

Dehla Pakad

4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Long

Capture the majority of tens across rounds and win two consecutive rounds for a court victory.

SETUP

- Use a standard 52-card deck with 4 players in two partnerships.
- Deal 13 cards to each player.
- Trump is activated when a player first cannot follow suit and plays a trump card.

SCORING

- Capturing 3 or 4 tens wins the round.
- Two consecutive round wins earn a court, which wins the game.
- Capturing all 4 tens (sirr) is an automatic court win.

Tip: After winning a round, play aggressively to close out the court before opponents reset the ladder.

ON YOUR TURN

- Follow the led suit if possible; otherwise play any card.
- The highest trump wins; without trump, the highest card of the led suit wins.
- Count captured tens after all 13 tricks are played.

Dehla Pakad, meaning 'collect the tens,' is a North Indian partnership trick-taking game focused on capturing tens over a series of rounds. It uses an accumulating scoring system where successive wins build toward a decisive victory called a 'court.'

Objective

Capture the majority of the four tens through trick-taking across multiple rounds. Consecutive round wins build toward a 'court' (winning two consecutive rounds with 3+ tens), which wins the overall game.

Setup

1. **Players:** 4 players in two fixed partnerships.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 13 cards.
4. **Trump:** Determined by the first card played that a player cannot follow suit to, or by a predetermined rule.

Gameplay

1. **Leading:** The player to the dealer's left leads any card.
2. **Following suit:** Players must follow the led suit if possible. If unable, they may play any card.
3. **Trump activation:** The trump suit is activated when a player first fails to follow suit and plays a card of the trump suit.
4. **Winning tricks:** The highest trump wins. Without trump, the highest card of the led suit wins.
5. **Collecting tens:** Teams count how many tens they captured after all 13 tricks are played.

Scoring

- **Tens captured:** The team with 3 or 4 tens wins the round.
- **Two-two split:** If each team captures 2 tens, the round is a draw and does not advance the scoring ladder.
- **Court system:** Teams must win consecutive rounds to climb the scoring ladder. A court (two consecutive wins) wins the game.
- **Sirr:** Capturing all 4 tens in a single round counts as an automatic court win.

Variations

- **Mendikot crossover:** Some groups use Mendikot scoring within the Dehla Pakad framework.
- **Open trump:** A simpler variant where trump is declared before play begins rather than activated dynamically.

Tips and Strategies

- Lead aces to safely extract high cards from opponents before playing your tens.
- Coordinate with your partner on which suits to lead to protect or attack tens.
- When your team has won the previous round, play aggressively to close out the court before opponents can reset the ladder.

Tips & Strategy

The court system means momentum matters enormously. After winning a round, shift to aggressive play to prevent opponents from breaking your streak.

Dynamic trump activation means the timing of when trump is revealed can be manipulated. Skilled players may deliberately void a suit to activate trump at a strategically advantageous moment.