

# SINGLE DECK PARTNERSHIP PINOCHLE

Pinochle is played with a 48-card deck. The deck consists of twelve cards in each of four suits—two in each of the ranks, Ace, Ten, King, Queen, Jack, and Nine. Note that the rank of cards differs from standard usage: the Ten outranks everything (within its suit) except the Ace.

In the trick-taking phase of the game, the Aces, Tens, and Kings are worth points, and thus are called “counters”. Queens, Jacks, and Nines are not worth points (although they can win tricks), so they are called “non-counters”.

## The Deal

For the first round of a game, the players select a dealer in whatever manner they choose. (Throughout this document, a “round” will refer to the entire sequence from one deal to the next; the set of cards dealt to an individual player will be called a “hand”).

The dealer shuffles the cards in whatever manner is convenient to mix them thoroughly. (It is considered good form to offer to shuffle and/or deal for somebody whose hands don't work so well.) The shuffled deck is placed on the table to the dealer's right; the player to that side cuts the deck, preferably toward the dealer.

The dealer picks up the deck (cut portion last) and deals the cards evenly to each player, beginning with dealer's left. All 48 cards will have been dealt.

It is generally courteous to wait until all the cards have been dealt before picking up your hand. This way, if one player does not have enough cards, they can be re-distributed without having to re-shuffle and re-deal the whole deck.

Once the cards have been dealt, the players pick up, sort, and examine their hands. The next phase is bidding.

## The Bid

The winner of the bid (hereafter called the “declarer”) acquires three rights:

- the right to name trump,
- the right to receive cards from his/her partner, and
- the right to lead the first trick.

The minimum opening bid is 250 points, and the player to the dealer's left has the first opportunity to bid. Bids are made in increments of 10 (or multiples of 10) points.

Bid passes to the left, and when the bid reaches you, you have four options:

- Give a normal bid by announcing a number 10 points higher than the last bid.
- Give a “jump” bid by saying a number at least 20 points higher than the last bid.
- Say “Pass,” thereby removing yourself from the bidding for this round.
- Say “Pass with help”. This phrase removes you from the bidding for the round, but can be used to convey extra information to your partner.

When only one person has not said “pass” (or “pass with help”), that person has won the bid and becomes the declarer. The amount bid is recorded on a piece of paper which is being used as a score pad.

The winner of the bidding names the trump suit.

## Passing Cards

When the bidder has named trump, the bidder’s partner selects four cards to pass across the table. Exactly four cards must be sent. Once you’ve selected your four cards, place them in one stack face down on the table in front of you, and slide them across to your partner.

The bidder picks up these four cards and sorts them into his or her hand and chooses four cards to send back across the table in the same way. These may include some of the cards just received.

## Laying Down Meld

Now that the cards have been passed back and forth across the table, all four players lay down their meld. Meld is a combination of cards declared, especially by putting them face up on the table. Each combination is called a piece of meld, and each piece is worth a particular number of points.

There are three types of meld, and an individual card may belong to several different pieces of meld as long as they are of different types. Each player places face-up on the table only those cards necessary to show the value of their meld.

### TYPE 1

<b>Runs</b> (all cards must be in trump—non-trump runs do not count)	
Bare Run (A, T, K, Q, J).....	150
Run with Extra King (A, T, K, K, Q, J).....	170
Run with Extra Queen (A, T, K, Q, Q, J).....	170
Run with Extra Marriage (A, T, K, K, Q, Q, J).....	190
Double Run (A, A, T, T, K, K, Q, Q, J, J).....	1500
<b>Nine of Trump</b> (called the deece).....	10

<b>Marriages</b> ( King and Queen of the Same Suit)	
Royal Marriage (in Trump).....	40
Common Marriage (non-Trump).....	20

## TYPE II

### Pinochle

Single (one Jack of Diamonds/Queen of Spades).....	40
Double (both Jacks of Diamonds/Queens of Spades).....	300

## TYPE III

<b>Arounds</b>	One of Each Suit	Both of Each Suit
Aces.....	100.....	1000
Kings.....	80.....	800
Queens.....	60.....	600
Jacks.....	40.....	400

When all four players have laid down their meld, both teams count their points and record them on the score pad. There are only a total of 250 points available during the trick-taking phase of the game. If the amount that was bid is more than 250 points above the amount melded by the declarer's team, there is no way that team can make their bid. They are not "on the board", and they will "go set" for this hand.

If the difference between the amount bid and the amount the declarer's team has melded is 250 points or less, the hand can be played out. However, if the declarer feels there is absolutely no chance of making the required points, he or she can "throw in the hand" and the consequences are the same as if that team had not been "on the board". General courtesy calls for all players to wait until the declarer picks up his or her own meld; then they may pick up theirs. This gives the declarer a fair chance to see what he or she is up against.

## Taking Tricks

Once all players have picked up their melded cards, the declarer leads to the first trick. Proceeding to the left, each player plays a card on the trick (following the rules outlined below). When four cards have been played to the trick, the highest-ranking card of trump, or if there is no trump in the trick, the highest-ranking card of the suit led, wins. The player who played the winning card leads to the next trick, and so on until twelve tricks have been played.

There are some rules about what must be played on the trick. The first, or lead card, may be anything in the leader's hand. The basic rules of engagement are as follows:

- If you have a card of the same suit as the lead card, you must play it. If possible,

you must play a card that beats the card that currently controls the trick.

- If you do not have any cards in the suit led, but you have a card in trump, you must play it, thereby “trumping the trick”. If the trick already contains trump, you must beat it with a higher trump card if you can.
- If you cannot follow suit and you cannot trump the trick, you may play any other card.
- The first played of two identical cards beats the second.
- The rule obliging you to beat the card currently winning the trick applies even if the card you are obliged to beat is your partner’s.
- If you have no card of the suit led, you must play a trump if you can, even if someone before you has already played a higher trump than yours. The only case in which you are allowed to throw a card of a non-trump suit different from the led suit is when you have no cards of the suit led and no trumps.
- The obligation to play higher only applies if you are able to beat the card that is currently winning the trick. If you are unable to do this you may play any card, subject always to the necessity to follow suit and to play a trump if you have no card of the suit led. For example, if the non-trump lead has already been trumped, and you have cards in the suit led, you cannot beat the trump that is currently winning the trick (since you have to follow suit), so you may play any card of the suit that was led.

Once all four cards have been played to a trick, it should be clear which player has won the trick. Each team should designate one partner to “pull” the tricks, or gather them from the center of the table. For the declaring team, this is usually the non-declarer (giving the declarer time to concentrate on what to lead next). The puller collects the cards, turns them face-down, and places them in a stack in front of him or her on the table. As a courtesy, the puller shows the cards to the other players (especially the declarer) before they are turned face-down.

Once all twelve tricks have been played, both teams collect their stacks of pulled cards and count the Aces, Tens and Kings collected during the round. Each counter is worth 10 points. The final trick, in and of itself, is worth an additional 10 points. This makes 250 points total: 240 for the twenty-four counters in the deck, plus 10 for the final trick.

The scores obtained by each side are recorded on the score pad.

If the declaring team “makes the bid” (earns enough points, through melding and trick-taking combined, to meet or exceed the amount bid), all the earned points are added to the team’s previous score. If they do not, they “go set”. This means that they do not score any points melded, they score no points taken in the tricks, and their previous score is reduced

by the amount bid.

If the non-declaring team fails to earn points while taking tricks (that is, they pulled no counters and failed to capture the final trick), they do not score any points that were melded. (It is said that they failed to “save their meld”). The exception is that if their only meld was one or both deeces, the points are scored. Nines of trump are said to “save themselves”. If the non-declaring team does capture points in tricks, the meld is added to their previous score, along with any points earned in tricks.

If the declaring team were not “on the board” (their meld fell short of their bid by more than 250 points) or they decided to throw in the hand without play, they lose the amount of their bid, and the opponents score their own meld. The cards are not played, so there is no score for cards won in tricks. Note that if the declaring side have no chance of making their bid, it is advantageous for them to throw in the hand, as this prevents the opponents from scoring for cards taken in the play.

