

# Boston

4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Hard

Duration: Long

Win at least the number of tricks you bid playing solo against three opponents.

## SETUP

- 4 players use a standard 52-card deck.
- Deal 13 cards to each player.
- Two suits are designated as preference suits for higher-ranked bids.

## SCORING

- Making your bid: collect payment from each opponent.
- Failing your bid: pay each opponent based on how many tricks short.
- Bidding and winning all 13 tricks yields maximum payout.

*Tip: Count your sure tricks carefully before bidding; overcommitting by even one trick is very costly.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Bid on tricks you will win (5 to 13); highest bidder plays alone.
- Bid suit becomes trump; follow suit if possible.
- After 13 tricks, check if the bidder met their commitment.

*Boston is an elaborate trick-taking card game that emerged in France during the late eighteenth century, reportedly named after the city of Boston during the American Revolution. It features a complex bidding system where players commit to winning a specific number of tricks, with escalating rewards and penalties.*

## Objective

Win the number of tricks you bid, or more. Failing to meet your bid results in penalties, while succeeding earns you payments from the other players.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 4 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 13 cards.
4. **Preference suits:** Two suits are designated as 'preference' suits, which rank higher in bidding.

## Gameplay

1. **Bidding:** Players bid on the number of tricks they will win (from 5 up to 13). Higher bids in preference suits outrank equal bids in plain suits.
2. **Solo play:** The highest bidder plays alone against the other three.
3. **Trick taking:** Standard trick-taking rules with the bid suit as trump. Players must follow suit if possible.
4. **Counting:** After all 13 tricks are played, the bidder checks whether they met their commitment.

## Scoring

- **Making your bid:** Receive payment from each opponent based on the level of your bid.
- **Failing your bid:** Pay each opponent a penalty that increases with the number of tricks you fell short.
- **Grand slam:** Bidding and winning all 13 tricks yields the maximum payout.

## Variations

- **Boston de Nantes:** A regional French variant with modified bid levels and additional bonus declarations.
- **Russian Boston:** Features partnership play and altered preference suit rules.

## Tips and Strategies

- Be conservative in your bidding until you understand the distribution of cards at the table.
- Count your sure tricks carefully before bidding. Overcommitting by even one trick can be very costly.

## Tips & Strategy

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Count your guaranteed winners before placing a bid. Having long trump suits is valuable, but also consider your ability to control side suits to prevent opponents from cashing winners.

The preference suit system creates interesting bidding dynamics. Sometimes bidding in a preference suit with a mediocre hand beats a strong hand bid in a plain suit.