

HEARTS OF MIROMAR CANASTA RULES (2025)

WHAT IS CANASTA?

Canasta is a partnership card game played with 2 decks of cards, including 4 jokers.

The object of the game is to reach 8500 points. You accumulate points by making Canastas. A Canasta consists of seven “like” cards (e.g., seven 6’s or seven kings) or 5 or 6 “like” cards with one or two wild cards. Jokers and deuces (2’s) are wild.

BEGINNING THE GAME

Two decks of cards are shuffled together. The person to the right of the dealer cuts the deck by removing the top portion (about 1/4 of the deck) and then takes the bottom 8 cards and puts them face down on the tray. An additional card (9th) is taken from the bottom and placed sideways on top of the 8 cards. This 9th card is called the “turn card”. (The “turn card” alerts players that there are just eight more cards left in the deck.) Any remaining cards are placed on top of the turn card.

Meanwhile the dealer deals 13 cards clockwise to each of the four players, starting with player to her left. Remaining cards are placed on top of the cards in the tray.

Each player arranges his/her hand by number.

Card Values:

Jokers = 50 points (wild card)

Deuces = 20 points (wild card)

Aces = 20 points

8-King = 10 points

4-7 = 5 points

3s * Special case

Play of the hand begins with player to the left of dealer and continues clockwise as follows: First, if player has any *3’s, they are placed on the table, face up, and a replacement card for each is picked from deck. The player then draws one additional card for her turn and discards.



Note: If you lay any 3 face-up on the table during your turn and forget to take a replacement card, you are not allowed to replace it at any future time.

MELDING/OPENING

A *minimum meld must contain a “natural” of at least **three like cards** (with no wild cards) and additional sets of at least two like cards with one or a maximum of two wild cards until the requirement for an opening meld is met. The first person to meld for the partnership must lay down the appropriate point count, according to the following criteria:

*Minimum count of initial meld:	Cumulative score:
125 points	0-2999
155 points	3000 - 4999
180 points	5000 (Over at 8500)

MELDING/OPENING WITH WILD CARDS

If you have at least three wild cards and they meet the minimum point requirement, you may meld them without an accompanying natural. If the three wild cards do not meet the minimum point requirement, you will also need a minimum of a natural three card assist.

Exceptions: If you have a **natural canasta** (7 like cards) or **wild card canasta** (7 wilds) in your hand, you do not have to meet the minimum point count requirements to meld.

You may use all but one of the cards in your hand to meld because you **must** have a discard.

Exception: *If you are below the turn card when you meld, you must keep at least 1 card in your hand and have a discard.*

Only one person from each partnership has to meet the requirements for the initial meld.

There is a 10-point penalty if you attempt your first meld without the required minimum points. If this occurs, you must pick up your cards and add 10 points to your minimum when you eventually do meld/open (e.g., 125 points increases to 135 points.).

Also, when melding you may shift cards around that you have placed on the board to make a required meld. At NO time may you put cards back in your hand that you have attempted to meld with. “A card laid is a card played”. If you don’t make the required meld, all cards are put back in your hand and the penalty then is applied.

Once a player has melded, either partner may add to the meld with one or more cards when it is her turn.

MELDING (Opening) BY TAKING THE PILE

You *may open by taking the discard pile* (with two like cards) *instead* of picking from the deck, if you do not need the top card for your initial meld point count or to complete your natural. However, if you pick up the pile, you may not take a Toulon. (No “double-dipping”!) It is recommended to let everyone know you are taking the pile and leave it in the holder until you have laid down your meld. If you pick-up the pile prior to laying down your meld and you cannot make the meld, there is a 10-point penalty. If you have a 3 in your hand, you may pick up a replacement card but put it to the side until you show you have successfully met the requirement of the meld. After meeting the requirement of the meld, you may use the pile and any replacement cards picked up for a 3.



Note: When opening, you may not pick up an ace from the discard pile unless you are planning to open aces clean.

TOULON (A bonus of cards to replenish your hand following an opening meld.)

If you are the 1st or 2nd person to meld at the table, you take a “Toulon”. The 1st player to meld gets to draw 4 cards *after discarding* and the 2nd player draws 3 cards *after discarding*. You may not look at your Toulon until *after* you discard. If you pick a “3” in the Toulon, you must **keep it in your hand** until your next turn to lay it down and draw a replacement card. A Toulon may not be taken after you pass the “turn card”.

If you forget to take your Toulon, it is lost. You may not take it after the person on your left has drawn a card or picked up the discard pile. You may not alert your partner to take the Toulon.

TAKING THE PACK/DISCARD PILE

Once your partner has melded/opened, you may pick up the entire discard pile if you are holding 2 like cards in your hand that match the top card. After taking the discard pile, you may lay down as little or as much as you want; but it is wise to keep some

pairs in your hand so you can take future packs. You may also use a card from the pack as your discard if it is not an ace, 7 or dead card (a card that has been used to make a canasta).



Hint: Do not close any canastas with wild cards until your partner has had at least one turn, as your partner may be able to close it as a natural canasta.

If it is late in the game or if the opposing team already has two canastas and could go out, be aware of how many 7s and aces are in the pack before you pick it up. If you are caught with more than two aces or two 7s in your hand at the end of the hand, penalties apply (see Scoring Section).

DISCARDS

Threes can *never* be discarded and there is a 100-pt. penalty for each one that you're holding at the end of the hand. You must lay 3s down and pick a replacement card*. If you pick the last card in the pile and it is a 3, you must keep it in your hand (there are no more cards to pick a replacement) and incur a 100-pt. penalty.

*See [Splash Hand Section](#) for the exception.

CANASTAS

Clean/natural canasta = 7 like cards

Dirty canasta = 6 like cards + 1 wild card or 5 like cards + 2 wild cards.

When you make a canasta, place a red card on top to signify a clean canasta (no wilds) and a black card on top if it is "dirty" (contains 1 or two wilds).

You must have at least 2 canastas to go out.

If the hand ends and you have no canastas, the 3's and all the cards in your and your partner's hand, as well as all the cards on the table are counted against you.

If the hand ends and you have one canasta, the 3s are "neutralized" (don't count for or against you). You can count your points that are melded (on the table); however, the cards in your and your partner's hand count against your score.

CANASTA OF SEVENS (special rules apply here):

You can never use a wild card with 7's. Canastas of 7's can only be natural.

If you are holding more than two sevens at the end of the game, there is a penalty of 1500 pts. If your partner is also holding more than two sevens the penalty is 3000 pts.

Natural Canasta of 7s completed = + 2500 pts.

Canasta of 7s not completed = - 2500 pts. (penalty)

More than 2 (7s) in your hand = - 1500 pts. (penalty)



Note:

- You may not discard a seven on an empty tray.
- Try to keep track of how many sevens have been discarded so that you can assess the risk of picking up the discard pile.
- You may NOT go out with an incomplete canasta of sevens.

CANASTA OF ACES (special rules apply here)

The only time you can lay down (meld) aces with a **wild card/s** is on an “opening” (first) meld. If you or your partner put aces down at any other time after your first meld, they must remain natural (no wild cards).

An incomplete meld of aces with wild cards has no penalty.

If you are holding more than two aces at the end of the game, there is a penalty of 1500 pts. If your partner is also holding more than two aces the penalty is 3000 pts.

Natural canasta of aces (completed) = + 2500 pts.

Natural canasta of aces (not completed) = - 2500 pts. (penalty)

Dirty canasta of aces (with wild cards) = + 300 pts. (penalty)

Dirty canasta of aces (not completed) No penalty



Note:

- When opening, if picking up the pile with aces to meld they need to be laid clean, no wild cards; however, once you or your partner have opened aces dirty, it is okay to pick up the discard pile, with 2 aces in hand.
- You may not discard an ace on an empty tray.
- Try to keep track of how many aces have been discarded so that you can assess the risk of picking up the discard pile.
- You may NOT go out with an incomplete canasta of NATURAL aces.

WILD CARD CANASTAS (special rules apply here):

An incomplete meld of wild cards carries a penalty of 2500 points.

Once the partnership puts wild cards down (establishing that they are going for a wild card canasta), the partners must apply all wild cards to the wild card meld until it is completed. No wild cards can be applied to other canastas until then.

You may NOT go out with an incomplete canasta of wild cards.

SIGNALS

You want to play defensively to prevent your opponents from getting a Canasta of Aces or Sevens. You also want to look for the possibility of **your partnership** completing a canasta of wild cards, sevens or aces. There are a few signals to help you, and your partner keep track of these cards:

Asking for Sevens

On your first turn, if you are holding three or more 7's in your hand, discard one. This signals to your partner that you have at least 2 more in your hand which you will keep to prevent the opposition from getting a natural Canasta of 7's. (Remember, you can't use wild cards with a 7's canasta). After this signal, the partner should discard all her 7's so that you know how many 7's there are between you and the pile and can decide whether or not to attempt a 7's canasta.

Asking for Wild Cards: The 4/2 Rule

On your **first turn**, if you are holding 4 or more wild cards (jokers and/or deuces), you should **discard a 10-point card**, (preferably a picture card, which your partner is more likely to notice) to let your partner know you have at least 4 wild cards. In response to your signal, **your partner should discard a 10-point card** if she has 2 or more wild cards in her hand. If your partner doesn't have at least two wild cards, then a low card should be discarded. If you and your partner have 6 wild cards between you, lay them down and go for a Wild Card Canasta.

SPLASHES

A Splash is a combination of **14 cards (no discard)** which meet specific criteria. You may Splash at any time (when it is your turn), regardless of whether your partner has opened/melded.



Example: Neither you nor your partner has opened, and you are contemplating a Splash. Then at some point, your partner opens. At this time, you must decide whether it's wise to try for the Splash or to support your partner's opening meld. In deciding, you should assess how your hand could support your partner's, and whether the opposing players are open and have any canastas.

When a Splash is made, the hand is over. The partnership with the Splash scores 2500 points and the opposing players score is 0.



Note: In a Splash, you are permitted to use cards which have already been made canastas. You are not permitted to use a 3 in any Splash except the Garbage Hand.

SPLASH HANDS

2 SETS OF 3 + 2 SETS OF 4 (no wild cards)

3 SETS OF 4 + 2 matching wilds

4 SETS OF 3 + 2 matching wilds

7 PAIRS (no wild cards)

7 PAIRS (with 2 matching wild cards, either jokers or 2's NOT both), must also have pair of aces and pair of sevens.

GARBAGE HAND:

One of each card including a "3" and a joker. In this instance a deuce is considered a "2" and an ace is a "1."

ZIP CODE:

(1 SET OF FOUR + 2 SETS OF THREE + 2 SETS OF 2) (wild cards may be used)



Tip: If a card you need to make a Splash Hand is discarded onto an **empty tray** (and only an empty tray), you may pick it up to complete your Splash.

GOING OUT

You must have at least 2 canastas to go out (see exception), all the cards in your hand must be played and you must have a discard.

Exception: You CANNOT go out if you have an uncompleted canasta of natural aces, natural sevens or wild cards on the board, regardless of whether you have two or more canastas.

You must assess your ability to go out. It is a courtesy and wise play to ask your partner 'may I go out?' **before playing any of the cards in your hand.** (The reason for asking this question is to find out if your partner is holding more than two 7's or more than two aces, which in each case a 1500-point penalty would apply).

If partner responds "Yes", you then proceed by laying down the cards in your hand and discarding your last card face up.

If you laid down any card(s) before asking your partner, you may NOT ask your partner to go out. If you did ask your partner to go out, you cannot go out and you MAY NOT go out for one full turn.

Asking to go out is only permitted one time per partnership during hand.

There is no penalty if you go out without asking your partner, with the exception you may be penalized if your partner is holding more than two 7's or more than two aces.

If you ask to go out, your partner tells you yes and you realize you cannot go out, you and your partner MAY NOT go out for one full turn, giving each opponent an opportunity to play.

Regarding the discard when going out, you may throw a wild card only if there is no other option.



Example: If a player has two remaining cards in her hand, one wild card and the other a non-wild card, she must discard the non-wild card. She cannot, for example, use the non-wild card on a meld, and go out with the wild. The only scenario when a wild card can be discarded would be if player is holding a wild card and picks another.

SCORING

	Bonus Points:	Penalty Points:
Going out:	200 pts.	
Natural Canasta	500 pts.	
Dirty Canasta	300 pts.	
3 or more 7's in hand		-1500 pts.
3 or more Aces in hand		-1500 pts.
3 card left in your hand		-100 pts.
Picking 3 as last card in deck		-100 pts.
Splash:	2500 pts.	
Natural Canasta of Aces	2500 pts.	
Unmade Canasta of Aces		-2500 pts.
Natural Canasta of 7's	2500 pts.	
Unmade Canasta of 7's		-2500 pts.
Wild Card Canasta	2500 pts.	
Unmade Wild Card Canasta		-2500 pts.
All 4 jokers or 7 deuces in a canasta	3000 pts.	
Scoring 3's:		

Penalty Points:

1 Red 3 or 1 Black 3 100 pts.

2 Red 3s or 2 Black 3s 300 pts.

3 Red 3s or 3 Black 3s 500 pts.

4 Red 3s or 4 Black 3s 1000 pts.

ALL 3's Red & Black	2500 pts.
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NO Canastas & all 3's Red & Black -2500 pts.

The team that goes out adds up points for all their Canastas, their 3's, and gets an **additional 200-point bonus for going out**. That score represents the **"base"**. Next, count all the cards in the melds and canastas individually* and this is the **"count"** which is added to the base to make up the total score for the hand.



Important: This does not apply to 2500 pt. canastas which are counted only once toward the “base” score. The cards contained within the 2500 pt. canasta are not counted individually.

If all cards are exhausted and/or one of the partnerships has gone out, the scoring is as follows:

With No Canastas: Each player adds all points in her hand including any penalties for two or more sevens or two or more aces. Each player's hand total are added together and all points on the board (including 3's) are deducted from your score.

With 1 Canasta: Points in your hands are deducted from score. Canastas and cards melded are added into the score. 3's are neutralized and are neither a bonus nor a penalty.

With 2 Canastas: Points in your hands are deducted. All Canastas, melded points and 3's are added to the score.

ADDITIONAL INFO, HINTS and REMINDERS

- ❖ A card laid face-up is a card played. This includes if you pick-up the pile and in sorting cards you display the cards face-up. You must sort the cards face-down.
- ❖ If you pick up a card, the game continues even if you notice a mistake made by the other team. Check the opposing team for melding counts, use of dead cards, and when the pile can be picked up with aces, before you pick a card to continue the game.
- ❖ Once a canasta is made, that card is dead, can only be used as a discard or in a Splash and cannot be added to an open meld or placed on an empty tray.
- ❖ You may not remind your partner to take a Toulon. Once your opponent picks from the pile, your partner's turn is over and the opportunity to take the Toulon is lost.
- ❖ You are allowed to make an opening meld after the turn card but cannot take a Toulon. You are allowed to take a replacement for 3's after the turn card.
- ❖ You may not pick up the pile with a pair if you already have 5 cards in a meld on the table.
- ❖ After taking the pack, you may want to keep some pairs in your hand to enable you to pick up a future pack.
- ❖ Try to keep track of how many 7's and aces are in the pack, especially if you have two in your hand.
- ❖ If your partner picks up the pile and you know there are more than two 7's in the pile, you should discard all your 7's. Your partner should keep two 7's and keep track of 7's in the pile. Your partner should pick up the pile using pairs in her hand once the pile would complete a canasta of 7's. The opposing team should not discard 7's.
- ❖ If your partner picks up the pile and you know there are more than two aces in the pile, you should discard all your aces. Your partner should keep two aces and keep track of aces in the pile. Your partner should pick up the pile using pairs in her hand once the pile would complete a canasta of aces. The opposing team should not discard aces.

- ❖ Keep wild cards in your hand to complete a second canasta. Once a meld has five of a kind, place the wild card on that meld. Once, you and your partner have two canastas and you have a wild card in your hand, place it on the meld which has the highest chance of getting an additional canasta. For example, if your opposing team has four 5's and your team has four 5's, there is no chance that your 5's can be a canasta.
- ❖ If you pick the last card in the pile and it is a 3, you must keep it in your hand as there is no replacement for it, and you incur a 100-point penalty.
- ❖ You must have a discard to go out and it is to be placed face up so that all players can see it.
- ❖ You may only discard a wild card if no other option, e.g., you only have two wild cards.
- ❖ You may take the discard pile after the Turn Card.