

Sheepshead: Rules for 5 Players (JD Partner)

2016-02-14 edition

Cards and Dealing

From a standard 52-card deck, remove Twos through Sixes. Deal, face down, 6 cards to each player and 2 to the blind.

Picking

Each hand begins with a picking round. Picking stops either when someone has picked or everyone has passed. The player left of the dealer has first choice: pick or pass. If passing, this choice moves left to the next player, dealer being last. When you pick, you add the blind to your hand and drop 2 cards from the resulting 8. The dropped cards will not be played in tricks, but they count toward your trick points. If everyone passes, then the game is a "Leaster;" the blind remains unseen and unplayed during the hand, and it is taken by the first player who takes a trick that is worth points.

Teams

Each player has an individual score, so there are no permanent teams. However, each hand has teams: Picker and Partner (Picking Team) against everyone else (Opposing Team). The Partner is the player who was dealt the Jack of Diamonds, but no one else knows who the Partner is until this card is played. As Picker, if you were either dealt the Jack of Diamonds or it was in the blind, you "go it alone" against the other 4 players. There are no teams in a Leaster.

Goal of the Hand

Both teams want to take in as many trick points (based on the cards *in* the tricks, not the number of tricks) as they can. The Picking Team members raise their scores if they take a majority of the points in tricks plus any points buried by the Picker in the two dropped cards. The Opposing Team members raise their own scores if they take enough trick points to prevent that outcome. To win a Leaster hand, you must take the fewest trick points while still taking at least one trick.

Taking Tricks

Sheepshead follows standard trick-taking conventions, such as those used in card games Euchre and 500. The player left of the dealer leads the first trick. You must follow suit when you can (treat trump as its own suit). You may play a card that does not win you the trick. Queens, Jacks, and Diamonds compose the trump suit. The fail (non-trump) suits consist of the remaining Clubs, Spades, and Hearts. No fail suit is more powerful than another. Trick-taking power, high to low: trump suit [$\clubsuit Q \spadesuit Q \heartsuit Q \diamondsuit Q \clubsuit J \spadesuit J \heartsuit J \diamondsuit J \diamondsuit A \diamondsuit T \diamondsuit K \spadesuit 9 \spadesuit 8 \spadesuit 7$], then the fail suits [$(\clubsuit \spadesuit \heartsuit) A T K 9 8 7$].

Counting Trick Points

Aces: 11, Tens: 10, Kings: 4, Queens: 3, Jacks: 2; 120 total points. Team members combine their trick points for team totals. The picking team includes the Picker's two dropped cards in their trick point total, as does the blind-taker in a Leaster. Trick points do not go onto the scorecard. They only determine how many scorecard points go to each player.

Scoring: Determine Scorecard Points Based on Trick Points

Points always flow from the losers to the winners of each hand. All players' scores should total 0 after each hand.

Trick Points		Scorecard Points			
Picking Team	Opposing Team	Picker	Partner	Others, each	
all tricks	no tricks	6	3	-3	<i>"schwartz"</i> <i>Pickers "schneider" the Opposition</i>
91-120	0-29, took trick(s)	4	2	-2	
61-90	30-59	2	1	-1	
31-60	60-89	-2	-1	1	<i>Opposition "schneiders" the Pickers</i> <i>"schwartz"</i>
0-30, took trick(s)	90-120	-4	-2	2	
no tricks	all tricks	-6	-3	3	

Picker going it alone: double the points under the "Picker" column above; scoring for Others remains the same.

Leaster: Winner gains 4, Others lose 1 each; to break a tie, shuffle and draw for [higher] trump, repeating if no trump.

End of Game

The winner is the first player to reach 10 points or more while having the highest score among all players.

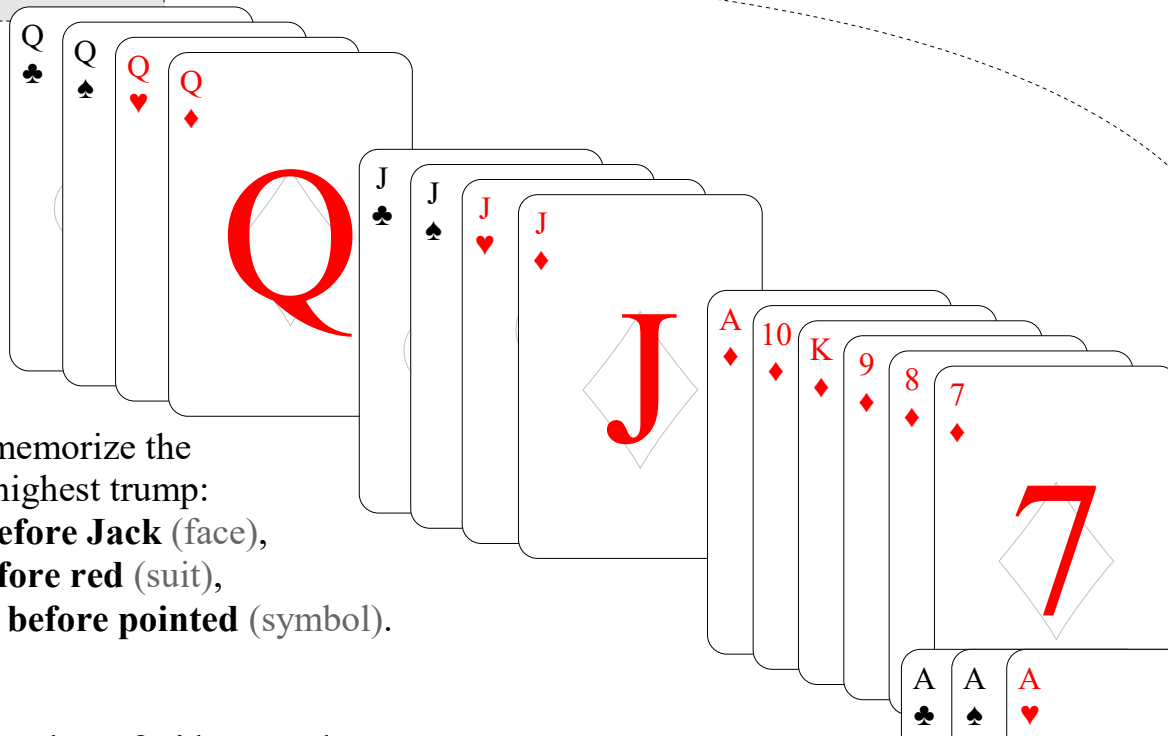
Sheepshead: Trick-taking power of all cards



First, the trump suit...

Queens, Jacks, all remaining Diamonds.
These cards can take all fail cards.

HIGHEST TRUMP

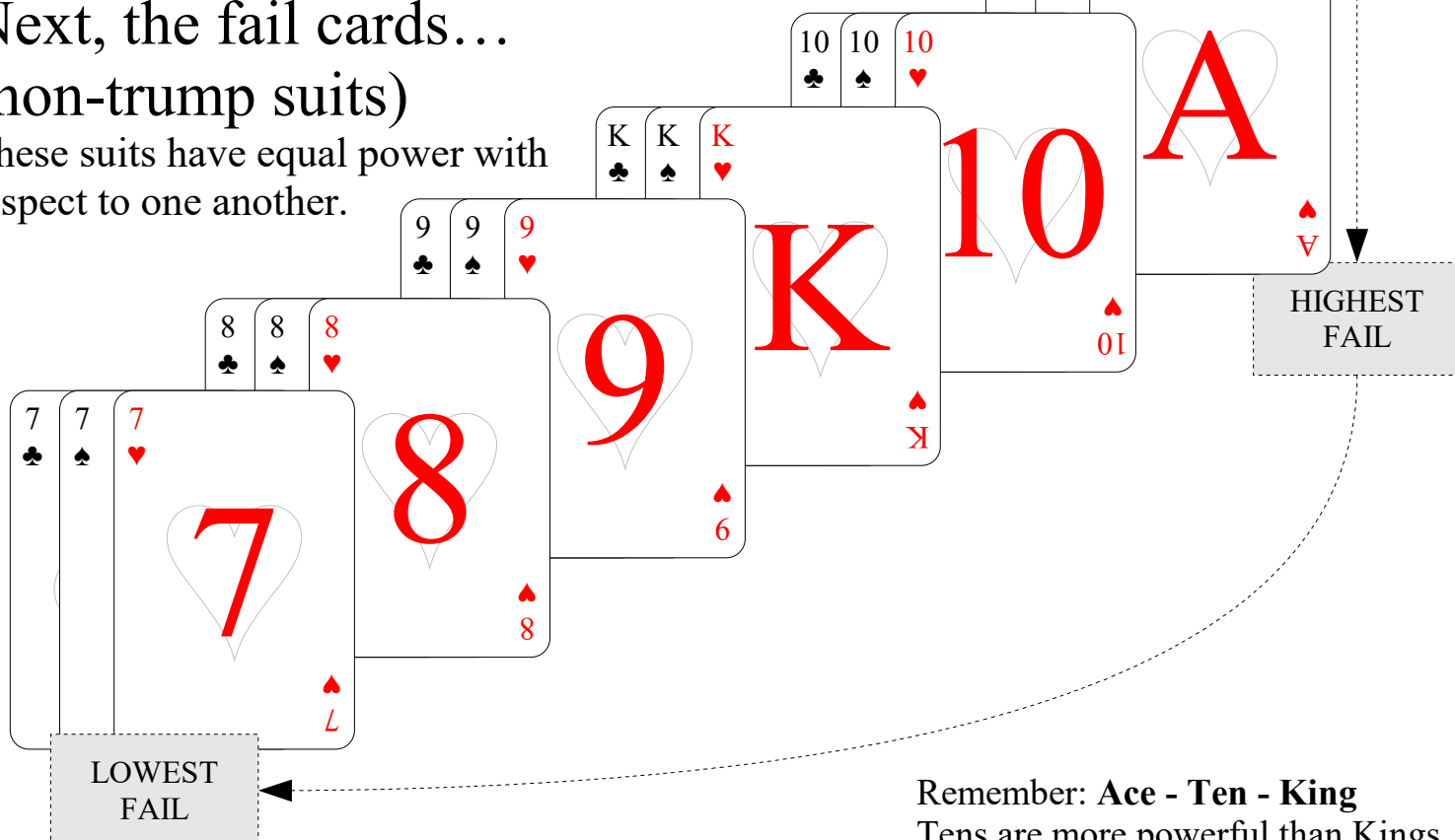


LOWEST TRUMP

To help memorize the order of highest trump:
Queen before Jack (face),
black before red (suit),
rounded before pointed (symbol).

Next, the fail cards...
(non-trump suits)

These suits have equal power with respect to one another.



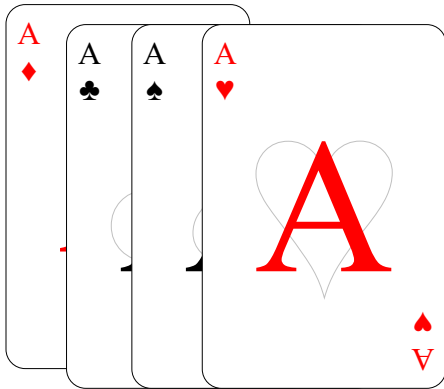
HIGHEST FAIL

LOWEST FAIL

Remember: **Ace - Ten - King**
Tens are more powerful than Kings.

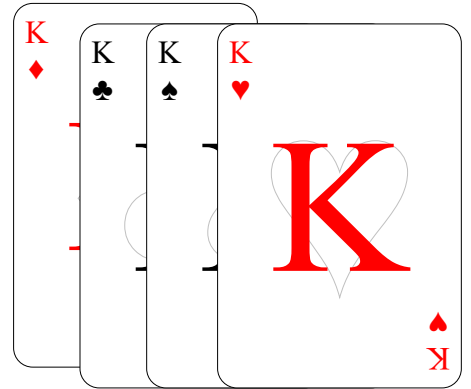
Sheephead: Point values of all cards

After playing out the hand, pool your team's tricks and total the point values of cards to determine scoring.



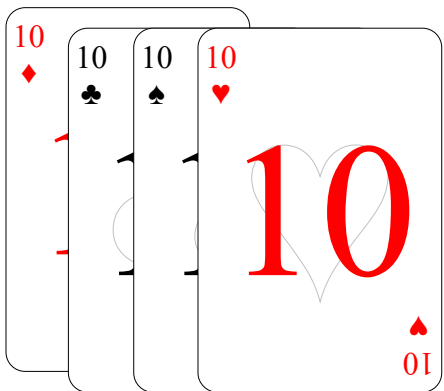
11

Aces



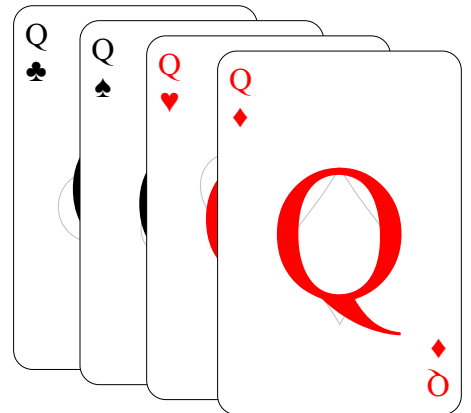
4

Kings



10

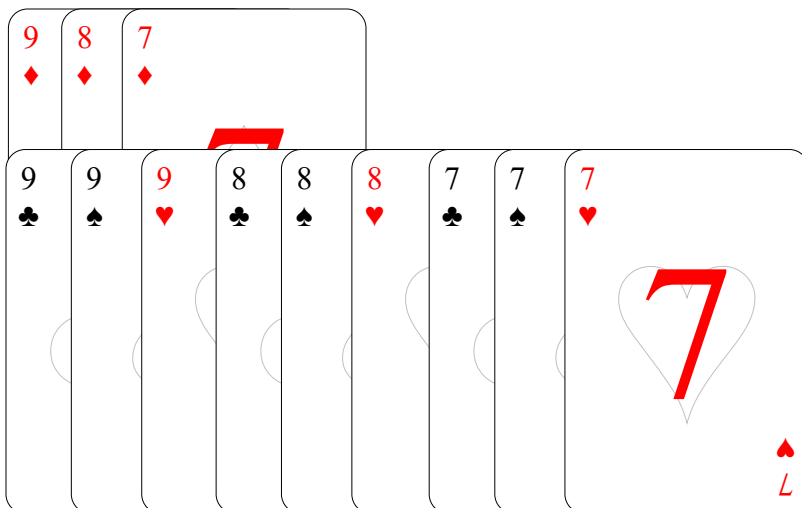
Tens



3

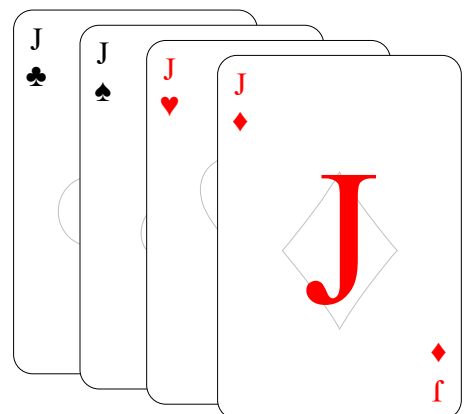
Queens

**All cards total
120 points.**



2

Jacks



0

Nines, Eights, Sevens