

Ashti Kashti

2-5 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

Score the most points from melding card combinations and winning tricks.

SETUP

- Use a standard 52-card deck with 2 to 5 players.
- Deal 8 cards to each player.
- Remaining cards form a draw pile in the center.

SCORING

- Each valid meld: 10 points.
- Aces in tricks: 15 points. Face cards in tricks: 10 points each.
- Number cards in tricks are worth their face value.

Tip: Trigger the trick phase when your hand is strong for tricks but opponents still hold unmelded cards.

ON YOUR TURN

- Draw one card from the stock or discard pile.
- Lay down valid melds (sets of matching ranks or runs in the same suit).
- Discard one card to end your turn; a trick phase begins once someone melds out.

Ashti Kashti is an Indian card game that blends elements of rummy and trick-taking into a distinctive format. Players collect cards to form specific combinations while also competing to win tricks, creating a dual-objective challenge that rewards versatile strategy.

Objective

Score points by forming valid card combinations in your hand and by winning tricks that contain high-value cards. The player with the highest total score after the agreed number of rounds wins.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 5 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 8 cards.
4. **Stock pile:** Remaining cards form a draw pile in the center.

Gameplay

1. **Drawing:** On your turn, draw one card from the stock pile or the discard pile.
2. **Melding:** If you hold valid combinations (sets of three or four matching ranks, or runs of three or more consecutive cards in the same suit), you may lay them down.
3. **Trick phase:** Once any player melds all their cards, a trick-taking phase begins with remaining hand cards.
4. **Discarding:** End your turn by discarding one card to the discard pile.

Scoring

- **Melds:** Each valid set or run scores 10 points.
- **Face cards in tricks:** Kings, queens, and jacks captured in tricks are worth 10 points each.
- **Aces:** Worth 15 points when captured in tricks.
- **Number cards:** Worth their face value when captured in tricks.

Variations

- **Speed Ashti Kashti:** Players have a time limit for each turn, adding pressure.
- **Team Ashti Kashti:** Four players form two partnerships and combine scores.

Tips and Strategies

- Balance your focus between building melds and keeping high cards for the trick phase.
- Watch what opponents discard to understand which combinations they are pursuing.
- Trigger the trick phase when your hand is strong for tricks but opponents still hold unmelded cards.

Tips & Strategy

The transition from melding to trick-taking is the key moment. Try to meld quickly when you hold strong trick cards, catching opponents with unmelded hands.

Expert players read the discard pile and opponents' melds to determine the optimal moment to trigger the trick phase, maximizing their advantage in both scoring categories.