots may not be Melded unless the Player is Going Out in the same turn.

14. The first Meld made by a side is called the Initial Meld.

The Initial Meld must have a minimum count depending on the progress total score of the side at the time. (See Para. 15).

The Initial Meld may comprise several different Melds providing they are made in the same turn by the same Hand.

The count value of the Cards comprising the Meld is obtained from the table. (See Para. 16).

A Player may consult the progress score at any time, but if either partner asks or informs the other regarding the minimum count required that side is penalised 100 Points. (Para. 57).

15. Minimum count required for first Meld.

Progress Total Score	Minimum Count
Minus Score	Nil
0-1495	50
1500-2995	90
3000 & over	120

16. Count Value of Cards.

All Jokers . . . 50 Points each
Aces & Twospots 20 Points each
Kings to Eight-spots . . . 10 Points each
Sevenspots to Fourspots . . . 5 Points each
Black Threespots 5 Points each

17. Only Melds which have been faced on the table in the Player's proper turn count as Plus Score.

18. When Play ends any Cards remaining in the hands, even though they may form Melds, are counted as Minus Score.

19. All the Melds of a partnership are placed before one partner.

20. Once the partnership has made its Initial Meld either partner in his turn may make additional Melds or add to the partnership Melds, Cards of a similar rank or Wild Cards.

21. No Player may add a Card to the Meld of another side.

CANASTAS

22. A Canasta is a Meld comprising seven or more Cards.

The Cards comprising a completed Canasta are faced on the table in one pile.

Leave a Red Card on top if it is a natural Canasta or a Black Card if it is a mixed Canasta.

23. A Canasta must contain at least four natural Cards and Not more than three Wild Cards.

24. A Natural Canasta comprises seven Natural Cards.

25. A Mixed Canasta comprises at least four Natural Cards and from one to three Wild Cards.

26. A Canasta carries a special Bonus (See Para. 57) and No side may Go Out unless it has at least one Canasta.

In two handed play only, a side requires two Canastas.

27. Additional Cards added to a Canasta increase the point value of the Canasta by the count value of the Cards concerned, but do not increase the Bonus value.

28. A Wild Card added to a Natural Canasta reduces it to a Mixed Canasta.

29. Although no Meld may contain more than three Wild Cards any number of Wild Cards may be added to a completed Canasta.

30. No Card once Melded may be withdrawn from the Meld of which it forms a part.

Taking from the DISCARD PILE

31. Whenever the Top Discard is taken the balance of the Discard Pile must also be taken.

32. All Cards which are to be Melded with the Top Discard must be faced on the table before the Player touches the Discard Pile.

33. While the Discard Pile is Frozen No Player may take the Discard Pile unless he can Meld the Top Discard with two Natural Cards.

34. The Discard Pile is Frozen against a side until that side has made its Initial Meld.

For an Initial Meld the Top Discard may be taken provided it is Melded with two Natural Cards of the same denomination in the Player's hand.

Any Card below the Top Discard does not count towards the Initial Meld.

35. After the Initial Meld by a side, either Partner may take the Discard Pile when:—

1. The Top Discard will Meld with two Cards in his hand, either two Naturals or one Natural and a Wild Card.

2. When the Top Discard matches Cards the Partnership has already Melded.

36. If a Black Threespot is discarded, then the Next Player Only may not take the Discard Pile.

37. If a Wild Card is discarded the Discard Pile is Frozen and remains so until a Player can take up the Top Discard to Meld with two Natural Cards in hand.

38. It will be seen that a Wild Card or Red or Black Threespot may never be taken from the top of the Discard Pile.

39. If the Player has only one Card left in his hand and there is only one Card in the Discard Pile, he may not take it and Go Out unless the Stock Pile is completely exhausted and the Player's side has made or can make a Canasta.

40. If the last Card in the Stock is a Red Threespot, then the Player drawing it must face it on the table and make whatever Melds he wishes.

He may not discard and Play Then Ends.

The Game that is sweeping England and America

CANASTA

EASY TO LEARN

SIMPLE TO PLAY

EXHAUSTED STOCK PILE

41. After the last Card of the Stock Pile has been drawn, play continues so long as each successive Player can legally take the Discard Pile to Meld the Top Card with the Cards in his hand. This is at the Player's Option.

42. At this stage it is Compulsory for a Player to take the Discard Pile if he can Meld the Top Card with Cards his Partnership has already faced.

43. Play ends when a Player in his turn:—

1. Cannot legally take the Top Card.
2. Does not wish to Meld the Top Card with Cards in his own hand, and has no suitable Melds on the table with which he can be forced to Meld the Top Card.
3. If the Discard Pile becomes Frozen and cannot be legally Unfrozen.
44. When Play ends by exhaustion or by Para. 40, scores are totalled in the usual manner, but no points are allotted for Going Out or for Concealed Hands.

GOING OUT

45. No Player may Go Out unless his side has at least one Canasta. (2 handed games, 2 Canastas).

If his side has not made a Canasta a Player must retain at least one Card in his hand.

46. A Player Goes Out when he legally gets rid of the last Card in his hand, either by discarding or Melding.

47. A Player Going Out need not discard, but may Meld all his remaining Cards.

48. In Partnership games a Player who is able to Go Out may, when his turn comes, ask his Partner, "Shall I Go Out?"

The Partner may only reply "Yes" or "No," and the Player is bound by the reply.

49. Permission may only be asked in the Player's turn, and never after the Player has indicated or made a Meld.

50. If permission to Go Out is refused, then the Player carries on in his turn in the normal way.

51. If permission to Go Out is given and the Player finds he cannot Go Out, the side is penalised 100 Points.

52. When any Player Goes Out the play ends, and that Player's side receives a Bonus of 100 Points.

The various hands are then tallied and scores recorded.

CONCEALED HANDS

53. A Concealed Hand occurs when a Player Goes Out by Melding all his Cards at the same time.

In so doing the Player may not add any Cards to the Melds of his Partner.

54. It does not matter if his Partner has already Melded.

But unless his Partner has Melded the required number of Canastas, the Concealed Hand must Meld the required number of Canastas.

55. The Bonus for a Concealed Hand is 100 Points in addition to the Bonus of 100 Points for Going Out.

SCORING A HAND

56. At the end of the Hand all Cards faced count Plus values, and those in hand count Minus values.

57. Hands are tallied as follows:—

	Points
For Going Out	100
For Going Out Concealed	Extra 100
Red Threespots (if side has Melded)	Each 100
Red Threespots (if side has Melded and holds all four)	Extra Each 100
Natural Canasta	Each 500
Mixed Canasta	Each 300

B. Minus Penalties

	Points
Red Threespots (if side has not Melded)	Each 100
Red Threespots (if side has not Melded and holds all four)	Extra Each 100
For keeping Red Threespots in hand after first Discard	500
For seeing another Card when drawing	50
For obtaining permission to Go Out and then not being able to do so	100
For taking a Discard before showing the matching Cards	50
For Melding out of turn	100
For drawing out of turn	100
For drawing out of turn and adding the Card to your hand	Extra 100
For informing or indicating to one's Partner the minimum count required for a particular hand	100

C. Plus Value of Cards Faced on Table

	Points each
Jokers	50
Aces & Twospots	20
Kings to Eightspots	10
Sevenspots to Fourspots	5
Black Threespots	5

D. Minus Value of Cards Held in Hand

The same scale as "C" above.

58. To obtain the nett Score for the Hand—

Subtract B from A.

Add C to the remainder.

Then subtract D and the balance is the Nett Score which may be Plus or Minus.

59. A Game is won by the first side to reach 5000 Points.

60. If both sides reach 5000 Points in the same Hand, then the side with the greatest Total wins the Game.

61. There is no Bonus for winning a Game.

IRREGULAR PLAYS AND PENALTIES

62. Wrong Player deals—

The deal stands, but if noticed in time the Player whose turn it should have been plays first. That Player deals the next hand.

63. If during or after a deal—

- (a) the incorrect number of Cards are dealt to any Player;
- (b) the deal is irregular;
- (c) a Card is turned up;
- (d) a Card is found face up in the Stock;
- (e) a foreign Card is found in the Stock or in a Player's hand—

If the error is discovered before each Player has had a turn, then the original dealer re-deals the hand.

If all the Players have completed a turn the errors (a) to (c) stand.

A Card face up in the Stock is turned over and the Stock reshuffled.

A foreign Card in the Stock is removed and if in a Player's hand removed and replaced by the Top Card of the Stock.

64. If a Player in his turn touches a Card and then does not take or play it, his opponents at their option may force him to play the first Card he touched.

65. If a Player draws before the preceding Player has discarded, then the preceding Player has the option of discarding or not.

66. If a Player draws more than one Card from the Stock he may not draw again until his hand has been rectified by discarding the extra Cards singly at each turn.

67. If a Player Melds out of his turn when it is his Partner's turn to play, the Cards so Melded become Penalty Cards and must be discarded in turn singly without option. (This is in addition to the penalty of 100 points).

68. If a Player discards without drawing or discards more than one Card there is no Penalty if the next Player draws before the error is discovered.

If the error is discovered before the next Player draws, then the offender who discards without drawing must take the top Card of the Stock; if the offender has discarded simultaneously several Cards, he may choose which is to be the discard, and the others become Penalty Cards, as Para. 69; if not simultaneously, then the first discard stands and the other Cards become Penalty Cards.

69. Penalty Cards must remain faced on the table, and must be successively discarded until the opportunity arises to make a valid Meld with them (includes their use to take the Discard Pile).

70. If a Player exposes one or more Cards from his hand except to make a valid Meld, then all such Cards become Penalty Cards.

71. If a Player takes the Top Discard (with or without the rest of the Discard Pile) into his hand he must be stopped at once.

If he has shown Melding Cards or the Card can be added to his Melds already on the table, there is no Penalty.

If there is a doubt about the validity of the draw the opponents may decide that the Player shall replace the Discard Pile and draw from the Stock.

Those Cards which the opponents agree were originally in the offender's hand must be left face up on the table and become Penalty Cards.

In addition, they may not be Melded or used to take the Discard Pile.

72. If a Player asks permission from his Partner to Go Out he must do so if he receives an affirmative reply.

If before receiving his Partner's reply he shows or indicates any Melds, or he or his Partner by their questions or answers pass any further information, then the opponents may demand that the Player Goes Out.

If the Player then cannot Go Out his Cards in hand become Penalty Cards (ref. Para 69).

73. Illegal Melds. It shall be an Illegal Meld if—

- (a) A Player takes the Discard Pile for an Initial Meld and either has not sufficient minimum count or is not in possession of two Natural Cards to Meld with the Top Card.
- (b) A Player takes the Discard Pile when it is Frozen without having two Natural Cards to Meld with the Top Card.
- (c) A Player Melds more than:
 - 1 Wild Card in a Meld of 3 Cards.
 - 2 Wild Cards in a Meld of 4 Cards.
 - 3 Wild Cards in a Meld of 5 or more Cards.
- (d) A Player who having been refused permission to Go Out by his Partner proceeds to Go Out.
- (e) A Player Goes Out before his side has the minimum number of Canastas required.

74. Correction of Illegal Melds.

(a) If an error is discovered before the offender has Discarded then he may legalise it by any way possible.

He may add Cards, remove Cards, re-arrange Melds, etc.

Any Card which has been faced and cannot be added to a legal Meld becomes a Penalty Card. (See Para. 69).

(b) If the error is discovered after the offender has discarded, but before the next Player has drawn, the offender must legalise as much as possible.

But he need not Meld an illegally Melded Wild Card which then becomes a Penalty Card. All faced Cards which are not legalised become Penalty Cards. (See Para. 69).

(c) If the next Player draws before the error is discovered, then there is no Penalty and the offender is allowed to take the illegally Melded Cards back into his own hand.

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