

# Reform Tarock

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## Sources

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- *Stockholms Wirasällskaps*, a compendium of rules for card games and abstract strategy board games
  - <http://hem.bredband.net/wira/GameCollection.pdf>
  - Available only on <https://web.archive.org/>
- *Königrufen*, Matthew Macfadyen and Kirsty Healey, revised by John McLeod
  - <https://www.pagat.com/tarot/koenig.html>
- *Reform Tarock*, Wolfgang Mayr and Robert Sedlacek
  - <http://www.tarockspiele.com/reformtarock.html>
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## Introduction

During the last few weeks of WWII, some Austrians at an air raid shelter under Vienna City Hall created the rules to Reform-Tarock, which were intended to be satirically convoluted and complex. The first part of the rules are the "laws" of the game, while the second part explains game play and all the weird and wonderful bids and contracts.

My Austrian German is non-existent, so I couldn't translate the rules from Wiener Zeitung very well. However, Google Translate and ChatGPT seem to handle Swedish better than German, so I was able to get through *Stockholms Wirasällskaps*. I then inserted all the unusual rules from Reform Tarock into the rules for *Königrufen* found on the Pagat website. Unfortunately, the Swedish translation seems to have added additional clarifications not found in the original.

## Cards

Five suits; 8 each of Clubs, Spades, Hearts and Diamonds; and 22 tarocks (trumps), of which the highest, the Sküs, looks rather like a Joker. The second highest tarock (XXI) is called the Mond and the lowest tarock (I) is called the Pagat. The black suits rank from highest to lowest: King, Queen, Knight, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7. The red suits rank from highest to lowest: King, Queen, Knight, Jack, 1, 2, 3, 4.

Cards are worth points as follows:

Kings	4-1/3 each
Honours – Sküs, XXI (Mond), and I (Pagat)	4-1/3 each
Queens	3-1/3 each
Knights	2-1/3 each
Jacks	1-1/3 each
All other cards	1/3 each

The total value of the pack comes to 70 card points. In a positive contract, the declarer's side wins if they make at least  $35\frac{2}{3}$  of the 70 points.

Actually, Reform Tarock counts points by subtraction; see [Counting card points in Tarot games](#). With this method, honors and Kings are worth 5 points, Queens 4, Knights 3, Jacks 2, and all other cards 1. For each set of three cards, you add up their values and subtract 2. It helps if you rearrange the cards such that each group contains one valuable card and two empty cards (cards that are worth only 1 point). If, at the end of counting, you have one or two cards left over, you subtract  $\frac{2}{3}$  from the value of those leftover cards. Each  $\frac{1}{3}$  point is a "card". So, in a positive contract, the declarer's side wins if they win at least 35 card points and 2 cards (or  $\frac{2}{3}$  points). The use of the term "cards" makes more sense if, when counting cards, you rearrange them such that the one or two left over are empty cards.

This is different from how Königrufen scores leftover cards: If you have two cards left over, you subtract one point from the sum of the values. If you have one card left over, you subtract one point from the value. This yields the same result as using fractional card values and rounding to the nearest whole number.

## *The Contracts, a Summary*

These are listed in ascending order, with their scores. Further details of the contracts are given later.

The first six are only available to Forehand (the player to dealer's right), in the case that "Mein Spiel" is passed out.

The rest of the contracts are available to all players.

The value in the columns **Points won** and **Points lost** are in game points. These are not to be confused with the card points in your tricks which you count to find out whether you have made your (positive) contract.

Note: Some contracts are numbered; these numbers correspond to those in the original German rules. Contracts highlighted in pink are unique to Reform Tarock.

Game	Type	Points	Lead	Rufen?	Talon	Requirements
1. Rufer	Mein spiel, Positive	4	F	yes	3	35-2/3
Wald und Wiese	Mein spiel, other	4	F	no	–	Last one out: a trick ends when when it's trumped or someone discards when a tarock was led
Klostergeheimnis	Mein spiel, ?	Win: $\frac{1}{2} \times$ the value of the game chosen Lose: $1\frac{1}{2} \times$ the value of the game chosen	F	?	?	Pick a contract that's Solorufer or higher, but don't tell anyone what it is.
2. Trischaker	Mein spiel, Negative	4 Win 35-2/3+: 6 Lose as Forehand: pay double	F	no	–	Not to win the most points
Böhmischer Trischaker	Mein spiel, negative	Win: 12 minus number of tricks you won Lose: 12 minus number of tricks each opponent won	F	no	–	Not to win the most tricks. The player after Forehand says whether players must head the trick and which suit is trump. Cards rank from highest to lowest: Trump suit, Kings through Jacks, tarocks, then the rest of the number cards.
Sechserdreier	Mein spiel, positive	Win: 6 Lose: 20	F	no	6	35-2/3
3. Solorufer	Positive	8	F	yes	–	35-2/3
8. Eisenbahner and Fahrt ins Blau (variant)	Other	9 Fahrt ins Blau: $9 \times 3 = 27$	F	no	–	35-2/3 Have only cards of a declared suit in your hand. Fahrt ins Blau: Arrange the cards in your hand in the order that you will play them
4. Bettel	Negative	10	D	no	Talon not used	Zero tricks
5. Piccolo	Negative	10	D	no	–	One trick
6. Amerikaner or Prämieamerikaner (worth 20?)	Other	10	D	no	–/3	Exact number of tricks. Players aren't forced to play a tarock. Prämieamerikaner: Only Declarer is forced to play a tarock.
7. Spezi or Wechselspezi	Other	10	D	no	Only look at talon	Win first and last trick. Declare the suit of the last trick. Wechselspezi: Players must play the lowest card of the suit led.
9. Hausierer	Other	11	F	no	$\leq 6$	Run out of cards. Forehand plays any number of cards of the same trick, but loses if they can't follow suit.
10. Pagatrufer	Positive	12 (4 + 8)	F	yes	3	35-2/3
10. Uhurufer	Positive	20 (4 + 16)	F	yes	3	35-2/3
10. Kakadurufer	Positive	28 (4 + 24)	F	yes	3	35-2/3

Game	Type	Points	Lead	Rufen?	Talon	Requirements
11. Artist	Other	Win: 8 or 16 Lose: 8	F	no	3	Have three or four face cards of the same rank left in your hand
Dreier	Positive	10	F	no	3	35-2/3
Bettel ouverte	Negative	20	D	no	–	Zero tricks
Piccolo ouverte	Negative	20	D	no	–	One trick
Farbensolo	Positive	20	D	no	–	35-2/3
Amerikaner or Prämieamerikaner ouverte	Other	20	D	no	–/3	Exact number of tricks
Spezi or Wechselspezi ouverte	Other	20	D	no	Only look at talon	First and last trick. You must declare the (non-trump) suit of the last trick.
12. Oberdreier	Positive	15	F	no	3	35-2/3
Eisenbahner ouverte	Other	18	F	no	–	35-2/3
13. Pensionist	Other	20	D	no	6	Don't head the trick.
14. Solopagatrufer	Positive	24 (8 + 16)	F	yes	–	35-2/3
14. Solouhurufer	Positive	40 (8 + 32)	F	yes	–	35-2/3
14. Solokakadurufer	Positive	56 (8 + 48)	F	yes	–	35-2/3
15. Solodreier	Positive	20	F	no	–	35-2/3
16. Apotheker	Other	24	F	no	–	Opponents win an "average" number of points
18. Diskreter Dreier	Positive	30	D or F	no	3	35-2/3
17. Volatrufer	Positive	32	F	no	3	All tricks
Pensionist ouverte	Other	40	D	no	6	Don't head the trick. You may play a card once without losing.
19. Sautanz	Other	45	D	no	–	Play all your cards (face down), following suit (while accusing other players of lying)
20. Juwel	Positive	$((\text{card points} \times 3)^2)/100$	F	no	3	35-2/3

## *Bonuses*

These are additional ways of winning game points in positive contracts.

Bonus	Silent	Declared	Description
Trull	2	–	Win all three honours.
Fyra kungar	2	–	Win all kings.
Königfang	2	–	The opponents capture the king which the declarer called to determine the partnerships.
Mondfang	2	–	Capturing an opponents' XXI with the Sküs.
Pagatfang	1	–	Win opponent's Pagat.
Rufkönig lassen	1	–	If the declarer finds the called king in the talon but chooses to play alone and picks the part of the talon not containing the king.
Single ultimo	10	–	Win the last trick with a non-face card in a side suit.
Naturstich	10	–	Win a trick that contains no Tarocks and no face cards.
König ultimo	2	4	Win the last trick with the king called by the declarer.
Pagat ultimo	4	8	Win the last trick with the Pagat.
Uhu ultimo	8	16	Win the second-last trick with the II.
Kakadu ultimo	12	24	Win the last trick with the III.
Marabu ultimo	16	32	Win the last trick with the IIII (part of Königrufen, not Reform Tarock)
Mortgage	–	±20%	Each additional card exchanged with talon: game value drops by 20%. Each card not exchanged with the talon: game value increases by 20%.
Sürtaxe	1½x	3x	Declarer's side: Win at least 45-2/3 points. Opponent's side, 44-2/3 points. In the negative games Bettel, piccolo, Amerikaner and Prämieamerikaner, opponents win if declarer loses by more than one trick. Called Gramerboy when declared.
Black out	–	5x	Win the game by the first seven tricks. The bonus is announced when the seventh trick is won without the declarer counting his or her points won in tricks. Card points from cards exchanged with the talon are included. The game still continues after the seventh trick.
Schleifen	–	-10%/-50%	Either side may resign and pay a 10% discount of the value of the game to the other side. If the declarer resigns a Rufer contract because the called king is in the talon, the discount is 50%
Selbstkontra	–	÷2	You can self-kontra, or kontra your own side. This halves the value of the game or the bonus. You cannot self-kontra a game or bonus your opponents already kontra'd. Your opponents cannot kontra a self-kontra'd game or bonus.
Ankauf	–	-50%	An opponent may purchase a one-against-three contract from the declarer. All players must agree. If there's a disagreement, players hold a vote; the “chair” (the player in the lead) decides ties. If the purchase goes through, the new declarer pays 50% of the value of the contract to all other players.
Protest	–	–	If your partner kontras a bonus or a game, you can protest, which means that you will no longer participate in the doubling of that particular bonus or game.
Volat	4x	8x	Win all tricks.
<b>Kontra</b>	<b>After exchange</b>	<b>Before exchange</b>	Bonuses apply only to positive games.
Kontra x2	x2	x3	
Rekontra x4	x4	x6	
Subkontra x8	x8	x12	
Hirsch x16	x16	x24	

Notice that most bonuses can be announced in advance, and are then worth twice as much. All bonuses score double the amounts given above if the contract is Solorufer, Solodreier, Solopagatrufer, Solouhurufer, Solokakadurufer, Diskreter Dreier, or Juwel.

The tarocks I, II, III and IIII, and the bonuses for winning particular tricks with them are called birds.

Scores for the game and bonuses are independent of each other, so that a player may have conflicting objectives during a hand. It is quite possible to win the game and yet lose money because the bonuses were worth more than the game.

Bonuses except that for Volat are not available in Farbensolo.

Most of these bonuses are worth double if you announce the intention to achieve them during the announcements phase (see summary table of bonuses), but in this case failure to achieve the bonus scores minus. They are all scored independently of each other and of the game.

These bonus scores are doubled in Solo and Solodreier, on top of any doubles for being announced beforehand and for kontras.

Many players do not allow Kakadu and Marabu, as they are thought to introduce a too great random element into the game.

Notes on bonuses involving winning a particular trick with a particular card (Pagat Ultimo, Uhu, Kakadu, Marabu, King Ultimo)

For king ultimo, it is good enough for either partner to win the last trick with the called king in it.

For Pagat, Uhu, Kakadu, and Marabu the card named actually has to win the trick - if not the bonus is lost, even if the trick is won by the partner of the person playing the card. If the bonus is not announced, but you play one of these cards to the relevant trick, you are deemed to be attempting to get the bonus, and you score minus the appropriate bonus if the card fails to win the trick (or if your side fails to in the case of King Ultimo).

An announced bonus of this type can be lost in four ways:

- You play the card to the correct trick, but it fails to win (or in the case of the king, your partner also fails to win)
- The card is forced out prematurely
- (For II, III and IIII) you keep the card until the correct trick but the player on lead leads a suit to which you have to follow, so you don't manage to play it
- Your side does not possess the card at all (stranger things have happened!)

If the bonus is announced, the side making the announcement is obliged to keep the card until the relevant trick and play it then if possible. e.g. having announced Uhu the player must hold onto the II until the penultimate trick (if possible) and must play it to that trick if it is legal, even though it may have become clear that the II will not win the trick.

## *Playing Procedure*

The game is played anticlockwise. The first dealer is selected randomly, and the turn to deal rotates anticlockwise after each hand. There are only four active players in each deal. If there are five players at the table, the dealer deals no cards to herself and takes no part in the hand.

The sequence of events on each deal is as follows:

## Deal

Dealing is done counterclockwise. After shuffling, the dealer lets the player across from them cut the deck up to three times. The dealer deals a talon of two groups of three cards to the center, Then the dealer deals 12 cards to each player in packets of six cards, starting with Forehand. However, if the cutting player knocks on the deck instead of cutting it, then the dealer deals a talon of two groups of three as before, then asks each player, starting with forehand, how they would like to receive their cards. The dealer takes what remains.

## Bidding

The auction then starts. The player to the dealer's right ("forehand") may reserve her bid by saying "Mein Spiel." Each player in turn after that must either bid by naming a contract or pass. Once having passed a player may not re-enter the auction. The auction continues until three players have passed consecutively, and the last player to have bid becomes declarer. If the only bid was "Mein Spiel" the first player now names any contract - this is the only case in which the top six contracts in the list can be played.

During the bidding there is an order of priority, starting with forehand (highest) and continuing anticlockwise round the table to dealer (lowest). When bidding a contract, if you have lower priority than the previous bidder you must bid a higher contract or pass, but if you have higher priority than the previous bidder it is sufficient to bid an equal or higher contract.

Example: (the players in anticlockwise order are A (forehand), B, C and D) A says "mein Spiel"; B bids "Solo", C passes. Now if D wants to bid, the minimum bid is "Bettel", because B has priority over D. If D passes then A is allowed to bid "Solo", which overcalls B's Solo, because A has priority over B.

[However, I believe the bidding is like in Hungarian Tarokk: If you have already bid, but another player has subsequently bid higher, you may hold, which means that you make a bid equal to the highest bid so far; there is no order of priority. A bid can only be held once: if the last positive bid was a hold, you cannot also hold but must bid higher or pass.]

## Ankauf or Buying the Contract

An opponent of the declarer may buy the declarer's contract and take over the role of declarer. All players must agree to this. If not, players vote. If there's a tie, then the "chair" [the player in the lead in the Swedish translation] makes the final decision.

[It's not clear how much the new declarer must pay. In the Swedish translation, an opponent can buy a contract only if the declarer plays alone. If the players agree to the purchase, then the new declarer pays 50% of the value of the contract to all other players.]

## Calling a King

If the contract is one in which the declarer gets a partner, the declarer now names a suit. The holder of the king of that suit becomes the declarer's partner but does not tell anyone who they are. The partnerships are sometimes not discovered until quite late in the hand.

It is legal to call your own king. In this case you play on your own against the other 3 players in partnership, but they will not realize at first that they are all on the same side. You also play alone if the called king happens to be in the talon.

If a declarer entitled to call a king for a partner holds three kings in her hand, he or she may call "The fourth king" without naming its suit. This is normally a good idea.

If as the declarer you have all four kings and find yourself playing a contract in which you are allowed to call a king, you have no option but to call yourself. Incidentally, you are not allowed to try to confuse matters by calling "the fourth king" in this case.

## Exchanging Cards with the Talon

When declarer is entitled to exchange three cards with the talon, the talon is now exposed in two sets of three cards. Declarer chooses one of the sets, and gives the other to her opponents (actually they are put in a separate pile from the opponents' tricks, since some of the players do not yet know who is on which side). After taking the chosen three cards into her hand, declarer then discards three cards face down into her trick pile. Kings and Trull cards (Sküs, XXI, I) may never be discarded; other tarocks may only be discarded if there is no choice, and they should be discarded face up.

## Mortgage

You can exchange more cards with the talon than you're entitled to; for each extra card, the value of the game drops by 20%. Conversely, you can exchange less cards with the talon; each card not exchanged raises the value of the game by 20%.

## Announcements

There is now a round of announcements. Beginning with the declarer, each player can pass or make one or more announcements on behalf of her side. An announcement is a statement that you are going for some bonus, or a kontra of something said by the other side. The round of announcements continues until three players have passed consecutively.

Bonuses, with the exception of Sürtaxe, are only available for contracts where the requirement is to win at least 35-2/3 points in tricks. Pagat ultimo, Uhu ultimo, Kakadu ultimo, König Ultimo, Single Ultimo, Black Out, and Volat cannot be announced for Eisenbahner or Eisenbahner Ouverte. If Volat is declared, neither Black Out nor Sürtaxe must be declared.

## Kontra

During the round of announcements, a member of the defending side may double the score for the game or for any announced bonuses (independently of each other) by saying for example "kontra the game" or "kontra the king ultimo". After this either member of the side which originally made the announcement may say "rekontra" to that bonus, in which case the opponents can double again with "subkontra". Some players allow the doubling to continue further with "hirschkontra" and "mordkontra", by which time the original score for that feature has been multiplied by 64 (announcement and five doubles).

A player may only make a bonus announcement if they are the declarer's partner or if it is already known which side they are on. (e.g. declarer's partner holding the Sküs and the XXI may announce trull and this demonstrates that he is her partner; alternatively a defender holding both Sküs and XXI may be pretty sure of making the trull, but may only announce it if he or she also makes some kontra, for example "Kontra the Pagat ultimo; trull" might be appropriate).

## Selbstkontra, veto, or self-kontra

You can self-kontra, or kontra your own side. This halves the value of the game or the bonus. You cannot self-kontra a game or bonus your opponents already kontra'd. Your opponents cannot kontra a self-kontra'd game or bonus.

## Protest

If your partner kontras a bonus or a game, you can protest, which means that you will no longer participate in the doubling of that particular bonus or game.



## Resigning or Schleifen

Either side (declarer's side or defending side) may resign and pay a 10% discount of the value of the game to the other side. If the declarer resigns a Rufer contract because the called king is in the talon, the discount is 50%.

## The Play

In positive contracts the player to dealer's right (Forehand) leads to the first trick no matter who is declarer.

In negative contracts and Farbensolo, Declarer leads to the first trick.

In ouvert contracts, all players place their hands face up after the first trick.

You must follow suit if you can. If you cannot follow suit you must play a tarock. The trick is won by the highest card played of the suit led, unless it contains a tarock in which case the highest tarock wins (exception: Farbensolo).

Additional rule for negative contracts (Trischaken, Piccolo, Zwiccolo, Bettel, Piccolo Ouvert, Bettel Ouvert): You must beat the highest card on the table if possible.

Further additional rule for Trischaken only: you are not allowed to play the Pagat until it is your only tarock.

Optional rule for all contracts - The Emperor trick: If the three trull cards, the Sküs, the XXI (Mond) and the I (Pagat) are all played to the same trick, then that trick is won by the Pagat. The bonus for capturing the Sküs only applies if the Sküs is captured by an opponent.

## The Scoring

The hand is counted and scored. The scoring system is designed for people who score by pushing money across the table at the end of each hand. In contracts with two players on each side, each player on the losing team pays one of the players on the winning team the game score. When one player plays against the other three, he or she is paid by (or pays) the score to each of them, so the value to declarer of such contracts is three times as much.

Solidarity of partnerships applies throughout. If a player wins (or loses) a game or bonus, all players of that partnership win (or lose) equally.

## *The Contracts*

### 1. Rufer: **Mein Spiel, positive**

Declarer chooses a partner by calling a king, and gets to change three cards with the talon.

If there are no announcements or kontras, the cards are not played, but the game is paid for as though it had been won without bonuses, i.e. declarer and partner win 4 each and the opponents pay 4 each. If the called King is in the talon, then the declarer has two choices:

- The declarer may play alone with a game value of 2
- Play Wald und Wiese

Wald und Wiese (Forest and Meadow): **Mein Spiel: Last one out; a trick ends when when it's trumped or someone discards when a tarock was led**

Forest and Meadow can only be played when the king in Rufer is revealed in the talon. Each player plays individually. Forehand leads to the first trick. A trick doesn't necessarily end once each player has played one card to it. A trick ends when someone beats the led suit with a tarock, or—if a tarock was led—when someone plays a non-tarock card, the stack is won by the player who played the highest tarock.

If a king and queen in the same suit are played by two consecutive players, the first player is eliminated; it does not matter which of the king and queen was played first. The eliminated player can no longer play their cards to the stack and cannot win the game. If the same thing happens with a king and queen in different suits, the second player must add the entire talon to their "trick stack" (unless another player who has encountered the same misfortune has already taken the talon).

The hand (and the last trick) ends when all but one player has been eliminated or has zero cards left. The player or players who have the most cards remaining in their hand plus cards in won tricks pay the winner 4 points.

## Klostergeheimnis: **Mein Spiel: Opponents must figure out the contract you chose**

You look at the talon and pick any game that's at the Solorufer level or higher. You don't name the game; you only say enough information so that your opponents can play legally (whether the game is positive or negative; announce any other special trick-taking rules; and call a king, if required by the game). You then exchange with the talon according to the game that you chose. Your opponents can't kontra Klostergeheimer but can kontra any announcements. If you win, you score half of the contract's value. If you lose, you pay one-and-a-half times the contract's value.

## 2. Trischaker: **Mein Spiel, negative**

The four players play as individuals. The object is to take as few points as possible. The player who plays after Forehand decides whether players must head the trick, if possible. If you hold the Pagat, you may not play it unless it's your last tarock. The points in the talon count toward the winner of the last trick. The player who won the most points in tricks loses and pays 4 points to each of the other players. A player who won 35-2/3 or more points pays 6. If one or more players take no tricks (virgins), then the loser instead pays 12 divided equally among the virgins. [The Swedish account has tie breaking rules: Among tied players, the loser is the one who won the most tricks, then Forehand. Otherwise, all tied players lose.] If you're Forehand and you lost, you have committed suicide and pay double. After each Trischaker, each player receives a Hölzel (stick) or a Radel (wheel). If you have a Hölzel and are declarer, all game values and announcements are doubled. You lose your Hölzel when you win a game.

## Böhmischer Trischaker: **Mein Spiel, negative**

All players play for themselves. The player who plays after Forehand announces whether players must head the trick, if possible, and which suit is trump. Suits rank as follows from highest to lowest: Trump suit, Kings through Jacks, tarocks, then the rest of the number cards. If a trump card was played to a trick, then the highest trump card wins the trick. If no trump cards have been played, but one or more face cards have, then the highest face card wins the trick. Among tied face cards, the first played wins. If no trump or face cards were played, then highest tarock, otherwise, the highest number cards (a black 10 is equal to a red 1 and so on). Players must still follow suit and play a tarock if unable to do so. If you won the most tricks, then you lost and must pay each opponent the difference between 12 and what each opponent won. Among tied players, Forehand loses, otherwise all tied players lose and must pay other opponents. Afterward, all players receive a Hölzel.

## Sechserdreier: **Mein Spiel, positive**

You play alone against the rest. Draw six cards from the talon. Your discards count towards you.

## 3. Solorufer: **Positive**

All bonuses count double. Declarer chooses a partner by calling a king, but does not change cards with the talon; the talon is put aside, unseen until the end of the hand. If it turns out that the called king was in the talon, then the declarer has been playing alone against all three players and kontras don't apply. [I don't know if rekontras also don't apply.] Note: In Königrufen, the talon is added to the defenders' tricks at the end of the hand unless the king was in the talon; in this case, the talon is added to the declarer's tricks instead for compensation for playing alone.

## 8. Eisenbahner or Railwayman: **Other: Have cards of only one suit in your hand**

You play alone against the other three. You don't exchange with the talon. Declare a suit. Your objective is to have only cards of that suit in your hand. Ordinary tarock rules apply until all the cards in your hand are of the suit you announced. When this happens, at the end of the trick, you announce "Departure for all passengers." Then, you take all the cards of your declared suit from the hands of your opponent and the talon.

If you won 35 points, it's a tie.

If you weren't able to achieve the single-suited hand objective, then the value of the contract is doubled.

If an opponent manages to have a hand of cards that only consist of one suit, then this opponent "has taken the express train" and you lost.

If you believe that someone else is about to take the express train, you can "pull the emergency brake" and renege by playing a tarock. You lose all remaining tricks, including the trick to which you reneged, but you still win if you have won at least 35-2/3 points.

If, before play starts, a player believes he or she can achieve the single-suited hand objective, then that player can declare that they will "take the bus." That player receives and pays points like the declarer if they succeed or fail the contract, respectively.

In the Swedish translation, if someone takes the bus, then the value of the game is tripled and payment occurs only between the declarer and the player taking the bus. If someone is taking the bus and you pull the emergency break, then the game reverts to the regular payment schedule.

### Variant: Fahrt ins Blaue or Ride into the Blue

Same as Eisenbahner except you must sort your cards in the order that you will play them. If you are forced to renege, then you lose. The value of the game is 3 times the value of Eisenbahner.

## 4. Bettel: **Negative**

Play alone, lose every trick.

## 5. Piccolo: **Negative**

Play alone, win exactly one trick.

## 6. Amerikaner or Prämieamerikaner: **Other: Win exactly the number of tricks announced**

Bridge-style trick taking (you are not forced to play a tarock, nor are you forced to beat all cards played to the trick if able). You don't exchange any cards with the talon. You must announce in advance exactly how many tricks you will win. You lead to the first trick. Multiple players can play Amerikaner this. If so, the first player to bid this contract leads.

Can be played as Prämieamerikaner: Exchange 3 cards with the talon. You play against all other players. Only you are forced to play a tarock. You lead to the first trick. Unlike Amerikaner, only the declarer can play this.

[Question: In Prämieamerikaner, does the declarer bid the number of tricks before or after exchanging with the talon?]

## 7. Spezi or Wechselspezi: **Other: Win the first and last trick**

You, the declarer, look at the talon but don't exchange any cards. You play alone and lead to the first trick. The objective is to win the first and last trick; you must declare the suit of the last trick before play. [I believe the declared suit must not be the trump suit.] Players aren't obliged to play a tarock if they can't follow suit. If a player wins a trick that they lead to, they may pick who leads the next trick. Otherwise the trick winner leads to the next trick. If you win the last trick but not with the declared suit, you don't have to pay your opponents.

ChatGPT translates the rules for Wechselspezi as "... normal tarock rules. The player must alternate taking tricks and discarding with the opponents." [The original german is: *Abart: Wechselspezi: mit normaler Tarockregel. Der Spieler muss abwechselnd mit den Gegnern stechen und laschieren.*] The Swedish translation seems to translate this as the player who leads to a trick must play their lowest card. All other players, except for the declarer, must try to win the trick if possible.

## 9. Hausierer: **Other: Run out of cards by playing any number of cards of the same suit and always following suit**

You draw up to six cards from the talon without discarding. You must have at least one card of each side suit or else you lose automatically. Forehand leads. You can play any number of cards of the same suit (or any number of Tarocks) simultaneously to each trick while your opponents play just one card per trick as usual. Your objective is to run out of cards before the other players. You lose if you cannot follow suit. The Sküs is a wild card; you can play it with other cards. It can only win a trick if played by itself or with other Tarocks. If you win, the game is worth 11 points for every unplayed trick. If you play to the last trick, it's a draw. If you lose because you ran out of cards of a suit, then you pay 11 points plus 11 points for each unplayed trick. If you lose but were always able to follow suit, then you pay 11 points for each card you have left.

## 10. Pagatrufer: **Positive**

Like Rufer, except you must announce Pagat Ultimo. If the called card is in the talon, then you can do one of the following:

- Play alone with normal tarock rules.
- Play Pratermäßig: Choose a partner. Players can play more than one tarock to a trick. The trick winner is the player who played the largest sum of tarocks. Among tied sums of tarocks, the first played wins. The hand continues as long as players have cards in their hand.
- Play Steinhofmäßig: You win if you either win the game or win the appropriate trick with the called bird (i.e. winning the last trick with the Pagat). You cannot win both the game and the bonus.

## Uhurufer: **Positive**

Like Rufer, except you must announce Uhu Ultimo (win the second-last trick with the II).

## Kakadurufer: **Positive**

Like Rufer, except you must announce Kakadu Ultimo (win the third-last trick with the III).

## 11. Artist: **Other: Have a 3- or 4-of-a-kind remaining in your hand**

You exchange three cards with the talon. You must have three or four picture cards of the same rank. You win if these picture cards are your only remaining cards. If you hold the Sküs, then it can be played anytime, which still wins the trick. [Apparently, this power to renege with the Sküs applies only to the declarer.] Game is with 8 if you win with a three-of-a-kind, double with a four-of-a-kind.

Dreier: **Positive**

Play alone; 3 cards from talon; take 35-2/3+ points

Farbensolo: **Positive**

Part of Königrufen but not part of Reform Tarock. Original game value is 5. Declarer plays alone against the other three players with the object of winning at least 35-2/3 points in tricks, but the tarocks function as an ordinary suit. The declarer leads to the first trick. A player unable to follow suit is still obliged to play a tarock, but the tarocks do not win – the trick is won by the highest card of the suit led. It is illegal to lead tarocks until you hold nothing else. When a tarock is led, players must follow with tarocks if possible and the highest tarock wins. In Farbensolo, all six cards of the talon go unseen to the opponents' tricks. The only bonus available is for making Valat.

## 12. Oberdreier: **Positive**

You first discard three cards, then you take three cards from the talon. [I'm not sure if you get to see the talon before picking which group you want to take]. Opponents may freely discuss among themselves but cannot reveal their cards. Declarer plays alone and the talon goes unseen to the opponents' tricks. All bonuses count double.

## 13. Pensionist: **Other: Don't beat the highest card**

Updated: You take the entire talon, discard six cards, and then play alone against the remaining three. You lead. The led card starts a pile. The turn to play to the pile continues clockwise. The player in turn must beat the highest card, following the usual tarot rules, otherwise they must refrain from playing any card and must pass. The players continue to play cards to the pile as long as any of them can still follow, then the pile is turned over. The player who last played a card to the pile plays a card to start a new one. Note that the same player can play more than one card to the same pile. The declarer wins if they manage to avoid playing to the pile. The led card played by the declarer does not count.

If the declarer is forced to play a card, but the opponent to the right (i.e. the next player) cannot play anything because they have no cards left, this is not counted as a loss - it is considered that the declarer played a card for the destitute opponent - unless the declarer can then follow their initially played card (which can actually happen, for example, if the declarer first follows with their last card in a side suit and then has tarots left). If the declarer is forced to follow only after the 25th lead, they become a Jubelpensionist and don't have to pay.

Pensionist ouverte

Pensionist, except all hands are exposed as soon as a card has been led to the second trick, and declarer may play a card immediately after the player before him or herself once without losing.

## 14. Solopagatrufer: **Positive**

Like Solorufer, but you must announce Pagat Ultimo (win the last trick with the Pagat). Bonuses count double, declarer calls a king but doesn't change cards with the talon.

You may announce other birds until the sixth trick.

If the king was in the talon, kontras don't apply. The half of the talon contains the king counts towards you, the other half counts towards your opponents.

#### 14. Solouhurufer: **Positive**

Like Solodrier, but you must announce Uhu Ultimo (win the second-last trick with the II).

#### 14. Solokakadurufer: **Positive**

Like Solodrier, but you must announce Kakadu Ultimo (win the third-last trick with the III).

#### 15. Solodreier: **Positive**

You don't exchange with the talon, you play alone, bonuses are doubled, and Forehand leads.

#### 16. Apotheker: **Other: Force your opponents to take between 17-1/3 and 35-2/3 card points**

You play alone against the other three and don't exchange with the talon. You lead to the first trick. You may play any card to a trick; you aren't bound by normal trick play rules (although your opponents are). At the end of the hand, distribute the talon among your opponents. All your opponents must win between 17-1/3 and 35-2/3 card points each. You lose if you have more than 19 points. If any opponent wins 0 or all tricks, you must pay that opponent an additional 10 game points.

If one opponent wins 23-1/3 card points, you get the honorary title of *Tarockmeister*; two opponents winning 23-1/3 card points, *Tarockrat*; and all three opponents, *Tarockdirektor*. You lose these titles when someone else captures an opponent's **XXI** or wins all tricks (Valat). [This has no bearing at all on the game.]

#### 17. Volatrufer: **Other: Win all tricks with a willing partner**

Your partner is the first one who volunteers to do so. If no one volunteers, you call any tarock and the player who holds it becomes your partner, and there's an additional bonus of six times the value of the contract.

In the Swedish translation, the player who holds the announced tarock says so. If the announced tarock is in the talon, then you announce another tarock.

Your partner can join your opponents before the first trick (concede) or withdraw at any time (veto). If your partner vetos, then that partner receives and pays nothing and places their hand face up. You'll play this face-up hand like a dummy in Bridge.

The original German rules mention that the declarer needs only 47 card points if their partner concedes or vetoes.

The original German rules mention that if your partner withdraws, you also play with the talon. I don't know what this means. Does it mean that the card points in the talon count towards you? Also it mentions that the declarer can have two partners, and if so, the bonus goes to the opponent. I have no idea how this could happen.

Alternate rules for the partner conceding from the Swedish translation: Either of the two remaining players can change their mind and join you. If you accept, then the remaining opponent exchanges the remaining three cards from the talon. The bonus of six times the game's value is paid in this case by the declarer and their partner to the remaining opponent, if they manage to fulfill the contract.

Alternate rules for the bonus from the Swedish translation: The bonus, six times the game value, only goes to the declarer if the declarer succeeds, and the declarer's two opponents split the payment.

## 18. Diskreter Dreier: **Positive**

You take half the talon (three cards), then discard three cards. Your closest opponent, in turn order, takes the other half of the talon, discards three, and gives those discards to the next opponent in turn order. Repeat this until each opponent has a chance to exchange cards. Declarer may lead to the first trick or let Forehand lead to the first trick. You play alone. All bonuses count double.

## 19. Sautanz: **Other: Play all your cards (face down), following suit (while accusing other players of lying)**

You can play this only if you hold no kings or tarocks. Players play against each other. The length of the game is limited to a specific duration (such as 3 minutes). Leader of a "trick" plays a card face down to a pile and announces a suit (which need not match the actual suit of the played card). Next player either plays another card that should match the announced suit or calls the bluff of the previous player. If the accuser is correct, the accused picks up all the cards that have been played, adds them to his or her hand, and starts the next pile. If not, the accuser picks up the cards instead and the accused starts the next pile. Once a player runs out of cards, he or she is out of the game. Whoever has the most cards at the end of the game pays 45 to each player. However, players who have not made an accusation throughout the game don't get paid. Among tied players, the player who declared Sautanz pays. If that player is not among the tied players, then all tied players pay.

After Sautanz, in the next round [of four hands?], all contracts have the same value [which should be a value not less than Rufer and not more than Sautanz; no kontras are allowed].

## 20. Juwel: **Positive**

Highest bid in Reform Tarock. Played like Diskreter Dreier, but the last opponent passes three cards to the first opponent, enabling that player to improve his or her hand. The value of the hand (in game points) is  $((\text{card points} \times 3)^2) / 100$ . Don't round card point values. No extra bonus is awarded for Sürtaxe/Gramerboy, Black out, or Volat. If you do win Volat, then the three cards discarded by the first opponent are credited to you, and your score is  $210^2 / 100 = 441$ .