

# Cribbage Rules

Two players, one deal from shuffle to show. First to 121 wins.

**Card values** A = 1 · 2–9 face value · 10 J Q K = 10 · suits matter only for the flush and nobs

## ♦ BEFORE THE PLAY

### 1 The deal

Cut for first deal; the lower card deals, and the deal alternates every hand. The dealer gives six cards each, face down, one at a time.

*in the cut, king is high and ace is low; ties cut again*

### 2 The discard

Each player puts two cards face down into the crib. The crib belongs to the dealer and stays unseen until the show.

*both players now hold four cards*

### 3 The cut

The non-dealer cuts the deck; the dealer turns the top card of the lower packet face up. This starter joins every hand at the show.

*a jack starter pegs the dealer 2 at once: his heels*

## ♣ THE PLAY AND THE SHOW

### 4 The play

The non-dealer leads. Take turns laying single cards face up, announcing the running count, which may never pass 31. Peg fifteens, pairs, and runs as they form.

*the full point table is on our scoring cheat sheet*

### 5 Go

If you cannot play under 31, say go; your opponent plays every card that still fits. The last card laid pegs 1, or 2 for exactly 31, and the count resets to zero.

*after a reset, the other player leads the next count*

### 6 The show

Count in order: non-dealer's hand, dealer's hand, then the crib. The starter counts as a fifth card in each.

*first to reach 121 wins on the spot, in any phase*

## TABLE RULINGS · THE DISPUTES THAT COME UP

**You must play if you can.** Holding back a playable card and saying go is not a legal pass.

**The crib stays face down.** The dealer turns it up only after both hands are counted.

**Overpegging is corrected.** A peg moved too far goes back, and the difference goes to your opponent.

**The starter is cut late.** It is turned only after both players have discarded to the crib.

**121 ends everything.** The game is over the instant a score reaches it, even mid-count. A loser under 91 is skunked.

**Muggins is optional.** Your opponent may claim points you miss, but only if you both agreed to play muggins.