



Official Continental Rules

Continental is a card game that is played with two (or more) English decks and in which you have to make different combinations, like in gin rummy.

One continental game is made up of seven hands, were as in each hand you must make a different combination of trios and/or runs, increasing in difficulty each time.

It's unique in that each hand combination is fixed and you have a chance to pick cards 'out of turn' (means to take a card from the discard pile if no one before you wants it).

Content

- Game objectives
- Players
- Type of deck
- Card values
- Combinations: Trios and Runs
- Fixed combinations and cards to be dealt
- Start of the game: Distribution of seats and cards
- Evolution of the game
- Picking 'out of turn'
- Dropped cards
- End of the game
- The joker
- Variants to classic continental
- Specific vocabulary

Game objectives

Combine cards in the fixed combinations for each hand and drop or expose them, since the ones left in your hand, combined or not, are the ones that count against you. The player that wins the game is the one with the least amount of points at the end of the game.

Players

From two to four players that are all individuals without partners or teams.

Type of deck

Continental is played with two English decks, with three jokers for each deck (although you can also play with two jokers per deck). You can also use poker Spanish decks.

Card values

- Joker.....50 points
- Ace.....20 points
- Face cards (king, queen, jack).....10 points
- Number cards (10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 y 2).....their value

Combinations: Trios and Runs

The two combinations possible are trios and runs.

A trio is a set of three cards of the same number or face card, no matter the suit.

A run is four or more cards of the same suit and in sequence, unlimited number of cards (cards can repeat). It has no beginning and no end: The ace can be the top card or the bottom card of the run or even in the middle between the king and the two. When you have to make several runs, they can all be of the same suit (just like there can be several trios of the same numbers).

Fixed combinations and cards to be dealt in each hand

In classic continental there are seven hands, each more difficult than the last. In each hand you deal one more card than necessary to make the correct combinations:

- 1st (TT): Two trios. You deal seven cards.
- 2nd (TR): One trio and one run. You deal eight cards.
- 3rd (RR): Two runs. You deal nine cards.
- 4th (TTT): Three trios. You deal ten cards.
- 5th (TRT): Two trios and one run. You deal eleven cards.
- 6th (RTR): One trio and two runs. You deal twelve cards.
- 7th (RRR): Three runs. You deal thirteen cards.



Start of the game: Distribution of seats and cards

Seats are distributed by dealing one card to each player. If several players receive the same card, they will do a tie break between them.

The player with the highest card will start the game. The player with the next highest card sits to his/her right and so on until all players are seated counter clockwise. The game is also played taking turns counterclockwise.

Each player, before dealing, will give the next player the chance to cut the deck and will deal each player one card at a time in order or play counterclockwise starting with the player to the right and finishing with himself/herself.

Once finished dealing, the player will put the rest of the deck in the middle of the table, putting the top card beside the deck face up thus starting the discard pile. That first card can be a joker or any other card.

The player that starts the game is the player to the right of the dealer, the player who cut the deck before dealing the cards.

Evolution of the game

Each player, during his/her turn, must take either the card on top of the discard pile or the card on top of the deck, one or the other. When he/she takes one of these cards, the game has begun.

The player finishes his/her turn when he/she discards one of the cards in his/her hand which he/she will put on top of the discard pile face up to continue the game or face down to finish the game. Once the card touches the discard pile the player must leave the card there, without being able to change it for another.

Players can not see cards from the discard pile, except the top card.

If one player asks another player how many cards he/she has left, that person must answer honestly.

Picking 'out of turn'

If the current player does not take the card from the discard pile, any of the remaining players can take that card, but they also have to take an additional card from the top of the deck, without discarding any card. Picking out of turn must be done before the player discards and the next player's turn starts, because of this card will become a dead or trodden card and no player will be able to pick it out of turn.

If more than one player wants the card, the decision of who gets the card is made by order of play; whose turn comes first is the one who gets the card.

Dropped cards

During his/her turn, the player with the correct combinations for that hand can put his/her cards on the table. This action is called 'dropping cards'. The dropped cards do not count against you if another player finishes the hand.

Once the cards are dropped, a player can drop additional cards in any other combination already on the table during his/her turn.

If the player still has cards left, he/she must continue playing the hand until all cards are dropped into one of the combinations on the table.

End of the game

When a player has dropped all his/her cards and has only one card left, he/she can put that card on the discard pile face side down to close or finish the hand. If that card can also be placed in a combination on the table, the player can place the card and finish the hand by putting his/her palm on top of the discard pile.

When a player drops and closes at the same turn, he/she gets -10 points for that hand. If he/she had dropped at a previous turn, he/she gets 0 points.

Other players must count the value of the cards that they have in their hands, value which will be written down on a piece of paper: below the name of each player there will be a line for each hand which will begin by identifying which hand is being played (TT, TR, RR, TTT...) and following the score for that hand and the total score so far for each player, so at the end of each hand the current standings of each player can be known.

Now, the cards are picked up and the turn passes to the player to the right of the one who dealt last, who will deal the cards for the new hand after shuffling and cutting the deck. This will continue until all the hands are played.

After the final hand, the player with the least amount of points will be the winner of the game.



The joker

The joker is a special card that replaces any other card in the deck. Is allowed to discard a joker.

In the trios, there can be unlimited jokers. You can even make a trio of jokers but the first value card added to the trio of jokers determines what the trio is.

In a run there cannot be two consecutive jokers. The jokers in a dropped run can be moved within the run that they are in or can be moved to other runs dropped by the same player. However, when moving a joker, a run cannot be left with only three cards and two jokers cannot be placed consecutively. The joker in a run can be substituted by the card it represents but that joker must be immediately placed in a run dropped by the player who dropped the joker to begin with without placing two jokers consecutively. If the joker is free at either end of a run you can also move it to another run of the same player as long as the run is not left with less than four cards.

The jokers in a run are the only cards that can be moved once they have been dropped, as long as they fall under the conditions in the first paragraph stated above. The rest of the cards are fixed without the possibility of being moved or exchanged.

Variants to classic continental

- Super continental: Five additional hands are added to the game: TTTT, TTTR, TTRR, RRRT, RRRR. In each of those hands you deal 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 card respectively.
- Two new games can be added at the beginning: T and R, dealing 4 and 5 cards respectively.
- Not allowing dropping any cards without closing the game in the last hand.
- Make mandatory that the runs in RR, RTR or RRR be of different suits and that the trios in TT, TTT, or TRT be of different numbers.
- Give -50 points to the player who drops all his/her cards and finished at the same time.
- Give -50 points to the player who drops and places all his/her cards and closes the game at the same time.
- Change the value of the cards: five points to all the cards between 2 and 7; 10 points to the 8, 9, 10, and face cards; 20 points to the aces, and 50 points to the joker.
- Allow finishing a hand with cards in hand as long as they add up to five points or less.
- Not allow any player to pick out of turn more than three times in each hand.

Specific vocabulary

- **Clean:** A combination made without any jokers.
- **Closing:** Finishing a game or hand when a player is left without cards in hand.
- **Clubs:** One of the suits in the English deck. Its symbol is a three leave black clover.
- **Combine:** Putting the right cards together to make the correct combinations for that hand.
- **Deck pile:** Group of cards face side down in the middle of the table from where the players take cards to play.
- **Diamonds:** One of the suits in the English deck. Its symbol is a red diamond.
- **Dirty:** A combination made with the assistance of a joker.
- **Discard pile:** Group of cards next to the deck pile comprised of the cards that the players are discarding (releasing) from their hand.
- **Discard:** Putting a card from your hand on the top of the discard pile.
- **Dropping:** Showing the combinations of cards related to the hand and leave them exposed on the table.
- **Equal cards:** Cards of the same value or number.
- **Face card:** The King, Queen and Jack in the deck of cards.
- **Hand:** Each round that composes the game of continental.
- **Hearts:** One of the suits in the English deck. Its symbol is a red heart.
- **Penalty card:** Additional card that must be taken by a player picking out of turn.
- **Picking out of turn:** Taking a card from the discard pile when it is not your turn. This action incurs a penalty of an additional card taken from the deck pile.
- **Player's hand:** Combination of cards that a player has in his/her hand during the game.
- **Round:** From the moment it is a player's turn to the next time it is that player's turn again.
- **Run:** A combination of consecutive cards of the same suit.
- **Spades:** One of the suits in the English deck. Its symbol is a black spade.
- **Trio:** Combination of three or more cards of the same number.