

# Hokm

4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Medium

Win at least 7 of 13 tricks with your partner to score a point toward the match.

## SETUP

- Use a standard 52-card deck.
- 4 players sit in two partnerships across from each other.
- The Hakem receives 5 cards first and declares the trump suit; then all get 13 cards.

## SCORING

- Team with 7+ tricks scores 1 point.
- Sweeping all 13 tricks may score bonus points.
- First team to 7 match points wins.

*Tip: As Hakem, choose a trump suit where you have both length and high cards.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Hakem leads the first trick.
- Follow suit if able; otherwise play any card.
- Highest trump wins, or highest led-suit card if no trump played.

Hokm is a popular Iranian trick-taking card game for four players in partnerships. One player is designated the Hakem (ruler), who determines the trump suit after seeing their first five cards. The game emphasizes teamwork, trump management, and reading the table.

## Objective

Win the majority of tricks (at least 7 out of 13) to score a point for your partnership. The first team to reach a target score, typically 7 points, wins the match.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 4 players in two partnerships sitting across from each other.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Hakem selection:** Cut the deck; the first player to draw an ace becomes the Hakem for the first deal.
4. **Deal and trump:** The Hakem receives their first 5 cards, examines them, and declares the trump suit. Then the rest of the cards are dealt to all players, 13 each.

## Gameplay

1. **Lead:** The Hakem leads the first trick by playing any card.
2. **Follow suit:** Players must follow the led suit if able. If unable, they may play any card.
3. **Win the trick:** The highest trump wins; if no trump is played, the highest card of the led suit wins.
4. **Continue play:** The trick winner leads the next trick. Play all 13 tricks.

## Scoring

- **Winning the hand:** The team that takes 7 or more tricks scores 1 point.
- **Sweep bonus:** If one team wins all 13 tricks, they may score additional points depending on the variant.
- **Hakem transfer:** If the Hakem's team loses, the Hakem role passes to the winning team.
- **Match victory:** First to 7 points wins the match.

## Variations

- **Shelem:** A related Iranian game that adds bidding and values certain card combinations for bonus points.
- **Hokm with cut:** Some groups play that a player who cannot follow suit must trump if they hold trumps.

## Tips and Strategies

- As the Hakem, choose a trump suit where you have length and strength, especially if supported by high cards.
- Lead trumps early if your partnership has trump superiority to strip opponents of their trumps.
- Pay attention to which cards have been played to count remaining trumps and plan accordingly.

## Tips & Strategy

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The Hakem's trump choice defines the hand. Pick your longest suit when possible, and lead aggressively to establish trump control early.

Trump selection is the single most consequential decision. Count your guaranteed winners and choose the suit that maximizes your partnership's combined strength.