

Silhill u3a

CANASTA Rules

Note: There are many variations of Rules for Canasta. In Silhill u3a, we play by the rules originally introduced by Mary Stokes; we do this in her Memory as she taught many of to play this wonderful game.

1. Canasta is played with 2 Decks of cards, plus 4 Jokers = 108 cards total
2. Card Values:

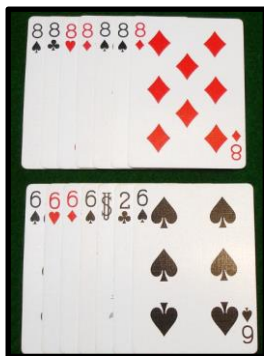


- Joker – 50 Points
- Twos & Aces – 20 Points
- Red 3s – 100 points (4 Red 3's = 800 points)
- 8, 9, 10, J, Q, K – 10 Points
- 4, 5, 6, 7 – 5 Points
- Black 3's – 5 Points
- Wildcards are 2's and Jokers

3. The aim of the game is to make a MELD and to outscore other players by earning more points. Points are scored from both MELDS and CANASTA's – defined below:

MELD – combination of three or more cards, of the same Rank (with or without Wild Cards)

CANASTA – A meld containing at least seven cards:



Natural (or Clean) Canasta – at least 7 Cards of the same Rank, with no Wild Cards. Scores **500** points. Red card on top to denote "Natural" or Clean". Also known as a "Pure" Canasta.

Mixed (or Dirty) Canasta – at least 7 cards consisting of natural cards and wild cards. All the natural cards must be the same Rank; Wild cards must not outnumber natural cards. Scores **300** points. Black card on top to denote "Mixed" or "Dirty".

4. To Begin the Game:
 - a. Draw one card to determine the dealer → Ace Low, King High. Highest card deals.
 - b. Cut the Deck
 - c. Deal **13** Cards face down to each player (*Mary's Rules*)
 - d. Place remaining Pack in centre of table. This is now called the STOCK.
 - e. Replace any Red 3's in your hand by drawing a replacement card from the Stock pile
 - f. Turn top card up to start the DISCARD pile:
 - If card is Joker, 2 or 3, turn over another card (leaving original card in Discard Pile)
 - If the second card is also Joker, 2 or 3 -> Return both to Pack and Reshuffle
 - If a Red 3 is picked up from the Discard Pile, it is not replaced
 - g. Organise your own hand, without showing it to the others. Generally sort by Rank (A, K, Q, J, 10 ...). Keep Wildcards (Jokers and 2's) and Black 3's separate
5. To Play:
 - a. The player to the left of the dealer plays first, and then the turn to play passes clockwise.
 - b. A basic turn consists of drawing the top card of the stock, adding it to your hand without showing it to the other players, and discarding one card from your hand, face up on top of the discard pile.
 - c. After drawing, but before discarding, you may be able to make one or more Melds by placing the melded cards face up on the table in front of you.

- d. Each player's FIRST meld, must meet specific criteria, based on your current score:
 - Current Score 0 – 1499 Cards in the Meld(s) must add up to → 50
 - Current Score 1500 – 2999 Cards in the Meld(s) must add up to → 90
 - Current Score OVER 3000 Cards in the Meld(s) must add up to → 120
 - If your score is minus (negative), No minimum value is required
 - If you lay down a "COMPLETE" Canasta, No minimum value is required
- e. Under certain conditions, instead of drawing from the stock, you are permitted to take the whole of the discard pile. In order to do this, you must be able to meld the **top** discard, without needing any of the other cards in the discard pile to make your meld valid:
 - For a FIRST meld, you must have TWO natural matching Rank cards in your hand. You must also be able to achieve the minimum point values (above) using ONLY the **top card** you have picked up from the discard pile.
 - AFTER your first meld, you may pick up the discard pile if you have one matching natural card and one wild card in your hand OR if you have a matching meld already on the table.
 - This rule changes if the Discard pile is FROZEN or BLOCKED (see later below)

6. SCORING:

- a. Natural (Clean) Canasta = 500 Points Mixed (Dirty) Canasta = 300 Points
- b. Every card on the table counts as part of your score (whether in a Meld or Canasta). BUT, you must DEDUCT points for each card held in your hand at the end of the round.
- c. Each Red three has a bonus value of 100 points. They are even more valuable if you have all four Red threes as they then count 200 each, or 800 in all. BUT, if the game ends before you have any Melds, any Red 3's are deducted from your score. (Minus 100 for each Red 3).
- d. The Player who "goes out" first scores 100 extra points
- e. A "Concealed" or "Blind" Canasta earns an EXTRA 100 points. This occurs if you go out (with or without a discard) without having previously made any melds or layoffs other than Red 3s. The hand must consist entirely of melds, of which at least one must be a canasta.
- f. The first player to reach 5000 points is the winner.

7. Miscellaneous Rules

- a. Melds/Canastas
 - Melds can grow as large as you wish. A meld of seven or more cards becomes a canasta.
 - There must be more Natural Cards than Wild Cards in every meld. No meld can contain more than three wild cards; a canasta must contain at least four natural cards.
 - There is no limit on the number of natural cards that can be added to a complete canasta.
 - A wild card added to a Natural (Clean) canasta changes it to a Mixed (Dirty) Canasta.
 - Once a canasta contains three wild cards, no further wild cards can be added.
- b. Discarding
 - Discarding a Black 3 blocks the next player from picking up from the discard pile
 - Discarding a Wild Card (Joker or 2) FREEZES (or BLOCKS) the discard pile. This complicates drawing from the discard pile for all players: The pile can be thawed only by melding its top card with two natural hand cards. When discarding a Wild Card, place it sideways in the discard pile to indicate the pile is FROZEN.
- c. Going Out. Ending a round is called GOING OUT. This is done by playing all the remaining cards in your hand by adding the cards to your melds or canastas. You may **optionally** discard one final card. You must have at least one Canasta (Natural or Mixed) on the table before you can go out.
- d. Black 3s at the end of the Round may be placed into a Meld as part of your final turn when you go out. This is the only time Black 3's can be placed on the table.
- e. The Round can also end if the stock pile runs out of cards -- if a player who wishes to draw from the stock is unable to do so because there are no cards left, the play ends immediately and the hand is scored. No one receives the 100 point bonus for Going Out.