

Guan Dan 撸蛋

Origin: Huai'an, Jiangsu Province, China, 1960s.

Deck: double deck of 52 cards + a red and a black joker
= 108 cards in four suits, including 4 jokers.

Hands: 27 cards each. Played by 4 players in partnership.

Levels and Scoring: Instead of points, teams move up “levels,” starting from 2 and going up to 14 (Ace) to win.

The player who goes out first wins the round for the team, and if their partner goes out

- 4th - the team goes up **one** level.
- 3rd - the team goes up **two** levels.
- 2nd - the team goes up **three** levels.

Levels not only reflect points for scoring, but also affect the rank order of certain combos and also determines the rank of the wild card. (See below.)

The first round is played with both teams starting at level 2.

Leading the round: First hand starts randomly; in subsequent rounds the player who donated the highest tribute card in the previous hand leads first (And if there is no tribute, the player who goes out first leads the next round.)

Card play: Card play rotates counterclockwise. Each player must beat the last combo or pass. After three consecutive passes the winner leads the next combo. You can re-enter after passing. The game continues until both partners of either team both shed their hands. If a player sheds out with a winning combo (i.e. remaining players pass), their *partner* leads the next combo (“catch the wind”); otherwise play continues in order. Note who went out 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th.

Combos

Ordinary Combinations

Single

One card played by itself

Pair

Two of same rank

Trio

Three of same rank

Full House

Trio plus pair

Straight

Five consecutive of any suit.

Tube

Three pairs in natural order.

Plate

Two triples in natural order.

Bombs

Quad	8 of a kind
Quint	9 of a kind
Straight Flush	10 of a kind
6 of a kind	Four Jokers – no wilds
7 of a kind	

To beat an ordinary combo, you have to play higher rank of the same combo, or you can play a bomb. A bomb can be beaten by a higher bomb of the same type, or by any bomb of a stronger type.

Rank: Combos based on straights use natural ordering. Combos based on sets situate cards of the level value as third highest rank, between the Black Joker and the Ace. So, cards rank high to low:

<i>Based on sets</i>	<i>Based on sequence</i>
Single, Pair, Trio, Full House, most Bombs	Straight, Tube, Plate, Straight Flush
♦Joker, ♣Joker, <u>Level</u> , A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2	A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. (A)...

Full houses are determined solely by the rank of the trio.

Aces can be high or low in sequences, but can't round the bend.

Jokers can only be used in Singles and Pairs, and in the Joker bomb. But a red and black joker are not considered a pair. And **jokers may never be mixed with wilds**.

The two Level cards of ♥ hearts are **Wilds**, and can be used in any combination and bomb, except those with jokers.

Example:

Team B-C wins and ends at level 7. The next round is therefore played at level 7– which means the two ♥7s are wild and 7s are the “level” rank. So it might go....

A	B	C	D
♣K ♦K	♠7♦7	★ ★	♦8♠8♥8♣8
♣7♣7♦7♣7	♣Q♦Q♠Q♦Q♥7	pass	pass
pass			

Tribute: Exchange of cards, face up, at the beginning of the next hand. After the next hand is dealt, players do a quick “red joker test” to see if the tribute is canceled. (See chart.) Otherwise,

the player coming in last gives up their strongest single card (other than a wild) to the player who went out first. They can be on the same or different teams! And if winners went out 1st & 2nd, first-out gets the best card of *either* opponent, with her partner receiving the other losing opponent's best card. If both tribute cards are equal, winners decide who gets what.

Went Out	Levels jump	Tribute	Tribute cancelled if
1st & 4th	1	4 th gives best card to 1 st	4 th has both red jokers
1st & 3rd	2		
1st & 2nd	3	3 rd and 4 th give their best card to 1 st ; with lesser card going to 2 nd .	the losers hold both red jokers

After taking the tribute, the winner(s) give any other card(s) from their hand(s) face up in return to bring everyone back to 27 cards.

Leading the Next Round: The player who gave up the highest tribute card leads the next round, with the level card for that hand determined by the level of the team who won. (For instance, a team goes out first and after scoring is at level 6. The next hand is played with 6s being the level card.) If both losing players donate the same rank card, they determine which of them will lead. If there's no tribute at all, the player who went out 1st starts.

Winning the Game

The first team (a) getting to level Ace and then (b) going out 1st and 2nd or 3rd wins. Coming in 1st and 4th doesn't win the match—but the level stays the same and the next round continues normally. Being unsuccessful three times at level Ace moves the winning team down a level, however, and passes the lead to the opponents.

House Rules:

- If you feel it's still too punishing on losers, require 1-2 at Ace to win the match (not 1-2 or 1-3).
- If your team wins at the Ace level in 1st & 4th, your opponents go up a level also.
- After a rare bomb 9 or 10, you may hand over the next play directly to your opponent.
- Teams start at level 4 rather than at level 2 to speed up matches.

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Please let me know any errors. Thanks to Martin (Shobu) for correcting errors and other feedback. Thanks to



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