

The Game of Cribbage

Recommended ages 8+. Pegs are a choking hazard for children under 3.

Cribbage is a card game that can be played with two, three, or four players. All that is required is a standard deck of 52 cards and a cribbage board, with pegs, for keeping score. A game of two players is most common. Play with three requires an extra set of holes for keeping score; playing with four is done in pairs.

THE BOARD

The object of cribbage is to be the first to peg 61 or 121 points, depending what is agreed upon. On a standard board, the pegs are moved down the outer row (30 holes) and back the inner row. A game of 121 points would be twice around. A continuous board will have 120 holes for each player. Each player has two pegs of a color for keeping his own score. Points are recorded by jumping the rear peg ahead of the other by the number of points scored. Points are scored and pegged during play and by counting the hand after play is finished. The extra six holes per player are to score the final point and to keep count of games won with a third peg. A player winning before her opponent passes the halfway mark is credited with winning two games. In this case the loser has been *lurched*.

PLAY (2 players)

The first deal is determined by cutting the deck. Low card is the dealer and thereafter the deal alternates. Dealer begins by dealing six cards to each. Each player then discards two of his six cards putting them face down on the table. The four cards are put together to form an extra hand called the *crib*. This goes to the dealer after play is completed. The non-dealer then cuts the remainder of the deck and the dealer turns up the top card, called the *starter*; placing this card on the top of the deck. The starter isn't used until after the hand is played: however, if it is a jack the dealer immediately pegs two points for "*his heels*".

The non-dealer starts the series by showing a card from his hand and calling its value. The dealer then follows with one of her cards and calls the sum of the two cards. Each player keeps his own cards in separate piles. Play continues with the non-dealer laying down another card and calling the sum of the three. Play alternates up to 31 without going over. If a player can't play without going over, she says "go", her opponent continues play alone if he can. One point is scored for playing the last possible card without going over 31, two points for exactly 31. The spent cards are turned over and another series begins with the player who said, "go" on the previous play. Play continues until the hand is gone, the last card played being worth one point. Other points scored during a series: Two points for a count of 15, two points to the player making a pair of two consecutively played cards, six points for completing three-of-a-kind, and 12 points for four-of-a-kind.

The last card completing a run of three or more, no matter what suit, scores one for each card.

After play is finished, the hands are counted in the order of non-dealer, dealer, and crib (which goes to the dealer separate from his own hand). The started card is considered the fifth card in each hand for counting purposes. A card can be used any number of times in different combinations. Points in counting hands are as follows:

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Combinations

Combinations	Points
Each combination totaling 15	2
Each pair	2
3 of a kind	6
4 of a kind	12
Runs of three or more	1 for each card
His nobs (jack of same suit as starter)	1
4 cards of same suit (not in crib)	4
4 cards same suit as starter (in hand or crib)	5

PLAY (3 or 4 players)

For both three and four players, each person is dealt five cards with only one going to the crib. With three players, each keeps his own score with playing rotating around the table. With four players, play is with two pairs of partners seated alternately around the table. Hands are scored separately but points are pegged together on the board with partner.



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