

# Durak

2-6 players

36 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

**Shed all your cards to avoid being the last player holding cards (the durak).**

## SETUP

- Use a 36-card deck (6 through Ace in each suit).
- Deal 6 cards to each player.
- Flip top card of remaining stock to determine trump suit.

## SCORING

- No point system; last player with cards is the durak (loser).
- There is no winner, only a loser.

*Tip: Save your trump cards for defense and attack with low non-trump cards early.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Attacker plays a card; defender must beat it with a higher card of same suit or any trump.
- Other players can add cards matching ranks already on the table.
- If defender cannot beat all attacks, they pick up all cards.
- Draw back to 6 cards from the stock after each round.

*Durak is a traditional Russian card game that can be played by two to six players. The objective is to shed all of one's cards to avoid being the last player holding cards — the "durak" (fool), who is the loser. There is no winner in Durak, only a loser.*

## Equipment

Durak requires a standard deck of 36 cards, removing all cards below the 6 in each suit. If more than five players participate, a 52-card deck can be used.

## Setup

1. Determine the dealer. Players draw cards, and the player with the lowest card becomes the dealer.
2. The dealer shuffles the deck and offers it to the player on their right to cut.
3. The dealer deals six cards to each player, one at a time, starting from the player to their left. The remaining cards form the draw pile.
4. Determine the trump suit by turning the top card of the remaining stock face up and placing it under the stock pile. This card's suit is trump.

## Gameplay

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1. The player with the lowest trump card becomes the first attacker, and the player to their left becomes the first defender.
2. Attacks are initiated by playing a card face up on the table and declaring its value. The defending player must then beat the card played.
3. To defend against an attack, the defending player must play a higher-ranking card of the same suit or any trump card if the attack card is a non-trump suited card.
4. If the defender successfully beats all attacks, they become the new attacker.
5. Attacks continue clockwise, with players having the option to attack or pass.
6. The maximum number of attacking cards in a single attack is six. If the defender begins with less than six cards, the maximum is equal to the number of cards the defender has at the start of the attack.
7. If a defender cannot or chooses not to defend an attack, they must pick up all the cards on the table and add them to their hand. They then lose their turn to attack.
8. Before the next attack begins, any player with fewer than six cards draws from the remaining deck to return their hand to six cards. Once the deck runs out, no card draw occurs after an attack.
9. If a defender chooses not to defend an attack, other players can add possible attacking cards before the defender takes the cards from the middle.
10. The game continues until one player sheds all their cards, at which point they are the winner, and the last player holding cards becomes the "durak" or loser.

## Winning the Game

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The game continues until only one player has cards remaining. That player is the "durak" (fool) and loses. There is no winner — everyone else simply avoids being the durak. The winner shuffles the cards and deals the next hand.

## Variants

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Durak has numerous regional variants, including rules for two-player and six-player games, as well as variations in trump selection, attacking, and defending strategies.

### Tips & Strategy

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To succeed in Durak, focus on attacking strategically, bluffing opponents, and defending against attacks effectively. Pay attention to the cards played and anticipate opponents' moves to gain an advantage.

Strategic decision-making is key in Durak. Balance aggressive attacking with prudent defense, use bluffing tactics to mislead opponents, and adapt your strategy based on the flow of the game and opponents' tendencies.