

Hearts

(Black Lady, Black Maria)



4 Players / Trick Taking

Finish with the lowest amount of points by avoiding hearts and the Q♠

The Deal

With four players the entire deck is dealt, 13 cards to each player.

With three players, the 2♦ is removed from the deck before dealing, and each player receives 17 cards

With five players, the 2♣ and 2♦ are removed, and each player receives 10 cards.

With six players, the jokers are inserted.

Before the start of each hand, each player chooses two cards, and passes them to another player. On the first deal, players pass to the left, the second to the right, the third across the table. On the fourth deal no cards are passed, then the cycle of 4 begins again.

Gameplay

The player holding the 2♣ (or 3♣ if there are 5 players) leads. The game proceeds clockwise, with each player aiming to follow suit if possible, although any card may be played if the player does not hold any cards of the chosen suit. Each trick is won by the highest card of the original suit laid. (Ace is high). There is no trump suit.

Players must not lead with a heart until a heart or the Q♠ has been discarded.

At the end of each trick, players collect the cards, and display their hearts (or the Q♠) face up in front of them.

When all players have run out of cards, the scores are counted and the next round begins.

Scoring

Each heart held counts as one point, and the Q♠ counts as 13. The total points assignable for each hand should total 26. Rounds continue until a player reaches an agreed score (often 100 points). Once this agreed score is met, the player with the lowest amount of points wins.

However, if a player takes all 13 hearts, and the Q♠, they are said to have **shot the moon**. Instead of losing 26 points, the player scores 0, and all opponents score an additional 26 points.