

# Hartenjagen

4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Medium

Accumulate the fewest penalty points by avoiding hearts and the Queen of Spades.

## SETUP

- Use a standard 52-card deck for 4 players.
- Deal 13 cards to each player.
- Pass 3 cards to another player; direction rotates each round.

## SCORING

- Each heart: 1 penalty point.
- Queen of Spades: 13 penalty points.
- Shooting the moon: 0 for you, 26 to each opponent.
- Jack of Diamonds (optional): subtract 10 points.

*Tip: Pass away high spades during the passing phase to avoid being stuck with the Queen.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Player with 2 of clubs leads first.
- Follow suit if possible; otherwise play any card.
- Hearts cannot be led until they have been broken.

*Hartenjagen, meaning 'hunting hearts' in Dutch, is a penalty-avoidance trick-taking game where players try to dodge capturing heart cards and the dreaded Queen of Spades. It is the Dutch version of the classic Hearts game with its own regional twists.*

## Objective

Accumulate the fewest penalty points over multiple rounds. Hearts and the Queen of Spades carry penalties, while the Jack of Diamonds offers a bonus in some variants.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 4 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 13 cards to each player.
4. **Passing:** Before play begins, each player passes 3 cards to another player. The passing direction rotates each round.

## Gameplay

1. **Leading:** The player with the 2 of clubs leads the first trick.
2. **Following suit:** Players must follow the led suit if possible. If not, they may play any card.
3. **Hearts restriction:** Hearts cannot be led until a heart has been discarded on a previous trick (hearts are 'broken').
4. **No trump:** There is no trump suit. The highest card of the led suit wins each trick.

## Scoring

- **Hearts:** 1 penalty point each.
- **Queen of Spades:** 13 penalty points.
- **Shooting the moon:** Capturing all 13 hearts and the Queen of Spades gives you 0 points and every opponent 26 points.
- **Jack of Diamonds (optional):** Subtract 10 points when captured.

## Tips and Strategies

- Pass away high spades during the passing phase to avoid being stuck with the Queen of Spades.
- Create voids in a suit so you can dump penalty cards when that suit is led.
- Watch for players collecting many hearts — they may be attempting to shoot the moon.

## Tips & Strategy

The passing phase is critical. Shed dangerous high cards, especially the Ace and King of Spades, to avoid being forced to take the Queen of Spades.

Controlling spade cards is crucial. If you hold the Queen of Spades, either play it early on a trick you will not win, or try to void spades during the passing phase.