

Elbows Up!

Game Rules

Welcome to the exciting card game Elbows up! This is the newest fun, fast-paced, Trick-Taking, sittin' around the table with family and friends card game with endless laughs, twists and strategies. With Elbows Up! there are no teams; it's every man for himself!

How to be the BIG WINNER:

What is the object of the game? To frustrate the plans and delusions of your opponents and be the player with the most points after 10 rounds of play.

What's Elbows Up! all about?

It is about predicting exactly how many tricks you can win and fulfilling that prediction, while simultaneously toppling the plans of your opponents. Whoever can do that the best will gain the most points at the end of play, receive bonus points and obtain the full admiration and respect he deserves from his opponents!

How to Play:

1. The player whose birthday is closest to now is the first dealer. The cards are dealt out by a new dealer after each round. The person to the left of the dealer is always the first to play or "Lead Out."
2. Cards are shuffled and dealt to players face down in the following manner:
 - For 3 players – Deal 15 cards each.
 - For 4 players – Deal 12 cards each.
 - For 5 players – Deal 10 cards each.
 - For 6 players – Deal 8 cards each.
3. There will be some cards left-over at the end of the deal. Spread these cards out face down in the middle of the table. If a player has a Tea Card, he will take it out of his hand and place it face up on the table in front of him and replace it by choosing one of the cards from the middle of the table. When all Tea Cards are replaced, the person to the left of the dealer will turn over any one of the remaining, face-down cards from the middle of the table without looking, to be the Trump Suit. This card will be placed face up on the table in a place where ALL players can clearly see it throughout the round.
 - **NOTE:** If the Joker or a Tea Card is turned up, the Trump color will be chosen by the player who turned the card up. Additionally, if the Joker is turned up the DEALER instantly gets 10 extra points added to his score. BEFORE PLAY BEGINS, all of the remaining cards will be placed face down under the Trump Suit Card.
4. Players will look at their cards and predict how many "Tricks" they believe they can win during the round. This predicted number will be the player's bid.
5. **The Bidding Process:** Why is this game called "Elbows Up!?" Because of how the bidding process works. The bid must be both secret AND known to all players at the same time... WHAT??? How does that work? When all the players are ready to bid, everyone puts one of their elbows on the table, making a fist with their hand. All players will count out loud while lowering and raising their fist from the table – One, Two, Three – On three all players will hold up the number of fingers on their hand that corresponds to their bid. For example: If a player's bid is 3, he will hold up 3 fingers on his hand.
 - **NOTE:** If a player is dealt all low number cards, few or no Trump cards, etc., he may choose to bid zero. When all players count, One, Two, Three, he will keep his hand in a fist to indicate that his bid is zero. It is actually harder than one might think to win 0 tricks!
 - **NOTE:** It is VERY rare for a player to take 6 or more tricks. If a player has a REALLY STRONG HAND, he may choose to bid 6 or more. If this is the case, instead of holding up a number of fingers for his bid, he will indicate it by holding out his thumb sideways when the group counts to three during the bidding process.
 - **Just start playing and it will all become clear!** You will discover that there are many strategies that can be utilized to frustrate your opponent's plans during play. In this game, what one may consider a "bad hand," can end up winning the most points and thwarting the plans of all the other players. In other words, there is no such thing as a bad hand; it is all in how you use your skill and strategy to play the hand you were dealt.
6. The bids for each player are then recorded on a score sheet.
7. The player to the left of the dealer will start play by Leading Out with the suit of his choice.
 - **HINT:** Players are not NECESSARILY trying to win every trick. The number of tricks a player WANTS to win is determined by the number that was bid (see "Scoring" below). One of the most interesting twists of this game is that, depending on how each hand unfolds, a player may end up "Throwing Away" high cards towards the end of a hand, just so he will not exceed his bid!
8. Players MUST Follow Suit if they have the Lead Out Suit in their hand; this includes Trump cards. That is, if someone Leads Out with a Yellow card, a Yellow Card must be played by the other players. If, however, one of the players does **NOT** have a Yellow card in his hand, that player may either use a Trump card (which will beat the Yellow card), or he may "Throw Away" some other card that he does not want to keep.