

2-4 Player Cribbage Rules

The Deal

- Players cut for the deal and lowest card wins.
- After the first hand, players take turns to deal moving clockwise.
- In 2 player crib, the dealer shuffles, asks their opponent to cut and then deals six cards each.
 - Both players discard two cards face down and these two cards are henceforth referred to as "*the crib*".
 - The crib is effectively an extra hand scored for the dealer.
 - Thus the dealer aims to discard cards into the crib that will give a good chance of a high scoring hand whereas the opponent aims to confound this objective.
 - Most of the skill in the game of Cribbage is down to the choice of cards discarded at this point.
- In 3 player crib, the dealer shuffles, asks their clockwise opponent to cut and then deals five cards each and then places a final card into their crib.
 - All three players discard one card face down into the crib (the final card dealt makes the fourth crib card).
- In 4 player crib, the dealer shuffles, asks their opponent to cut and then deals five cards each.
 - All four players discard one card face down into the crib.

The Cut

- The dealer asks the opponent to their left to cut the cards a second time.
- The top portion of cards is placed underneath the lower portion and the new top-most card is turned face upwards (the "*starter card*").
- "*His Heels*": If the starter card is a Jack, the dealer pegs 2 points and says "*Two for his heels*".

The Play ("*Pegging*")

- The opponent to the dealer's left begins the play by laying one of their four cards face up, while clearly stating it's numerical value.
 - All royal cards count ten, the ace counts one and all other cards are worth their pip value.
- The dealer then lays a card separately in front of them and announces the total of both cards.
- Play continues like this with each player alternately laying a card on the pile in front of them while verbally keeping tally of the current joint total.
 - The total must not go above 31.
- When a player cannot play without taking the total above 31, that player says, "*Go*" and, if possible, the remaining player(s) must carry on alone until everyone cannot play without taking the total above 31.
- When no player can play any card without taking the total above 31, the player who laid the last card pegs 1 point saying "*One for Go*".
- Should any player manage to take the total to exactly 31, that player pegs 2 points instead of 1, saying "*Thirty-one for two*".
 - The player CANNOT score 3 (i.e. "*Thirty-one for two, plus one for Go*").
- Then the cards already played are turned over and the player to the left of the player who laid the last card starts a new play.
- As each player's cards are exhausted, the other players continue alone.
- The last card played scores 1 ("*One for last card*"), unless the amount is 31, in which case 2 points are scored.
 - The player CANNOT score 3 (i.e. "*Thirty-one for two, plus one for last card*") UNLESS 15s, runs or pairs are involved with placing the last card.

- During the play, the following events are scored and the appropriate amounts are immediately recorded on the cribbage board. All combinations are counted (e.g. a run of 3 also equals 15).
 - If anyone lays down a card that brings the total to 15, 2 points are scored ("*Fifteen for two*").
 - If anyone lays down a card of the same type as the previous one, 2 points are scored ("*Pair for two*").
 - The numerical value is not used (a Jack valued at 10 cannot be paired with a Queen, which is also valued at 10).
 - If anyone lays down a third card of the same type, 6 points are scored ("*Pair Royal for 6*" or "*Three for six*").
 - If anyone lays down a fourth card of the same type, 12 points are scored ("*Double Pair Royal for twelve*" or "*Four for twelve*").
 - If anyone lays down a card such that with the two preceding cards, a run occurs, 3 points are scored ("*Run for three*").
 - The cards do not have to be of the same suit nor do they have to have been laid in sequential order, but the run must be uninterrupted and not proceed past 31.
 - Aces count low so Queen, King, Ace is not a run.
 - Double, Triple and Quadruple Runs do not count.
 - Similarly, if anyone lays a card such that with the three or more preceding cards, a run can be constructed, the number of cards that would make up that run are scored.
 - The fourth card would score 4 points ("*Run for four*"), the fifth card would score five points ("*Run for five*"), etc. (7 is the maximum possible).
- If a card can be played, it must be played, otherwise a "*Renegé*" has occurred.
 - For example, if you say "*Go*" when you could have played a card without going over 31.
 - When a "*Renegé*" is claimed, any cards played after the renege are returned to the players and any points pegged are cancelled.
 - The opponent who claimed the "*Renegé*" gets 2 points for each reneged card.
 - For example, the count is 25 and a player holds A, 5 & 6 but does not play any of the three cards and says "*Go*". That is a "*Triple Renegé*" and the opponent gets 6 points (2 for each card).
 - The player may correct a renege prior to an opponent playing their card or announcing the count of their hand.

The Show

- Each player counts the score of the four cards in their hand, plus the turned up card.
- The player to the left of the dealer shows first and scoring continues around to the dealer.
 - This is important because it can often make the difference between winning and losing.
 - It is usually best to score by category so that nothing gets missed, as a flush, pairs and runs can also include 15s (e.g. 5-5-5 = 6 points for Pair Royal + 2 points for a 15)
- Fifteens: All discrete combinations of cards that add up to fifteen count 2 points each.
- Pair, a Pair Royal (three of a kind) or a Double Pair Royal (four of a kind): Count 2, 6 or 12 respectively (excluding 15s).
- Run: One point for each discrete sequential card, beyond 2 cards.
 - 3 Card Run = 3 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-3-4)
 - 4 Card Run = 4 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-3-4-5)
 - 5 Card Run = 5 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-3-4-5+6)
 - Double 3 Card Run = 6 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-2-3-4)
 - Double 4 Card Run = 8 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-2-3-4+5)
 - Triple 3 Card Run = 9 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-2-2-3+4)
 - Quadruple 3 Card Run = 12 points - excluding pairs & 15s (e.g. 2-2-2-3+4+3)

- Flush (4 or 5 cards of the same suit, irrespective of value): One point is scored for each card.
 - 4 Card Flush can only be scored using cards from the hand = 4 points.
 - 5 Card Flush requires the use of the starter card = 5 points.
 - Note that flushes do not count during the play.
- His Nob: A Jack in your hand, or crib, of the same suit as the turned up card scores 1 point.
 - This is always scored last so that the score is tallied by finishing with the satisfying phrase, "And one for his nob" (also known as "nibs for one").
- The highest possible score in the show is 29 points (3 fives and a Jack with the starter card being another five of the same suit as the held Jack = 8 different combinations of "Fifteen" can be made for 16 points; 6 different pair combinations of 5's for 12 points, plus Nibs for 1 point).
- Nineteen: This is an impossible hand in crib, so if a player has no points in their hand, they will often claim they have "nineteen" when announcing their score ("Nineteen" = 0 points).

The Crib

- Finally, the dealer counts the score of the cards in their crib plus the turned up card and adds these points to their total.
- Scoring is done in exactly the same way as for the show except that a crib can only score a flush if all five cards are of the same suit (5 points).

End of Game

- The game ends as soon as one player scores 121 or more points (does not have to be exact), or a "Double Skunk" has been made.
- "Double Skunk": If a player scores 61 or more points before an opponent scores 31 points, the game ends and the winner scores 2 games instead of 1 game for the win.
- "Skunk": If a player scores 121 or more points before an opponent scores 91 points, the winner scores 2 games instead of 1 game for the win.

Optional Rules

- "Muggins": You may claim points which your opponent(s) fail to score in their hand, crib, play, or those they forget to peg on the board.
 - The first player to identify the error and exclaim, "Muggins", gets to claim the unclaimed point(s) for themselves.

Penalties

- 2 point penalty for sneaking a peek at any cards (such as the bottom card when dealing or cutting the deck, or prematurely checking the crib).
- 2 point penalty for moving an opponent's peg.
- 2 point penalty for placing the starter card in your hand or crib, or prematurely returning it to the pack.
- 15 point penalty for incorrectly claiming the game.
 - For example, if a player mistakenly pegs more than their actual score (or scores prematurely) and claims the game as a result, the aggrieved opponent scores points equal to the number over-claimed and the offender takes the penalty (has to peg back 15 points).

Cribbage Scoring Summary

The Cut

"His Heels" (you turn over a Jack as the starter card) = **2 points**

The Play ("**Pegging**")

- "15" (the count lands on exactly 15) = **2 points** (cumulative with runs & pairs)
- "31" (the count lands on exactly 31) = **2 points** (cumulative with runs & pairs, but not with Go)
- "Pair" (two cards in a row match, without exceeding 31) = **2 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Three of a Kind" (three cards in a row match, without exceeding 31) = **6 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Four of a Kind" (four cards in a row match, without exceeding 31) = **12 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Run of 3" (three uninterrupted cards, in any order, make a run without exceeding 31) = **3 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Run of 4" (four uninterrupted cards, in any order, make a run without exceeding 31) = **4 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Run of 5" (five uninterrupted cards, in any order, make a run without exceeding 31) = **5 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Run of 6" (six uninterrupted cards, in any order, make a run without exceeding 31) = **6 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Run of 7" (seven uninterrupted cards, in any order, make a run without exceeding 31) = **7 points** (cumulative with 15 & 31)
- "Go" (after your play, your opponents cannot play a card without exceeding 31) = **1 point** (cumulative with 15s, pairs & runs BUT NOT cumulative with you playing out to "31")
- "Last Card" (you play the last card of the round = **1 point** (cumulative with 15s, pairs & runs BUT NOT cumulative with 31)

The Show

- "Fifteen" (any combination of discreet cards that total 15) = **2 points**
- "Pair" (two matching cards) = **2 points**
- "Three of a Kind" (three matching cards) = **6 points** (excluding 15s)
- "Four of a Kind" (four matching cards) = **12 points** (excluding 15s)
- "Run" (three, four or five cards in sequential order) = **3, 4 or 5 points** (excluding 15s)
- "Double Run" (three or four cards in sequential order, plus a matching card) = **6 or 8 points** (excluding 15s & Pairs)
- "Triple Run" (four cards in sequential order, plus a matching card) = **9 points** (excluding 15s & Pairs)
- "Quadruple Run" (three cards in sequential order, plus two separate matching cards) = **12 points** (excluding 15s & Pairs)
- "4 Card Flush" (four cards of the same suit, irrespective of value, in your hand) = **4 points**
- "5 Card Flush" (five cards of the same suit, irrespective of value - your hand + starter card) = **5 points**
- "Nibs" (the suit of the Jack in your hand, or crib, matches the suit of the starter card) = **1 point**

The Crib

- Score the same as The Show, but the "4 Card Flush" DOES NOT APPLY

Muggins and Penalties – are resolved as they occur