

# Sabacc

Sabacc has been called the greatest card game in the galaxy. True or not, it's at least the most popular. And the most varied. Depending on who you ask, there are dozens, if not hundreds of variations of sabacc. But they all have a few things in common: they're played with a special deck of cards and rely heavily on betting, bluffing, and chance.

## Corellian Spike

Corellian Spike is one of the most popular variations of sabacc. It uses a deck of sixty-two cards. The deck is divided into three suits (called staves): circles, squares, and triangles. Each stave contains twenty cards ranging from -10 to +10. There are also two zero cards called sylops. Also, to add a touch of randomness to the game, it is played using a pair of dice called "spike dice."

The object of Corellian Spike is to have a hand worth exactly zero points -- called sabacc -- or at least to have a hand that is closer to zero than anyone else at the table -- called nulrhek. In most versions of Corellian Spike -- yes, variations of sabacc often have numerous variations themselves -- there are also several special hands that can beat a regular sabacc, such as an idiot's array or a pure sabacc.

## Yarith Bespín Casino's Corellian Spike

At the Yarith Bespín Casino, a challenging wrinkle is added to the game: In addition to each player's hand cards, they also have a spike card. The spike card sits face-up on the table in front of each player and must be used as part of their hand.

## Gameplay

- Choose one player to be the dealer. That player deals for the first round. The dealer rotates to the left in subsequent rounds. The dealer also plays.
- Each player puts two credits in the game pot and one in the sabacc pot to enter the hand. This is the ante and can increase later on in the game, especially in tournament-style play. (At some tables, there is only a game pot and no sabacc pot. At these tables, the ante into the game pot usually starts at one rather than two credits.)
- The dealer deals two hand cards to each player. These cards are kept secret from all but the player who holds them. The remaining cards are placed face-down in the center of the table and constitute the draw pile.
- Starting with the player to the dealer's left, each player checks or bets (the bet must be at least equal to the game pot ante -- typically two credits). If a player bets, all subsequent players must either call (match the bet), bet (increase the bet in increments of the game pot ante), or junk (discard their cards face-up

and exit the hand). Betting continues around the table until all players have either called or junked. (If all but one player has junked, that remaining player wins the hand.)

- After the initial betting phase, the dealer places a third card -- the spike card -- face-up in front of each remaining player.
- Starting with the player to the dealer's left, each player can now choose to buy a card by adding the hand pot ante amount to the hand pot (typically two credits). The player draws the top card from the draw pile and can either discard it, swap it with one of their hand cards, or swap it with their spike card. (In any case, at least one card is discarded so the player ends their turn with two hand cards and one spike card.)
- Once all players have taken a turn, another betting phase begins -- identical in rules to the first betting phase -- and continues around the table until all players have either called or junked. (If all but one player has junked, that remaining player wins the hand.)
- The dealer then rolls the spike dice. If the symbols on the dice match, all players discard their two hand cards and are dealt two new cards. If the symbols on the dice are both spikes, players also discard their spike card and are dealt a new one.
- Everyone gets another chance to buy a card, and then to bet. If more than one player still remains, the spike dice are rolled again, following the same rules as before.
- Players then get to buy and bet one more time. If more than one player remains, the spike dice are rolled a final time.
- The remaining players reveal their hands (unless there is only one player left, in which case they have the option to keep their hand a secret). The player with the best hand wins, collecting the hand pot. If the winning hand's value is zero, the player with that hand also collects the sabacc pot.
- If play is to continue, the dealer rotates to the left and the above steps are followed again.

## Winning Hands

In a tie, a positive total beats a negative one. After that, the hand with the highest positive card total wins, then the hand with the single highest positive card.

However, with the hands yee-haa and sabacc with one pair, the hand with its pair closest to zero wins.

## Idiot's Array

A sylop, a two, and a three.

0, +2, +3 or 0, -2, -3 or 0 +2, -3 or 0, -2, +3

## Prime Sabacc

Zero with a positive ten, a negative ten, and a sylop.

+10, -10, 0

## **Yee-haa**

Zero with one pair and a sylop.

*Examples: +2, -2, 0 or +7, -7, 0*

## **Sabacc with One Pair**

Zero with one pair.

*Examples: +1, +1, -2 or +6, -3, -3*

## **Sabacc with Highest Value Cards**

Zero with the highest positive card total.

*Example: +4, +6, -10 beats +4, +5, -9 because 10 (sum of +4 and +6) is higher than 9 (sum of +4 and +5)*

## **Sabacc with Highest Value Single Card**

Zero with the highest single positive card.

*Example: +1, +8, -9 beats +4, +5, -9 because 8 is higher than 5*

## **Nulrhek**

Closest to zero.

*Example: +1, +3, -5 beats +3, +5, -10*

## **Nulrhek with Positive Score**

Closest to zero with a positive score.

*Example: +1, +3, -3, beats +1, +2, -4*

## **Nulrhek with Highest Value Cards**

Closest to zero with the highest positive card total.

*Example: +4, +8, -6 beats +3, +4, -1 because 12 (sum of +4 and +8) is higher than 7 (sum of +3 and +4)*

## **Nulrhek with Highest Value Single Card**

Closest to zero with the highest single positive card.

*Example: +2, +10, -6 beats +4, +8, -6 because 10 is higher than 8*

## **Single Blind Draw**

If players are still tied, they must draw one card from the draw pile. The player whose card is closest to zero wins. If tied, the positive number wins. If still tied, draw again until a winner is determined.

*Examples: -1 beats +4 and +1 beats -1*

## Winning Hand Variations

At some tables in the Yarith Bepin, you'll find a slightly different set of winning hands. These tables drop the idiot's array, prime sabacc, or both. Another variation: when it comes to yee-haa and sabacc with one pair ties, the hand with the highest pair wins, rather than the pair closest to zero.

## Zabaka's Corellian Spike

Toydarian Toymaker can be found nestled among the other shops of Merchant Row in Black Spire Outpost on the planet Batuu. The place is owned by a Toydarian named Zabaka. She has come up with her own variation of Corellian Spike, the rules of which she sells with a sabacc deck and some spike dice. Her clientele are mostly children so her rules are modified to not include betting. The rules presented here have been remodified to add betting back in, but feel free to skip over the betting phases if a more easy-going game is preferred.

## Gameplay

- Choose one player to be the dealer. This player deals for the first round. The dealer rotates to the left in subsequent rounds. The dealer also plays.
- Each player puts one credit in the hand pot. This is the ante and can increase later on in the game, especially in tournament-style play. (At some tables, there is also a sabacc pot. At these tables, players put credits in the hand pot and the sabacc pot, usually two to one.)
- The dealer deals two hand cards to each player. These cards are kept secret from all but the player who holds them. The remaining cards are placed face-down in the center of the table and constitute the draw pile.
- The dealer then flips the top card from the draw pile and places it face-up beside it. This is the discard pile.
- Starting with the player to the dealer's left, each player checks or bets (the bet must be at least equal to the ante -- typically one credit). If a player bets, all subsequent players must either call (match the bet), bet (increase the bet in increments of the ante), or junk (discard their cards face-up and exit the hand). Betting continues around the table until all players have either called or junked. (If all but one player has junked, that remaining player wins the hand.)
- Starting with the player to the dealer's left, each player can now choose to either gain, swap, or stand. (At some tables, players have to put credits equal to the ante amount into the hand pot to take any of these actions, other than to stand. At these tables, you may be allowed to discard the card you drew using the gain action if you decide after seeing it that you don't want it.)
  - To gain, either discard a card or don't, then take the top card from the draw pile. You cannot discard after you have already drawn.
  - To swap, take the top card from the discard pile and discard one card from your hand. You can never take a card from the discard pile without also

discarding.

- To stand, take no actions. Choose this option if you do not wish to gain or swap.
- Once all players have taken a turn, another betting phase begins -- identical in rules to the first betting phase -- and continues around the table until all players have either called or junked. (If all but one player has junked, that remaining player wins the hand.)
- The dealer then rolls the spike dice. If the symbols on the dice match, all players discard all their hand cards and are dealt an equal number of new cards.
- Everyone gets another chance to gain, swap, or stand; and then to bet. If more than one player still remains, the spike dice are rolled again, following the same rules as before.
- Players then get to gain, swap, or stand; and then to bet one more time. If more than one player remains, the spike dice are rolled a final time.
- The remaining players reveal their hands (unless there is only one player left, in which case they have the option to keep their hand a secret). The player with the best hand wins, collecting the hand pot. (If playing with a sabacc pot and the winning hand's value is zero, the player with that hand also collects the sabacc pot.)
- If play is to continue, the dealer rotates to the left and the above steps are followed again.

## Winning Hands

In a tie, a positive total beats a negative one. After that, the hand with the most cards wins, then the hand with the highest positive card total, lastly the hand with the single highest positive card. However, with the hands pure sabacc through sabacc with one pair, the hand with a pair or set closest to zero or a run that starts closest to zero wins.

### Pure Sabacc

Zero with exactly two sylops.

0, 0

### Full Sabacc

Zero with exactly two positive tens, two negative tens, and a sylop.

+10, +10, -10, -10, 0

### Fleet

Zero with four of a kind (except 10s) and a sylop.

Examples: +5, +5, -5, -5, 0 or +9, +9, -9, -9, 0

**Yee-haa**

Zero with one pair and a sylop.

*Examples: +5, -5, 0 or +7, -7, 0*

**Rhylet**

Zero with a positive three of a kind and a negative pair (or vice versa).

*Examples: +2, +2, +2, -3, -3 or -4, -4, -4, +6, +6*

**Squadron**

Zero with four of a kind.

*Examples: +5, +5, -5, -5 or +1, +1, -1, -1*

**Gee Whiz**

Zero with a positive run of one through four and one negative ten, or a negative run of one through four and one positive ten.

*+1, +2, +3, +4, -10 or -1, -2, -3, -4, +10*

**Straight Khyron**

Zero with a four card run.

*Examples: +7, -8, -9, +10 or -4, +5, +6, -7*

**Banthas Wild**

Zero with three of a kind.

*Examples: +4, +4, +4, -3, -9 or +5, +5, -5, -3, -2*

**Rule of Two**

Zero with two pairs.

*Examples: +3, +3, +5, -5, -6 or +9, -9, +4, -4*

**Sabacc with One Pair**

Zero with one pair.

*Examples: +5, -5 or +3, +3, -6*

**Sabacc with Most Cards**

Zero with the most total cards.

*Example: +1, +8, -2, -7 beats +9, -2, -7*

### **Sabacc with Highest Value Cards**

Zero with the highest positive card total.

*Example: +4, +6, -10 beats +4, +5, -9 because 10 (sum of +4 and +6) is higher than 9 (sum of +4 and +5)*

### **Sabacc with Highest Value Single Card**

Zero with the highest single positive card.

*Example: +1, +8, -9 beats +4, +5, -9 because 8 is higher than 5*

### **Nulrhek**

Closest to zero.

*Example: +4, -5 beats +3, +5, -1, -5*

### **Nulrhek with Positive Score**

Closest to zero with a positive score.

*Example: +3, -2, beats +2, -3*

### **Nulrhek with Most Cards**

Closest to zero with most cards.

*Example: +4, +9, -1, -3, -8 beats +5, +10, -7, -7*

### **Nulrhek with Highest Value Cards**

Closest to zero with the highest positive card total.

*Example: +4, +9, -6, -6 beats +5, +7, -4, -7 because 13 (sum of +4 and +9) is higher than 12 (sum of +5 and +7)*

### **Nulrhek with Highest Value Single Card**

Closest to zero with the highest single positive card.

*Example: +2, +10, -4, -7 beats +3, +9, -5, -6 because 10 is higher than 9*

### **Single Blind Draw**

If players are still tied, they must draw one card from the draw pile. The player whose card is closest to zero wins. If tied, the positive number wins. If still tied, draw again until a winner is determined.

*Examples: -1 beats +4 and +1 beats -1*

## Winning Hand Variations

At some tables using Zabaka's rules, the full sabacc hand is removed as a winning hand and is instead simply part of the fleet hand, and the least valuable fleet, at that. Another common variation is for all hands ranking higher than regular sabacc, you're required to have only exactly the cards needed to complete your hand and no extras, even if those extras would bring your hand total to zero.

---

All reused work maintains its original copyright where applicable and is used here with the assertion that it is [fair use](#) of the material under [United States copyright law](#). Original text and images are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).