Gin Rummy Rules

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Overview

• Gin Rummy is a 52-card standard deck game where two players on each turn ...
  • draw a card to and discard a card from a 10 card hand, in order to ...
  • form sets of cards called “melds” faster than their opponent, in order to ...
  • score points from unmelded opponent cards.

• Gin Rummy is a game of
  • Chance – face down draw from a shuffled draw pile
  • Imperfect information – private card hands
Melds, Sets, and Runs

• As with other Rummy games, players seek to collect sets of cards called *melds*. Melds are of two types:
  • **Sets** – 3 or 4 cards of the same *rank* (A, 2, ..., 10, J, Q, K)
  • **Runs** – 3 or more consecutive cards of the same *suit* (Clubs, Hearts, Spades, Diamonds)
• Melds are disjoint, i.e. do not share cards
Deadwood

- Cards not in melds are referred to as deadwood.
- Cards have associated deadwood point values:
  - Aces = 1
  - 2-10 according to their number
  - Face cards (J, Q, K) = 10

- **Deadwood points** are the sum of card point values from all deadwood cards.
- Players play so as to reduce their deadwood points.
Game Setup

• A random dealer **deals 10 cards** to each player. (The dealer then alternates until the game end.)
• The remaining 32 cards are placed face-down to form the **draw pile**.
• Then, the top card is turned face-up to start the face-up **discard pile**.
• The top card of the discard pile is called the **upcard**.
Normal Versus First Turn

• Normal turn: A player **draws** either the upcard or the top of the draw pile. Then, the player **discards** a card (just-drawn upcard excluded).

• First turn:
  • The non-dealer may start by drawing the upcard.
  • If declined, the dealer may start by drawing the upcard.
  • If declined, the non-dealer must start by drawing from the draw pile.
Example Draw and Discard
Knocking (Ending the Hand)

• If, after discarding, a player has \( \leq 10 \) deadwood points, the player may **knock**.

• If the player knocks:
  • If there is 0 deadwood ("gin"), the player scores a 25 point **gin bonus** plus the opponent’s deadwood (case 1).
  • Otherwise, the opponent **lays off** their deadwood cards that can be added to the knocker’s melds, reducing deadwood points.
  • If the knocker still has less deadwood than their opponent, the knocker scores the difference in deadwood points.
  • Otherwise, if the knocker has the same or greater deadwood than their opponent, the opponent scores a 25 **undercut bonus** plus the difference in deadwood points.
Example: Going Gin
Example: Scoring Without Gin
Example: Undercut
End Game and Replay Condition

• A player scoring a total of 100 or more points wins the game.

• In the event that the hand has not ended after a turn with only 2 cards remaining in the draw pile, nothing is scored, all cards are shuffled, and the hand is replayed with the same dealer.
Final Notes

• U.K. gin and undercut bonuses are 20 and 10, respectively. 25 point bonuses are common in North America.

• This description omits “box scores” for tournament play. Our object is to maximize the number of games won.

• There are different conventions for choosing the dealer, and many Gin Rummy variations. This represents the most common Gin Rummy play in North American literature and competition.