

Put

2-4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Win 2 of 3 tricks, or bluff your opponent into folding by calling Put.

SETUP

- 2 players with a standard 52-card deck.
- Deal 3 cards each. Card ranking: 3 (high), 2, A, K, Q, J, 10...4 (low).

SCORING

- Win 2 tricks = 1 point. Win after Put accepted = 2 points.
- Opponent folds after Put = 1 point to caller.
- First to 5 points wins the game.

Tip: Bluff with confidence on mediocre hands; your opponent cannot see your cards.

ON YOUR TURN

- Lead any card (no trumps, no suit obligation).
- Higher card wins the trick.
- At any time, call Put to challenge your opponent: they play on for double or fold.

Put is an old English card game of bluff and bravado, dating back to the 16th century. It is a deceptively simple trick-taking game where two players each receive three cards and must win two of three tricks or successfully bluff the opponent into folding. The game's charm lies in its combination of luck, nerve, and psychology rather than complex card play.

Objective

Win two out of three tricks, or force your opponent to fold by calling 'Put,' challenging them to play on or concede.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 players (can be adapted for 3 or 4).
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck. Card ranking is 3 (highest), 2, Ace, King, Queen, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 (lowest).
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 3 cards, dealt one at a time.
4. **Stakes:** Players agree on a stake per game point. The game is typically played to 5 points.

Gameplay

1. **Leading:** The non-dealer leads any card to the first trick. There are no trumps and no requirement to follow suit.
2. **Winning tricks:** The higher-ranking card wins the trick. If both players play the same rank, the trick is a tie and is discarded.
3. **Calling Put:** At any point during play (before or after playing a card), a player may call 'Put!' This challenges the opponent: they must either play on for double stakes or concede the hand immediately.
4. **Tied hands:** If each player wins one trick and the third is tied, or if all three tricks are tied, the hand is drawn and no points are scored.

Scoring

1. **Normal win:** Winning 2 tricks scores 1 point.
2. **Put accepted:** If a Put is called and the opponent plays on, the winner scores 2 points instead of 1.
3. **Put declined:** If the opponent folds after a Put is called, the caller scores 1 point without finishing the hand.
4. **Game:** The first player to reach 5 points wins the game.

Variations

- **Three-player Put:** Deal 3 cards each; the player who wins 2 tricks scores. If all three win one trick each, the hand is spoiled.
- **Four-player Put (Partnership):** Two teams of two; partners sit opposite. Combined trick wins count for the team.
- **Trut:** A Scandinavian variant with similar mechanics but different card ranking and a trump suit.

Tips and Strategies

- The 3 is the most powerful card in the game. Holding a pair of 3s almost guarantees a win.
- Use the Put call as a bluff when you have a weak hand but your opponent appears uncertain.
- Pay attention to your opponent's confidence level when they play; hesitation is a sign of weakness.

Tips & Strategy

Bluffing is the heart of Put. Call Put with confidence even on marginal hands; your opponent cannot see your cards. The 3 is the highest card, so a single 3 gives you a strong foundation.

Since there are no trumps and no suit obligations, the game is purely about card rank and nerve. A well-timed Put call on a mediocre hand can steal points from a cautious opponent.