

Variations on the Original ROOK Game

The Beginner Game (for 4 Players)

Play this ROOK game without bidding for trump or using the nest to get into the swing of things! Perfect for introducing people to the game.

Object: Be the first player to score 40 points at the end of a hand.

Get started: All draw a card at random. The person with the highest-value card deals. Follow the Dealing instructions for the **Original** Game.

Counters: The following cards (called “Counters”) have these points values:

Each 5	1 point
Each 10	2 points
Each 14	2 points
Rook Bird card	4 points



How to determine trump: Turn over the top card of the nest – that color will be trump. If it's the Rook Bird card, put it on the bottom of the nest and turn over the next card.

You don't use the nest in the Beginner Game, so leave the card turned over as a reminder of the trump color.

Play: The player to the left of the dealer starts by ‘leading’ with the first card. The card they play determines the lead color for this trick. Play continues clockwise.

On your turn:

- Play one card, face up, into the middle of the table. If you have a card of the ‘lead’ color, you must play it. If you don't, play a worthless card, the Rook Bird card, or a trump card.
- When every player has played one card, the person who played the highest card of the color led takes all of the cards UNLESS someone has played a trump card, in which case the highest number trump card wins. If anyone played the Rook Bird card, that trumps everything! Taking all of the cards is called ‘taking a trick.’

If you took the trick, place all the cards face down on the table. You lead the next round.

The Rook Bird card: This is the most powerful card in the game and trumps everything.

- If the first player leads with the Rook, all other players must play a trump card.
- If the first player leads with a trump card but you have no cards in the trump color, you must play the Rook.
- You can play the Rook card on any turn, regardless of the color led. You can play it even if you have cards of the color led and/or trump cards in your hand.

Scoring: At the end of each hand, all add up the number of points you scored and make a note of it. Total up your points after each hand.

Winning: Play until someone's total reaches 40. If more than one player reaches 40 at the same time, the highest total wins. If there's a tie, play again!

The Game for 2 Players

Dealing: Remove all 1s, 2s, 3s and the Rook Bird card, for a total of 44 cards.

Shuffle and cut the deck, then deal out 12 cards into three piles – one for your opponent, one for you, and a dummy hand that is to your right. Deal half of the dummy hand cards **face up** and the other half **face down**. At the end, take the remaining eight cards, put five into a nest, and **put the other three aside, out of play**.

Object: 300 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 50 points. Note that the three cards out of play may be Counters!

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. The score could be as low as 70 or as high as 100.

Playing: After trump is called, turn the face down half of the dummy hand face up, so that all of the cards in the dummy hand are now face up. The player who did **not** win the bid will play the dummy hand in addition to his or her own, effectively playing for two players. The dummy hand leads the first card. All tricks won by the dummy hand should be placed next to that hand so the players remember to lead **from** the dummy hand on the next trick. At the end of the hand, the Counters scored by the bidder are compared to the Counters scored by the other player and the dummy hand combined.

The Game for 3 Individual Players

Dealing: Same as the 2-player game, except do not deal a dummy hand.

Object: 200 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 50 points. Note that the three cards out of play may be Counters!

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. The score could be as low as 70 or as high as 100.

Playing: See the Original Game for 2 Players, except that the person who wins the bid plays against the other two players, who automatically become partners. These two players' scores are combined at the end of the hand.

The Game for 5 or 6 Individual Players

Dealing: Use the basic deck of 56 cards; do not use the Rook Bird card. For five players, deal a 6-card nest. For 6 players, deal a two-card nest.

Object: 150 points wins the game.

Bidding: See the Partnership Game. The minimum bid is 30 points.

Scoring: See the Partnership Game. Total points for each hand are 100.

Playing: See the Partnership Game.

Card-Playing Terms for New Players

Trick: One player “leads” a card face up on the table from their hand, and each other player in turn lays a card on it. The highest card of the color led “takes the trick” unless someone plays a trump; then the trump (or highest trump) card takes it.

Trump: The player who bid highest “picks trump,” naming one of the four colors to be trump for that hand. Now any card of the trump color is more powerful and beats any card of another color.

Bid: Before the trick-taking play begins, all players bid (as in an auction) for the privilege of naming the trump color. During the hand, the player who bid the highest and thus “took the bid” must win enough tricks to capture Counters worth enough points to equal or exceed the amount of the bid.

Scoring: At the end of the hand, players count up the Counters in the tricks they have taken in order to calculate their scores for the hand. A high bidder who does not capture the number of points at least equal to his/her bid “goes down” and subtracts the total amount of that bid.

Nest: A number of cards dealt to the table and “won” by the highest bidder. These cards may be exchanged for the same number of cards in the high bidder's hand. The high bidder is the only player who knows which cards are in the nest and therefore out of play.



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