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Cribbage Board

Cribbage, is a card game, traditionally for two players, that involves playing and grouping cards in combinations which gain points. It can be adapted for three players.

Cribbage Board

Each player takes two pegs of the same color. Each time a player scores, they advance a peg along a row on their side of the board, counting one hole per point. Two pegs are used, and the rearmost peg jumps over the first peg to show the first increment in score. After another increase in score, the peg behind jumps over the peg in front to the appropriate hole to show the player's new score, and so on

Game rule

Play proceeds through a succession of "hands", each hand consisting of a "deal", "the play" and "the show". If a player reaches the target score (usually 121), play ends immediately with that player being the winner of the game.

Deal

The players cut for first deal, and the person who cuts the lowest card deals. The dealer shuffles and deals five or six cards to each player, depending on the number of players. For two players, each is dealt six cards; for three or four players, each is dealt five cards. In the case of three players, a single card is dealt face down in the centre of the table to start the crib. Once the cards have been dealt, each player chooses four cards to retain, then discards the other one or two face-down to form the "crib" (also called the box), which will be used later by the dealer.

At this point, each player's hand and the crib will contain exactly four cards. The player on the dealer's left cuts the remaining deck, and the dealer reveals the top card, called the "starter" or the "cut". If this card is a jack, the dealer scores two points for "his heels" or "his nibs".

Play

Starting with the player on the dealer's left, the players each in turn lay one card face up on the table in front of them, stating the count—that is, the cumulative value of the cards that have been laid (for example, the first player lays a five and says "five", the next lays a six and says "eleven", and so on)—without the count going above 31. Face cards (kings, queens, and jacks) count as 10. The cards are not laid in the centre of the table as, at the end of the "play", each player needs to pick up the cards they have laid.

Players score points during the play as follows:

- 15 For causing the count to reach exactly 15 a player scores two points, then play continues.
- Pair Completing a pair (two of a kind) scores two points.
- Three of a kind is the same as three different pairs, or 6 points.
- Four of a kind is 6 different pairs, or 12 points.
- A run of three or more cards (consecutively played, but not necessarily in order) scores the number of cards in the run.

If a player cannot play without causing the count to exceed 31, they call "Go". Continuing with the player on their left, the other player(s) continue(s) the play until no one can play without the count exceeding 31. A player is obliged to play a card unless there is no card in their hand that can be played without the count exceeding 31 (one cannot voluntarily pass).

Once 31 is reached or no one is able to play, the player who played the last card scores one point if the count is still under 31 and two if it is exactly 31. The count is then reset to zero and those players with cards remaining in their hands repeat the process starting with the player to the left of the player who played the last card. When all players have played all of their cards the game proceeds to the "show".

Players choose the order in which to lay their cards in order to maximize their scores; experienced players refer to this as either good or poor "pegging" or "pegsmanship". If one player reaches the target, the game ends immediately.

Show

Once the play is complete, each player in turn, starting with the player on the left of the dealer, displays their own hand on the table and scores points based on its content in conjunction with the starter card. Points are scored for:

- Combinations of any number of cards totalling fifteen
- Runs
- Pairs (Multiple pairs are scored pair by pair but may be referred to as three or four of a kind.)
- Flush (A four-card flush scores four and cannot include the starter card; a five-card flush scores five.)
- Having a jack of the same suit as the starter card ("one for his nob [or nobs or nibs]", sometimes called the "right" jack)

The dealer scores their hand last and then turns the cards in the crib face up. These cards are then scored by the dealer as an additional hand, also in conjunction with the starter card. Unlike the dealer's own hand, the crib cannot score a four-card flush, but it can score a five-card flush with the starter.

All scores from 0 to 29 are possible, with the exception of 19, 25, 26 and 27. Players may refer colloquially to a hand scoring zero points as a "nineteen hand".

