

Pisti

2-4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Score the most points by capturing cards and earning pisti bonuses.

SETUP

- 2-4 players with a standard 52-card deck.
- Deal 4 cards each and 4 to the center (top card face-up).
- Redeal 4 cards to each player when hands are empty.

SCORING

- Jacks and Aces: 1 pt each. 2 of Clubs: 2 pts. 10 of Diamonds: 3 pts.
- Most cards: 3 bonus pts. Pistis: 10 pts. Double pistis (J on J): 20 pts.
- First to 151 points wins.

Tip: Save your Jacks for large piles or to block an opponent's pistis setup.

ON YOUR TURN

- Play one card onto the center pile.
- If it matches the top card's rank, capture the entire pile.
- Jacks capture any pile. Matching a lone card scores a pistis (10 pts).

Pisti (also spelled Pistis) is a popular Turkish card game of matching and capture, enjoyed across Turkey, Cyprus, and surrounding regions. Players try to capture cards from a central pile by matching the top card's rank. The game's signature move, a pistis, occurs when a player captures a single face-up card with a matching card, earning bonus points.

Objective

Score the most points by capturing cards from the central pile, especially through pistis and by collecting valuable cards.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2-4 players (best with 2 or in 2v2 partnerships).
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 4 cards face-down to each player. Place 4 cards in the center; the top card is face-up. If the top center card is a Jack, tuck it into the middle and turn the next card face-up.
4. **Redealing:** When all players have used their 4 cards, deal 4 more cards to each player (but not to the center). Continue until the deck is exhausted.

Gameplay

1. **Playing a card:** On your turn, play one card onto the center pile.
2. **Capture:** If your card matches the rank of the top card on the pile, you capture the entire pile and place it face-down in front of you.
3. **Jack capture:** A Jack captures the entire pile regardless of what is on top, but it does not count as a pistis.
4. **Pistis:** If the pile contains only one face-up card and you capture it with a matching rank (not a Jack), that is a pistis, worth 10 bonus points.
5. **Double pistis:** If you capture a lone Jack with another Jack, it scores 20 bonus points.
6. **No match:** If your card does not match the top card and is not a Jack, it simply goes on top of the pile.

Scoring

- Each Jack captured: 1 point.
- Each Ace captured: 1 point.
- 2 of Clubs: 2 points.
- 10 of Diamonds: 3 points.
- Player with the most cards captured: 3 bonus points.
- Each pistis: 10 points. Each double pistis (Jack on Jack): 20 points.
- First to 151 points wins the game (played over multiple rounds).

Variations

- **Partnership Pisti:** 4 players in teams of 2 sitting across from each other, combining captured piles.
- **Cumulative Pisti:** Points carry across multiple rounds; first team to 151 wins.
- **Double-deck Pisti:** Two decks shuffled together for larger groups and longer games.

Tips and Strategies

- Remember which cards have been played, especially Jacks and the 10 of Diamonds.
- Set up pistis by leaving a single card on the pile when you suspect the next player cannot match it.
- Hold Jacks for strategic moments, either to clear large piles or to block opponents from scoring a pisti.

Tips & Strategy

Track played cards, especially Jacks and high-value cards like the 10 of Diamonds. Save Jacks for capturing large piles or blocking pisti opportunities. Try to leave traps for opponents by playing unpaired cards when they are unlikely to match.

Card counting is the backbone of Pisti strategy. Knowing how many Jacks remain and tracking the 2 of Clubs and 10 of Diamonds lets you time your captures for maximum value. Setting traps (leaving a single card your opponent cannot match) creates pisti opportunities.