

# Quad:

## *A Minimalist Card Game for Two Players*

By David R. Lorentz

### **Setup:**

This game is played with a regular deck of 52 shuffled playing cards and 2 jokers. It requires exactly **two players**.

The play space consists of the deck of cards, face down; a discard pile; two collection piles, one for each player; and enough free play space for up to four stacks of cards.

### **Round Structure:**

Each round begins with each player being dealt **four cards**, face down, which he can look at.

One of the players is the **chooser**; this assignment alternates from round to round.

Before play begins (but after looking at his cards), the chooser decides secretly if he wants to shoot for **reds** or **blacks**, as described in the *Counting* section below. He indicates his choice by placing the red or black joker, respectively, in front of the other and placing them both face down in front of him.

After the chooser has made his decision, one card is turned face up from the top of the deck and placed in the middle of the table.

The chooser is the first to play, and turns alternate until both players have played all four cards.

### **Gameplay:**

On each turn, the player may choose any one of his cards to play.

If a card is played whose suit **does not match** any cards yet on the table, the card **must** be played by itself on the table, face up.

If the suit of the chosen card **matches** a suit already on the table, one of two plays may be made:

- (1) The card may be played on top of a stack of other card(s) of the **same** suit; or
- (2) The card may be played on top of a stack of cards in a **different** suit, in which case the whole stack is **canceled out**, removed and discarded.

Note that two stacks of the same suit cannot exist at the same time; if an existing suit is played, it must be played on top of a stack.

**Counting:**

After all cards have been played, the face value of the cards remaining on the table is enumerated.

Aces are 1; jacks are 11; queens are 12; kings are 13.

Hearts and diamonds are summed to make the total reds; clubs and spades are summed for blacks.

If the red total (hearts plus diamonds) is greater than the black total (clubs plus spades), the outcome of the round is termed *reds*; if the black total is greater than the red total, it's *blacks*; if it's a tie, it's neither.

**Scoring:**

If the outcome of the round is what the chooser predicted (as indicated by his secret arrangement of the jokers), he collects all the cards in play on the table, both reds and blacks; otherwise (if it's the opposite, **or a tie**), the other player collects all of these cards. The cards are added to the winner's collection pile.

The cards that were *canceled out* during game play are not collected by either player.

**Continuing the Game:**

The cards collected by a player join his collection pile, which is pooled throughout the game. The cards that were discarded by canceling out will never be used again in the game.

Following each round, the cards are not reshuffled; rather the cards for the next round are simply dealt off the top of the remaining deck.

The role of chooser alternates with each round.

Rounds continue in this manner until the deck is used up: all cards end up in either the discard (canceled out) pile or the players' collection piles.

In the final round, there is only enough for three cards dealt to each player, with one card left over to be turned up at the beginning of the round. This slightly faster round is played normally.

**Winning:**

After the final round, each player simply counts up the cards in his collection pile—the **number of cards**, not their face value. The one who has collected the most cards wins.