

# Ombre

3 players

40 cards

Difficulty: Hard

Duration: Medium

**As Ombre, win more tricks than either opponent individually.**

## SETUP

- 3 players use a 40-card deck (8s, 9s, 10s removed).
- Deal 9 cards each in batches of three.
- Remaining 13 cards form the talon for exchanges.

## SCORING

- **Sacardo:** Ombre wins and collects from both opponents.
- **Codille:** An opponent takes the most tricks; Ombre pays both.
- **Remise:** No clear majority; Ombre pays a smaller penalty.

*Tip: Only bid with strong trump support and at least one or two side-suit winners.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Bid for the right to become Ombre and choose trumps.
- Ombre exchanges cards from the talon, then defenders may exchange.
- Follow suit if able; otherwise trump or discard.

*Ombre is a sophisticated trick-taking card game of Spanish origin that became enormously fashionable across Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It introduced many concepts still found in modern card games, including bidding for the right to choose trumps and playing against a temporary alliance of opponents.*

## Objective

As the declarer (called Ombre), win more tricks than either opponent individually. The two defenders work together to prevent the Ombre from achieving this goal.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 3 players.
2. **Deck:** A 40-card Spanish deck, or a standard deck with 8s, 9s, and 10s removed.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 9 cards dealt in batches of three.
4. **Talon:** The remaining 13 cards form a face-down talon from which players may exchange cards.

## Gameplay

1. **Bidding:** Players bid for the right to become Ombre. The highest bidder selects the trump suit.
2. **Card exchange:** The Ombre may discard unwanted cards and draw replacements from the talon. Defenders may also exchange afterward.
3. **Trick play:** The Ombre leads to the first trick. Players must follow suit if able; otherwise they may trump or discard.
4. **Winning:** The Ombre succeeds by taking more tricks than either opponent. If an opponent takes more, the Ombre loses and must pay a penalty.

## Scoring

- **Sacardo:** The Ombre wins and collects from both opponents.
- **Codille:** An opponent takes more tricks than the Ombre, who must pay both opponents.
- **Remise:** No one takes a clear majority, and the Ombre pays a smaller penalty.

## Variations

- **Quadrille:** A four-player adaptation that became popular in France and England.
- **Solo Ombre:** A simplified version where the Ombre plays without card exchange.

## Tips and Strategies

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- Only bid to become Ombre when your hand has strong trump support and at least one or two side-suit winners.
- As a defender, communicate implicitly with your partner by leading suits where you hold strength.

## Tips & Strategy

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Assess your trump length and side-suit stoppers before bidding. As Ombre, control the tempo by leading trumps early to strip defenders of their trump cards.

Timing your trump leads is everything. Drawing out enemy trumps early gives you freedom to cash side-suit winners later, but overcommitting to trumps can leave you vulnerable.