

Cee-lo: Studies in Fluctuations and Variance for Data Scientists or Gamblers

Cee-lo is a gambling game played with three six-sided dice. There is not one standard set of rules, but there are some constants that hold true to all sets of rules. The name comes from the Chinese Sì-Wǔ-Liù (四五六), meaning "four-five-six". In America it is also called "See-Low," "Four-Five-Six," "The Three Dice Game," "Chinchirorin," and by several alternative spellings, as well as simply "Dice." In China it is also called "Sānliù Bàozi" (三六豹子), or "three-six dice". This game was first brought to the United States by Chinese immigrants, who played it with their colleagues.[when?] Many today still play the game, mostly in very rural areas.

Many hip hop artists have referenced the dice game "Cee-Lo" in rap songs since the 1990s. The references usually come from east coast rappers, including Kool G Rap, Nas and Notorious B.I.G. as well as many other hip hop artists, and Cee-lo has seen a resurgence in popularity in American settings.

Without a bank (winner take all)

In this version of the game, each round involves two or more players of equal status. A bet amount is agreed upon and each player puts that amount in the pile or pot. Each player then has to roll all three dice at once and must continue until a recognized combination is rolled. Whichever player rolls the best combination wins the entire pot, and a new round begins. In cases where two or more players tie for the best combination, they must have a shoot out to determine a single winner.

The combinations are similar to those described above, and can be ranked from best to worst as:

4-5-6: The highest possible roll. If you roll 4-5-6, you automatically win.

Trips: Rolling three of the same number is known as rolling "trips". Higher trips beat lower trips, so 4-4-4 is better than 3-3-3.

Point: Rolling a pair, and another number, establishes the singleton as a "point". A higher point beats a lower point, so 2-2-6 is better than 5-5-2.

1-2-3: The lowest possible roll. If you roll 1-2-3, you automatically lose.

Any other roll is a meaningless combination & must be rerolled until one of the above combinations occurs.

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