

Speculation

3-8 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Hold the highest trump card when all cards are revealed to win the pot.

SETUP

- Deal 3 face-down cards to each player.
- Turn up one card to set the trump suit.
- Each player antes chips into the pot.

SCORING

- The holder of the highest trump wins the entire pot.
- Profits can also be made through buying and selling trump cards.

Tip: Sell the winning card for a sure profit if many cards remain unturned and the pot is not large enough to risk.

ON YOUR TURN

- Reveal the top card of your hand face up.
- If it is a higher trump, you now own the pot.
- Any player may negotiate to buy or sell the current best trump.

Speculation is a historical English card game centered on trading and gambling. Players buy and sell the right to win the current trick's pool, with the trump card being the key to winning.

Objective

Win chips by holding the highest trump card in play when the round ends, or profit by buying and selling trump cards during the round.

Setup

1. **Players:** 3-8 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Deal 3 cards face down to each player. Turn up the next card to establish the trump suit.
4. **Ante:** Each player puts an agreed number of chips into the pot before the deal.

Gameplay

1. **Step 1:** The turned-up trump card currently 'owns' the pool. The dealer holds this card and its ownership can be traded.
2. **Step 2:** Starting left of the dealer, each player turns up one card from their hand. If it is a trump card higher than the current best trump, it becomes the new best and that player now owns the pool.
3. **Step 3:** At any point when a new best trump appears, players may offer to buy or sell the current winning card. Negotiations are open and any price can be agreed upon.
4. **Step 4:** Continue turning up cards clockwise. Non-trump cards are simply revealed and have no effect.
5. **Step 5:** When all cards have been revealed, the player holding the highest trump card wins the entire pot.

Scoring

- The player holding the highest trump card at the end wins the pot.
- Players can also profit by selling a winning trump card for more than they paid for it.
- If no trump cards appear beyond the initial turn-up, the dealer wins the pot.

Variations

- **Multiple Rounds:** Play a set number of rounds with rotating dealers, tallying total chips at the end.
- **Blind Speculation:** Players may buy face-down cards from other players, adding more gambling to the game.
- **Fixed Prices:** Set a maximum trade price to limit the gambling aspect.

Tips and Strategies

- Selling a winning trump early can guarantee a profit, even if you miss out on the full pot.
- Watch what cards have been revealed. If most of the deck is flipped and no higher trump has appeared, the current winner is likely safe.
- Buy a winning card only if the pot value justifies the price, accounting for the risk that a higher trump may still appear.

Tips & Strategy

Calculate the odds before buying a trump card. If many cards are still unturned, the risk of a higher trump appearing is greater, so negotiate a lower price.

The trading element is where skilled players excel. Knowing when to lock in a profit by selling versus gambling on winning the full pot is the core decision in every round.