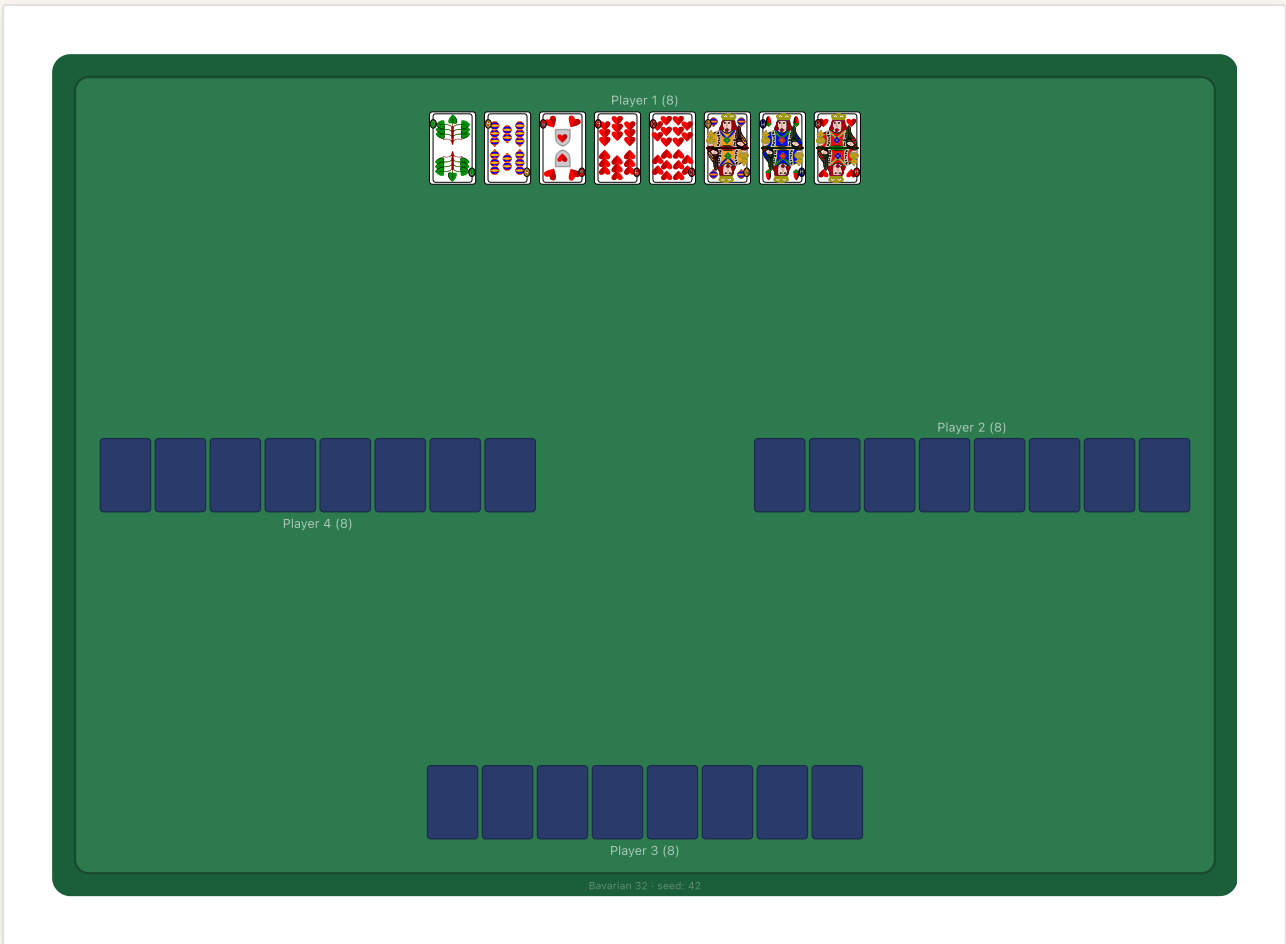


SCHAFKOPF

Schafkopf (pronounced SHAHF-kopf, meaning “Sheepshhead”) is the defining card game of Bavaria, Germany. Played seriously in clubs, tournaments, and casual settings throughout southern Germany, it is one of the most culturally embedded regional card games in Europe. The American game **Sheepshead** is derived from Schafkopf brought by German immigrants.



Schafkopf — table layout

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=bavarian-32&variant=schafkopf>

THE DECK

32-card Bavarian pattern deck: 4 suits × 8 ranks. The suits are Acorns, Leaves, Hearts, and Bells (equivalent to Clubs, Spades, Hearts, and Diamonds in French-suited decks). The ranks in each suit: Ace (Sau), King, Ober, Unter, 10, 9, 8, 7.

Card point values:

CARD	POINTS
Ace (Sau)	11
10	10
King	4
Ober	3
Unter	2
9, 8, 7	0

Total card points in the deck: **120**.

DEALING

All 32 cards are dealt to the 4 players — **8 cards each**. No cards are set aside. Deal rotates clockwise each hand.

PERMANENT TRUMP HIERARCHY

Unlike Skat, the top 8 trumps are always fixed regardless of the declared suit or game type:

- 1 Ober of Acorns (highest trump)
- 2 Ober of Leaves
- 3 Ober of Hearts
- 4 Ober of Bells
- 5 Unter of Acorns
- 6 Unter of Leaves
- 7 Unter of Hearts
- 8 Unter of Bells (lowest of the 8 Matadors)

Below the Matadors, the **Heart suit** (or the solo-declared suit) forms the remaining trumps: Ace, 10, King, 9, 8, 7.

Total trumps in a normal Rufspiel: 8 Matadors + 6 Hearts = **14 trumps**.

GAME TYPES

Rufspiel (Partner Game) — most common: The declarer calls an Ace of a non-Heart suit (e.g., “I call the Ober of Leaves” or “I call the Ace of Bells”). The player holding that Ace is the secret partner. The declarer and partner work together to score 61+ card points, without revealing their partnership. The called Ace must be played if that suit is led, unless the holder plays a trump instead. Worth 2 game points per opponent.

Solo: One player against three, with a named trump suit replacing Hearts as the lower trumps. The 8 Matadors remain fixed. Worth 3 game points per opponent.

Wenz (Wenzel): Only the four Unters are trump — no Obers, no suit trumps. Solo play. Worth 5 game points per opponent.

Farbsolo (Colour Solo): Solo with a named non-Heart trump suit. Worth 3 game points.

PLAY

The player to the dealer’s left leads the first trick. Players must **follow suit** if possible; if unable, they may play any card. The highest trump wins a trump trick; the highest card of the led suit wins a plain-suit trick. The winner of each trick leads the next.

SCORING

After 8 tricks, the declaring side’s total card points determine the result:

CARD POINTS	RESULT
61–90	Normal win for declarers
91–119	Schneider — declarers win double
120	Schwarz — declarers win triple (all tricks taken)
30–60	Schneider — defenders win double
0–29	Schwarz — defenders win triple
31–60	Normal win for defenders

Game points are settled per player at the table (losers pay winners). A running score is kept across hands.

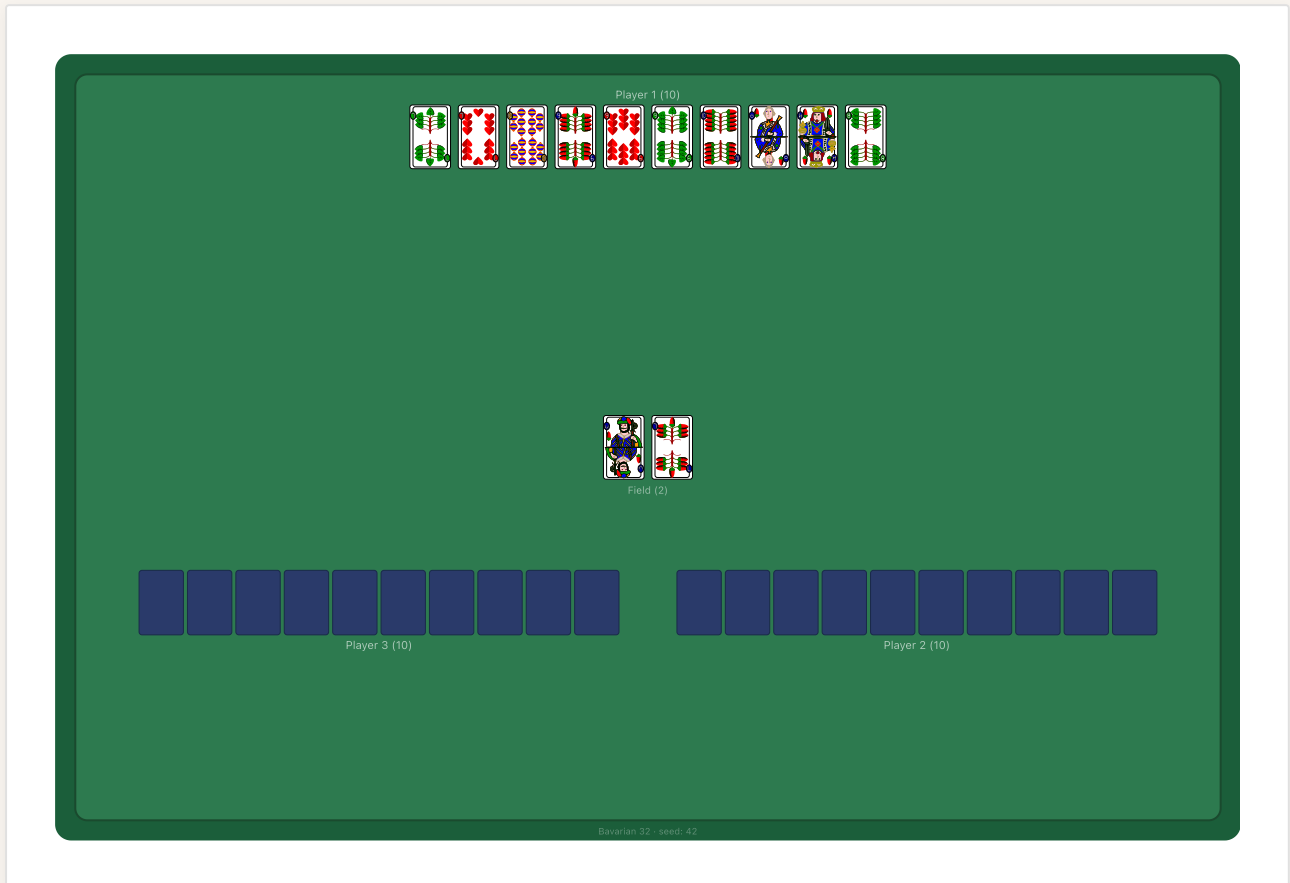
ATTRIBUTION

Traditional Bavarian card game. Rules documented per the Bayerischer Schafkopf-Verein (Bavarian Schafkopf Association) standard ruleset.

SKAT

Skat is Germany's national card game and one of the most strategically complex three-player card games in existence. One player (the **declarer**) competes alone against the two **defenders**. The declarer wins the auction, picks up a 2-card blind (the **Skat**), discards 2 cards, and announces a game type — then tries to fulfil the contract.

Origin: Altenburg, Germany, early 19th century. Codified by the Deutscher Skatverband (German Skat Federation).



Skat — table layout

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=bavarian-32&variant=skat>

THE DECK

32 cards: 4 suits × 8 ranks (7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King, Ace). No Jokers.

Card point values:

RANK	POINTS
Ace	11
10	10
King	4
Queen	3
Jack	2
9, 8, 7	0

Total: 120 card points in the deck.

ROLES

- ♦ **Forehand (F):** Player to the left of the dealer. First to speak in the auction; leads the first trick.
- ♦ **Middlehand (M):** Player to the left of Forehand.
- ♦ **Rearhand ®:** The dealer. Last to act in the auction.

Roles rotate clockwise each deal.

DEAL

Deal as follows: **3 cards each** → **2 cards face-down to center (the Skat)** → **4 cards each** → **3 cards each**. Result: 10 cards in each player's hand; 2 cards in the Skat.

THE AUCTION (BIDDING)

Players bid the **game value** they believe they can achieve. Legal bids are multiples of the base game values.

Minimum bid: 18 (the lowest possible game value: Diamonds base 9 × multiplier 2).

Bidding order:

- 1 Middlehand bids to Forehand: M names a value; F says "Yes" (willing to play at least that high) or "Pass." Continue until one passes.
- 2 Rearhand bids to the winner of step 1 (by the same method).
- 3 The final bidder becomes the declarer. If all three pass, the cards are redealt or Forehand must play Ramsch (see Variants).

PICKING UP THE SKAT AND DECLARING

The declarer picks up the 2-card Skat, looks at them, and discards any 2 cards face-down (the new Skat). These 2 discarded cards count in the declarer's trick pile at the end.

The declarer then announces the **game type**:

GAME TYPE	DESCRIPTION	BASE VALUE
Suit Game	One of the four suits is trump (in addition to all four Jacks, which are always top trump).	Clubs=12, Spades=11, Hearts=10, Diamonds=9
Grand	Only the four Jacks are trump. No suit trump.	24
Null	No trump. Declarer must win zero tricks. (Fixed game values; no Skat pickup unless Hand.)	23
Null Hand	Null without picking up the Skat.	35
Null Ouvert	Null with declarer's hand exposed face-up.	46
Null Ouvert Hand	Null Hand with cards exposed.	59

TRUMP HIERARCHY (SUIT GAMES AND GRAND)

In **Suit games** and **Grand**, the four Jacks are always the top four trumps, outranking the trump suit:

1	Jack of Clubs (J♣) — highest trump
2	Jack of Spades (J♠)
3	Jack of Hearts (J♥)
4	Jack of Diamonds (J♦)
5	Ace of trump suit
6	10 of trump suit
7	King of trump suit
8	Queen of trump suit
9	9 of trump suit
10	8 of trump suit
11	7 of trump suit (lowest trump)

In **Grand**, only positions 1–4 (the four Jacks) are trump. No suit rank 5–11 applies.

Non-trump suit ranking (high to low): A, 10, K, Q, 9, 8, 7. (Jacks are always trump, never belong to their original suits.)

MATADORS AND THE MULTIPLIER

The **game value** = base value × multiplier. The multiplier is based on **Matadors** (consecutive top Jacks held or not held).

Counting Matadors:

- 1 Does the declarer hold the J♣ (Jack of Clubs)? If yes: count how many consecutive top Jacks are held from J♣ downward. This is “with X.”
- 2 If the declarer does NOT hold J♣: count how many consecutive top Jacks are missing from J♣ downward. This is “without X.”

MATADOR COUNT	MULTIPLIER
With/Without 1	+1
With/Without 2	+2
With/Without 3	+3
With/Without 4	+4

Then add +1 for **Game** (Spiel) — always included.

Additional multipliers (each +1 to the multiplier):

CONDITION	MULTIPLIER BONUS
Schneider achieved (opponents score ≤30 card points)	+1
Schneider announced before play	+1 (only valid if also achieved)
Schwarz achieved (opponents win zero tricks)	+1
Schwarz announced before play	+1 (only valid if also achieved)
Hand (Skat not picked up)	+1
Ouvert (hand played face-up)	+1

Example: Declarer plays Hearts game. Holds J♣, J♠, but not J♥ — so “with 2.” Hearts base = 10. Multiplier = 2 (matadors) + 1 (game) = 3. Game value = 10 × 3 = 30.

The final game value must be ≥ **the winning bid**. If the game is made but the game value is lower than the bid, the game is lost and scored negatively.

PLAYING TRICKS

Forehand leads the first trick. Players must follow suit if able. A player holding trump must follow trump if trump is led. If unable to follow suit, any card may be played (including trump). Highest card of the led suit wins, unless trump has been played, in which case the highest trump wins. The trick winner leads the next trick.

All three players play all 10 tricks. The declarer plays alone; the two defenders cooperate to prevent the declarer from making the bid.

WIN CONDITIONS

Suit game or Grand:

- ♦ Declarer wins if their card point total (tricks + Skat) is **61 or more**.
- ♦ Schneider: declarer scores 90+, or defenders score 30 or fewer.
- ♦ Schwarz: declarer wins all 10 tricks.
- ♦ Declarer loses if defenders score 60+ (or 61+ in some regional rules).

Null games:

- ♦ Declarer wins if they win **zero tricks**.
- ♦ Declarer loses immediately upon winning any trick (play ends; game scored as lost).

SCORING

Declarer wins:

- ♦ Score the game value (positive).
- ♦ If Schneider is achieved (without announcing): score game value including Schneider multiplier.
- ♦ If Schwarz is achieved (without announcing): score game value including Schwarz multiplier.

Declarer loses:

- ♦ Score the game value **negative** (−20 for a normal lost game, typically doubled: $-2 \times \text{game value}$).
- ♦ If the game value is less than the bid (overbid): the next lower multiple of the base value that does exceed the bid is used for the negative score, and the game is still doubled.

Null games scoring:

- ♦ Made: +23, +35, +46, or +59 (fixed values, not multiplied).
- ♦ Lost: −23, −35, −46, or −59 (doubled = −46, −70, −92, −118 in some scoring systems).

Scores accumulate across multiple hands; a session typically ends when all players have dealt an equal number of times.

HAND GAME

A player may declare Hand before picking up the Skat (leaving it face-down). The Hand bonus adds +1 to the multiplier. In a Hand game, the Skat cards are not revealed until after play and count in the declarer's trick pile normally. Hand allows announcing Schneider or Schwarz for additional multiplier bonuses.

VARIANTS

Ramsch: If all three players pass the auction, instead of a redeal, Ramsch may be played. In Ramsch: no declarer; all players try to win as FEW card points as possible. The player with the most card points at the end loses; they are scored negatively. Grand-jack-only trump applies (same as Grand).

Kontra and Rekontra: After the declarer announces the game type but before the first card is played, a defender may call Kontra (doubles the game value for scoring purposes). The declarer may call Rekontra (doubles again). The bid comparison uses the undoubled game value; only the score is affected.

ATTRIBUTION

Skat. Originated in Altenburg, Germany, approximately 1810. National card game of Germany. Rules codified by the Deutscher Skatverband. Standard rules confirmed from skatorderules.com, Pagat.com, and the International Skat Players Association. Public domain rule set.