

Reds – v. 20110819 – Jacob Peck – paperparachute games (<http://games.suspended-chord.info/>)

Reds — *A trick taking game for 2-6 players using a standard deck of playing cards*

Equipment:

A standard deck of playing cards, a pad of paper, and a pencil.

Setup:

Nominate one player to be the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper takes the paper and pencil.

Prepare the deck by removing any jokers and all Hearts from the deck, leaving a three-suited deck (diamonds, spades, clubs) of 39 cards (2-10, J, Q, K, A in each suit). Shuffle the deck and have each player draw a card. The player with the highest ranked card by value is the dealer for the first round. In the case of any tie, redraw until there is no tie.

Ranking of cards:

Diamonds are the trump suit. The suit of the first black card flipped from the top of the pack after all cards have been dealt is the anti-trump suit. The remaining black suit is neutral.

Cards are ranked as follows

Suit: Trump > Leading Suit > Anti-Trump

Value: A > K > Q > J > 10 > 9 > 8 > 7 > 6 > 5 > 4 > 3 > 2

An anti-trump card cannot win a trick unless the leading suit is the anti-trump and any other suited card has not been played in the trick, in which case the highest valued anti-trump takes the trick. If the leading suit is the anti-trump and someone else plays a neutral or trump card, the trick is won by highest value as normal. The net effect of these rules is to almost guarantee that the anti-trump suit will lose any trick it is played in, excepting when it is the lead.

The deal:

The dealer shuffles the 39-card deck and deals 5 cards to each player, face down. After this, cards are flipped from the top of the remaining pack until a black card is shown. The suit of this card is the anti-trump suit. In the extremely rare event that the pack contains only diamonds, there is no anti-trump this round (this can only happen in a 6-person game, and is extremely rare in practice).

The play:

Each round consists of 5 tricks. Before any cards are played each round, the following steps are taken in order:

First, the players bid. Each player (starting with the player to the left of the dealer and continuing clockwise to the dealer) bids a value between 0 (also known as nil) and 5, estimating how many tricks they'll take in the coming round. As each player announces their bid, the scorekeeper records this on the pad. Players are encouraged to guess correctly, and to take into account the card exchange in next step, to ensure that they score the most points per round as possible.

After the bid, players exchange a number of cards with another player by selecting the correct number of cards from their hand, and passing them to the player in the correct direction face down. All players pass cards before anyone looks at the new cards passed to them. After all cards have been passed, players take the cards passed to them into their hand.

The game lasts 9 rounds, each round exchanging a different number of cards to a different player. Use the chart below to help:

Round	Exchange
1	4 cards, left
2*	4 cards, right
3*	3 cards, left
4	3 cards, right
5	2 cards, left
6*	2 cards, right
7*	1 card, left
8	1 card, right
9	No exchange

For a shorter game, skip the rounds marked with an asterisk (*).

After this, the player to the left of the dealer leads the first trick, and play continues clockwise with each player playing a card to the trick in order. A player may lead a trick with any card, including trump and anti-trump cards. Players must follow suit if able to, and if unable to may play any other card in their hand. The trick is won by the highest ranking card in the trick, as per the rules above (see *Ranking of cards* above).

After all 5 tricks are played in each round, score is tallied (see *Scoring* below).

After scoring, the current dealer hands the pack to the player to his or her left, who becomes the new dealer.

Scoring:

Players that match their bid exactly receive 3 points for each trick plus a 5 point bonus. (e.g. I bid 3 and win 3, so I score $(3*3)+5=14$ points.) If the bid was nil, and was matched, that player scores 10 points instead of just the $(0*3) + 5 = 5$ points they normally would have.

Players that exceed their bid receive 3 points for each trick used in fulfilling their trick, and one point for each trick over bid. (e.g. I bid 2 and win 4, so I score $(2*3)+1+1 = 8$ points.)

Players that fail to meet their bid receive 1 point for each trick. (e.g. I bid 3 and won 2, so I score 2 points.)

Scoring is performed at the end of each round, and running totals are kept.

After the 9 rounds, the player with the highest score wins. In case of a tie for first place, play additional rounds with no exchange (as in round 9) until a clear winner emerges.

Variants:

Hidden bids – all players write their bid down on a piece of paper and reveal it at the end of the round.
Partnership game (for 4 or 6 players) – the person across from you at the table is your partner. At the end of the round, you and your partner score points on your individual bids, then add them together for your team score. At the end of the game, the team with the highest score wins.

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Acknowledgments:

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