

# Tonk

2-4 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Empty your hand or have the lowest point total when the round ends.

## SETUP

- Deal 5 cards to each player (some variants use 7).
- Place remaining cards as stock with one face-up discard.
- A dealt hand totaling 49 or 50 wins instantly (Tonk).

## SCORING

- Going out (empty hand): win the stake from each player.
- Dropping and winning: win the stake from each player.
- Dropping and losing: pay double to each player.
- Tonk on deal (49-50): win double stakes.

*Tip: Drop early if your hand total is very low; waiting risks drawing high cards.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- Draw one card from stock or discard pile.
- Lay down sets (3+ same rank) or runs (3+ consecutive same suit).
- Hit cards onto any existing spreads, including opponents'.
- Discard one card to end your turn, or drop (knock) instead of drawing.

Tonk is a fast-paced rummy-style game popular in urban communities across the United States. Players aim to reduce the point value of their hand by forming spreads (sets and runs) or by going out quickly when their hand is already low.

## Objective

Empty your hand or have the lowest point total when someone ends the round. Face cards are worth 10, Aces are 1, and number cards are face value.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 4 players.
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Deal:** Each player receives 5 cards (some variants use 7). Place remaining cards as stock with one face-up discard.
4. **Instant Win:** If dealt a hand totaling 49 or 50, declare 'Tonk' immediately and win double stakes.

## Gameplay

1. **Drawing:** Draw one card from the stock or discard pile.
2. **Spreading:** Lay down sets (3+ same rank) or runs (3+ consecutive same suit) from your hand to the table.
3. **Hitting:** Add cards from your hand to existing spreads on the table, including opponents' spreads.
4. **Discarding:** End your turn by discarding one card.
5. **Going Out:** If you empty your hand, you win the round.
6. **Dropping:** Instead of drawing, you may 'drop' (knock) if you believe you have the lowest hand total. All players reveal hands.

## Scoring

- **Going Out:** Win the agreed stake from each player.
- **Dropping and Winning:** Win the stake from each player.
- **Dropping and Losing:** If someone else has an equal or lower total, you pay double to each player.
- **Tonk (49-50 on deal):** Win double stakes from everyone.

## Tips and Strategies

- Drop early if your hand total is very low — waiting risks drawing high cards.
- Spread aggressively to reduce your hand value quickly.
- Track which cards have been played to judge if dropping is safe.

## Tips & Strategy

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The key decision in Tonk is when to drop versus when to keep playing. A hand of 15 or less is usually worth dropping, but gauge your opponents' likely totals first.

Tonk rewards quick decision-making. Unlike slower rummy variants, the best players know exactly when the risk of continued play outweighs the benefit.