

# **Assignment 1 - Analysis of a game**

## **Game Design Document of Sueca (Card Game)**

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# 1. Game Overview

Name: Sueca

Type: Trick-taking card game

Players: 4 (2 teams of 2)

Duration: 30-45+ minutes

Age Range: 10+

Complexity: Medium

Materials Needed: Standard card deck with some cards removed (8, 9, 10, jokers), in total should be 40 cards



## 2. Components

The compositions of a game of Sueca, its mainly, the standard deck, with the necessary cards removed (8,9,10 and jokers), usually there is a score sheet were one of the players will be tracking the game points of each team

The set up of the table, is usually on a place where the 2 teams sit across from their teammate, and the game is played clockwise



### 3. Setup of the game

Remove the mentioned cards, 8s, 9s, 10s and jokers, there are several ways to shuffle, cut the card and dealing with the cards, it normally depends on preferences, normally one of the players shuffles the cards, a different one cuts the deck and the third one deals the cards, this is made to maintain a sort of clarity with all the players in the game

The person who deals the card can do it in several ways, first of all, they should deal a card to themselves, either from the top or the bottom, that first dealt card will be the one to determinate the trump suit, after getting that card, the dealer has to deal the other players either in rounds of 3 card to each one, or directly 10 to each one

This ensures that every round, the dealer, the shuffle and the cut are all different, preventing the use of shuffle tricks

## 4. Gameplay Rules

### 4.1 Card Values

Card Points

Ace 11

Seven 10

King 4

Jack 3

Queen 2

Others 0

Total points per round: 120

### 4.2 Playing a Match

The game is started by the person on the right of the dealer, having to play a card of their choice, the next players are obligated to follow the suit if possible

If the player does not have the suit, they must either lose their possibility to get the round by using a different suit or using the trump suit to win the hand, it all depends on the game plan

The highest card that was set on the table is the one who wins, unless a trump card is played, and if several trump cards are played, it follows the first rule of the highest score winning

### 4.3 Winning a Round

Both teams need to collect all the winning hands, and at the end of a round, when all the cards have been played, they will count the points that they have on their team

The team that collects 61 or more points win a point, if the team that scores, has 91 or more, their team receive 2 points, if both teams have 60, it's a draw either no points to neither of the teams, or a point to each other

## 4.4 Winning the Game

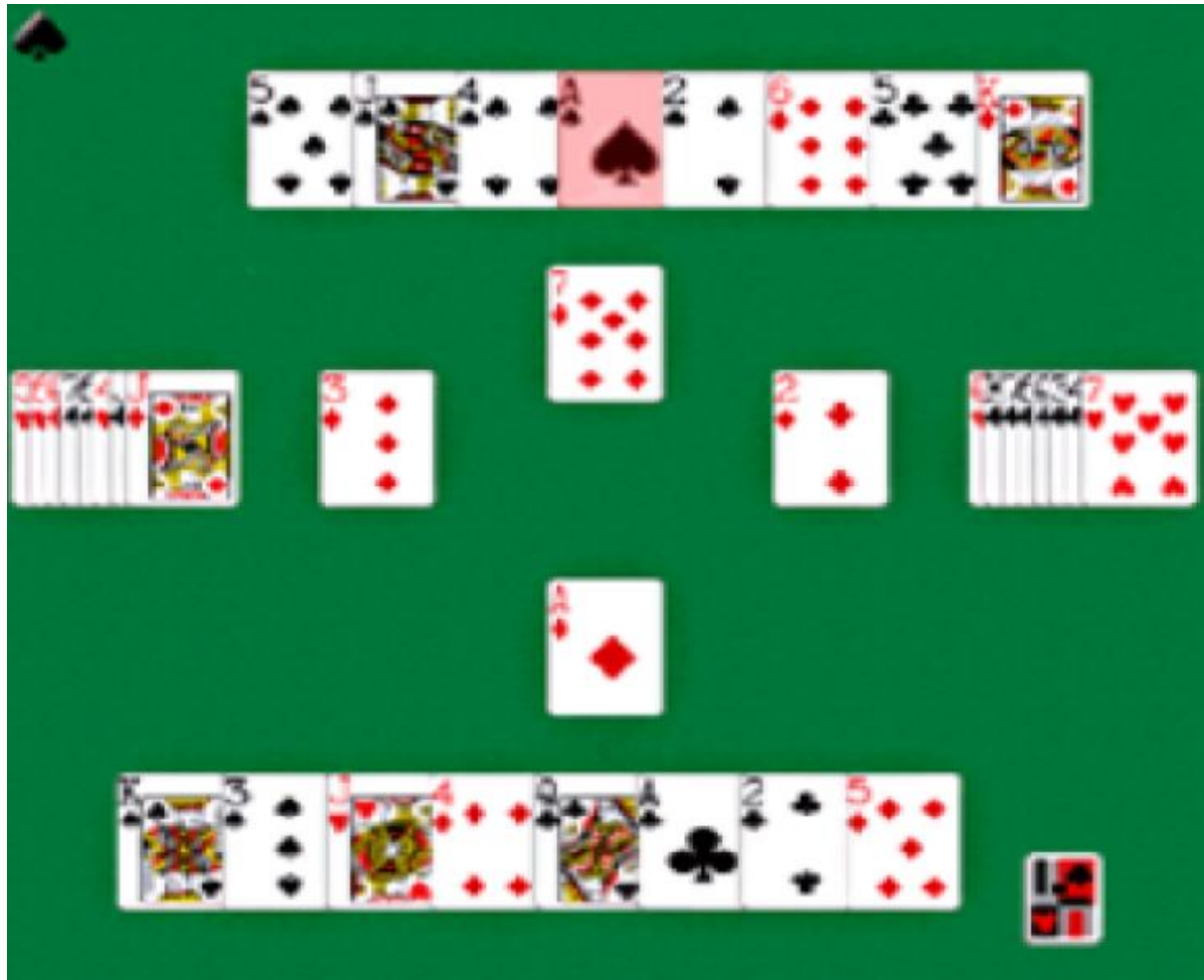
Beforehand, the winning goal should be set by all the players, normally a best of 5 or more, if they want longer matches, they can add more.

The team that reaches the final score is the winner

## 5. Example of how a game goes by

In this example, the player that used the highest card of the suit, wins the round, in this case: the team of the winner will win both the 7 and the Ace

The player that wins the round, is the one that starts the next round





## 6. Team play, Strategy & Mind games

### 6.1 Team Synergy is key

Fundamentally it's a 2v2 team-based strategy game, where the team that success is heavy dependant on how well the teammates understand each other's playstyles, habits, decision making patterns, verbal and visual cues. Long time partners often develop certain unspoken communications and synergies

### 6.2 Early Game Strategy

The usual strategy of the game for most players, is to aim to secure and much high scoring card as possible in the first hands. If a team has a bigger amount of high scoring cards, they might choose to play in a more aggressive playstyle, to dominate the early rounds and build momentum, causing the enemy team to do certain mistakes on this fast-paced moments

### 6.3 Adapting to the Hand

Luck and randomness play a significant role in Sueca, if a team lacks strong or trump cards, they will need to shift to a more defensive or deceptive strategy, conserving key cards to when the opportunity arrives

### 6.4 Mind Games & Psychological Play

Sueca is more than a card game, it also involves heavily on psychological tactics. Player often engages in strategies such as bluffing, baiting, misleading opponents through subtle gestures, different tones of voices, changing the pace of a hand or even strategic silence. These mind games add a huge layer of depth and excitement to each round and even to each hand, and is where more experience players thrive above new ones

### 6.5 Non-Verbal Communication

While communication is not prohibited, it is not allowed to talk about the card, so often, teams develop pre-agreed signals, gestures and other things to communicate without breaking the rules of the match. This a big part of why the game is so charming and challenging, since the players must be subtle to not get caught by the enemy team

## 6.6 Pre-Match Planning

Experienced teams and players will most likely discuss about certain strategies before playing, agreeing on how to handle certain scenarios or how to interpret their own cues. This preparation will add a significant edge during the gameplay

## 7. Target Audience

Sueca is a very popular card game for people within the ages between 35-50, as it was widely popular around the 80s and 90s across a variety of social groups

Is a team-based game played between 2 pairs (2vs2), making it even more popular between friend groups

Sueca is also a very casual game, often played on a social setting such as bars, gatherings or family setting. It has a strong social component with players frequently switching partners or changing the teams all together after a few rounds, enhancing the social bonding of this activity and maintaining a competitive but friendly environment

## 8. Motivation Profile

Based on social studies, we can analyse and learn about the motivations behind someone playing Sueca, using several psychological frameworks, such as:

### 8. 1. 16 Basics Desires of Human Nature

When we look at the 16 Basics Desires of Human Nature, we can find that sueca has a big impact on both Social Contact and Status, as a social game that is played in groups, it fulfils the basic needs for interaction and connection, if the team wins multiple rounds, it can elevate the players status on their group, showcasing their knowledge and strong strategy and their teamwork skills

Additionally, the game can tap into desires such as Honor, Tranquillity, and even Vengeance. For example, players may feel a sense of pride in fair play (honor), enjoy the relaxed yet competitive atmosphere (tranquillity), or seek to redeem themselves after a loss (vengeance).

### 8. 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

From Maslow's perspective, Sueca safeties primarily to the Belongingness and Love needs, it fulfils a social interaction, specially between friends and family, a common example of this is on family or group gatherings, where the adults usually play after dinner or while talking about news. This Sueca sessions are usually filled with a friendly competition, some light-hearted teasing and even if talked prior, small bets, which will enhance the competitive part, the connection of the players, enjoyment and overall, it will make so that the people focuses on the game and on trying to win

### 8. 3. Gamer Motivation Model

Following the gamer motivation model, we can put it on certain parameters of it, like in Action, Social, Mastery and Achievement

Action, On the Sueca game, there is a component of "Chaos" whenever a round is played, the players can use certain cards early on, or save a big card of a trump suit to cut a round and clutch the game, this also helps with the excitement, since Sueca is a very fast paced card game, there is not much thinking between rounds, so the players have to think fast and react to certain plays

Social, as a social card game, Sueca has a big impact on the competition and community, it's the nature of the card game, since it's a 2 v 2 game, it has impact on both parameters, the players will try to win points as fast as possible, to win the round,

use certain social clues to give information to their teammate or even, mislead the enemy team into thinking that your team has no good cards

Mastery, as explained before, this game focuses on the Strategy of how the teams are set, and how this teams will play, the players can and will talk before hand, to be able to communicate with each other between rounds without cheating all together

Achievement, whenever a team has a big win streak or they are known to be very good at Sueca, they will have a big sense of power on their friend group, making so the other friends, will have a big sense of achievement if they manage to win a round against those good players

## 9. Betting

### 9.1. Informal betting

The majority of social circles where Sueca is played, specially Portuguese ones, betting in Sueca is normal and it is not about high stakes or even, gambling for profits, rather it is a symbolic thing about fun, pride and the different social dynamics, bets are in the majority just symbolic of humorous on the social department, such as

- Buying the next round of drinks
- Buying some food or snacks
- Doing a dare or truth
- Perform a funny or an embarrassing task, like singing, dancing, etc
- Small amounts of money, like 20 cents per round

and many more

This bets, are light-hearted, so that the losing players will not feel like they lost that much, enhancing the overall social experience, making it more engaging and memorable

### 9.2 Social Dynamics and rivalries

Betting while playing Sueca help to improve the strength of friendship and shape the group's identity in different ways, for example:

**Bragging Rights**, winning a bet, even if it is a small one, gives players a sense of superiority and status within the group, it also improves in the trust in one-self of the winning person. Helps with motivation and achievement

**Rivalries**, Long-standing rivalries can form between different pairs or individuals, adding a big sense of drama and excitement to each round of that match, it also helps to settle certain differences, if players that hate each other, play together and win, they will settle their conformation to win and play together

**Team Loyalty**, Players often prefer to play with or against certain people, betting reinforce these alliances or even help to test new ones

### 9.3. Ethical and Legal Considerations

Casual betting is very common in friendly settings, but it is important to set boundaries between social betting and gambling

Social betting typically takes small stakes without a real profit motive between friends and social groups, unlike gambling which involves a bigger sum of bets, especially with strangers or organized setting, leading to a subject of legal restrictions and regulations

In Portugal, private small betting is tolerated among friend groups, but public betting or gambling without a regulated license, can lead to fees or even jail time depending on the amount. Always ensure that the betting remains responsible and consensual

### 9.4. Enhancing the experience with betting

To make betting in Sueca be more fun, structured and engaging, the players can set several things:

- Set house rules
- Use scoreboards to track wins and losses
- Create mini tournaments with several teams with small prizes
- Use small amount of money or non-monetary rewards

In summary, small betting is fun and engaging if done correctly, but if left unchecked it can lead to several issues, specially inside the friend group. Always bet and play carefully and with the utmost respect

## 10. Variants

**Sueca Italiana:** This version introduces different scoring systems and card values, often influenced by Italian card games like Briscola. It's commonly played in Portugal, especially among older generations who enjoy its strategic depth and nostalgic value.

**Sueca Brasileira:** A lively adaptation popular in Brazil, this variant includes regional rule changes and is often played in festive or casual settings. It may involve humorous twists or even light betting, reflecting Brazil's vibrant social culture.

**Solo Sueca:** A 1v1 version of the traditional 2v2 format, Solo Sueca adjusts the rules to maintain balance and competitiveness. While less common, it's occasionally played in Portugal or online, especially when only two players are available but still want to enjoy the game.



## 11. Design Notes

Theme: Traditional Portuguese culture

Packaging: Include rulebook, score pad, and themed card design

Accessibility: Use large print cards for visibility