

Gin Rummy: the rules

Two players · one standard 52-card deck, no jokers · from ginrummygame.app

Card values

Ace = 1 point. Number cards = their number. Jack, queen and king = 10 points each. The ace is always low: A-2-3 is a run, but Q-K-A is not.

The deal

Each player gets 10 cards. The next card is turned face up to start the discard pile. The rest of the deck is the stock, face down.

Melds

- **Set:** 3 or 4 cards of the same rank, such as 8-8-8.
- **Run:** 3 or more cards in a row in the same suit, such as 4-5-6 of hearts.
- A card can be in only one meld at a time.
- **Deadwood** is every card that is not in a meld. Its points are your deadwood count.

A turn

- **Draw:** take the top card of the stock or the top card of the discard pile.
- **Discard:** put one card face up on the discard pile. You may not throw back the card you just took from the discard pile.
- **First turn:** the non-dealer may take the face-up card. If they pass, the dealer may take it. If both pass, the non-dealer draws from the stock.

Knocking and gin

- After drawing, you may **knock** if your deadwood is **10 or less** after your discard. Put the discard face down and lay out your hand.
- The other player lays out their hand and may **lay off** deadwood cards on the knocker's melds (never on the knocker's deadwood).
- **Gin** means all 10 cards are in melds. After gin, the other player may not lay off.
- You never have to knock. You may play on and try for gin.
- If only two cards are left in the stock and the player who drew the third-last card discards without knocking, the hand is a draw: no score.

Scoring

Knock and win	Difference between the two deadwood counts
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Undercut (other player has equal or less deadwood)	Other player scores the difference + 10
Gin	20 + the other player's deadwood
Game	First player to 100 points or more
Game bonus	100 to the winner (200 if the loser scored nothing)
Box bonus	20 points for every hand each player won (does not count toward 100)

Common house rules: gin, undercut and box bonuses of 25; an undercut bonus of 20 with a gin bonus of 25; big gin (all 11 cards melded after drawing) for 31 points + deadwood. Agree before you start.

Example

You knock with deadwood 4. The other player has deadwood 23 after laying off. You score $23 - 4 = 19$. If they had 4 or less, they would undercut you and score the difference + 10.

Variants

- **Oklahoma gin:** the first face-up card sets the knock limit (ace 1, faces 10). If it is a spade, the hand counts double. Games are usually to 150.
- **Straight gin:** no knocking. You must go gin to end the hand.
- **Hollywood gin:** a scoring style with three games at once (see the Hollywood scoresheet).

Rules follow the standard set described by Pagat.com and Bicycle. Play free online at ginrummygame.app.