

# Old Maid

The rules on one page

## Players

2 or more. One deck is enough for up to 6.

## You need

A standard 52-card deck with one queen taken out, or a special Old Maid deck

## Goal

Get rid of your cards in pairs, and do not get stuck with the odd queen

## Game ends

When every card is paired except one queen. Whoever holds it is the old maid and loses.

## Setup

1. Take any one of the four queens out of a standard 52-card deck, along with the jokers. Put them back in the box. You play with the other 51 cards.
2. Any player can deal. Shuffle and deal all the cards face down, one at a time, going clockwise. Some players will get 1 more card than others, and that is fine.
3. Pick up your cards and keep them hidden from the other players.
4. Find every pair in your hand. A pair is two cards of the same rank, such as two kings or two 4s. Lay each pair face down on the table.
5. If you hold three cards of the same rank, lay down two of them and keep the third. If you hold all four, lay them down as two pairs.

## Scoring

**The player left with the odd queen is the old maid and loses. Everyone else is safe, and there is no winner in the main rules.**

## How to play

1. **Offer your cards.** The dealer goes first. On your turn, fan out your cards face down and hold them out to the player on your left. That player draws 1 card without seeing its face and adds it to their hand.
2. **Lay down a new pair.** If the card you drew makes a pair with a card in your hand, lay the pair face down. If it does not match, it stays in your hand. Either way, it is now your turn to fan your cards and offer them to the player on your left.
3. **Run out of cards and you are safe.** A player who gets rid of all their cards is safe. They take no more turns and nobody draws from them. Play passes them by, to the next player who still holds cards.
4. **The odd queen loses.** Play goes on until every card has been laid down in pairs except one queen. The player holding that queen is the old maid and loses the game. Everyone else is safe.

