

PAREBOAL RULEBOOK (v1.0.2)
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INTRODUCTION

Pareboal is a battle-style card game inspired by poker. In Pareboal, players fight against each other in a game of strategy and luck in equal amounts, trying to drop the opponent to zero hit points while losing as little of their own health as possible. The game can be played either solo or with a friend.

SETTING UP

All you need in order to play Pareboal is a standard **52-card playing card deck**. Should the deck have any jokers, the game can be played with or without them; it is up to the discretion of the player(s) whether the jokers are to be used or not. Follow the steps below to set up for the game.

1. Shuffle the deck and place it **face-down** in the middle of the play area.
2. Have both players take **five (5) cards** from the top of the deck and place them in a row in front of them, **all face-down**. These cards will signify the **health bar** of each player. If playing single-player, simply take 10 cards and divide them between either "side".
3. Have both players take **five (5) more cards** from the top of the deck and place them in a row below their health bars, **all face-up**. These cards will be the **hand** of each player. If playing single-player, simply take 10 cards and divide them between either "side".

BASIC RULES

With setup complete, the game can properly begin. The basic gameplay loop constitutes discarding cards and drawing new ones in an attempt to bring the opposing player's **health** to 0. In order to get to that goal, a degree of mathematics and decision-making is also involved.

At its simplest, the objective is to have a hand with a higher total score than the opponent. While there are bonus points to be gotten from certain poker hands, they serve a secondary role in that objective; what matters more are the values of individual cards. Because of this, the player with the worse poker hand may actually have the better Pareboal hand!

On their turn, a player can discard any number of cards – even their entire hand if they wish – and replace the discarded cards with new ones drawn from the deck. Any discarded cards are placed to the bottom of the deck.

At the end of a turn, the total points of both players' hands are calculated, and the player with less points must remove one card from their health bar and place it into a **discard pile**. In other words, they lose a **health point**. Any cards in the discard pile may not be used during the remainder of the game.

The player to lose all of their health points first loses the game.

If playing single-player, the opponent's (or **NPC's**) hand can be treated as a static goal to beat, meaning that only the player needs to perform discard actions.

STRUCTURE OF A TURN

1. Look at both hands and make a mental note of their total scores (see **Card values** and **Hand bonuses**).
2. Take any cards you wish to discard from your own hand and place them at the bottom of the deck. Take note of the number of cards you discarded. Take an equal amount of cards from the top of the deck and place them in your hand row. This step can be skipped if there are no cards to be discarded (follow the **card restrictions** as described below). **Only one discard action** may be performed unless playing with the Extra Discards modifier (see **Modifiers**).
3. Calculate the total points of both hands.
4. The player with the worse hand, i.e. the one with fewer points, removes **one card** from their health bar and places it in the discard pile. In the event of a tie, neither player loses a health point.

5. Remove all cards from both players' hands, place them back into the deck (at the bottom of it) and deal new hands for both players.

To keep the order of the cards from becoming predictable, a reshuffle of the deck is recommended every 3 turns or so.

HEALTH

Health is a central mechanic in Pareboal. It is a resource that determines the pace of a game and a deciding factor in which player ultimately wins. As players compete for a higher total score with their hands, one is most likely going to lose a **health point** at the end of a turn.

The face-down row of cards in front of each player is essentially their **health bar**. Both players start with 5 health points. When a player loses one of those health points, they remove it from their health bar and place it in a separate pile outside the play area. This pile will be the **discard pile**. Once either player removes their last health point, the game ends and the player with health points remaining is granted victory.

If a turn ends in a tie, i.e. both players have an equal number of points, neither player loses a health point.

DISCARD PILE

The **discard pile** is a separate area into which any health points that either player loses are placed. Cards can be placed into the discard pile either face-down or face-up, but to keep it from being confused with the deck, placing them face-up is recommended.

Cards placed into the discard pile can not be used for the remainder of a game.

YANKING

Yanking can occur if one player has a hand consisting of all picture cards and the other player has all number cards. In such an event, the player with all picture cards **must** discard at least one of their cards (see **Card restrictions**). The player with all number cards may respond to this by discarding at least one of their own cards and saying that they wish to **yank** the picture card.

When a card is yanked, instead of placing it back into the deck, the player with the card to be yanked hands it over to the other player, and the card becomes a card in the hand of the player who yanked it. The yanked card can not be discarded.

While the discarding player is free to discard as many of their picture cards as they wish, the yanking player **may only yank one (1) card**.

CARD RESTRICTIONS

If playing with jokers, there may only be **one (1) joker** in a hand at any time. If the number of jokers in a hand exceeds that limit, **any extra jokers MUST be discarded**. The joker must also be discarded if the other four cards in a hand are all picture cards or aces.

If one player's hand is all picture cards and the other player's hand is all number cards, the player with all picture cards **must discard at least one (1) of their cards**. In such an event, the player with all number cards may choose to discard one of their own cards in exchange for the picture card; this is known as a **yank**. The player with the picture card must then hand the card over to the other player.

Yanked cards **can not be discarded**.

CARD VALUES

Number cards (2-10) are all worth the value described on the card.

Picture cards (J, Q, K) are all worth 10. Jacks and kings are considered odd, and queens are considered even.

Aces (A) can have a value of either 1 or 11 depending on whether a hand has picture cards or not. If there is at least one picture card in a hand, any aces in that hand will have a value of 11. If a hand has no picture cards, aces in that hand will have a value of 1. In either case, aces will be considered odd.

Jokers are worth the value of the highest card in a hand.

With only the values of individual cards in a hand summed, the maximum total score that a hand can theoretically have is 54 (equivalent to four aces and a 10 or picture card). In practice, however, a hand's total score can and likely will exceed this limit.

HAND BONUSES

In Pareboal, bonus points are granted for most special hands. These hands are mostly derived from poker with a few additions specific to Pareboal. Consult the table below for which hands qualify for point bonuses and how many bonus points a hand grants.

Jokers and wild cards are **unaccounted for** in special hands; for instance, a pair in a hand with a joker does not become a three-of-a-kind.

Hands listed further down the table override ones listed above; for instance, if a hand has a full house with all evens, the bonus is only granted for the full house and the all evens are ignored.

NAME	BONUS	EXAMPLE
High card	Value of highest card in hand	♠A ♥9 ♣7 ♠3 ♥2
All odds	Value of highest card in hand	♠J ♣7 ♠5 ♠3 ♦A
All evens	Value of highest card in hand	♠10 ♠8 ♦6 ♥4 ♣2
One pair	3 points	♥K ♦J ♠8 ♥8 ♣4
Two pairs	6 points	♥10 ♠10 ♦7 ♠7 ♣5
4-card straight	Value of lowest card in hand	♠Q ♠J ♥10 ♠9 ♣6
Three-of-a-kind	4 points	♠A ♦K ♦7 ♠7 ♥7
Straight	No bonus	♥10 ♥9 ♠8 ♠7 ♦6
Flush	5 points	♥A ♥Q ♥9 ♥5 ♥3
Full house	5 points	♥J ♣J ♦J ♠5 ♥5
Four-of-a-kind	8 points	♠A ♥8 ♦8 ♠8 ♣8
Straight flush	10 points	♦7 ♦6 ♦5 ♦4 ♦3
Royal flush	No bonus	♠A ♠K ♠Q ♠J ♠10

MODIFIERS

Here is a list of optional extra rules to bring an additional layer of unpredictability and/or strategy into a game of Pareboal:

ACE IS HIGH

Aces are always worth 11.

BLIND CARD

When dealing hands, one card is dealt face-down for each player. The face-down card becomes a **blind card** and can not be discarded or yanked. When both players have performed their discard actions (if they decide to discard any cards), the blind card is flipped face-up, revealing both players' final hands.

CHAOS MODE

The deck is reshuffled at the end of every turn.

EXTRA DISCARDS

Player(s) may perform additional discard actions during their turn. For the sake of balance, the recommended maximum number of discard actions allowed is 3. Best combined with Chaos Mode.

GHOST MODE

Lost health point cards are placed at the bottom of the deck instead of the discard pile.

GOLDEN JOKERS

Jokers double the value(s) of the lowest-value card(s) in a hand.

HEALING YANKS

If a player has less than 5 health and performs a yank, the other player's picture card becomes an extra health point instead. The yanking player places the card in their health bar and does not need to discard any cards in this case.

ONE ACE

Restricts the aces in a hand to one (1), similarly to jokers. If a hand has more than one ace, any extra aces must be discarded.

UNRESTRICTED YANKS

Yanking may occur at any time, i.e. the usual "all picture cards vs. all number cards" restriction does not apply. Additionally, any card can be yanked.

WILD CARD

Decide on one (1) card to become a **wild card**. The wild card is effectively a joker, changing its value to the highest-value card in the hand where it appears. Works best when the game is played with no jokers.

CREDITS

Game designed by Santtu "MFG38" Pesonen

Rulebook designed and written by Santtu "MFG38" Pesonen

REVISION HISTORY

[2024-02-04] v1.0:

- Initial release.

[2024-02-05] v1.0.1:

- Tweaked hand bonus rules.
- Added rule for discarding jokers if other cards in a hand are all picture cards.
- Renamed Extras to Modifiers.
- Added the Ace Is High, Ghost Mode and Golden Jokers modifiers.

[2024-02-06] v1.0.2:

- Tweaked hand bonus rules.
- Simplified card value rules regarding jokers.
- Added 3 new special hands: all odds, all evens and 4-card straight.
- Added examples of special hands to hand bonus table.
- Minor (non-breaking) clarifications and rewrites.