



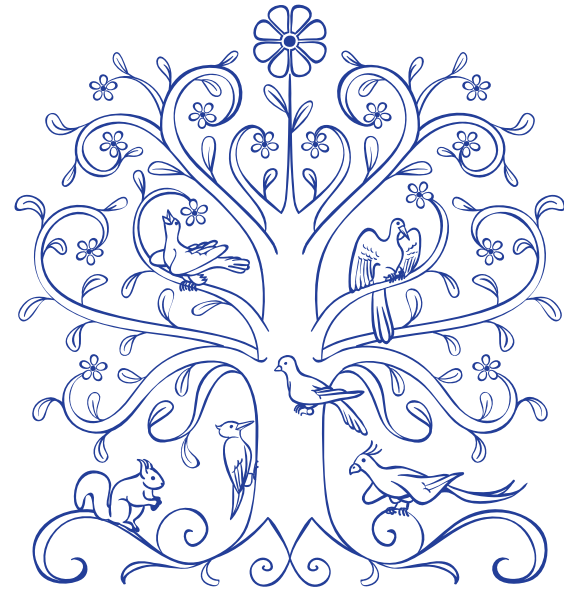
# LA *B*ÂTARDE



**GAME RULES**

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## HISTORY OF THE GAME

*The **B**astard one is a thrilling and mysterious card game. Some claim that a primitive version originated in the North of India and arrived in Venice via Asia Minor, from where it spread through Europe. It is also told that it owes its name to the illegitimate daughter of a Syldavian prince who introduced to his father's court.*

*Others maintain that three Portuguese sailors brought it back from much further afield. But nothing is less sure...*

## THE GAME SET

This box contains:

2 packs of 36 Bastard cards, 30 counters and this book of rules.

In this game, there are no teams, it is every man for himself.

3 to 8 players can play.

With 3 or 4, use only one of the two packs of 36 cards.

From 5 to 8 players use both packs.

With 6,7 or 8 players, you can also organize a mini-tournament with two tables of 3 or 4 players simultaneously.

## DEALING THE CARDS

Draw to designate the dealer (highest card). Next round the dealer shifts clockwise. In competitions, there is also a draw for the seats around the table.

The number of cards dealt to each player varies from one hand to the next :

- **With 3 players**, the initial deal is 7 cards per player, then 8,9,10,11 and 12 cards per player until all the cards are dealt. Then one starts again with 12 cards, then 11,10,9, 8 and 7.

The game is then over.

- **With 4 players**, , the initial deal is 5 to 9 cards then 9 to 5.

With 5 players, use both two packs (72 cards in all).

- **With 5**, deal 9 to 14 cards then from 14 to 9.

- **With 6**, deal 7 to 12 then 12 to 7.

- **With 7**, deal 5 to 10 then 10 to 5.

- **With 8**, make up two tables of 4 for more fun.

Deal the cards face down, one by one.

A "rubber" is a set of games made up of several "hands" all dealt in the same way.

## HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

After each hand is dealt, the players look at their cards and announce in advance the number of "tricks" which they think they will win. This is called "bidding".

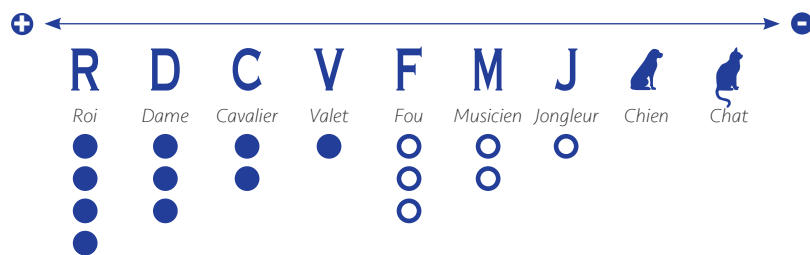
In this game you never pass. Each player bids on each round.

The bidding system leads all the players to agree on what "suit" is the "trump", if any.

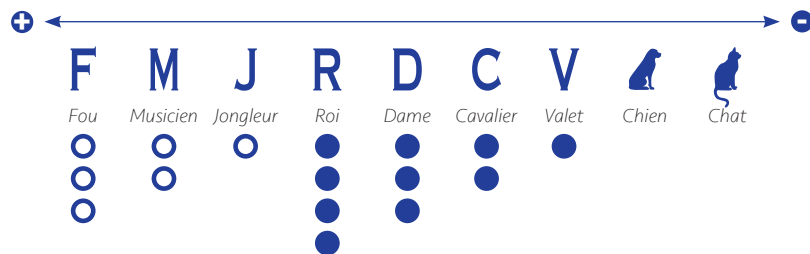
There are 6 possibilities: all cards are trumps, spades are trumps, hearts are trumps, diamonds are trumps, clubs are trumps – or there are no trumps.

When playing with trumps the order of the cards is different.

- The normal order of the cards, from the highest to the lowest in value is :



- In trumps, carnival reigns, the artists come to power and the order becomes :



## HOW TO PLAY THE CARDS

After the bids, the player on the left of the dealer plays the first card. Turning clockwise, the other players then each play a card in turn.

The idea is to play a card in the same suit as the first card.

If all the players play cards of the same suit, the highest value card wins.

The winner picks up the trick and puts it face down on the table, then plays a card.

If the first card played is a trump, each player must not only also play a trump, if his or her hand permits, but must play a trump of a higher value than those already played.

Remember that the order of the cards is special with trumps.

If the player cannot play a higher trump, he or she must play any trump they have in their hand.

If the player has no trumps he or she discards a card.

Discards do not win tricks.

In the same way, if the first card is of a normal suit (not a trump) and the player has neither a card of this suit nor a trump, he or she discards.

If the first card is a normal suit but the player does not have a card in this suit in hand but does have one or more trumps, he or she must play a trump.

A priori the trump wins the trick.

However another player in the same position can cut with a higher trump and wins the trick. Players in this position must play a trump, even if it is of a lower value.

You can only discard if you do not have a card in the same suit and if you do not have a trump.

If you are playing “no trumps”, none of the suits are trumps and the 4 suits are in their normal order. The rules of the game remain the same. You cannot trump and must follow suit or discard.

If you are playing with “all suits trumps”, all 4 colours are trumps. The order of the cards is thus that of the trumps in each suit and the value of the cards played must rise. When all cards are trumps there is no “cut” cut players without the suit required can only discard.

### *To summarise :*

- Players must always play the lead suit.
- If they do not have any cards in the suit but do have a trump they must play it.
- Subsequent trumps must be of a higher value.
- You can only discard if you have neither the lead suit nor a trump.
- The highest trump or, in the absence of a trump, the highest card played in the lead suit wins the trick.

At the end of each hand, players whose bids were wrong score negative points.

At the end of the rubber the winner is the player with the fewest negative points.

## BIDDING

**How do players agree on which suit is trumps at the start of the game?**

By bidding.

After the dealer deals the hand, the player who on his or her left starts the bidding, knowing they will play the first card.

The player asks the other players if they are ready and, when they are, announces the number of tricks he or she is going to take and the trump suit.

**The next player has 2 possibilities:**

- **Either** to approve the trump selected. He or she then announces the number of tricks they think they will take. This number can be more or fewer tricks than the preceding player - or even no tricks at all.
- **Or** to change the trump. This implies bidding for more tricks than the first player. ”

The highest bidder believes they are going to take the greatest number of tricks.

A bid can also be made for an equal number of tricks in a stronger suit.

Suit colours have an arbitrary hierarchy - in decreasing order :



**Example :**

*If the player before you bids “2 diamonds ” but you want trumps to be clubs you will have to bid at least “3 clubs”. However if you want trumps to be spades, it is sufficient to bid “2 spades”.*

In this bidding system each bid which imposes a new trump cancels the preceding bids. Bidding continues until each player makes a bid with the same trump as all the other players.

That ends the bidding and defines the trump for the hand.

### CASE OF THE LAST PLAYER TO BID

To take a trick, each player lays down a card and there are thus as many tricks as there are cards per player. To ensure that it is not possible for every

player to take the number of tricks bid for, the player who makes the final bid must ensure that the sum of the bids does not correspond to the number of cards distributed to each player.

**Example :**

*there are 3 players and each has been dealt 5 cards. The first player bids “3 no trumps”, the next “0 no trumps”. In this example, the player cannot bid “2 no trumps” as  $3+0+2 = 5$ , the number of cards dealt. He can, on the other hand, bid another figure with no trumps and that will end the bidding. The hand will be played with no trumps and each player will try to win the number of tricks bid. The alternative is to make a higher bid than “3 no trumps”, for example “3 hearts” and oblige the other players to bid again.*

This is only a slight handicap and does not prevent good players from winning hands.

### THE MÉCHOUNE

Players can “*méchouner*” at any moment during the bidding, stopping the next player from bidding. To do this the player says “I eschew” and taps the table loudly before a new trump is proposed.

“*Méchouner*” does 2 things :

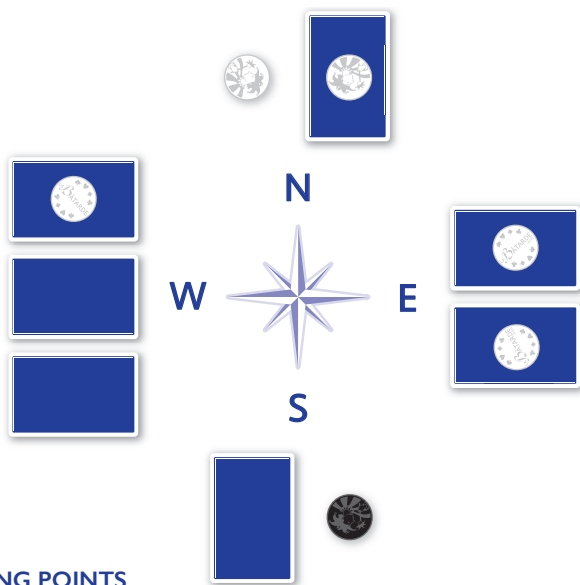
- **It blocks bids**, i.e. no other player can change the trump even if with a higher bid.
- **It doubles the negative points** of all the players at the end the rubber. We will see the way points are calculated below.

The first player to make a bid “*méchounée*” by another player can call out “*choune*” and bang on the table before the first card is played. That does not affect the game, but quadruples instead of doubling the points at the end of the rubber.

## WHAT THE COUNTERS ARE FOR

The counters exist to simplify point counting. When the bids are made, each player receives as many white counters as he or she has bid for tricks - or a black token if a "0" bid is made. During the game, players put these counters on the tricks they have won. At a glance, they can see where the other players are with their bids. At the end of the rubber, the counters facilitate the point counting.

### Example :



## COUNTING POINTS

When all cards have been played, each player counts the number of tricks won and hopes that the count corresponds to the bid made at the start of the hand. If this is the case the player scores 0 points. If not, he or she loses a point for each shortfall. Remember that the number of points is doubled if the hand was "méchounée" during bidding, and quadrupled if it was "chounée".

*Example :* In the illustration opposite, the player in North bid for 2 tricks but only got 1, so lost 1 point.

East bid for 2 tricks and made 2 so does not lose any points.

South bid "no tricks" but made 1 so lost 1 point.

West bid for 3 but only made 1 so lost 2 points.

If the game had been "eschewed", North would have lost 2 points, East 0, South 2 and West 4.

If the game had been "rechewed" North would have lost 4 points, East 0, South 4 and West 8.

The winner of the rubber is the player with the lowest number of negative points.

## THE BASTARD WITH 5 OR 6 PLAYERS

Both packs of 36 cards are used with 5 players or more.

Both packs have the same backs but the fronts are different.

On one, the letters or symbols in the corners are underlined. This is called the marked pack and the other is called the simple.

In this game, the packs are mixed and played with 72 cards.

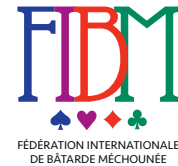
All the rules remain the same. Kings are stronger than Queens and Knives stronger than Musicians. With two packs there are henceforth 18 cards per suit and thus, when a suit is selected as trumps, there are 18 trump cards. The only problem is to know, when two similar cards are played, which is the winner. It is during bidding that the player who proposes a new bid specifies whether the stronger suit is the marked or the simple game.

A bid becomes, for example "4 spades, marked" or "3 no trumps, simple".

So the bid determines which of the two similar cards beats the other.

These rules may appear complex, but are very simple to understand when playing and ensure hands can be played very quickly.

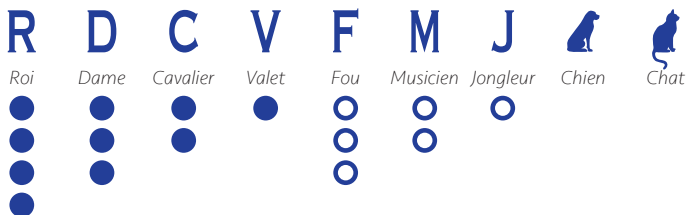
It only takes a few minutes to learn the Bastard, but several years to discover all its subtleties. You will then be able to confront the best players and, why not, participate in the world championship!



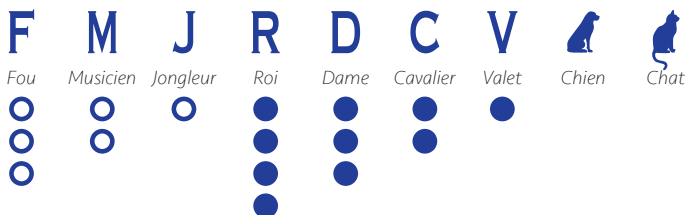


Thanks to the original codes printed in the margin of the cards, you never have a problem with their value.

⊕ ← THE NORMAL ORDER OF THE CARDS → ⊖



⊕ ← THE TRUMP ORDER OF THE CARDS → ⊖



⊕ ← THE ORDER OF THE SUITS WHEN BIDDING → ⊖



For more details about the Bastard  
(information, hints on playing, championships) contact  
[www.labatarde.com](http://www.labatarde.com)