

For drawing out of turn, 100; plus an additional 100 if the offender adds the card illegally drawn to his hand.

For inability to go out, after asking and receiving the answer yes, 100.

For melding in an opponent's turn, 100; in partner's turn, 200.

For taking the discard pile into the hand illegally, 200.

THREE-PACK CANASTA

Six play, in three partnerships of two each; each player sits between two opponents, one of each other team:

B C
A A
C B

Three full packs and six jokers are shuffled together; back designs and colors need not be the same. Thirteen cards are dealt to each player. Game is 10,000, and when a side reaches 7,000 it needs 150 for its initial meld. Five red threes count 1,000; all six count 1,200. A side needs two canastas to go out. The rules otherwise are as in four-hand Canasta.

The three-pack game may be played by any number of players from two to six.

CANASTA CUSTOMS

The following customs and terms apply in most Canasta games:

A player in turn may count the stock; may ask any other player how many cards he holds; and may announce when his own hand contains only one card.

The discard pile is called "the pack" and taking it is called "taking the pack"; discarding a wild card is called "freezing the pack."

A side that reaches 3,000 points is often said to be "vulnerable."

The partner who melds first keeps all the melds, and all the red treys, for his side. The other partner keeps score for his side. At the end of play, the partner who kept the melds calculates the score for his side, and the other partner watches and verifies the opponents' score.

Score is kept on a regular Bridge score pad, with "We" and "They" columns. After each hand is played, the score for that hand is entered, then the total of each side is written down.

When a game ends, each side reckons its total score to the nearest hundred, counting 50 or more points as 100. The winners then receive the difference between these net scores. Thus, if a side wins by 5,030 to 3,050, it wins the difference between 50 and 31, or 19 "points" net.

A complete canasta is shoved into a pile, with a red card on top if it is a natural canasta, a black card if it is a mixed canasta.



POINTERS ON PLAY

By Ely Culbertson

Author of "Culbertson on Canasta," published by the John C. Winston Company

The bonuses for canastas outweigh by far all the other point bonuses put together. Therefore: Concentrate, as a rule, on making canastas.

You can get canastas only if you have a lot of cards. The only way to get a lot of cards is to get the pack (discard pile). Therefore: It is the prime object of the game either to capture a large pack, or repeatedly to get possession of several smaller ones. (A small pack has five to nine cards.)

Take care of the pack, and your canastas will take care of themselves.

In order to prepare the ground for seizing the pack, make your initial meld as soon as you can, but not at the price of stripping your hand. At the start of the game, look for short three-card melds, such as aces; avoid five-card or longer initial melds.

Broadly speaking, there are two types of Canasta tactics, offensive and defensive—a play for the big pack and a play for going out. Therefore: You should play for out whenever it appears that prolongation of the game will benefit your opponents more than yourself.

Never freeze the pack when your side is down with melds and your adversaries are not.

Cultivate your memory. Concentrate first on your Left Opponent's discards, secondly on the pack (at least pairs), then on your partner's and Right Opponent's discards.

Trust your partner and he will trust you.



OFFICIAL RULES

of the Association of
American Playing Card Manufacturers

for

CANASTA

Incorporating the latest changes made for 1950.

The Canasta procedure and irregularities as described here, and adopted by the Association of American Playing Card Manufacturers, are the same in substance as the rules given in the books of Ely Culbertson, Oswald Jacoby, Otilie Reilly, Albert H. Morehead, Geoffrey Mott-Smith, Robert Lee Johnson, Walter L. Richard, Richard L. Frey, Samuel Fry, Theodore A. Lightner, and others, also endorsed by the leading clubs.

Canasta is a new game—it comes from Argentina, and the word "canasta" is Spanish, meaning "basket"—that bids fair to rival bridge as a popular partnership game for four players. It's fast, exciting and dramatic; a single play, according to experts, can make a difference of 5,000 points. Canasta is also good for any number of players from two to six.

The rules aren't simple, but complex rules didn't keep Bridge from becoming popular; and since Canasta is a member of the Rummy family, it will not be difficult for those who already play Rummy—as nearly everyone does.

Use two decks plus four jokers (that's easy, because every single deck includes a joker and an extra joker). Decks having either contrasting or similar back designs may be used. The principal differences that the Rummy player should remember are these:

Sequences don't count.

All jokers and deuces are wild.

Each meld must include at least two natural cards and not more than three wild cards. Seven of a kind are a canasta. It earns a large bonus, and without one you can't go out.

No. Mfr

(AGCA has original)

(b) Total all bonuses under this schedule:

For going out.....	100
For each red trey (see rule 13).....	200 or 100
For each natural canasta.....	500
For each mixed canasta.....	300
For concealed hand (see rule 48).....	100

(c) Total the point values of all cards left in the hand of the player whose partner went out.

(d) Subtract item (c) from the sum of items (a) and (b).

43. The opponents of the side that went out determine their net score for the deal as prescribed under rule 42, with these differences: They cannot score for going out or for concealed hand; if this side has made no meld, the value of its red treys is deducted instead of added; point values of cards left in both hands are deducted.

44. If the last card of the stock is a red trey, the player drawing it may not discard; and after he has had an opportunity to meld, play ends. Play also ends when the stock is exhausted and any player in turn fails to take the top discard. In either case the net scores are determined under rules 42 and 43, except that there can be no scores for going out and for concealed hand.

Scoring a Game

45. A game is won by the first side to reach a total of 5,000 points or more. If both sides reach 5,000 in the same deal (the final deal is played out, even though it is known that one side will reach 5,000 after play ends), the side with the higher total wins.

46. There is no bonus for winning a game. Settlement is made on the difference of the final scores, which are the totals of the net deal scores.

47. The score should be recorded on paper, with one column for each side, and the record should show each net deal score together with the cumulative total of such scores for each side. (Minimum count for the initial meld is fixed by this cumulative total.)

Concealed Hand

48. A player goes out with a *concealed hand* if he melds all his cards in one turn, having previously melded not a single card. (In going out concealed he may not add a card to a meld of his partner's.)

49. The player going out with a concealed hand must himself meld a complete canasta, but need not have any specific minimum count for an initial meld.

50. For concealed hand, a side scores a bonus of 100, additional to the bonus of 100 for going out.

IRREGULARITIES

51. If the wrong player deals, the deal stands; but if attention is called to it in time, the first play is made by the player whose turn it would have been, and he deals next.

52. There must be a new deal by the same player if it is ascertained, before each player has had a turn to play, that a card is faced in dealing or found faced in the deck; or that the dealer departed in any respect from the rules of correct procedure in dealing; or that a player was dealt an incorrect number of cards. After this time limit, the deal and any incorrect hand stands as regular.

53. If a player draws too many cards, he must rectify the error by discarding without drawing in each turn until his hand is correct. If a player discards without drawing, he may be required to take the top card of the stock if attention is called to the omission before the next player has drawn.

54. If a player exposes one or more cards from his hand, except to make a legal meld, all such cards must be left face up on the table and discarded in successive turns, except that the obligation to discard lapses for each such card that is included in a valid meld (including its use to take the discard pile.) *There is no penalty for card exposure in a two-hand game.*

55. If for the initial meld of his side a player shows less than the required count, he must validate his meld if possible with additional cards. If he cannot do so, or does not do so before discarding, all the cards he has exposed from his hand are dealt with under rule 54. If he has incorrectly taken the discard, he must restore it to the pile before making his own discard from his exposed cards.

56. If a player is dealt or draws a red trey, and fails to declare it before the play of the deal ends (provided he has had at least one turn to play), his side is penalized 500 points.

57. A player who takes the discard (with or without the rest of the pile) into his hand should be stopped at once and required to leave it on the table. But there is no penalty if he has already shown cards from his hand that entitle him to take the discard, or if the discard can be taken to add to a meld already on the table. Should any question arise as to his legal right to take the pile, through his taking it into his hand prematurely, the opponents may require him to replace the pile and instead draw from the stock, and they may decide what cards of his hand belong properly to the restored discard pile.

58. If a player makes a meld including more than three wild cards, or attempts to add a wild card to a meld already containing three, he must if possible rectify the error by moving one or more wild cards to another meld already on the table, or by melding additional cards to which they can be moved. If he is unable to rectify the error, the surplus wild cards together with any additional cards improperly exposed are dealt with under rule 54.

59. If a player asks permission to go out, he must go out if his partner answers yes; and either opponent may require him to go out if he shows or indicates any meld before receiving his partner's answer, or if he melds all his cards after receiving a negative answer, or if the form of his question or of his partner's negative reply transmits any additional information. If in such a case the player cannot go out, he must expose his hand and meld what he can, and his other cards are dealt with under rule 54.

60. There is no penalty for an irregularity if the next opponent in turn plays before attention is called to it; an insufficient meld stands, but cards illegally exposed, or an illegal meld that cannot be rectified, must be restored to the offender's hand.

POINT PENALTIES

Penalties paid in points, rather than by forced plays that rectify the error, are unpopular with many players. Therefore players may choose either to use or to omit the following point penalties. In all cases these penalties are additional to the penalties prescribed in rules 51 to 60.

For an irregular draw, 50. This includes touching or moving the top discard when not legally able to take it.

When you take the top discard, you take the rest of the discard pile too (called "taking the pack.")

The top discard may not be taken when it is a black three or any wild card.

Red threes are not melded—when you get one, you face it in your turn and draw from the stock to replace it. Red threes count for you if you've melded, against you if you haven't.

Black threes may be melded, but only in the turn in which you go out.

You may add one or more cards to the melds of your own side, none to the opponent's melds.

Each card has a point value, which counts for you if you meld it, against you if you're caught with it. Joker counts 50, deuce or ace 20, king to eight 10, seven to black three 5.

The first meld of a side must be worth 50; but 90 when the side's score reaches 1500, and 120 when it reaches 3,000 ("is vulnerable"). Game is 5,000.

Until a side has melded, or whenever the discard pile contains a wild card or a red three, the top discard may be taken only with a matching natural pair. (In such cases the discard pile is called "frozen.") In other cases, the top discard may be taken whenever it can be melded or added to a meld.

The rules for scoring are numbers 13, 25, 42, 43 and 50.

LAWS OF CANASTA

Players

1. Canasta may be played by two, three, four, five, or six players. It is best for two or four.
2. With two or three players, each plays for himself. With four or more players, there are two partnerships. With four, partners sit opposite each other at the table. With five, two partners are opposed by three, but only two of the three play at a time,

rotating so that a different one of the three is idle each deal. With six players, three on each side, partners sit alternately around the table; or three-pack Canasta, described on a later page, may be played.

Cards

3. The game is played with two regular decks of 52 cards, plus four jokers, all 108 cards being shuffled together.
4. The jokers and deuces (twospots) are wild. A wild card may be designated to be of any rank, at the pleasure of the owner.

Preliminaries

5. Partnerships may be determined by drawing cards from the deck, spread face down on the table. The two or three highest cards drawn show the partners playing against the other two or three. Highest card has choice of seats. For purposes of the draw only, the suits rank: Spades (high), Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs; and the cards of each suit rank: Ace (high), king, queen, jack, etc. to deuce (low). Jokers are void, in drawing.
6. The player drawing the highest card plays first; therefore, the player at his right deals first. Thereafter the deal rotates to the left, clockwise.
7. The player at right of the dealer cuts the deck, after any player who wishes to shuffle has done so. In cutting, each packet must comprise at least four cards.
8. The dealer gives eleven cards to each player one at a time clockwise, beginning with the opponent at his left and ending with himself. (When there are three players, each receives thirteen cards; with two players, each receives fifteen.)
9. The undealt remainder of the deck is placed face down in the center of the table to form the *stock*. The top card of the stock is turned face up beside it; this is the *upcard*. All subsequent discards are laid face up in one pile, on the upcard, if the first player does not take it. Only the top discard may be seen.

Red Treys

10. If the upcard is a red trey or a wild card it must immediately be covered by another card from the top of the stock, and the discard pile is then *frozen* (see rule 31).
11. The red treys (threespots) are bonus cards, counting for or against the side to which they fall, but never forming a part of

the eleven-card hand. At his first turn to play, each player must withdraw from his hand each red trey dealt to him, put it face up on the table, then draw a card from the top of the stock to restore his hand to eleven cards. After this, he may draw and play as provided in rule 15.

12. On drawing a red trey from the stock, a player must immediately face the trey on the table and draw a replacement from the stock to keep in his hand. A red trey taken in the discard pile is similarly faced, but is not replaced from the stock.

13. Each red trey has the point value of 100, except that if all four treys are owned by one side each counts 200, or 800 points in all. After the play is finished, a side that has made any meld scores all its red treys as plus bonuses; a side that has made no meld has the value of its treys deducted from its score.

Order of Play

14. The opponent at left of the dealer plays first; thereafter the turn passes to the left, clockwise. Each turn comprises; a draw, a meld (optional), and a discard.
15. The player in turn is always entitled to draw the top card of the stock; subject to restrictions given in the following sections, he may instead take the top card of the discard pile, if he can use it in a meld. Having so taken the last discard, he must take the entire pile and add it to his hand or his melds.
16. A discard must always be made from the hand, never from a meld. The act of discarding ends a player's turn, even though he should have failed to draw a card. (See paragraph 53.)

Melds

17. The principal object of play is to form *melds*, combinations of three or more cards of the same rank, with or without the help of wild cards. (Sequences are not valid melds in Canasta.)
18. A meld is valid if it contains at least two *natural* (not wild) cards of the same rank, and not more than three wild cards. But black treys may not be melded unless the player *goes out* in the same turn. Jokers and deuces may never be melded separately from natural cards.
19. To count plus, a meld must be laid face up on the table, in some proper turn of the owner. Cards left in the hand when play ends, even though they might form melds, count minus. All the melds of both partners are placed before one of them.
20. A player may add one or more cards of the same rank or

wild cards to a meld previously faced by himself or his partner. Wild cards in any number may be added to a completed canasta, but no other meld may contain more than three wild cards.

21. A player may make as many melds as he wishes in his turn, including the addition of cards to meld previously made by his side. A player may not add a card to a meld of the other side.

Canastas

22. A meld comprising seven or more cards is a *canasta*. A canasta may be built up by an initial meld of three or more cards and addition of other cards later. (The importance of a canasta is two-fold; it carries a special bonus, and a side must have at least one canasta before it can go out.)

23. Seven natural cards form a *natural canasta*, valued at 500. A canasta formed with help of one to three wild cards is *mixed* and is valued at 300. Additional cards added to a canasta do not increase the bonus, but merely add the point values of the cards. A wild card added to a natural canasta reduces it to a mixed canasta.

24. A player may at any time combine two or more complete melds, including no more than three wild cards, made by his side; but no card once melded may be withdrawn from the meld of which it is part. (There is no "trading" for a wild card.)

Minimum Count

25. Every card melded has a point value, as follows:

Each joker	50
Each deuce	20
Each ace	20
Each king, queen, jack, 10, 9, 8.....	10
Each 7, 6, 5, 4, and black 3.....	5

26. The first meld made by a side is its *initial meld*. The initial meld must have a *minimum count* that depends upon the accumulated total score of that side at the time, as follows:

TOTAL SCORE	MINIMUM COUNT
Minus	0
0 to 1495	50
1500 to 2995	90
3000 or more.....	120

27. For purposes of fulfilling the minimum count, a meld is valued by totalling the point values of all its component cards. A player may make two or more different melds in the same turn to achieve the minimum count. (Not even a canasta may be melded initially unless the count of its cards satisfies the minimum. The former custom, by which any canasta was sufficient, has been generally abandoned.)

28. After a side has made its initial meld, either partner may make any valid melds without reference to any minimum count.

Taking the Discard Pile

29. The discard pile is *frozen*, as concerns a side, until that side has made its initial meld. The initial meld, whether made wholly from the hand or with help of the discard, unfreezes the pile for both partners, provided that it is not frozen additionally under rule 30.

30. Even for side that has melded, the discard pile is *frozen* at any time that it contains a red trey (turned as upcard) or a wild card (upcard or a later discard). The pile remains frozen until it is taken up by some hand, whereupon the new pile commenced is not frozen unless a wild card is discarded (though it may be frozen for the opponents under rule 29.)

31. At a time when the discard pile is frozen (for both sides or his side alone), a player may draw the top card only to make a meld with two natural cards of the same rank from his hand.

32. At a time when the discard pile is not frozen, a player may draw the top card to make a meld with two cards from his hand, either two natural cards or one natural and one wild card, or to add to a meld of his side (see also rule 35.)

33. In taking the discard, a player must proceed as follows (to show his legal right to it); face two cards from his hand that form a valid meld with the discard, under rule 31 or 32; lift off the top discard and place it with them; in the case of an initial meld, make such additional melds from his hand as are necessary to meet the minimum requirement. These additional melds may be separate from the first or added cards on the first. Next the player must take the rest of the discard pile into his hand, and he may then make all additional melds he chooses, with the aid of these cards; but these melds do not help to fulfill the minimum count.

34. The discard pile may not be taken when it is topped by a wild card or a black trey.

35. At a time when the pile is not frozen, a player may take the top card to add it to a previous meld of his side. Correct procedure is to move the top card to such meld, then take the rest of the discard pile into the hand. But when the discard pile is only one card, and the player has only one card in his hand, he may not take it and go out unless he is forced to do so—see the next rule. (But in no case may a player go out when his side has not made a canasta and he cannot make one.)

Forcing

36. After the last card of the stock is drawn, play continues so long as each player in turn legally takes and melds the card discarded by his right-hand opponent. It is compulsory (when the stock is exhausted) to take the discard if it is legally possible to add it to a meld. (Making a discard that the next player must take, at this time, is called *forcing*.) The play ends when the player in turn does not take the discard, either because he cannot legally, or because he does not choose to.

Going Out

37. A player *goes out* when he (legally) gets rid of the last card of his hand, either by discard or by meld.

38. A player may go out only if his side has melded at least one canasta. Failing this requirement, he must keep at least one card in his hand.

39. A player need not make a discard after going out; he may meld all of his remaining cards.

40. If able to go out before drawing, or after drawing from the stock, a player may ask his partner "May I go out?" The partner must answer "Yes" or "No" and the player is bound by the reply. Permission to go out may not be asked by a player out of turn, nor when he has melded any card in that turn. (A player may always go out without asking permission.)

41. When any player goes out, play ends and the deal is scored.

Scoring a Deal

42. The side that goes out determines its net score for the deal as follows:

(a) Total the point values of the cards in its melds (rule 25.)