

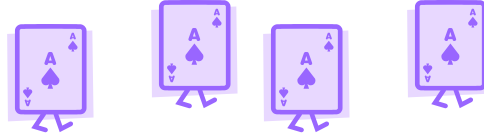


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Double Deck Pinochle

Players and Cards



Pinochle is a partner game. There are four players; partners sit across from each other.

The deck consists of 80 cards; containing four **Aces, Tens, Kings, Queens and Jacks** in each of the four suits, ♠ Spades ♥ Hearts, ♣ Clubs and ♦ Diamonds. This deck can be formed by mixing together two normal Pinochle decks, having thrown out the nines, or from four regular 52 card decks from which you throw out all the numbered cards of 2 through 9.

Cards are ranked from the Ace being high then 10, King, Queen and Jack.

Idea of the Game

After the deal there is bidding (an auction) in which players bid the total number of points they predict their team can achieve. Whoever bids highest, called the declarer, has the privilege of choosing trump and leading to the first trick. **Points or score is scored in two ways:**

1. By declaring and showing **meld** (combinations of cards held in a player's hand). Each team must have a minimum of 20 to be "on the board" (have their meld recorded). They must also pull a minimum of 20 counter points to have their meld added to their score.
2. By winning a minimum of 20 **counter points** (Aces, Tens and Kings) in tricks at one point each (there is a total of 48 and two bonus points for the last trick for an overall hand total of 50.)
3. The object of the high bidder's team, "declarers," is to win at least as many total points as the amount they bid.

The object of the other team is to win at least 20 counter points (so they get a score for that hand) and to save their meld (if meld was over 20). If they can keep the other team from getting 20 counter points or the amount needed that would equal their bid, it would be a "**set**" and the declarers team would get their bid subtracted from their score.

The game is won by the first team to achieve a score of 500 or more. If both sides reach 500 on the same hand, the bidding side wins. **Some play for only 250 or four deals / hands.**

Play of the Game

The game consists of the “playing” of hands. Each hand is divided into 7 actions:

1. Deal 2. Meld counting 3. Bidding 4. Meld declaration 5. Playing the hand 6. Count 7. Record

1. Deal

Deal and play are clockwise. All the cards are dealt to the players, so that everyone has 20.

Dealing practices vary; common methods are 4 cards at a time, 5 cards at a time, 2 and 3 cards dealt alternately or 2 cards to each player, and then the remainder at 3 at a time.

2. Meld counting

Meld is scored for combinations of cards in the hand of each player. Each team must have a **minimum of 20 meld** to get on the board.

The point scores for meld are given in the following table:

Type	Combination	Single	Double	Triple	Quadruple
Type I Runs and Marriages	Run - Ace, Ten, King, Queen and Jack “only if Trump”	15	150	300	You Win!
	Marriage - King and Queen of the same suit (if Trump then double)	2 / 4	4 / 8	6 / 12	8 / 16
Type II Pinochles	Pinochle - Jack of diamonds and Queen of spades	4	30	90	300
Type III Arounds	Aces around – An Ace in each suit	10	100	200	300
	Kings around – A King in each suit	8	80	160	240
	Queens around – A Queen in each suit	6	60	120	180
	Jacks around – A Jack in each suit	4	40	80	120
NOTE	Tens around – are not worth anything.	0	0	0	0

A Round House or Round Robin (K & Q of each suit) is 24 meld (Queens = 6, Kings = 8, three non trump marriages = 6 and a marriage in trump = 4).

A 19 pounder or a run with an extra marriage is 19 meld, two extra marriages is 23.

Jacks and Queens around are 14 meld (jacks = 4, queens = 6 and a pinnacle is 4).

Note: A run in a suit other than trump is not worth anything more than the marriage score (2).

There are **three types** of meld. **I. Runs and Marriages: II. Pinochles: and III. Arounds:**
Any particular card can only belong to one meld of each type.

Example: You have five queens in your hand, one in each suit plus an extra queen. This counts 6 points (type III, single queens around). None of these four queens can be re-combined with the fifth queen to be counted again as a type III. However any of the queens can be used in a run or marriage (type I) for an additional meld count of 15 or 2 / 4 respectively and the queen of spades can be combined with the jack of diamonds (type II) for a 4 point pinochle.

Example: A run & round house are only 35 points, (Run = 15, Queens = 6, Kings = 8, three non trump marriages = 6 and a marriage in trump = 0; the marriage in trump was counted in the run).

The total meld (points) in your hand is used to determine the bid(s) you will make during the bidding process. Never discuss or review your meld with others until after the bidding for that hand is completed.

EXAMPLES OF HANDS AND THEIR MELD COUNT AND BIDS

Example: with **spades as trump**, the following hands are worth:

♥K K Q J; ♦A 10 10 K Q J; ♣A 10 K Q; ♠A 10 K Q J J; a run in spades (15), a round house (20 not 24 as the marriage is counted in the run), a pinochle (4), for a total of 39 meld. Note; that a run in diamonds is not 15 as it is not Trump and the marriage is counted in the roundhouse. Also; notice, the queen of spades is simultaneously used in the spade marriage, the pinochle and the arounds (this is allowed because these melds are all of different types).

♥A A 10 K Q J; ♦A 10 Q J; ♣A 10 K Q J J; ♠A 10 J J; two runs in non trump (0), marriage in clubs (2), marriage in hearts (2), Aces around (10) and Jacks around (4) for a total of 18 meld.

♥10 10 K Q J; ♦A A 10 K J; ♣A A K K Q J; ♠10 K K Q; kings around (8), a pinochle (4), a marriage in hearts and clubs (2+2 = 4) and a marriage in spades/trump (4) for a total of 20 points.

♥A A 10 Q J; ♦K K Q Q J; ♣10 10 Q J; ♠A A 10 K Q Q; two marriages in diamonds (4), a marriage in spades (2), a pinochle (4) and Queens around (6) for a total of 16 points.

Example: with **diamonds as trump**, the following hands are worth:

♥10 10 K K J; ♦A 10 10 K Q J; ♣A 10 10 Q; ♠A K Q J J; a run in diamonds (15), a pinochle (4) and a marriage in spades (2) for a total of 21.

♥A A 10 K Q; ♦A 10 K Q J; ♣A 10 K Q J J; ♠A 10 J J; run in diamonds (15), marriage in hearts and clubs (4), Aces around (10) for a total of 29 meld.

♥A A K Q Q J; ♦K Q Q; ♣K Q J; ♠A A 10 10 K Q Q Q; a round house for (24), a pinochle (4), for a total of 28 meld. ♥10 Q J J; ♦A A 10 K J J; ♣A A 10 K K Q J; ♠10 K K; a marriage in clubs (2), for a total of 2. .

Example: with **hearts as trump**, the following hands are worth:

♥A 10 K K K Q Q J; ♦Q Q J; ♣Q Q; ♠A K K Q Q J J; a run (15) and an extra marriage in trump (4), **Note; this is sometimes called a 19 pounder or run with extra marriage (19)**, pinochle (4), double queens around (60), double marriage in spades (4) total of 87 meld

♥A K Q J; ♦A 10 10 Q J; ♣A 10 K Q J J; ♠A 10 10 J J; a run in non trump (0), a marriage in trump (4), marriage in clubs (2), Aces around (10) and Jacks around (4) for a total of 20 meld.

♥10 10 Q J; ♦A A 10 K J; ♣A A 10 10 K K J; ♠10 K K Q; pinochle (4), marriage in spades (2) total of 6 meld.

♥A A 10 J; ♦A 10 K K K Q J; ♣A 10 K Q J; ♠A A 10 Q; a marriage in diamonds (2), a marriage in clubs (2), a pinochle (4), Aces around (10) for a total of 18 meld.

3. Bidding

The bidding phase is used to determine who gets to call or name trump. The person to the left of the dealer bids first. Bidding proceeds clockwise.

Bidding is one of the most complicated aspects of Pinochle and is dependant on meld (see table) and hand strength. Strength of your hand is dependent on many things and determining your hand strength will come from experience in play. Initially you should know that a strong hand is long in the trump suit, (more than 6), and may have one more or one or more short suits, (less than three of a suit) and / or more than four aces are indicators of a strong hand.

The opening bid must be at least 50.

Bids only have to be increased by a minimum of 1 until the bidding reaches 60. Any bid above 59 must be a multiple of 5 (60, 65, 70, 80, 85, 100 etc.). Each bid must be higher than the previous one, but a player who does not wish to bid can pass.

The bidding continues for as many rounds as necessary until three players have passed.

Whoever wins the bid (bids highest) calls trump. This player is the Declarer.

If the first three players all pass, the dealer is forced to bid 50 (gets it dumped on him).

There are five types of bids:

A. Bid to Name Trump B. Give a Meld Bid C. Bid Up D. Save E. Pass.

A. Bid to Name Trump: You want to name trump and are sure you can pull at least 20 counter points in tricks and your team has at least 20 meld (the total of both must be a minimum of 50 and at least the amount of the final bid).

There are many options:

1. If first to bid (to the left of dealer or that person passed):

a. Bid 50 and hope your partner will give you a “meld bid” this will help you figure out how high you can bid.

b. To possibly stop the other team from giving a meld bid, bid 60 or more. Count your meld, count your partner for 5-10 (you are often safe assuming your partner has 10) and then add the number of counters you think you can take with help from your partner, (this is your maximum amount you should bid).

2. If not first, but next (partner has not had a chance to give a meld bid):

Bid one over the first bidder and hope your partner will give you a “meld bid.”

3. If your partner gave you a meld bid.

Count your meld, count your partners and then add the number of counters you think you can take (this is your maximum amount you should bid).

B. Meld Bid: A common system; at least for bids up to 60, is to skip numbers or jump bid to indicate meld (**no matter what trump is, so do not count a run**). This should be used to encourage your partner to bid and name trump.

There are many options:

1. If first to bid (to the left of dealer or they passed):

a. Opening 51 is aces around (or at least 6 aces and you should have at least 6 meld).

b. A 59 is double aces around. A 58 is at least 80 meld.

c. Opening 52 or more shows approximate meld, (approximately 10 meld for each point), no matter what trump is. A 52 bid would be 20 (most say 16-24). A 53 bid shows 30 meld (most say 26-34). A 56 bid is 60 (most say 56-64) etc.

2. Subsequent bidders: can show meld by the number of points they skip;

a. Bidding just 1 more than the previous bidder is not a meld bid, it indicates that you want to make trump.

b. Increasing the bid by 2 or more shows 10 meld (or 6-14) for each point of increase. So if the last bid was 52, then 54 or 2 more than the last bid indicates 20 meld (most say 16-24); then 55 or 3 more than the last bid indicates 30 meld (most say 26-34); and so on.

c. Once the bid gets to 60 or greater it is more difficult and may be subjective. It is commonly called a **jump bid** verses meld bid. **Some people will give 15 over to mean you have at least 40 meld. Going 20 or more over is at least 50 meld**

Examples / thoughts; for jump bids.

I. If the bid was 60 and you say 70 (meaning 30 meld), then your partner must say 75. This means he will need a combination of counters and meld of at least 75. So, if you have the 30; then if your partner has 25, he will only have to pull the minimum 20 counters (if he only has a run, 15, he would need to pull 30 etc.).

II. If the bid was 65 and you say 75 (meaning 30 meld), then your partner must say 80. This means you will need a combination of counters and meld of at least 80. So, if you have the 30, then if your partner has 25, then you only have to pull 25 counters (if he only had a run, 15, you would need to pull 40 etc.).

3. What if your partner gave you a meld bid already?

Well, variables are here too:

- a. If the next person passed, **and**, if bid is under 59, and if you have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you just **give** meld bid back.
- b. If the next person passed, **and**, if bid is under 59, and if you **don't** have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you just **may give** meld bid back or pass (gut call).
- c. If the next person bid, **and**, if bid is under 59, and if you have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you **give** meld bid back. (again, a gut call).
- d. If the next person bid, **and**, if bid is under 59, and if you **don't** have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you **seldom give** a meld bid back. (again, a gut call).
- e. If the next person bid 60 or more, and if you **don't** have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you **seldom give** a meld bid back. (again, a gut call).
- f. If the next person bid 60 or more, and if you have a marriage (remember, **he may not**) then you **may give a jump bid back**. (again, a gut call).

C. Bid Up: Bidding just to make the other team bid higher and maybe increase their chance of getting set; just remember, you could get set.

D. Save: (your partner) some people say “save” but it is really not legal (table talk), it should be a bid of 50.

Examples:

1. A bid of 50; if you have a marriage and your partner dealt and the first bidder passed, just in case the next person passes too and your partner does not have a marriage. Some people say “save my partner,” but it is really not legal, it should be a 50 bid.

2. A bid of one more than your partner (if you have a marriage, your partner gave you a meld bid and the other two passed). Some people say “save my partner,” but it is really not legal, it should be a bid of one more than your partner bid.

E. Pass: You don't want to or can't do anything else. Once you have **passed** once, you are out of the bidding until that hand is finished.

4. Meld Declaration

The bidder now chooses the trump suit and announces what it is. It must be a suit in which the bidder holds at least a marriage. If the bidder does not have a marriage he gets set (called board set). The hand is not played; in this case, the bidding side automatically loses the amount of their bid. The other side scores meld points if over 20 and **neither side counts anything for trick points.**

Once trump is called; teams let each other know their meld totals and if they total 20 or more, they lay their meld face up on the table. If they do not have 20 and they have aces around, they must declare or tell all players that they have aces around. A meld combination must be entirely within one player's hand to count. Note also, that you can count the same card in melds of different types (for example a queen of spades could be part of a marriage, a pinochle and a set of queens), but not in more than one meld of the same type (so a king and two queens does not count as two marriages). Partners add together their meld and this is written down on the score sheet. All cards are then put back into their respected hand.

5. The Playing of the Hand

A. As stated earlier there are counter cards and non-counter cards. The goal during the playing of the hand is to collect as many counter cards as possible in each trick. A good strategy is to plan to “take the last” trick (last 4 cards played) which is worth an extra 2 points. In total there are 50 points available 48 counter cards and 2 for last trick.

B. In order to score (save meld and counter card points) the teams must collect a minimum of 20 point cards.

C. An additional requirement for the declarer team, if the bid was greater than their meld + 20, is to collect the difference. Example: (bid 65, meld 40, team must collect 25 counter points).

D. If the non declaring team keeps the other team from getting enough counter points to be equal to or greater than their bid; then the declaring team goes set and the bid is subtracted from their score.

E. The declarer is the first to lead and plays a card face up in the center of the table. Each player in turn similarly plays a card. These 4 cards are called a “trick”. Once all 4 players have played a card, the player having played the highest card or highest trump wins the trick and he/she takes the 4 cards and places them face down in a stack for his / her team and leads the next card. This process is repeated until all cards have been played. The player with the lead may play any card he / she wishes but will normally lead an Ace in an effort to take the trick. Since the goal is to collect as many points as you can, it makes sense to play a counter card when you believe the trick will be your teams and a non-counter card when you believe you will lose the trick. This seems simple enough but there are **3 rules that must be followed:**

1. You **must follow suit** as long as you can.
2. You **must play a trump card if you are out of the suit.**
3. You **must play a higher value card, suit or trump when you can.** Any trump card is considered a higher value than any suit card. If you can't play a higher card you may play any

card in the suit. You may play any card if you are out of that suit and out of trump. Tied highest card in a trick goes to first one played.

I. Failure to follow the above rules is called a renege and if caught, play is stopped; you are considered “set” and your team score is reduced by the amount of the bid.

J. A **lead back** is a way to tell your partner you can take a trick in a particular suit. If they lead an ace and you know you can get the next trick in that suit; then you put a non-counter jack (sometimes a queen) on it. An ace is sometimes played (called a direct lead back); usually when you don’t have a jack and you probably have a 10 that will be good, or you want “no doubt” in your partners mind that you have that next trick for sure.

6. The totaling of the counter cards

Upon completing the play of a hand (last trick taken), each team counts the points in their stack of cards (tricks taken). One point is counted for each Ace, Ten, and King in the stack and 2 points are added for last trick. The teams ensure the total points for both are 50 and recount if necessary.

7. The Recording of scores

A. Meld is written down (not scored), if over 20, before the first trick is played of each hand.

B. It is recorded or scored if the minimum of 20 points were made by the **non declaring** team.

C. The points the **declaring team** takes during play, plus the amount of their meld for the hand must add up to at least the amount of their final bid. The declaring team must take a minimum of 20 points during the play of the hand. If the Declaring team **fails to meet** either one of these conditions; they are “**set**” and their score is reduced by the amount of their final bid (their meld for the hand and the points taken in play are disregarded). If the Declaring team **meets** both conditions their meld plus the points they took in play are added to their score.

D. If the **bidding partners** know that they cannot make the bid before play begins; they may call trump and “**surrender**,” **throw in their hand**. Or if they do not have the required marriage; they score nothing for their meld and their bid is subtracted from their score. The cards are not played and the non-bidding partners add their meld points to their score and 20 points for cards. (If it was dumped on a team without a marriage, they go set and the other team gets only their meld).

E. **Renege, incorrect play or cheating may adversely affect the score** in different ways. See below.

Renege, incorrect play, or cheating

A. Renege is when any player accidentally or purposely misplays during the play portion of the hand. There are various forms of misplay: playing out of suit (not following suit) or sloughing on a trick when you hold the high card or trump in your hand.

1. **If either of the declarer team reneges**; They may lose the game; however, they usually take a set and the amount of the bid is subtracted from their score. The opposing players

get to count their meld, if over 20, and receive 20 counter points. The remainder of the hand is thrown in.

2. **If either non-bidder reneges**, the bidder automatically makes his bid. The bidder gets to score the amount of his bid, the players that misplayed lose all meld and takes a set.

B. Incorrect play is knowingly or unknowingly playing out of turn or purposely exposing any portion of your hand to another player; knowingly or unknowingly not following suit or not having the meld said, may cause a set or loss of game

1. **Incorrect play is usually forgiven and there should be an apology from offender.**

C. Cheating is purposely: telling your partner what to play; not having the meld said; telling your partner about your hand or meld out of turn or as an illegal bid; not following suit; showing cards; looking at past played tricks, any may cause a set or loss of game. **DO NOT CHEAT!** At a minimum it is treated as a renege.. **Cheating is normally not allowed and player is normally removed.**



Pinochle Philosophy

Ken revised a piece from a pinnacle web site.

Pinochle is a card game and so much more if you get into it. So; “GET INTO IT !”

It is a partners’ game; and often you play with different partners, this makes the complexity of the game far more than any single player card game.

The game is **like a detective game**. You are looking for clues as to what is in your partner’s hand, and the other players’ hand.

Keeping track of trump, counting cards and remembering what was played is a great mind exercise. Deductive reasoning increases the rewards greatly.

It is a **game of communication**. As the level of play increases, every card is played for a reason. What everyone else plays on that card is a clue to what is in their hands.

When a pinochle player’s game level increases, and they play with players of similar experience, a new level of enjoyment emerges.

With that higher play level also comes the ability to deceive the opposition with what may look like a mistake; but later, **brilliance**.

The most enjoyment comes when playing with a seasoned player against a team of seasoned players. That is the ultimate goal of every experienced pinochle player. Some players will never reach the higher level of play, but will still enjoy the game.

This is a game where the more you put in, the more you will get out and with a higher level of enjoyment.

TIPS TO BECOME A BETTER PLAYER

Counting trump is the single most important tip. You have to know how many are still in the game. Along with this you should know some that were played; well, at least the aces and maybe 10s.

Counting Aces is important in suits you are short in or have a back-up in.

Determining what is in your partners hand is a key element in partner pinochle. When your partner names trump never try to control the game unless it is obvious you have complete control of the suit they named trump.

One key element in the game is to **communicate what is in your hand if you can**

Practice. You cannot practice during a game. You can sit behind a player and learn. Always ask, just wait till the right time. There are online sites that you can play.

This tip is not just for the girls. **Stop talking during the game.** It is that simple, ignore all conversation and do not respond to others talking to you. Just put up your hand and they will understand. Well sometimes it is ok (waiting on a slow poke or a player on a bathroom or coffee break or there are times we all just have to pass info on or listen to a friend)

Estimating what you can make is crucial. Estimating how much your hand is worth will help you develop a strategy on how to play the hand. Remember; easy hands can be played by anyone, hard hands are made by players picking the correct strategy. What makes this game so appealing is the fact that if you try to determine what your hand can make in points, there still is a good chance that a wide variance will occur.

If; during the bidding you are confused, pass or ask for a refresher on the bids.

Lead backs are exactly what the words mean. They communicate what your partner can expect from you. The documentation spells out lead backs. Read them again if you are not sure. At this point I would say to pay particularly close attention to direct lead backs.

Luck Never forget... LUCK both good and bad could be in the next few cards or hand.

Enjoy the game!

Please, read these carefully and make any suggestions to Ken.