

Scarto

3 players

54 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

As declarer, win more card points than the two defenders combined after exchanging with the talon.

SETUP

- 3 players with a 54-card Italian Tarot deck.
- Deal 16 cards each; 6 remaining cards form the talon (scarto).

SCORING

- The Fool, trump 1, and trump 21 are the most valuable cards.
- Declarer needs more than half the total card points to win.
- Declarer collects from both defenders if successful, pays both if not.

Tip: Discard low-value suit cards to void a suit, creating trumping opportunities during play.

ON YOUR TURN

- Bid for the right to be declarer and pick up the 6 talon cards.
- Discard 6 cards face-down (they count toward your trick points).
- Play 16 tricks following suit; must trump if unable to follow.
- Highest trump or suit card wins each trick.

Scarto is a three-player Italian Tarock game where the declarer exchanges cards with a face-down talon and then battles the other two players for card points.

Objective

As the declarer, use the talon exchange to strengthen your hand and win more card points than the combined total of the two defenders.

Setup

1. **Players:** 3 players.
2. **Deck:** 54-card Italian Tarot deck with 22 trumps (trionfi) and 32 suit cards.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 16 cards. The remaining 6 cards form the talon (scarto).

Gameplay

1. **Bidding:** Players bid for the right to be declarer. The highest bidder picks up the 6 talon cards.
2. **Discarding (Scarto):** The declarer discards 6 cards face-down. These discards count toward the declarer's trick points.
3. **Trick play:** The declarer leads the first trick. Players must follow suit; if unable, they must play a trump. The highest trump or suit card wins.
4. **Full play:** All 16 tricks are played out.

Scoring

- **Card points:** Standard Italian Tarot point values. The Fool, the 1 of trumps, and the 21 of trumps are the most valuable.
- **Winning threshold:** The declarer needs more than half the total card points to win.
- **Payout:** The declarer collects from both defenders if successful, or pays both if they fail.

Variations

- **Solo:** The declarer plays without using the talon for a higher reward.
- **Forced game:** If all players pass, the holder of the lowest tarock is forced to be declarer.

Tips and Strategies

- Discard low-value suit cards to void a suit, allowing you to trump in that suit during play.
- Bid aggressively when you hold the high tarocks — the talon exchange often provides the extra strength you need.

Tips & Strategy

Void a weak suit in your discard to create trumping opportunities. Keep your high tarocks and honour cards.

Defenders should coordinate their leads to attack the declarer's weakest suit — the suit they are most likely to have voided.