

Belote

4 players

32 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

With your partner, score more trick points than the opposing team.

SETUP

- Use a 32-card deck (7 through Ace in each suit).
- Deal 8 cards to each of 4 players in partnerships.
- Determine trump suit through a bidding round.

SCORING

- Trump Jack: 20 pts, Trump Nine: 14 pts, Ace: 11 pts, Ten: 10 pts.
- 162 total points available (including 10 for last trick).
- Contract team must outscore opponents or opponents get all points.
- Winning all 8 tricks (Capot): 90 bonus points.

Tip: Do not accept trump without at least two strong trump cards and some side Aces.

ON YOUR TURN

- Follow suit if possible; must trump if you cannot follow.
- Must overtrump if able when trumping.
- Highest trump wins, or highest card of led suit.
- Announce 'Belote/Rebelote' when playing King and Queen of trump.

Belote is France's most popular card game, a trick-taking game for four players in partnerships. Using a 32-card deck with a unique card ranking system, it combines bidding, declarations, and precise trick play into an engrossing team experience.

Objective

Working with your partner, score more points than the opposing team by winning tricks containing valuable cards and declaring special card combinations.

Setup

1. **Players:** 4 players in two partnerships, seated across from each other.
2. **Deck:** 32-card deck (7 through Ace in each suit).
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 8 cards, dealt in batches (typically 3-2-3 or 3-3-2).
4. **Trump Selection:** The top card of the remaining stock is turned face-up. Players bid to accept this suit as trump or pass. If all pass, a second round allows naming any other suit.

Card Rankings and Values

1. **In Trump Suit:** Jack (20 pts) > Nine (14 pts) > Ace (11 pts) > Ten (10 pts) > King (4 pts) > Queen (3 pts) > Eight (0) > Seven (0).
2. **In Non-Trump Suits:** Ace (11 pts) > Ten (10 pts) > King (4 pts) > Queen (3 pts) > Jack (2 pts) > Nine (0) > Eight (0) > Seven (0).
3. **Total Points Available:** 162 (including 10 bonus for winning last trick).

Gameplay

1. **Leading:** The player right of the dealer leads the first trick.
2. **Following Suit:** You must follow suit if possible. If you cannot follow, you must trump if possible (and must overtrump if able). If you cannot do either, play any card.
3. **Declarations:** At the start of play, teams may declare specific combinations (sequences of 3+, four of a kind) for bonus points.
4. **Belote and Rebelote:** Holding the King and Queen of trump earns 20 bonus points. Announce 'Belote' when playing the first and 'Rebelote' when playing the second.

Scoring

- **Contract Team:** The team that accepted trump must score more than the opponents. If they fail, the opponents receive all points from the round.
- **Last Trick Bonus:** The team winning the final trick receives 10 bonus points.
- **Capot:** Winning all 8 tricks earns a bonus of 90 points (252 total).

Tips and Strategies

- The trump Jack and Nine are enormously powerful — having both almost guarantees a successful contract.
- Signal to your partner by leading suits where you hold strength.
- Do not accept trump without at least two strong trump cards and some side Aces.

Tips & Strategy

The trump Jack (worth 20) and trump Nine (worth 14) are the key cards. Holding both gives your team 34 points in trump alone, making it very difficult to lose the contract.

Partnership communication through card play is essential. Leading a low card in a suit signals weakness, while leading an Ace shows strength and invites your partner to play their high cards.