

How To Play Indian Rummy - Standard Indian Rummy Rules

For decades since the long period of British rule, card games such as Poker, Bridge and Rummy have been immensely popular across the whole of India where they are played both socially and within the family. Rummy is particularly popular in card rooms and even casinos where, in certain jurisdictions, it is a wagering game. Little is known about the origin and history of Indian Rummy. It could be that Indian Rummy evolved from a version of Rummy in South Asia that goes by the name "Celebes Rummy".

It is equally possible that Indian Rummy (also known as Red Rummy) is derived from the United States as it plays like a cross between Gin Rummy and Rummy 500. It is similar to Rummy 500 in that it is played with 13 cards, one or two decks and sometimes jokers (wild cards) but it is a lot more like Gin Rummy in the simplicity of overall turn by turn play.

Players & Deck

Indian Rummy can be played by 2 to 8 players. Two deck of 52 cards is used (108 if wild cards are included) and each player takes turns dealing the cards. If there are 5 or more players, three or four decks are used (162/216 cards) but 13 cards are still dealt to each. Two decks and 2-4 player is most common game.

Number of players	Number of decks	Number of cards dealt
2 - 4 Players	2 deck	13 cards each
5 - 8 Players	3 decks	13 cards each

The Deal

The dealer deals each player 13 cards face down. The next card from the deck is turned face up which indicates that it is the start of the discard pile. The rest of the deck is positioned face down and becomes the stock pile.

Object Of The Game

The purpose of the game is to complete a hand with most or all cards formed into sets and/or runs. A run (sequence) is comprised of three or more cards bearing the same suit and in consecutive order such as for example:

Example of a Valid Run 3♠ 4♠ 5♠ 4♥ 5♥ 6♥ 7♥ 8♥

Example of an Invalid Run 3♠ 4♥ 5♣ 4♥ 5♥ 6♦ 7♥ 8♥

A set is formed of three or four cards that are identical rank and of different suits, such as for example:

Example of a Valid Set : 3♥ 3♣ 3♦ 9♠ 9♥ 9♣ 9♦

Example of an Invalid Set: K♠ K♥ Q♦ A♠ A♥ A♥

A card can be used only once – either in a set or in a run. You cannot use the same card for both a run and a set. Also note that in a group or set, each card must be of the same rank and a different suit, however when two decks are used situations do arise where you have in your hand for example K♥ and K♥ - you cannot add to this K♣ to form a valid set of three as the first two kings are of the same suit.

One crucial element of Indian Rummy is that your hand must contain at least two sequences (valid runs also termed as Life 1 and life 2) and if jokers are in play, at least one of those should be a "natural" or "pure" sequence (ie containing no joker wild card termed as life 1) and second sequence can be with joker (Life 2) before you can go out.

A Joker can be used anywhere(either in run or set) after forming Life 1

You must go out on your turn by discarding - it is irrelevant as to whether this may or may not be a card that could have been added to one of your existing melds.

How Indian Rummy Is Played Turn By Turn

There is no laying melds on the table during play and there is no laying off cards either during or at the end of play. The two main elements observed during a single turn of Indian Rummy are simply the draw and the discard:

Drawing (Compulsory) - The first player must take just one card either from the discard pile or the stock and add this card to the 13 cards of his hand. The discard pile is face up and only the upcard is visible and can be taken by next player. If that player chooses to take from the stock, his opponent will not see the card (since cards on the stock pile are face down).

Discarding (Compulsory) - After drawing, you must examine your cards and decide which one is the card you need least. It will be a card that is probably not in sequence with the rest or is the only one of its kind making it impossible to form either a set or a run. You then take this card and place it on the discard pile, face up.

How and When To Go Out

There is no knocking in Indian Rummy. Therefore, if the player manages to meld all his cards and has a zero deadwood count, and his hand meets the requirement of containing at least two sequences (one of which is pure, with no wild cards), only then may he may go out. He does this by discarding a final card, face down to signal victory. At this point, the other players display their melds and any deadwood is counted up and scored accordingly.



What If The Stock Pile Runs Out?

If there is just one card left on the stock pile and the player, whose turn it is, does not want the card on the discard pile, then the discard pile is taken, shuffled and turned over to start a new stock pile.

Some Notes On Scoring

If the player who goes Rummy does not have at least one pure sequence, all the other cards are counted as unmatched and no other meld is valid.

Face cards (Jack, Queen, King) score 10 points. Aces score 10 points. Joker are worth 0 points. All the rest of the deck score the rank as the value (ie the pip value). For example, a 6♣ would be worth six points, a 7♥ is worth 7 points, etc.

Cards	Value	Example 1	Example 2
Jokers	0 point	 is worth 0 points	 is worth 0 points
Aces	10 point	A♠ is worth 10 points	A♥ is worth 10 points
Faces	10 points	Q♦ is worth 10 points	K♣ is worth 10 points
Others	Pip value	5♠ is worth 5 points	7♦ is worth 7 points

Aces are high and the cards rank in this order: 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Jack Queen King Ace. Note that because the ace is always high in Indian Rummy, A♠ 2♠ 3♠ is a valid sequence and also Q♠ K♠ A♠ but Aces do not go "round the corner" and therefore K♠ A♠ 2♠ is not a valid meld.

Each player or a designated party ie the dealer will have to tally up the value of each players unmatched cards (ie deadwood) and players are scored with negative points for deadwood. The Winner earns the combined deadwood counts as a positive value.

Players keep dealing the cards for subsequent games until one reaches a designated (previously agreed) target score or until they play a fixed number of deals (Mostly 12 or 16 deals) or until a set amount of playing time has elapsed.

Other House Rules:

Variations to the standard Indian Rummy rules are mostly related to scoring although it is important to note that a large number of people play a version of Indian Rummy which uses rule (1) below.

(1) Some play this game without jokers as wild cards.

(2) Some play this game with one card opened as extra joker and that card of all colors become joker.

(3) Some house rules provide that you have to throw out a card to the discard pile that is different from the card you drew earlier from the discard pile. In other words, you cannot draw and discard the same card from the discard pile.

For further detail or online game:

<http://rummy.com/indianrummy.html>

www.ace2three.com

www.madrascals.com

A.K.Tiwari

arvindkumartiwariji@yahoo.co.in