

Ramsli

3-5 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

Win the most tricks, or fold to avoid risk.

SETUP

- Deal 9 cards to each player.
- Flip a card to set the trump suit.
- Each player declares play or fold.

SCORING

- Most tricks wins the pot.
- Zero tricks means paying a penalty.

Tip: Fold if your hand lacks trump strength rather than risk the zero-trick penalty.

ON YOUR TURN

- Follow suit, trump if void, overtrump if possible.
- Highest trump or highest of led suit wins.
- Trick winner leads next.

Ramsli (also known as Ramsch or Rams) is a German trick-taking game where players can choose to fold or play each round. Those who play must win at least one trick to avoid a penalty, and the player who takes the most tricks wins.

Objective

Win the most tricks in each round while avoiding being the player who plays but fails to take any tricks, which results in a heavy penalty.

Setup

1. **Players:** 3 to 5 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck (traditionally a 32-card Piquet deck, but playable with 52).
3. **Deal:** Deal 9 cards to each player. Flip the next card to determine the trump suit. Players then decide whether to play or fold.

Gameplay

1. **Step 1:** After seeing their cards and the trump, each player declares whether they will play or fold. Folded players set their cards aside.
2. **Step 2:** The player left of the dealer leads the first trick. Players must follow suit, must trump if void, and must overtrump if possible.
3. **Step 3:** The highest trump wins the trick, or the highest card of the led suit if no trumps are played. The trick winner leads next.
4. **Step 4:** After all tricks are played, the active player with the most tricks wins the round. Any active player who took zero tricks pays a penalty into the pot.

Scoring

- The player who wins the most tricks collects the pot.
- Any player who played but won no tricks must pay a penalty equal to the current pot value.

Variations

- **Compulsory Ramsli:** All players must play, with no option to fold.
- **Double Penalty Ramsli:** The penalty for winning zero tricks is doubled, increasing the stakes.

Tips and Strategies

- Only stay in the round if you have a strong trump holding or high cards in multiple suits.
- Fold early if your hand is weak to avoid the costly zero-trick penalty.
- Lead your strongest suit to force opponents to follow or waste trumps.

Tips & Strategy

Only commit to playing when your hand has reliable trick-winning potential. Folding is a valid strategy when your hand is weak.

The decision to play or fold is the most important choice in Ramsli. Evaluate your trump length, high cards, and the number of opponents staying in before committing.