



Voodoo Prince

The tricky voodoo game by Reiner Knizia
for 2 to 5 players ages 8 and up.

Contents

86 cards:

- 80 voodoo cards (numbered 0–15, each in 5 different colors)
- 5 trump indicator cards
- 1 overview card

Aim of the game

“Voodoo Prince” is a card game in which players try to carefully plan out the right time when to win their tricks. Each player is out of the round after winning a certain number of tricks. However, points are awarded for all the tricks won only by the other players at the time of finishing a round. So it makes sense to try to finish the round as late as possible and to initially help the others win their tricks first.

But whatever you do, don't be the last to finish the round, because the last player to finish a round gets points only for the tricks that he has won himself. Ideally, you want to be the second to last to finish a round. If it were only that easy...

The player with the most points after 5 rounds wins the game.

Game setup

For a 2- or 3-player game, use only the cards from 0 to 10. The remaining cards can stay in the box. For a 4-player game, use also the 11 and 12 cards, and for a 5-player game, you need all numbered cards. The overview card shows you exactly how many cards you need depending on how many players there are.

You will need a sheet of paper and something to write with to record the points throughout the game, and then you're about ready to play.

Required numbered cards depending on number of players:

Number of players	2	3	4	5
Numbered cards in game	0 - 10	0 - 10	0 - 12	0 - 15
Cards per player	13	13	13	14

The eldest player shuffles the 5 trump indicator cards, face down, draws the top card and lays it down, face up. This card indicates which color is trump in the first round. Then he shuffles all the **voodoo cards** and deals them out to each player, face down, according to the table above. Put aside the remaining cards. These will not be needed until the next round. Players pick up the cards that were dealt to them.

Explanation of terms for a trick-taking game:

TRICK: Each player takes turns playing a card in the middle of the table. Together, the cards played in the middle are referred to as a „trick“.

FOLLOWING SUIT: Players must play a card of the same color of the card that was first played in the middle. Only if it is not possible to play a card of the same color is it allowed to play a card of a different color.

TRUMP: A trump is a card of the trump color. All cards with the trump color outrank cards of other colors (regardless of their number). If only one trump card was played in the middle, the trick is taken by the player who played the trump card. If more than one trump card was played, the highest trump card „trumps“, or outranks, the lower ranked trump cards.

TRUMPING: If a player cannot follow suit (because he doesn't have the color that was led) and plays a trump card instead, he trumps the others. He can also choose to play any other color that is not trump and throw away his card.

Which card takes the trick?

Always the player who played the highest card takes the trick. Normally, that is the card with the highest number of the color played. Cards of other colors may be played only if the player does not have a card with the color that was played to begin the trick. In this case, the number is irrelevant.

EXCEPTION: If (at least) one trump card has been played, it trumps all other cards and the player who played the highest ranking trump card takes the trick.

How to play

The game consists of 5 rounds. The dealer begins the first round by playing a card from his hand. In a clockwise direction, the following players **have to follow suit**. That means they have to play a card of the same color as the card that was played first. If anyone cannot follow suit, he can either play a different color (and loses the trick) or the trump color (taking the trick).

Once all players have played their cards in the middle, everyone compares the cards played to see who takes the trick. The player who took the trick, lays it down in front of him on the table, face down, and separately from all the tricks already won. This will make it easier to see how many tricks a player has won at any given time. After taking the trick, he then starts the next trick by playing the first card.

ONCE AGAIN MORE CONCISELY:

If trump was played, the highest ranking trump card takes the trick.

If no trump was played, the highest ranking card of the suit played takes the trick.

EXAMPLE: In a 4-player game, blue is trump. Marie goes first by playing a red 4. Lukas plays a red 3. Since Leon doesn't have red, he plays a green 12. Nina doesn't have red either, and plays a blue 2. Since Nina played a card with the trump color, her blue 2 is the highest ranking card. She takes the trick and lays it down in front of her, face down. She then plays a card from her hand to start the next trick.

The number of tricks required to finish a round depends on how many players there are:

Number of players	2	3	4	5
Tricks per player	7	4	3	3

Once a **player** has taken the required number of tricks, the round is over **for him**. The number of tricks from **all the other players** are added up and recorded as points for this player. He then lays aside the remaining cards from his hand, face down, and does not participate in the rest of the round until the others are finished. His tricks are left where they are, as these are still needed in the scoring for the other players. Now the player to his left starts the next trick by playing the first card.

EXAMPLE: In a 4-player game, Marie has just taken her third trick. Her round is now finished. Lukas already has two tricks, Leon has one, and Nina also has one trick at this point. Marie lays aside the remaining cards from her hand and records her points: $2 + 1 + 1 = 4$. Then, Lukas, the player to Marie's left, plays the first card of the next trick.

A round is over once there is only one player left in the round. The last player of a round receives only the number of points corresponding to how many tricks **he himself** has won in the round. He is now the start player of the next round and determines the new trump color for this round.

It is therefore good to score your points as late as possible.
However, if you wait too long, you will be punished by the game ...

Special cards

Three cards have a special function:

Voodoo doll „0“:

If the 0 **and** the highest card (10, 12 or 15 depending on the number of players) **of the same color** have been played in the same trick, the 0 **outranks the highest card of the same color**. That means for a 2- or 3-player game, the 0 outranks the **10**, and in a 4-player game the 0 beats the **12**, and in a 5-player game, the 0 even beats the **15**. Otherwise the 0 is the weakest card of the same color. As long as the 0 is not the trump color and another card of the trump color is also in the trick, the trump card takes the trick.



EXAMPLE: In a 4-player game the 12 is the highest card. If the blue 0 and the blue 12 are both in the trick, the 0 outranks the 12. However, if red is trump and there is a red card in the trick, the red card takes the trick. When the red 0 and the red 12 come together, the red 0 wins the trick.

Trick splitting cards „5“ and „7“:

If a player wins the trick with a 5 or a 7, he has to **split his trick into two separate tricks**. It's not enough for a trick-splitting card to be in the trick to split it into two, the trick must be won by one of these two trick-splitting cards. Only in this case is the trick split into two. If the trick has to be split into two, the player who took the trick with this special card gets two instead of one trick. It is therefore possible that a player finishes his round with one more trick than the maximum required number of tricks.



EXAMPLE: In a 4-player game, blue is trump. Marie plays a yellow 4. Lukas is the next player. He plays the yellow 2, and Leon plays a yellow 8. Nina doesn't have any yellow cards and plays the blue 5. Since blue is trump, Nina takes the trick. Nina previously already had two tricks. By taking the last trick with her blue 5 she now has 4 tricks, even though the required number of tricks for a 4-player game is actually 3. Nina's round is now over. She receives the points corresponding to the number of tricks that the other players have won up until this point. Now Marie, the next player in a clockwise direction, plays the first card of the next trick.

Further rounds

The player who was the last one to finish the previous round is the new **start player** of the next round. He shuffles all the cards face down and deals out the same number of cards to the other players as in the previous round. After looking at his cards, **he gets to decide which color is the trump color** for this round. To indicate this, he lays down the corresponding trump indicator card, face up, so that everyone can see it. He then begins the round by playing the first card.

End of game

The player with the most points **after 5 rounds** wins the game.
There can be more than one winner.

Rules for a 2-player game

“Voodoo Prince” can also be played as a 2-player game. In a 2-player game, you need only the cards from 0 to 10, and each player receives **13 cards per hand**. The round is over once a player has **7 tricks**. The player with the 7 tricks receives as many points as his opponent has tricks. The opponent receives points according to how many tricks he would need to reach 7 tricks.

EXAMPLE: Carsten ends the game with 7 tricks. Ulrich took only 2 tricks. So Carsten receives 2 points and Ulrich gets 5. Had Ulrich 6 tricks, he would have received only 1 point and Carsten would have received 6.



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Author: Reiner Knizia
Illustrations: Stephanie Böhm
Layout: Leon Schiffer
Editor: Thorsten Gimmeler

Schmidt Spiele GmbH
Lahnstr. 21
D-12055 Berlin
www.schmidtspiele.de
www.schmidtspiele-shop.de

