


About

Schafkopf is the most popular card game in Bavaria. It is a four player point trick game with bidding. The distinguishing feature of Schafkopf is the rules and procedures around the calling of an ace in the basic 'deuce game' contract through which a silent partner is selected and whose secret identity is only revealed through the play of the cards.

Players & Cards

4 players, playing in partnerships.
Partners sitting opposite.

32 cards (7 – A) in four suits:

Acorns	Leaves	Hearts	Bells
			

Deal & 1st Lead

Deal out the whole deck in packets of 4 cards.

Each player has 8 cards at the end of the deal.

Regardless of who wins the bidding, forehand (left of the dealer) always leads to the first trick.

Ranking of suits for Obbers and Unters:


























Rules of play:

Follow suit, otherwise play any card.

If a trump is led, must play a trump if holding one.

Ranking and number of trumps for tricks in contracts:

Suit rank, card rank and card points

Deuce (14)	                      
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Contract rank, aim and explanation:

Highest ↑ ↓ Lowest	Sie	Immediate win (received 4 obers and 4 unters in the deal)		Card ranking and points as shown on previous page
	Solo tout	On own	Take all tricks	
	Wenz tout	On own	Take all tricks	
	Suit wenz tout	On own	Take all tricks	
	Solo	On own	Take 61 card points	
	Wenz	On own	Take 61 card points	
	Suit wenz	On own	Take 61 card points	
	Deuce game	With partner	Take 61 card points	

Contracts

Calling an ace – only in the ‘deuce game’

If the declarer is unable to name a suit that fulfils the conditions below, they cannot play a ‘deuce game’ and must name a higher contract.

- Establishing the silent partner:
 - The declarer calls a suit (from acorns, leaves, or bells.... **not** hearts) in which they **do not** hold the ace but **do hold at least one card** (... so the 7, 8, 9, 10, or K). The player holding the called deuce (called ace) is the partner of the declarer, though they must not identify themselves.
- For the holder of the called deuce (called ace):

- You **must** play it if its suit is **led** to a trick by anyone else.
- If **you** wish to lead the called suit you must play the deuce (ace) - not a different card of the suit.

*The called ace cannot be otherwise ‘thrown in’ to tricks in other situations. If the called deuce (ace) is not either demanded by another player (rule 1) or **led** by its holder (rule 2) it must be kept until the last trick.*

Exception... If the holder of the called ace also has 3 other cards of that suit, and the suit has not yet been led, they are allowed to ‘run away’. This means they are allowed to break rule 2. and lead a different card of the suit if they wish (provided they still have all four cards in their hand at the time). After ‘running away’ the called ace becomes free from any restrictions and may now be led or otherwise ‘thrown in’ to tricks as desired.

Scoring

Scoring schedule for different contracts:

Contract	Result	Winer(s)	Loser(s)
Deuce game	Normal win	+ 1 each	- 1 each
	schneider	+ 2 each	- 2 each
	schwarz	+ 3 each	- 3 each
Suit wenz	normal win	+ 6	- 2 each
Wenz	schneider	+ 9	- 3 each
Solo	schwarz	+ 12	- 4 each
Any Tout	All tricks taken	+ 18	- 6 each
Sie	Immediate win	+24	-8 each

Ramsch	Most card points loses	+1	-3
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If the declarer loses the contract, they lose the ‘winner(s) points’ and pays each defender the amount of the ‘loser’s points’

Schneider – Taking 90 or more card points.

Schwarz – Taking all tricks.

Tout – Taking all tricks having announced that you will do so (one of the ‘tout’ bids such as ‘wenz tout’ or ‘bells solo tout’)

Note – After each hand is played the scores of all the players will always sum to zero.

Variations

There are a huge number of variations in the number of cards in the deck, the scoring method and in the range of further additional options for contracts that can be bid. The rules above are those from the Schafkopfschule (Schafkopf School) in Germany, except that:

- The official rules do not allow for ramsch to be played.
- The official rules do include the option for one of the defenders to double the value of the game.

You can find out more about the many variations for the game of *Schafkopf* by going on-line