

Palace

Card Game



Rules of the House

Dealing:

The game is played with one deck of cards for two people, or with multiple decks with multiple people. The more cards you have to play with, the longer the game will last. First you must deal each player three (3) cards face down (called “the Under Palace”). These cards cannot be looked at until the end of the game. Once those cards are dealt, deal each player an additional six (6) cards face down (explained in the next section). All remaining cards are put into the center of the table, face-down on the board of play (a.k.a. the board). The remaining cards are called the “pickup stack”. Once the cards are dealt, the dealer takes the top card from the pickup stack and turns it over for the first card of play. If an Ace, 2, or 10 is the first card picked, return it to the deck and replace it with another.

Getting Started:

Out of the six cards you are given, place three of them face up on the three cards that are face down. Good cards are determined from highest to lowest, Kings being the highest and 3's the lowest. Aces and 2's are wild, making them good cards, and 10's are "clear deck" cards. Most players will put their 3 best cards on top of the three down-turned cards. The three cards face-up and the three cards face-down are called the 'original six.' The person with the worst 3 cards face-up goes first, and play continues clockwise. To determine the worst 3 cards, consider the number of wilds first, then values of the next highest card and so on. (You can simplify this rule for the math-challenged players by starting with the person to the left of the dealer.)

Card Values:

There are three (3) types of wild cards:



- Aces are the highest and most valuable card in the game. When this card is played, the next player in turn has to pick up the discard pile. If the next player in turn can play an Ace, then the picking up of the pile is deferred to the next player. The penalty of picking up the discard pile can be deferred as many times as there are Aces in player's hands to defer to the next player. The player that cannot play an Ace then has to pick up the discard pile. The next player in turn can lay down any card of his choosing.
Alternative play: the Ace plays like a 2.



- Tens and Jokers (if not using the alternate rules) are the second highest cards. A 10 can be played on any card just as the Ace or a 2, but once played, the 10 or the Joker and all the cards in the discard pile on the board are sent to the clear pile and cannot be used again. This clear pile is set off to the side to make sure it does not get mixed in with the pickup pile or the discard pile. The player laying this card can now play any card from his hand that he chooses.



- Twos are the lowest of the wild card in the game and can be played on any turn. Once a 2 is played, the person who played it must play any other card in his hand he wishes. There are 2 other options available:
 - ✓ If he doesn't want to play any of his cards, he may play the top card from the pickup pile. The discard pile is not cleared from the board.
 - ✓ If he wishes to keep the card off the top of the pickup pile, he must also pickup all the cards on the discard pile from the board. (Also referred to as the reset/start over card.) The next player resumes regular play.

Playing the Game:

The basic idea of the game is to get rid of all of your cards first. When it is your turn, you have several options, but you can never skip your turn.

1. You can play a card that is equal to or greater than the current card on the board. Once a player's places his card(s) down and he has less than three cards in his remaining hand, he must pick up cards from the deck until he has three cards (see rule #4). If the player has more than three cards in his hand, he is not allowed to pick from the deck. Note: Once a player uses a wild card or a ten and he has only two cards in his hand, he may pick up another card in the middle of his turn. For example, if I have three cards in my hand, and I put down a ten, I may pick up another card from the deck before I put down my second card.
2. You can always play a wildcard.
3. *If pickup pile still contains cards:*

If you cannot beat or match the current card on the board, or you don't wish to use your good cards, you can 'chance' it. To chance it, pick up one card from the pickup stack. If the card beats or matches the current card on the board or it is a wild, you can immediately play it. If the card does not beat/match the current card on the board, or you don't wish to use it, pick up all the cards from the discard pile on the board plus the card you just took from the pickup stack. The next player plays any card or cards (of the same value) thereby restarting the discard pile

If pickup pile has been depleted:
If a player cannot beat the card shown with the cards in his hand, and he has no wild cards or 10's, then he must pick up the discard pile and add it to his hand. After a pile is picked up, the next player plays any card(s) from his hand to restart a new discard pile.

4. You can play as many of the same card as you wish on your turn. The next person only has to beat or match the card, not the number of cards. (Ex. If you play three 5's, the next person can throw one six.)
5. Rule of Multiples: Four (or more) of a kind or more acts like both a 2 and a 10. It clears the board into the clear pile like a 10, and allows you to play another card like a 2. This does not mean that you by yourself must throw 4 or more of a kind to clear the board. If four or more of the same card are in a row, it creates a clear on the person who played the cards to make the total four or more. (Ex. You throw down two 6's. If the person after you throws two or more 6's, that clears to him. He can then play another card). Four+ cards, like wildcards, can be played at any time.
6. Remember you can always draw a card from the pickup stack. Even if the board is clear for your turn, or if you can beat it using the cards in your hand, you are allowed to take a 'chance'. The only stipulation is that the card you drew must be played by either laying the card on the board or keeping the card and all of the other cards in the discard pile. You cannot play any other cards from your hand on the current turn if you 'chance' a card. You continue normal play at your next turn.
7. *There must always be at least three cards in your hand until the pickup stack is gone.* If you have less than three at the end of your turn, pick up cards from the pickup stack until you have three (as stated in rule #1 above). If one of the cards you picked up matches the card you threw down, you can quickly throw it before the next person gets his card down. (Ex. You have 3 cards at the start of your turn. You lay down two 8's before the next persons turn; you must pickup two cards from the pickup stack. You picked up another 8 and a 6. Quickly throw down the 8 and pickup another card.) It pays to pay attention to the game to stop other players from doing this.
8. If you have more than three cards, you cannot take any cards from the pickup stack after you laid down a card. (Ex. You have four cards in your hand, and you play one on your turn. Now you have three cards and your turn is over.)
9. You cannot touch any of your original six until you have no other cards **and** the pickup stack is gone. Any peaking at the face down cards in not allowed.

Ending the Game:

1. Once the pickup stack is gone and you are left with your original 6 (you have played all the cards in your hand), you now take all three of the face-up cards into your hand to be played as normal. (They never have to go back down where they can be seen.) This is why it is helpful to pick out your three best cards beforehand at the beginning of the game.
2. After all of the cards that were once face up, and any other cards you had to pick up after you began to play the three face-up are gone, you move onto the three face-down cards.
3. When you are ready to use the three face-down cards, there are some rules to be followed:
 - a. **Only look at one card at a time** (you pick up only one card from the face-down cards on the board and that card must be played on your next turn. (You must play these cards blindly.)

- b. If the face down card cannot beat the card on the board, keep the card in your hand, and pick up the remaining cards on the discard pile from the board.
- c. Another face down card cannot be played until all of the cards in your current hand are gone.
- d. If the face down card can beat the card on the board, play it and take a look at the next face down card. If the drawn card matches the card you just played and the next player has not taken his turn, you can quickly play that card and turn over the next face-down card.
- e. The same rules apply for the second card as the first card.
- f. Once you have only one face down card left you can play it. If it beats the card on the board, you win. If it does not, pick up all the cards on the board and put the last face down card face down again. That last face down card must be the last card you play.

Alternate Rules:

1. You must say "Last Card" once you only have one card left from the Under Palace (3 original face-down cards from the beginning of the game). If you fail to say "Last Card" and are called out by another player, you must pick up the discard pile.
2. Variation: The Joker cards do not act like a 10 but instead, reverse the order of play. This rule makes it fun when playing an Ace that, because of the Joker card, forces the person playing the Ace to have to pick up the discard pile.

Tips for Developing Strategy:

- **Tip #1:** When it's your turn, you are allowed to pick up the card pile even if you can beat the card shown. You may want to do this early in the game when the pile is still small and contains high cards and/or wild cards you may need later on.
- **Tip #2:** Having multiple cards doesn't mean you have to play them all. For example, if you have three Kings, you may want to use each on a separate occasion instead of all in one turn, since it is the highest card.
- **Tip #3:** Make the pile grow. If you have several wild cards (Aces, 2's and a 10), you may want to save that 10 for last. Making the pile grow large while you have a "clear card" in your back pocket may mean that someone will have to pick up all those cards, and it won't be you.

I use to play this card game several years ago and had forgotten most of the rules. In searching the Internet, I discovered that there are several versions of the rules so I compiled and reconciled the rules then resolved the conflicts between versions based on how I remembered playing this game.

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