

Tarte
Games



Le Rouge et Le Noir: A game based on traditional Truc-family games

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赤と黒 Le Rouge & Le Noir



2 (or 4)



15m.



8 and up

The Red and the Black Rulesheet

Hiya, kid. Welcome to our family. You wanna learn The Red and the Black, right?

OK, never mind, we don't care where you are from, what your gender is, how you look. We're open to the diversity, y'know, so all that matters is how hard you work. The more you earn, the more we pay. We must help each other. Honesty is our virtue.

It must be the first time for you to play this game, but it's not that new. I've been playing it since I was a rookie like you, because this is over 400 years old. No, no, it's totally easy to learn how to play. But who said it's easy to win, eh?

Anyway, let's open the box out there.

Inside the Box

There're 21 number cards, ranked one to seven, each having 3 copies. And there're 4 scoring cards to track your score. The last 5 cards are the doubling cards, x2 to x6. 30 cards in total.

Everything inside? Can we get started now?

Setup

This box is for two players because it's played basically by two. Take a pair of scoring cards, a scale of 11 points and a sack. Put the sack on the scale to show your points. Use poker chips if you want 'em.

First, draw a card before the deal, and whoever draws the smaller is the first dealer. Now I'm shuffling all 21 number cards to deal three cards each, yours and mine. Yeah, kid, you've only three chances to play. Don't show your hand to me, of course.

The remaining 15 cards aren't used in this deal, so leave 'em face down. Doubling cards are next to the deck face up. As you see, if we're accused of this game, we're always *in pari delicto* (equally guilty), OK? You can use a die instead of the doubling cards.

Course of the Game

Let's begin. As I've dealt, you go first and I go second.

In a deal, we play one card in a row to form a trick. Bigger one wins the trick. Equal numbers are draw. The winner leads next. After three tricks, who wins more tricks wins the deal. Then collect all cards, the next deal begins, until either one wins 11 points. That's all, OK?

The opening lead must be played face up. Any card is good. A five? Alright.

It's my turn. I can play a card either face up or down. If I'd play face up, the winner of this trick would be determined right now. But let's play it face down. Then I must call a "double", and put the smallest remaining doubling card between us. The first card is x2, so my proposal is to raise this deal's points to 2. Double. Your turn.

If you're interested in a big deal, call a "take". Otherwise call a "pass". Once you'd pass, the deal ends right now and you'd lose one point. Yeah, this deal's point is still one until you decide to take.

Wanna take it? You're a go-getter! Now the point is two and I flip this card. One. You played a five and I played a one, so you're the first winner. Congrats. Leave these cards on the table.

The winner leads to the next trick, from two cards in their hand. Play it next to your first card. If it was a draw, the previous winner leads again, or the non-dealer in this case.

And from now on, you also may lead face up or down. One more double? Pick up the x3 doubling card... yes, next to the x2 card. Huh? Not double, triple? Who the hell cares?

I can pass of course, but losing 2 points that easy is just irritating. Hmm, I'm gonna — Hey! DON'T FLIP YOUR CARD UNTIL I MAKE MY CALL!! Listen up, kid, you're not guaranteed to be safe once you fail to obey our protocols, right?

OK, I take it. Flip your card up. The points of the deal now have risen to 3. Let's place the x3 card to cover the x2. And if I'd pass here, you wouldn't have to flip your card at the deal's end. Be smart enough to cover your information from the opponent. Yeah, you may bluff or show off for effect. That's how we work every day.

And your card is... four. I play a five face up. The next trick is mine, one-one.

I'm the winner, so I'm gonna lead to the last trick. Face down, double. The deal's current score is 3, or 4 if you take it.

Terrified? No worries. You'd win even if this trick ends in a draw. The most important thing is, if we end up sharing one trick equally with a draw, the first winner wins the whole deal too. You take or pass? Good, I flip my six. Now it's a 4-point deal.

Still more double? Ah, you have a good negotiation skill. You can grab your points by that card, even when it's a low card like one or two though, because it might be perhaps higher, six or seven. I've still seen no sevens, and losing 5 points is out of my tolerance. OK, you're the winner. Take 4 points.

...Are you smiling? Ha, good, you're a super gifted player like a young me, kid. Now you're the next dealer. Shuffle 'em all. The quota is 11 points, y'know, so take all doubling cards away, and the deal starts from 1 point again.



In Case of a Tie

As I said before, whenever we share the equal number of tricks at the end of the deal, say it's one-one, the first winner always wins the deal. So, for example, if the score is one-nil after the second trick, the first winner wins. You don't have to play the third trick. How silly it is to take one more double even when they are losing, right?

In other words, the deal will be tied only if the final score is nil-nil. Then that deal's points are carried over to the next deal, and the next deal's winner takes it all. Simplicity itself. Scoring? Write it down on that paper.

Short Deck

If your friend finds kinda difficult playing the basic game, reduce the deck to the ranks one to five, 2 copies each. Yes, 10 in total. Deal 3 cards each and 4 remains. Some minimalists like that way. Aren't you interested too?

4-Player Game in Partnerships

Some young members like to play with 4 players in two teams of two, partners sitting opposite each other. The winning pair of a deal scores points, so the scoring is exactly the same as in a 2-player game. Wanna play it so bad? Your enthusiasm is so nice!

Use 21 number cards. Deal 3 cards each in hand. Who sits to the left of the dealer leads, and play goes clockwise. 4 cards form a trick. If there're two highest cards from the same pair, that pair wins and who played it first leads to the next. But if there're two or three highest cards from both pairs, it's a draw. The previous leading player leads to the next.

A double can be called at any time except the opening lead, but in a deal you or your partner can't say it twice in a row. Same as Backgammon's double call. You're free to talk to take or pass. Also you may talk about your hand freely, even with bluffing, but there's always a risk.

The point is, if your partner is winning a trick, you don't have to play a higher card. Make sense? Suppose the leading card is a five, your partner plays a six, and the third is also a five. You don't have to play six or seven here, because your team is already guaranteed to win.

Good! That's all for today. You'll go your way around just fine.

Huh? Wanna meet our boss soon as possible? Didn't you know that I'm the boss, kid? Or are you shocked by this woman being your boss? Your head seems to be full of prejudice, y'know, too much confidence will harm you. Go practice!