

Sette e Mezzo

2-8 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Get as close to 7.5 as possible without going over.

SETUP

- Remove 8s, 9s, and 10s from the deck.
- Choose a dealer (banker) and place bets.
- Deal one card face down to each player.

SCORING

- Number cards = face value, face cards = 0.5 points.
- Closer to 7.5 than the dealer wins. Ties go to the dealer.

Tip: With a total of 5 or more, the odds of busting start to outweigh the chance of improvement.

ON YOUR TURN

- Look at your face-down card.
- Request additional cards face up, one at a time.
- Stand when satisfied or bust if you exceed 7.5.

Sette e Mezzo (Seven and a Half) is an Italian banking card game similar to Blackjack. Players try to get a hand value as close to 7.5 as possible without going over, using a 40-card deck where face cards are worth half a point.

Objective

The objective is to draw cards to reach a total as close to 7 and a half as possible without exceeding it. Players compete against the dealer, and whoever is closer to 7.5 wins.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2-8 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck with 8s, 9s, and 10s removed, leaving 40 cards. Alternatively, use an Italian deck.
3. **Deal:** One player is designated as the dealer (banker). Each player places a bet, then receives one card face down.

Gameplay

1. **Card Values:** Number cards (Ace through 7) are worth their face value. Face cards (Jack, Queen, King) are each worth 0.5 points.
2. **Wild Card:** The King of Diamonds (or King of Coins in Italian decks) is wild and can be worth any value the player chooses.
3. **Player Turns:** Starting from the dealer's right, each player looks at their face-down card and may request additional cards one at a time, dealt face up.
4. **Busting:** If a player's total exceeds 7.5, they bust and immediately lose their bet to the dealer. They do not reveal their face-down card.
5. **Standing:** A player may stop drawing at any time by saying 'stand.'
6. **Dealer's Turn:** After all players have acted, the dealer reveals their card and draws until they choose to stand or bust.

Scoring

- If the dealer busts, all surviving players win and receive their bet back plus an equal amount from the dealer.
- If neither busts, the hand closer to 7.5 wins. Ties go to the dealer.
- A 'Sette e Mezzo' (exactly 7.5) with just two cards is a premium hand and typically pays double.
- If the dealer gets a two-card Sette e Mezzo, all players pay double.

Variations

- **Rotating Dealer:** The dealer role passes to any player who achieves a two-card Sette e Mezzo, adding a strategic element to the banking position.
- **No Wild Card:** Some groups play without the wild King to simplify the game.

Tips and Strategies

- Stand on 5 or higher unless you are feeling bold, as the risk of busting increases sharply.
- Pay close attention to which cards have already been dealt face up, as this affects the odds of drawing a low card.
- As the dealer, you have the advantage of seeing players bust before you act, so you can be more conservative.

Tips & Strategy

Stand on values of 5 or higher to minimize bust risk. Watch the face-up cards on the table to estimate the likelihood of drawing a safe card.

Unlike Blackjack, the half-point face cards create finer gradations of risk. With a total of 6, you have a strong chance of improvement since both face cards and Aces are safe draws.