

Shoot Pontoon

2-10 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Medium

Duration: Medium

Beat the Banker with a hand closest to 21.

SETUP

- Choose a Banker.
- All players ante.
- Deal two cards to each player.

SCORING

- Pontoon beats all other hands.
- Five Card Trick beats a plain 21.

Tip: Only shoot when you are holding 19 or better.

ON YOUR TURN

- Check for a Pontoon.
- Hit, stick, or shoot.
- Banker reveals and draws.

Shoot Pontoon is an Australian variant of Blackjack where players can 'shoot the pot' for bonus payouts. It features unique terminology and payout rules that distinguish it from standard 21 games.

Objective

Beat the banker's hand by getting as close to 21 as possible without going over, with bonus payouts for certain hands.

Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 10 players.
2. **Deck:** A standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** One player is designated as the Banker. Each player (including the Banker) antes, and two cards are dealt to each player.

Gameplay

1. **Step 1:** Players look at their cards. A natural 21 (Pontoon) is announced immediately.
2. **Step 2:** Starting from the Banker's left, each player may 'hit' for more cards or 'stick' with their current total.
3. **Step 3:** Before drawing, a player may choose to 'shoot' by betting an additional amount. If they win, they receive a bonus payout.
4. **Step 4:** After all players have acted, the Banker reveals their hand and draws according to house rules. Hands are compared and bets are settled.

Scoring

- A Pontoon (Ace plus a 10-value card) is the best hand.
- Five cards totaling 21 or under (a Five Card Trick) beats a regular 21.
- Any hand over 21 is a bust and loses automatically.

Variations

- **No Peek:** The Banker does not check for Pontoon before players act.
- **Double Stakes:** Allow players to double their bet after seeing their first two cards.

Tips and Strategies

- Shoot only when your hand is strong, such as 19 or 20.
- Stand on 17 or higher unless going for a Five Card Trick.
- Pay attention to the Banker's visible card to guide your decisions.

Tips & Strategy

Shoot when you hold 19 or 20 for the best chance of a bonus payout. Avoid shooting on weak hands.

Knowing when to shoot is the key skill. Strong hands of 19 or 20 are ideal shooting opportunities, while anything below 17 should typically just be played normally.