

## Decide on The Game Structure

### PARTNERS

4 People in Total

When playing partners (2 people per team), you always have the help of your partner and vice versa. Depending on which one of you made the bid, you can help your partner reach their bid by playing the trump you have strategically.

### CUTTHROAT

5 People in Total

When playing cutthroat, you "call" for the next lowest card you need. Whoever has this card must play that card in the second round (there are 5 rounds to each hand) and is therefore your partner for that round only. Even your "partner" can play to their advantage and not necessarily how you want them to play.

## The Basics of Auction Forty Fives

Simply, the object of the game is to accumulate 125 points (regardless of game structure chosen above) by acquiring as many tricks as you can in each round. There are 5 tricks to each round.

You start off by shuffling the deck. Then whoever shuffled the deck of cards deals one card to each person playing until a jack (of any suit) appears. The first person to get the first jack, is the dealer for the first round. From this point forward, the person to the left of the dealer will be the next dealer and so on for the remaining rounds until someone reaches 125 points.

When the dealer has been determined, they will shuffle the deck again. Once shuffled, they will pass out three cards per person playing. Then they will put two cards in the middle of the playing area. This area is often called the kitty. They will then proceed to give each person the remaining two cards/person for a total of five cards each. The dealer will then place two more cards in the kitty for a total of 4 cards.

The person to the left of the person who dealt will start the bidding. You can bid as follows:

20 Bid (3 tricks)\*

25 Bid (4 tricks)

30 (all tricks)

60 for 120 (all tricks)\*\*

\* Assuming you have the highest trump.

\*\* You can bid 60/120 ONLY if you are below zero in points.

The person who was the dealer for any round always has the final say. They can say “take it!” or “hold ya!”. Whoever wins the bidding calls trump. They keep whatever trump is in their hand as well as the kitty. However, before they take the kitty, they must tell everyone what trump is (i.e., spades, diamonds, clubs, or hearts).

## Time

The amount of time it takes to play a game depends on the group playing. However, an average game takes around 45 minutes.

## Scorekeeper

This game requires a scorekeeper. The scorekeeper’s job is to record the "tricks" each person or group received after each round. It is also their duty to let everyone know when anyone (or team) reaches 95 points.

## Kitty

The 4 cards in the middle of the playing area are called the kitty. These cards are awarded to the player who won the bidding.

## Playing the Game

When the players have discarded all their non-trumps, the dealer will then ask them how many cards they require. If the answer is more than 3, then the dealer hands them 3 cards the first time around and then comes back around for the second time and give them either 1 or 2 cards.

Once everyone has their cards dealt to them, the person to the left of the bidder (person who won the bidding, see above) starts. The person to the left of the bidder can lay a trump or non-trump card. If a trump card is led, then you **MUST** play a trump card (if you have any). If a non-trump (suit that is not trump) is played the next player can play a non-trump or a trump depending on their own strategy.

Normally, the player to the right of the bidder will what we call “ruff” them. Ruffing means you will force the bidder to play a high trump card to win the trick.

## Tricks

Each round there is what is called "tricks". Tricks are simply who won a round. For instance, if trump was spades and everyone played a trump and the final person played the three of spades, then this would be one trick worth 5 points. If anyone plays the 5 of trump, then they would earn 10 points for that one trick. All tricks should add up to 30 points when a round has been completed (regardless of if the 5 was played or not).

## Ruffing

The term "ruffing" refers to making the bidder play a high trump card to win a trick.

## Points

Every "trick" is worth 5 points, except for the trick that has the highest trump (usually whoever played the 5) is worth 10 for a total of 30 points.

## Trump and Non-Trump

Trump is the suit (diamonds, clubs, hearts, or spades) that the bidder has called once they were determined to be the successful bidder or the dealer elected to hold (see above). From this point forward all trumps win over non-trumps.

Non-trumps (suits that are not trump) are still viable and can win you a trick (often in the last round of a hand). The important thing about non-trump is that whatever non-trump suit was laid, is the highest card unless someone can beat that card in the non-trump hierarchy.

## Trump

Red – 5 J A♥ A ♦ K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 4 3 2

Black – 5 J A♥ A ♣♠ K Q 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## Non-Trump

Red – K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 A♦

Black – K Q J A ♣♠ 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## The Following Are Optional Rules

### Reneging

You can only renege the 5, Jack or Ace of Hearts. However, if the 5 or Jack is played and you only have the Ace of Hearts, then you would have to play it. Same goes for the Jack, if they 5 was played and the Jack is your only trump, then you must play it. However, if one of these three cards are not led and you have another trump, you do not have to play them. A good rule of thumb is that you can only renege on trump lower than the card you have.

### Top 6

If a person does not have anything in their hand to go on (i.e., a force bid), they have the option of going on the kitty. However, if there is nothing to go on in the kitty, they can opt to take the Top 6 cards off the deck. When this is their choice, they must discard one card and cannot draw any further after they call trump.

### Ticks

Every time you lose a bid, you get a tick. Accumulating 4-ticks (at least in our house) is called going out the back door. Your part in the game is over. If playing the cutthroat version of Auction Forty Fives, the remaining players continue until there is a winner. Some people play with a 3-tick rule and others play a 5-tick rule.