

Guinote

2-4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

Score the most points through tricks and melds to reach the target score.

SETUP

- Remove 8s, 9s, and 10s from the deck.
- Deal 6 cards each and flip one card to set trumps.
- Place the stock pile on top of the trump card.

SCORING

- Ace = 11, Three = 10, King = 4, Queen = 3, Jack = 2.
- Trump King-Queen meld = 40 points, non-trump = 20 points.

Tip: Swap the 7 of trumps for the face-up trump card early to secure a stronger hand.

ON YOUR TURN

- Play a card to the trick (relaxed suit rules while stock remains).
- Winner takes the trick and may declare a King-Queen meld.
- Each player draws a card from the stock.

Guinote is a popular Spanish trick-taking card game that uses a 40-card deck. It features trump cards, card melding, and a unique mechanic where players can swap the trump indicator card.

Objective

The objective is to win tricks containing valuable cards and reach a target score before your opponents. Melds and card captures both contribute to your score.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 or 4 players (4 players in partnerships).
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck with 8s, 9s, and 10s removed, leaving 40 cards. Alternatively, use a Spanish deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 6 cards to each player. Place the next card face up to determine the trump suit, then place the remaining deck on top of it.

Gameplay

1. **Leading:** The player to the dealer's right leads the first trick. During the first phase (while cards remain in the stock), players do not need to follow suit.
2. **Drawing:** After each trick, the winner draws a card from the stock, followed by the other players. The trick winner leads the next trick.
3. **Trump Swap:** A player holding the 7 of trumps may swap it for the face-up trump card at the bottom of the stock.
4. **Second Phase:** Once the stock is empty, players must follow suit if possible, must play a higher card of the led suit if possible, and must trump if unable to follow suit.
5. **Melds (Guinotes):** A player who holds both the King and Queen of the same suit may declare them when winning a trick, scoring 40 points for the trump suit pair or 20 points for a non-trump pair.

Scoring

- Ace = 11 points, 3 = 10 points, King = 4 points, Queen = 3 points, Jack = 2 points.
- Cards 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 have no point value.
- The total card points in the deck are 120. The last trick is worth 10 bonus points, making 130 total.
- King-Queen melds score 40 (trump suit) or 20 (non-trump suit).

Variations

- **Guinote in Pairs:** The 4-player partnership version adds team communication and cooperative strategy.
- **Arrastre Variation:** In some regions, during the first phase players must also follow certain suit obligations, making the game more restrictive.

Tips and Strategies

- In the first phase, use low-value cards to lose tricks strategically, saving your strong cards for the stricter second phase.
- Declare melds as soon as you can to lock in those bonus points.
- Keep track of the trump cards played, especially the high-value ones, to know when it is safe to lead with your own trumps.

Tips & Strategy

Save your high trumps for the second phase when following suit is mandatory. Declare melds early to secure bonus points, and track which key cards have been played.

The two-phase structure means different cards have different value at different times. Aces and 3s dominate the second phase, while the first phase is about positioning and information gathering.