

Casino

from Foster's Complete Hoyle: An Encyclopedia of Games

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Revised and Enlarged to October, 1914

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extracted 2026-08-04

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CASSINO.

This is a very old and always popular game, which has lately been much improved by the introduction of the variations known as Royal and Spade Cassino, the latter especially being a very lively game. Like Euchre, Cassino is eminently respectable, and is one of the few games of cards that are unhesitatingly admitted to the domestic circle.

Cards. Cassino is played with a full pack of fifty-two cards, which have no rank in play, their pip or face value being the only element of importance. In cutting for positions at the table, or for partners in the four-handed game, the Ace is the lowest card, the others ranking upward to the King in the order of their sequence.

Markers. When a certain number of points is agreed on as a game, the score may be kept with counters, on a sheet of paper, or on a cribbage board. If each hand is a game in itself, it is settled for immediately, either in counters or in money.

Players. Any number from two to four may play, each for himself, or four may play two against two, partners sitting opposite each other. The players on the dealer's right and left are known as the pone, and the eldest hand respectively.

Cutting. The players draw from an outspread pack for positions at the table, the lowest card having the choice and dealing the first hand. If the first cut does not decide, those tying must cut again. If a player exposes more than one card he must cut again. The ace is low.

Stakes. Cassino may be played for so much a game, or so much a point; and it may be agreed that the game shall be a certain number of points, or shall be complete in one deal, or that the player making the majority of points on each deal shall score one, and the one first making a certain number in this manner, such as five, shall be the winner. If points are played for, the lower score is usually deducted from the higher, and the difference is the value of the game. It is sometimes agreed that if the winner has twice as many points as his adversary, he shall be paid for a double game.

Dealing. After the cards have been properly shuffled they must be presented to the pone to be cut, and he must leave at least four in each packet. Beginning on his left, the dealer distributes four cards to each player in two rounds of two at a time, giving two to the table just before helping himself in each round. No trump is turned, and the remainder of the pack is left face downward on the dealer's left. The four cards dealt to the table are then turned face up, and the play begins. After the four cards given to each person have all been played, the dealer takes up the remainder of the pack, and without any further shuffling or cutting, deals four more cards to each player, two at a time, but gives none to the table. These four having been played, four more are dealt in the same manner, and so on, until the pack is exhausted, after which the deal passes to the left in regular rotation.

Irregularities in the Deal. If the pack is proved to be imperfect, or if a card is found faced in the pack there must be a fresh deal by the same dealer. If a player deals out of turn, he must be stopped before the cards on the table are turned face upward.

A misdeal loses the deal. It is a misdeal if the pack has not been cut, or if the cards are shuffled after the pack has been properly cut; or if the dealer deals a card incorrectly, and fails to remedy it before dealing to the next player; or if he deals too many or too few cards to any player or to the table.

If a card is exposed during the deal, an adversary may claim a fresh deal. If, after the cards on the table have been faced, a card is exposed by the dealer, or is found faced in the pack, the player to

whom it would be dealt may reject it, and it must then be placed in the middle of the stock, and he must be given the top card. If a card is exposed in the last round, the dealer must take it, and must allow the player to whom it would have been dealt to draw a card from the dealer's hand, face downward. If he draws the exposed card, he must keep it.

If the dealer gives any player an incorrect number of cards in any round after the first, and does not detect and correct the error before he deals to the next player, the dealer cannot count anything that hand. The number of cards in each hand must be restored to four, either by drawing from them, face down, or adding from the stock. If any player lifts his cards before the dealer has helped all the players, including himself, a misdeal cannot be claimed.

Objects of the Game. The object in Cassino is to secure certain cards and combinations of cards which count toward game. These are as follows:--

Points. The majority of **Cards** taken in. 3 The majority of **Spades** taken in. 1 The Ten of diamonds, **Big Cassino**. 2 The deuce of spades, **Little Cassino**. 1 The **Ace** of any suit. 1 A **Sweep** of all the cards on the table. 1

The manner in which these points are secured will become apparent from the description of the method of playing the hands.

Method of Playing. Beginning on the dealer's left, each player in turn plays a card from his hand, placing it face upward on the table. Only one card can be played at a time, and each person must play in his proper turn until all four of his cards are exhausted. After receiving fresh cards, the eldest hand again plays first, and so on for every round. Under certain conditions, each player in his proper turn may take up certain cards from the table, together with the one played from his hand, turning them face downward in front of him. He is entitled to count all the points contained in the cards taken in or won in this manner. These conditions are: that he can match or **pair** a card or cards on the table; that he can **combine** two or more cards on the table so as to make their total pip value equal to that of the card he plays; or that he can **build** a card in his hand upon one on the table, so as to make their total pip value agree with that of a second card, still in his hand.

Pairing. If the person whose turn it is to play, holds in his hand any card of a similar denomination to any of those on the table, he may play the card from his hand, face upward, and then gather it in again, together with all similar cards, turning them face downward in front of him. For instance: He holds an Eight, and there are one or two Eights on the table. He plays the Eight from his hand, and then gathers in all of them.

Combining. If a player holds any card, not a K Q or J, the pip value of which is equal to that of two or more cards on the table, he may play the card from his hand, and then gather it in again, together with the two or three cards that collectively equal it in pip value. For instance: He holds a 9, and a 4, 3 and 2 are upon the table. He may combine these three cards, calling attention to the fact that their collective value is 9, and then play the 9 from his own hand, gathering in and turning down all four cards. An 8 and Ace, or 6 and 3 might be gathered in the same way; or two such combinations might be gathered at the same time, 3, 2, 6, 7, for instance, which would make two nines; all of which might be gathered by a player holding a 9 his hand.

Pairs and combinations may be taken in together. For instance: Among the cards on the table are a 4, 6, and 10, and the player holds a 10. He can gather in not only the pair of Tens, but the combinations which equal a 10.

Building. A player may have in his hand two cards, the lower of which, if added to a card on the table, would build up its value to that of the higher card still in the player's hand. For instance: A player holds a 9 and 2, and there is a 7 on the table. He may place the 2 on the 7, announcing the

total value; "Nine," which will notify other players that those two cards cannot be separated; but he cannot take them in until it again comes round to his turn to play, because he is allowed to play only one card at a time, and he has played his card in making the build.

Should any other player following him hold a 9, he would be entitled to take in this build, but he could not separate the two cards forming it. A player holding either a 7 or a 2 could not touch either of the cards in the build, because they are no longer a 7 and 2, but a 9, for all practical purposes.

Increasing Builds. If any player held an Ace and a 10 in his hand, he could increase the 9 build to a 10 build, by putting his Ace on the 7 and 2, and announcing the total value, "Ten." Any following player would then be unable to win the build with anything but a 10, and the player who originally built it a 9 would lose it unless he also held a 10 in his hand. Should the build remain a 9 until it came round again to the player who originally built it, he could then take it in with his 9, or he might himself increase it to 10, if he had an Ace and a 10 in his hand; but in order to do this the player must have in his hand the cards to win both the original and the increased builds. A player holding in his hand a 10, 3 and 2, but no 8, could not build a 5 on the table to an 8, and afterward advance it to 10. He must have the 2 3 8 and 10 all in his own hand to do this.

Some players imagine that a player cannot increase his own build in this manner, even if he has both the cards for the first and last build; but there is no reason why a player should be denied a privilege which is freely granted to his adversary. If any player can legitimately make or increase a build, all may do so, provided they have the proper cards.

Double Builds. When two cards of the same denomination, or two builds of the same value are put together as one, they cannot be increased. For instance: A player holds 7 and 3, and there are upon the table a 5 2 and 4. He places his 3 on the 4, and gathers the 5 and 2 together, announcing the build as "Two Sevens." This cannot be increased to 8, 9, or 10 under any circumstances, and nothing but a 7 will win it.

Pairs may be doubled in the same manner. If a player has two Nines in his hand, and there is one on the table, he may build on the latter with one of his own, announcing, "Two Nines," which will prevent any player from building either of them to 10, and will entitle the builder to take in both cards with his third Nine when it comes round to his turn. Should any other player at the table hold the fourth Nine, he could of course take in the build.

It is necessary to distinguish between building and combining. In combining cards, those already on the table are gathered together; in building, or increasing a build, a card must be played from the hand. If one player has made a build of any description, it cannot be interfered with or increased except by other cards from a player's hand, those from the table not being available. For instance: One player has built a 5 by combining two Aces on the table with a 3 from his hand. On the table are also a 2 and 4 and a following player holds a 9 and 7. He cannot use the deuce on the table to increase the build from 5 to 7, nor the 4 to increase it to 9; because that would not be building from his hand; but if he held the 4 and 9 in his hand, he could build on the 5.

The simple rule to be remembered is that no combination of cards once announced, and left on the table, can be changed, except by the addition of a card from the hand of some player.

Taking In. Any player who has made a build is obliged either to win it, when it is next his turn to play, or to win something else, or to make another build. For instance: He has built a 5 into a 9 with a 4, and holds another 4; if another 5 appears on the table before it comes to his turn to play, he may build that into a 9 also, with his other 4, announcing, "Two Nines." Or if some player should lay out a 4 he could pair it and take it in, leaving his 9 build until the next round. In the same way a player may increase or win another player's build instead of taking in his own. An

opponent's build may be increased by cards from the hand only.

In the four-handed game, partners may take in one another's builds, or may make builds which can be won by the card declared in the partner's hand. For instance; One player builds an 8, and his partner holds Little Cassino. If there is a 6 on the table, the Cassino can be built on it, and "two Eights," called, although the player has no 8 in his own hand; the 8 already built by his partner is sufficient. If a player has built a 9 which has been taken in by an adversary, he still holding the 9 he built for, his partner may build for the declared 9 in the same way.

Sweeping. If at any time a player is able to win everything on the table with one card, it is a sweep, and counts a point. For instance: He holds an 8, and there are upon the table four cards only:--5 3 6 and 2. By combining the 6 and 2, and the 5 and 3, two Eights will be formed, and the sweep is made. Sweeps are usually marked by leaving the cards with which they are made face upward at the bottom of the tricks taken in by the player. Sweeps made by opposite sides are sometimes turned down to cancel one another.

Trailing. When a player cannot pair, combine, or build anything, he must play a card. This is called trailing, because he is simply following along waiting for opportunities. In trailing it is usually the best policy to play the smaller cards, except Aces and Little Cassino, because as other players will probably trail small cards also, these may be combined and won with the larger cards kept in the player's hand.

Last Cards. In the last round, all the cards remaining on the table are won by the player who takes the last trick, but it does not count as a sweep unless it would have been a sweep under any circumstances. The last trick is usually made by the dealer, who always keeps back a court card if he has one, to pair one already on the table.

Irregularities in Play. If any person plays out of his proper turn, the card so played is laid aside as exposed, until it comes to his turn, when it is simply placed on the table with the others. The player in error is not allowed to build or combine it, nor to win anything with it.

If a player gathers in a card which does not belong to the combination or build, he must not only return the card improperly taken up, but all others taken in with it, together with his own card, the latter, however, being laid out separately from the others. If the combination was his own build, it must be broken up; if an adversary's, it must be restored, and left as it was.

If a player takes in a build with a wrong card, or takes in a wrong combination, or gathers cards to which he is not entitled, the error must be challenged and proved before the next trick is taken in by another player, because only the last trick gathered can be seen.

If a player makes a build without the proper card in his hand to win it, on discovery of the error, the combination must be broken up, and the adversaries may take back the cards they have played in following the erroneous build, and may amend their play. If, however, another player has won the erroneous build, there is no penalty, nor any remedy.

Showing. After the last card has been played, each player counts his cards face downward, and announces the number. The player having the majority scores the three points for cards. If it is a tie, neither scores. The cards are then turned face up, and the spades counted and claimed; and then all the points for Cassinos and Aces. It should be remembered that the total number of points to be made in each hand, exclusive of sweeps, is eleven, and the total of the claims made must agree with that number.

Scoring. There are several methods of scoring. The old way was to play 11 points up, deducting the lower score from the higher at the end of each deal. If one side reached 11 before the adversary reached 6, it was a lurch, and counted as a double game. The common method is to

count every hand a game, and settle for it in counters.

TWENTY-ONE POINT CASSINO.

This game is usually marked with counters, or pegged on a cribbage board. Nothing is scored until the end of the hand, when each side reckons and claims its points. In order to avoid disputes there should be a previous understanding as to what points go out first in a close game. In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the points count out in the following order:--Cards first, then Spades, Big Cassino, Little Cassino, Aces, and Sweeps. If the Aces have to decide it, the spade Ace goes out first, then clubs, hearts, and diamonds. If the sweeps have to decide it, only the difference in the number of sweeps counts, and if there is none, or not enough, the game is not ended, and another deal must be played.

It is better to agree to **count out** in twenty-one point Cassino; each player keeping mental count of the number of cards and spades he has taken in, together with any "natural" points. The moment he reaches 21 he should claim the game, and if his claim is correct he wins, even if his adversary has 21 or more. If he is mistaken, and cannot show out, he loses the game, no matter what his adversary's score may be. If neither claims out, and both are found to be, neither wins, and the game must be continued to 32 points, and so on, eleven points more each time until one player claims to have won the game.

Suggestions for Good Play. The principal thing in Cassino is to remember what has been played especially in the counting and high cards, such as Aces, Eights, Nines, and Tens. In making pairs and combinations, give preference to those containing spades, and if you have to trail, do not play a spade if you can help it. If three Aces have been taken in, play the fourth, if you hold it, at the first opportunity, because it cannot be paired; but if there is another Ace to come, keep yours until you can make a good build with it. As between cards which were on the table and those trailed by an adversary, take in those trailed if you have a choice. Take in the adversary's build in preference to your own, if you can, and build on his build at every opportunity. If Big Cassino is still to come, avoid trailing cards that will make a Ten with those on the table. Go for "cards" in preference to everything else, and always make combinations that take in as many cards as possible. If you have a Nine, and the cards on the table are 2 2 5 7, take in the 2 2 5, in preference to the 2 7. It is considered bad policy to take in three court cards, as it stops all sweeps when the fourth appears.

ROYAL CASSINO.

The only difference in this form of the game is that the three court cards, K Q J, have a pip value, and may be used in combining and building, whereas in the ordinary game they can be used only in pairs. The Jack is worth 11, the Queen 12, and the King 13; so that a 9 and 2 can be taken in with a Jack, or a 6 4 and 3 with a King. In the same manner a Queen will win a Jack and Ace, or a King will win a Jack and deuce. The aces are sometimes valued at 14 each.

SPADE CASSINO.

In this interesting variation every spade counts one point toward game. The spade Jack counts one in addition to its being a spade, and the extra point so made takes the place of the count for "spades" in the ordinary game, so that 24 points are made in every hand, exclusive of sweeps: Cards 3; Big Cassino 2; Little Cassino 1; the four Aces 4; the spade Jack 1, and 13 spades. It must be remembered that the spade Jack and deuce count 2 points each, the extra point being for the spade.

The game is scored on a cribbage board, every point being pegged immediately; that is, every spade, every Ace, the Cassinos and the sweeps. There is nothing to count at the end of the hand but the cards. Sixty-one points is game, once round the board and into the game hole.

DRAW CASSINO.

In this variation, no more cards are dealt after the first round, but each player keeps his hand filled to four cards by drawing one from the top of the stock as soon as he plays one from his hand. The stock is left on the table, face down, slightly spread, for convenience in slipping off the top card as it is drawn.