

Gin Rummy

(for 2 players)



The Deck

One standard deck of 52 cards is used. Cards in each suit rank, from low to high:

Ace 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Jack Queen King.

The cards have values as follows:

Face cards (K,Q,J) 10 points

Ace 1 point

Number cards are worth their spot value.

The Deal

The first dealer is chosen randomly by drawing cards from the shuffled pack - the player who draws the lower card deals. Subsequently, the dealer is the loser of the previous hand (but see variations). In a serious game, both players should shuffle, the non-dealer shuffling last, and the non-dealer must then cut.

Each player is dealt ten cards, one at a time. The twenty-first card is turned face up to start the discard pile and the remainder of the deck is placed face down beside it to form the stock. The players look at and sort their cards.

Object of the Game

The object of the game is to collect a hand where most or all of the cards can be combined into sets and runs and the point value of the remaining unmatched cards is low.

• **a run** or sequence consists of three or more cards of the same suit in consecutive order, such as 4, 5, 6 or 8, 9, 10, J.

• **a set** or group is three or four cards of the same rank, such as 7, 7, 7.

A card can belong to only one combination at a time - you cannot use the same card as part of both a set of equal cards and a sequence of consecutive cards at the same time.

For example if you have 7, 7, 7, 8, 9 you can use the 7 either to make a set of three sevens or a heart sequence, but not both at once. To form a set and a sequence you would need a sixth card - either a 7 or a 10.

Note that in Gin Rummy the Ace is always low. A-2-3 is a valid sequence but A-K-Q is not.

Play

A normal turn consists of two parts:

1. The Draw. You must begin by taking one card from either the top of the stock pile or the top card on the discard pile, and adding it to your hand. The discard pile is face up, so you can see in advance what you are getting. The stock is face down, so if you choose to draw from the stock you do not see the card until after you have committed yourself to take it. If you draw from the stock, you add the card to your hand without showing it to the other players.

2. The Discard To complete your turn, one card must be discarded from your hand and placed on top of the discard pile face up. If you took the top card from the discard pile, you must discard a different card - taking the top discard and putting the same card back is not permitted.

For the first turn of the hand, the draw is done in a special way. First, the person who did not deal chooses whether to take the turned up-card. If the non-dealer declines it, the dealer may take the card. If both players refuse the turned-up card, the non-dealer draws the top card from the stock pile. Whichever player took a card completes their turn by discarding and then it is the other player's turn to play.

Knocking

You can end the play at your turn if, after drawing a card, you can form sufficient of your cards into valid combinations: sets and runs. This is done by discarding one card face down on the discard pile and exposing your whole hand, arranging it as far as possible into sets (groups of equal cards) and runs (sequences). Any remaining cards from your hand which are not part of a valid combination are called unmatched cards or deadwood. and the total value of your deadwood must be 10 points or less. Ending the play in this way is known as knocking, presumably because it used to be signaled by the player knocking on the table, though nowadays it is usual just to discard face down. Knocking with no unmatched cards at all is called going gin, and earns a special bonus.

A player who can meet the requirement of not more than 10 deadwood can knock on any turn, including the first. A player is never forced to knock if able to, but may choose instead to carry on playing, to try to get a better score.

The opponent of the player who knocked must spread their cards face-up, arranging them into sets and runs where possible. Provided that the knocker did not go gin, the opponent is also allowed to lay off any unmatched cards by using them to extend the sets and runs laid down by the knocker - by adding a fourth card of the same rank to a group of three, or further consecutive cards of the same suit to either end of a sequence.

If a player goes gin, the opponent is not allowed to lay off any cards.

Note that the knocker is never allowed to lay off cards on the opponent's sets or runs.

The play also ends if the stock pile is reduced to two cards, and the player who took the third last card discards without knocking. In this case the hand is cancelled, there is no score, and the same dealer deals again. Some play that after the player who took the third last stock card discards, the other player can take this discard for the purpose of going gin or knocking after discarding a different card, but if the other player does neither of these the hand is cancelled.

Scoring

Each player counts the total value of their unmatched cards. If the knocker's count is lower, the knocker scores the difference between the two counts.

If the knocker did not go gin, and the counts are equal, or the knocker's count is greater than that of the opponent, the knocker has been undercut. In this case the knocker's opponent scores the difference between the counts plus a 10 point bonus.

A player who goes gin scores a bonus 20 points, plus the opponent's count in unmatched cards, if any. A player who goes gin can never be undercut. Even if the other player has no unmatched cards at all, the person going gin gets the 20 point bonus the other player scores nothing.

The game continues with further deals until one player's cumulative score reaches 100 points or more. This player then receives an additional bonus of 100 points. If the loser failed to score anything at all during the game, then the winner's bonus is 200 points rather than 100.

In addition, each player adds a further 20 points for each hand they won. This is called the line bonus or box bonus. These additional points cannot be counted as part of the 100 needed to win the game.

After the bonuses have been added, the player with the lower score pays the player with the higher score an amount proportional to the difference between their scores.

Variations

Many books give the rule that the winner of each hand deals the next. Some play that the turn to deal alternates.

Some players begin the game differently: the non-dealer receives 11 cards and the dealer 10, and no card is turned up. The non-dealer's first turn is simply to discard a card, after which the dealer takes a normal turn, drawing the discard or from the stock, and play alternates as usual.

Although the traditional rules prohibit a player from taking the previous player's discard and discarding the same card, it is hard to think of a situation where it would be advantageous to do this if it were allowed. The *Gin Rummy Association Rules* do explicitly allow this play. The *Game Colony Rules* allow it in one specific situation - "action on the 50th card". When a player takes the third last card of the stock and discards without knocking, leaving two cards in the stock, the other player has one final chance to take the discard and knock. In this position, this same card can be discarded - if it does not improve his hand, the player simply turns it over on the pile to knock.

Some people play that the bonus for going gin is 25 (rather than 20) and the bonus for an undercut is 20 (rather than 10). Some play that the bonus for an undercut, the bonus for going gin, and the box bonus for each game won are all 25 points.

Some play that if the loser failed to score during the whole game, the winner's entire score is doubled (rather than just doubling the 100 game bonus to 200).

Points awarded after every hand

After a player knocks to end a hand, and the defender lays off, the deadwood count of both hands are compared. These points and bonuses are awarded after each hand:

Knock Points - If the knocker has less deadwood points than the defender, he scores the difference between the two deadwood counts.

Undercut (or Underknock) - If a knocker has equal or more deadwood points than the defender, the defender scores the difference between the two deadwood counts and an undercut bonus of 25 points. Some rules award an undercut bonus of 10 points.

Gin Bonus - If the knocker goes Gin, he scores the entire deadwood count of the defender and a Gin bonus of 25 points (20 points according to some rules). The defender doesn't get to lay off.

Big Gin - When a player draws the 11th card, and can form a gin with all 11 cards, he can retain the extra card as part of his hand. He is awarded an extra 6 points besides the regulation Gin Bonus.

After each hand, the winning player's points are recorded in the score sheet. The game ends when a player scores 100 points.

Points awarded after a game

The following bonuses are awarded after a game is over:

Game Bonus - If a player scores 100 points in the course of the game, the game is over. The player receives a Game Bonus of 100 points.

Box Bonus (or Line bonus) - At the end of the match, a player receives a bonus of 25 points for every hand (or round) won during the match.

Shutout Bonus - If the winner of a match wins every hand in the match, and thus shuts out his opponent, the points for each hand are doubled before adding the Line Bonus. This is also known as a Blitz or a Schneider.

Game 1		Guide to keeping score sheet			
	Ed	Jim	Hand	Result	Score
	51	17	1	Ed goes gin	Ed scores 51: (26 + 25 as Gin bonus)
	7	41	2	Ed knocks with 3	Ed scores 7: (10 - 3)
	28		3	Jim knocks with 2	Jim scores 17: (19 - 2)
	39		4	Jim goes gin	Jim scores 41: (16 + 25 as Gin bonus)
			5	Jim knocks with 6	Ed scores 28: (3 + 25 as Undercut bonus)
			6	Ed knocks with 2	Ed scores 39: (41 - 2)
Game ends as Ed's score has crossed 100.					
	125	58	Game Bonus		
GB	100		Ed has won the game		
BB	100	50	Ed has won 4 hands		
	325	108	Jim has won 2 hands		
			Ed scores 100 as Game bonus		
			Ed scores 100: (25 X 4)		
			Jim scores 50: (25 X 2)		

