

Noddy Rules

The game of Noddy is an ancestor of Cribbage and dates back to the late 16th century. The earliest reference to the game is in 1589.

It can be played using a standard 52-card deck and 2 or 4 people can play, 4 people play as two teams of two (pairs).

A cribbage board is used for scoring. Ace is always low and court cards count as 10.

The object of the game is to peg points by making combinations with the cards in hand and also during play. First player to peg 31 points wins.

DEAL

The person cutting the lowest card deals first and the person to the dealer's right deals for the next game. Three cards are dealt to each player in turn. The deck is placed face-down and the top card turned over for 'trump'. If the trump card is a Jack the dealer pegs 2 for 'Knave Noddy'.

SCORING

Note that the trump card should be included in the hand when scoring.

Knave Noddy

Having a Jack that matches the trump card – 1 point
Jack turned up as the trump card – 2 points to dealer

Fifteen

Any combination of cards totalling 15 – 2 points

Pairs

Any pair – 2 points
Pair royal (3 of a kind) – 6 points
Double pair royal (4 of a kind) – 12 points

Runs

Run of 3 or more cards – 1 point per card

Flush

3 or more cards of the same suit – 1 point per card
(all cards in the hand must be the same suit)

Twenty-Five any combination of 3 or more cards totalling 25 – 1 point per card

Thirty-One (play only) scoring exactly 31 during play – 2 points

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GAME PLAY

The game play is in two parts, first the 'Announcement' then the actual 'Play'.

Announcement

Each player in turn, starting with the non-dealer, announces (but does not show) the combinations of cards they hold, including the trump card. They then peg the total score of the combinations.

Play

The non-dealer plays a card and announces its value. Each player in turn then plays another card and announces the combined total of cards so far played. Whenever the player plays a card that creates a scoring feature (e.g. a pair, a run, etc) they peg the appropriate score. The running total may not exceed 31. If a player cannot play without exceeding 31 they must pass and the next player may continue if possible. 1 point is scored for playing the last card. If exactly 31 is scored, 2 points are scored. Flushes of 3 cards or more are valid during play. Play ends once 31 is reached or no player can continue without going over 31.

EXAMPLE

Player A has: Jh 4d 5d

Player B has: 7d 8s 9s

Trump card: 6h

Announcement:

Player A announces: "Fifteen 2, fifteen 4, run of three for 7, twenty-five for 11, Knave Noddy for 12"

Player B announces: "Fifteen 2, fifteen 4, run of four for 8"

Play:

Player A plays 4d making 4,
Player B plays 7d making 11,
Player A plays 5d making 16 and pegging 3 for a flush,
Player B plays 9s making 25 and pegging 4 for twenty-five,
Player A says Go
Player B pegs 1 for last card.

This document was put together from information found on the web, some of it confusing, so the above rules may not be correct.

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Inconsistencies

The following differences in the rules among the various internet documents are noted:

- Some of the web documents say that the Knave Noddy points, turned up as the trump card, go to the Dealer while others say the points go to the non-dealer. I have followed cribbage rules and allocated the points to the dealer.
- Scoring exactly 31 during play. Either 2 points as in cribbage or 1 point for each card played to reach 31, which results in 4 or more points.
- Fifteen. Most references say 2 points for cards adding to 15 while some say 1 point per card. I have followed cribbage and allocate 2 points for each fifteen.
- Runs. Some references say 2 points for a run of 3 and then 1 point per card for longer runs. I have followed cribbage rules and allocate 1 point per card for runs of 3 or more.
- Knave Noddy (or 1 for his nob). Some have it only counting during play. Should be counted during 'announcement' and not in play.

Special Cards

Some cards appear to have special significance in the game according to a few references:

- Flat Back – King of Spades, 6 points
- Countenance – Queen of Hearts, 4 points
- Roger – Knave of Hearts, 5 points

References

Historic Card Games by David Parlett

<https://www.parlettgames.uk/histocs/noddy.html>

Stefan's Florilegium

<http://www.florilegium.org/files/ENTERTAINMENT/Noddy-Crd-Gme-art.html>

Four-Card Noddy

<https://www.pagat.com/invented/4cardnoddy.html>

Noddy Board

https://www.thehistoricgamesshop.co.uk/onlineshop/prod_7371361-Noddy-Board.html

<http://jducoeur.org/game-hist/game-recon-noddy.html>

How to play Noddy

<https://discover.hubpages.com/games-hobbies/how-to-play-noddy>