

# Shithead

2-5 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Medium

Get rid of all your cards; the last player with cards loses.

## SETUP

- Deal 3 cards face-down, 3 face-up on top of them, and 3 in hand per player.
- Before play, swap hand cards with face-up cards to optimize your layout.

## SCORING

- 2s reset the pile; 10s and four-of-a-kind burn it.
- 8s are transparent; next player must beat the card below.
- Last player remaining with cards is the loser.

*Tip: During setup, put 2s, 10s, and Aces face-up to guarantee strong table cards for the endgame.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Play one or more cards of equal or higher rank than the discard pile top.
- Draw back to 3 cards while the draw pile exists.
- Pick up the entire discard pile if you cannot play.
- After hand is empty, play face-up cards, then face-down cards blindly.

Shithead is a popular shedding game where the goal is to avoid being the last player with cards. With a multi-layered hand structure (hand, face-up, face-down) and special card powers, it creates dramatic reversals and exciting endgames.

## Objective

Get rid of all your cards — hand cards first, then face-up table cards, then face-down table cards. The last player with cards is the 'shithead.'

## Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 5 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** 3 cards face-down (do not look at these), 3 cards face-up on top of them, and 3 cards in hand.
4. **Swap:** Before play begins, you may swap hand cards with your face-up cards to optimize your layout.

## Gameplay

1. **Playing:** Play one or more cards of equal or higher rank than the top of the discard pile.
2. **Drawing:** While the draw pile exists, replenish to 3 cards in hand after each play.
3. **Pickup Penalty:** If you cannot or choose not to play, pick up the entire discard pile.
4. **Face-Up Cards:** Once your hand is empty and the draw pile is gone, play from your face-up table cards.
5. **Face-Down Cards:** After face-up cards are gone, play face-down cards blindly — flip one and hope it beats the pile.

## Special Cards

- **2:** Resets the pile — can be played on anything.
- **10:** Burns the entire discard pile (removed from game).
- **8 (transparent):** Can be played on anything; the next player must beat the card below the 8.
- **Four of a Kind:** Playing 4 of the same rank burns the pile, like a 10.

## Tips and Strategies

- During the swap phase, put your best cards (2s, 10s) face-up to guarantee strong table plays.
- Save 2s and 10s for emergencies when the pile is dangerously high.
- The blind face-down card phase is pure luck — try to empty your hand before it comes to that.

## Tips & Strategy

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The initial swap phase is the most strategic moment. Place 2s, 10s, and Aces face-up to create a strong safety net for your endgame.

Managing when to pick up the pile is counterintuitive — sometimes picking up early gives you ammunition for a stronger late game.