

Cuttle

2 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Short

Be the first to reach 21 points on the table.

SETUP

- Two players, deal 5 cards to non-dealer, 6 to dealer.
- Place remaining cards as a draw pile.
- Non-dealer takes the first turn.

SCORING

- Number cards are worth their face value as points (Ace = 1).
- First to 21 points on the table wins instantly.

Tip: Save your Twos as counters and protect big point cards with Queens.

ON YOUR TURN

- Draw a card, play for points, scuttle, or use a card effect.
- Scuttle by playing a higher number card on an opponent's point card.
- Face cards have persistent effects: Jacks steal, Queens protect, Kings boost.

Cuttle is a two-player combat card game played with a standard deck where number cards score points and face cards have special powers. The first player to reach 21 or more points on the table wins.

Objective

Be the first player to accumulate 21 or more points worth of point cards on the table in front of you.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 5 cards to the non-dealer and 6 cards to the dealer.
4. **Layout:** Place the remaining deck face down as a draw pile between both players.

Gameplay

1. **Step 1:** On your turn, you must perform exactly one action: draw a card, play a number card for points, play a number card as a scuttle to destroy an opponent's point card, play a face card as a permanent effect, or play a number card for its one-time effect.
2. **Step 2:** To scuttle, play a number card on an opponent's point card. Your card must be higher in rank (or same rank with a higher suit). The scuttled card and your card both go to the discard pile.
3. **Step 3:** Jacks attach to an opponent's point card and steal it to your side. Queens protect your cards from targeting. Kings increase the value of your point cards.
4. **Step 4:** Number cards played as one-time effects have various powers: Aces destroy all point cards on the table, Twos destroy a face card or counter a one-time effect, and so on.
5. **Step 5:** Play alternates until one player has 21 or more points on the table at the end of any action.

Scoring

- Number cards (Ace through 10) are worth their face value in points when played as point cards. Aces are worth 1 point.
- The first player to have 21 or more points in front of them wins instantly.
- If the draw pile runs out and neither player can reach 21, the game is a draw.

Variations

- **Cuttle for Three:** A variant where three players compete, typically with adjusted hand sizes and a target of 14 points.
- **Quick Cuttle:** A shorter variant with a target of 15 points instead of 21.
- **Open Cuttle:** Both players play with their hands revealed for a pure strategy experience.

Tips and Strategies

- Save your Twos to counter opponent effects at critical moments rather than playing them early.
- Build your point total with mid-range cards while keeping high cards ready to scuttle the opponent's big plays.
- Queens are extremely powerful as shields. Prioritize playing them early to protect your point cards.

Tips & Strategy

Protect your high-value point cards with Queens and keep Twos in hand as counters. Timing your scuttles to destroy the opponent's biggest point cards is crucial.

The tension in Cuttle comes from deciding whether to play a number card for points or save it for its effect. A well-timed Ace that wipes the board when your opponent is close to 21 can completely reverse the game.