

Pesten

2-8 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Be the first player to play all cards from your hand.

SETUP

- Use a standard 52-card deck (optionally with Jokers) for 2-8 players.
- Deal 7 cards each; place remaining as draw pile.
- Turn the top card face-up to start the discard pile.

SCORING

- Number cards: face value in penalty points.
- Face cards: 10 points each.
- Aces: 15 points. Jokers: 20 points.

Tip: Save action cards for when opponents are close to winning to disrupt their final plays.

ON YOUR TURN

- Play a card matching the suit or rank of the top discard.
- Draw one card if you cannot play.
- Action cards: 2s draw 2, 8s skip, Jacks reverse, Aces change suit.
- Stack 2s to pass the draw penalty to the next player.

Pesten is the Dutch version of Crazy Eights or Mau-Mau, a fast-paced shedding game where players race to empty their hands by matching the suit or rank of the previously played card. Special action cards add chaos and strategy to every round.

Objective

Be the first player to play all cards from your hand. The winner scores points based on the cards remaining in opponents' hands.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 8 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck, optionally with Jokers.
3. **Deal:** Deal 7 cards to each player. Place the remaining deck face-down as a draw pile and turn the top card face-up to start the discard pile.

Gameplay

1. **Playing cards:** On your turn, play a card that matches the suit or rank of the top card on the discard pile.
2. **Drawing:** If you cannot play, draw one card from the pile. If the drawn card is playable, you may play it immediately.
3. **Action cards:** Certain cards have special effects. Twos force the next player to draw 2 cards. Eights skip the next player. Jacks reverse the direction of play. Aces let you change the suit.
4. **Stacking:** If a 2 is played, the next player can play another 2 to pass the draw penalty along, increasing the total draw count.

Scoring

- **Number cards:** Face value in penalty points.
- **Face cards:** 10 points each.
- **Aces:** 15 points each.
- **Jokers (if used):** 20 points each.

Variations

- **Pesten with Jokers:** Jokers act as super wild cards that can be played on any card and force the next player to draw 5 cards.
- **Speed Pesten:** Players do not take turns but play simultaneously whenever they have a valid card.

Tips and Strategies

- Save your action cards for defensive moments when opponents are close to winning.
- Hold Aces for when you need to switch to a suit where you have multiple playable cards.
- Keep track of which suits opponents seem to struggle with and try to switch play to those suits.

Tips & Strategy

Timing your action cards is key. Using a skip or reverse card when an opponent is about to go out can save you from losing the round.

When you are close to emptying your hand, your opponents will target you with draw cards and skips. Keep a defensive action card in reserve to protect your winning position.