

Cribbage

The rules on one page

Players

2. Also played by 3, or by 4
in 2 teams

You need

A standard 52-card deck, and a cribbage
board with pegs or a pencil and paper

Goal

Score points for card
combinations, first as you play
your cards and again when you
count your hand

Game ends

The first player to 121 points wins

Setup

1. Shuffle a standard 52-card deck. Each player cuts it to show a card. The lower card deals first, and the ace is lowest.
2. Deal 6 cards each, one at a time, starting with the other player (the non-dealer). Set the rest of the deck face down.
3. Each player puts 2 cards from their hand face down to one side. These 4 cards are the crib, an extra hand that scores for the dealer.
4. The non-dealer cuts the rest of the deck. The dealer turns up the top card of the lower part, and it goes face up on top of the deck. This is the starter. If it is a jack, the dealer scores 2.

How to play

1. **Take turns playing cards.** Starting with the non-dealer, take turns playing one card face up on your own side and saying the running total, called the count. Aces count 1, face cards count 10, and other cards count their number.
2. **Score as you play.** Score 2 when your card makes the count exactly 15. Score 2 for a pair when it matches the rank of the card before. A third matching card in a row scores 6, and a fourth scores 12. A run of 3 or more cards, in any order, scores 1 for each card.
3. **Stop at 31 and say go.** The count cannot pass 31, and making exactly 31 scores 2. If every card you hold would pass 31, say "go." The other player must then play every card they can. Whoever played the last card scores 1, unless it made 31. The count restarts at zero, and the player who did not play the last card starts.
4. **Play out the cards.** Keep going until all the cards are played. Pairs and runs do not carry over to a new count. The last card of all scores 1, or 2 if it makes 31.
5. **Count the hands.** Pick up your cards. The non-dealer counts first, then the dealer, then the dealer counts the crib. The starter is a fifth card each time. Score 2 for every group of cards adding up to 15, 2 for every pair, and 1 for each card in a run of 3 or more.
6. **Add flushes and the jack.** Four hand cards of one suit score 4 for a flush, or 5 if the starter matches too. The crib scores a flush only if all 5 cards match. The jack of the starter's suit scores 1.
7. **Peg and deal again.** Mark each score on the board as soon as it is made. After the crib is counted, the other player deals.

What each card counts toward 15 and 31

Card	Counts
Ace	1
2 through 10	The number on the card
Jack, queen or king	10

Scoring

Cribbage scoring chart: the starter and the play (pegging)

What happens	Points
The starter is a jack (his heels). Dealer only	2
Your card makes the count exactly 15	2
Your card makes the count exactly 31	2
Pair: your card has the same rank as the card before	2
Three of a kind: the third card of one rank in a row	6
Four of a kind: the fourth card of one rank in a row	12
Run: the last 3 or more cards make a run, in any order	1 for each card in the run
Go or last card: you played the last card of a count, or of the whole hand, and it did not make 31	1

Cribbage counting chart: a hand or the crib, with the starter

Combination	Points
Fifteen: each different group of 2 or more cards that adds up to 15	2
Pair: each 2 cards of the same rank	2
Three of a kind (3 pairs)	6
Four of a kind (6 pairs)	12
Run: each run of 3 or more cards	1 for each card in the run
Flush in a hand: all 4 hand cards in one suit	4
Flush in a hand or the crib: all 4 cards and the starter in one suit	5
His nobs: the jack of the same suit as the starter, in a hand or the crib	1

Counting chart: runs with pairs in them

Cards	Example	Points	How it adds up
A run of 3 with one card paired (double run)	A, 2, 2, 3	8	Two runs of 3 and a pair
A run of 4 with one card paired (double run of four)	A, 2, 2, 3, 4	10	Two runs of 4 and a pair
A run of 3 with one card three times (triple run)	A, 2, 2, 2, 3	15	Three runs of 3 and three of a kind
A run of 3 with two cards paired (double double run)	A, A, 2, 2, 3	16	Four runs of 3 and two pairs

The first player to reach 121 points wins, and the game stops at that moment. You do not have to land on 121 exactly.

