

ZERO

A Card Game by Reiner Knizia

Players: 3-5
Age: 8 and up
Duration: c. 20 minutes.

Berliner Spielkarten No. 8366

German Edition:

(P) 1998, Berliner Spielkarten, D-64295 Darmstadt, Germany;
© 1998, Reiner Knizia, D-89257 Illertissen, Germany.

English Translation:

© 1999, Reiner Knizia and Kevin Jacklin.

All rights reserved.

OBJECT of the GAME

In clockwise order players swap one card from their hands with a card from the pool.
Each player aims to score as few points as possible at the end of the round.

If a player succeeds in achieving a ZERO (i.e. a hand with zero points) the round ends immediately.

After playing a number of rounds, the player with the least points overall is the winner.

PREPARATION

There are cards in seven different colours (red, yellow, green, blue, violet, grey & black). There are eight cards of each colour, with numbers 1 to 8.

Shuffle the cards and deal nine to each player. Players take their cards into their hands, keeping the values hidden from the other players. Five cards are then placed face-up, adjacent to each other, to form a pool. The remaining cards are not used in the current round, and are placed face-down to one side.

PLAY

The player to the left of the dealer begins the round. Then play progresses clockwise. On your turn, you must either Swap or Knock.

Swapping

Choose one card from your hand and place it face-up into the pool. Then select a different card from the pool and take it into your hand. This concludes your turn.

Knocking

If you do not want to swap a card, you knock once on the table. This concludes your turn.

The first Knock of the entire round has no effect - play continues as normal. However, the second Knock of the round (irrespective of whether by the same or a different player) signals the last opportunity to Swap. After the second Knock all players get one more turn before the round ends, but not the player who performed the second Knock. Players who do not wish to use their last opportunity to Swap may simply Knock and pass.

SCORING

Five or more cards of the same colour, or five or more cards of the same number scores 0 points. Otherwise, each number represented in the player's hand is scored once.

Example: *a single 7 scores 7 points; similarly two 7's, three 7's or four 7's also scores just 7 points. However five or more 7's in the hand scores 0 points.*

Scoring Examples

Hand 1: 2-Green, 5-Red, 5-Grey, 3-Black, 3-Yellow, 3-Blue, 3-Green, 3-Grey, 3-Red

Scores: $2 + 5 + 0 = 7$ points.

Hand 2: 1-Violet, 1-Blue, 4-Green, 8-Blue, 1-Red, 3-Red, 4-Red, 7-Red, 8-Red

Scores: $1 + 4 + 8 + 0 = 13$ points.

Hand 3: 1-Yellow, 2-Blue, 2-Red, 2-Green, 5-Black, 7-Black, 7-Blue, 7-Yellow, 7-Grey

Scores: $1 + 2 + 5 + 7 = 15$ points.

ZERO

If a player succeeds in forming a hand that contains five cards of one colour *and* five cards with one number (with one of the nine cards belonging to both groups) he has achieved a ZERO. He immediately reveals his cards and announces "ZERO". This concludes the round, and all hands are scored immediately.

Example

ZERO Hand: 8-Blue, 7-Blue, 5-Blue, 1-Blue, 2-Blue, 2-Yellow, 2-Red, 2-Grey, 2-Green

The 2-Blue card is common to the group of five Blues (0 points) and also to the group of five 2's (0 points).

THE NEXT ROUND

After recording the points for each player, all cards are reshuffled to start the next round. Play as many rounds as there are players in the game.

The player with the least points overall is the winner.

Berliner Spielkarten
D-64295 Darmstadt
Germany

Version: 1.0
Last Revised: 4 April, 1999
By: Kevin Jacklin