

O F F I C I A L
RULES OF THE CARD GAME
 SMOKING **CAT**

I. BASIC RULES

The card game is intended for 4 players. It is played with 32 special Smoking Cat cards, otherwise with 32 international playing cards (using the cards from seven through the ace). Professional players of Smoking Cat prefer single-headed cards of Prager pattern. Amateurs and players from developing countries, however, often use playing cards of Hungarian pattern.

A) PRINCIPLE OF THE GAME

In the game, players try to get as few penalty points as possible for not loosing the given round and not getting a letter of the playing word. The penalty points are counted separately in each round. They are added in case a player takes: an upper jack of leaves (Hejma in Smoking Cat cards) – 10 points or another card of hearts ranked by penalty points as follows: ace of hearts – 5 points; king of hearts – 4 points; upper jack of hearts – 3 points; lower jack of hearts – 2 points; ten, nine, eight and seven of hearts – 1 point. A special „reward“ is given to the player who takes the last trick – 5 points.

The loser of a round gets one letter of a playing word.

The loser of the entire game is the player who is the first to collect all the letters of the playing word.

B) DEALING THE CARDS

At the beginning of the game, the one who allots the A position at the table deals the cards, or (within amateur encounters and in the name of supporting the Olympic idea among analphabets) players can decide who is going to deal the cards. All 32 cards are dealt clockwise, one by one, maximally two by two. Because the cards are usually slick and often stick, it can happen that the dealer will deal cards incorrectly. The dealer has the right to deal the cards once again, but in the event of repeated mistakes he can be penalized by a letter... Each player thus receives 8 cards. During the course of the game, the dealer is the player who has lost the last round...

C) COURSE OF THE GAME

At the beginning of each round, each player gives his/her 3 least advantageous cards (placed face down on the table) to the player sitting on his/her left. After giving away these 3 cards, he/she can look at the cards that were given to him/her by the player sitting on his/her right. The round can start only after this change of 3 cards. The first card is played by the player sitting to the left of the dealer. He/she can start with any card. Then the game runs clockwise. The suit of the first card played determines the suit of the round. The trick is taken by the player who has played the highest card of the given suit. To “take the trick” means to turn over the 4 cards played and put them aside on one’s own pile. The player who took the trick then starts a new round.

D) RULES

Players must follow suit if possible, i.e. they must play a card of the same suit that was led by the first player of a round if they have a card of that suit in their hand. If a player cannot follow suit, he/she can play any other card. A player is not allowed to play sooner than his/her turn. Anyone can look back at the cards played in last trick before a new round starts. No one can look back at the other cards that have already been played before the last trick.

E) PACKING THE CARDS

If a player is convinced that he/she will lose the whole round – i.e. by collecting the most penalty points (17 or more) – he/she can “pack” all the cards in order to end the round and speed up the game. When packing the cards, the player takes all the cards of the other players, regardless of whether another player would have taken a trick if the round had continued.

F) END OF A ROUND

A round ends after all the dealt cards are played. At the end of a round, the penalty points of each player are counted. If two or three players have the same number of penalty points, the loser is the one who has taken the upper jack of leaves (Hejma). The loser gets a letter of the playing word. The collected penalty points of each round are not recorded anywhere and afterwards may be immediately forgotten.

G) END OF THE GAME

Smoking Cat is not played for money. In the origins of this game, players used to drink a shot when losing the trick, respectively after each round (this used to be a custom above all in the Ukraine extraleague of SC). In the new era, Smoking Cat has been naturally transformed, and it is played based on playing words. In the ordinary game, these words might represent all manners of outrage, depending on the common disgusts of players (e.g., politicians, mass murders, failing sportsmen, etc.). In competitions organized by the SCWU (Smoking Cat World Union), the playing words are rigorously chosen by the commission of the SCWU, so that no pervert or social democrat or soccer fan is offended. The loser of the whole game is the player who is the first to collect all of the letters of the playing word.

II. RENOUNCE

A renounce is a cheating. A) It is a renounce when a player looks at the 3 cards received from the player on his/her right before giving 3 cards to the player on his/her left. B) Renounce of not following the suit. If a player commits this renounce intentionally, he/she receives a ban on playing the game for the rest of his/her life. If the renounce is caused by a player’s inattentiveness (e.g. accidental failure to follow suit due to sticky cards, etc.), the other players have the right to consider the appropriate penalty/consequences. In such a case, the renouncing player at least loses the given round. C) Renounce of wrong dealing of cards. If a player deals cards incorrectly, it is up to the other players at the table to consider the error’s severity and the circumstances in which it has occurred (e.g. stickiness of cards, psychosomatic state of the player, complications caused by players coming to the table and leaving, etc.).

III. UNWRITTEN RULES

There are many unwritten rules in existence. One can best experience them during long-term practice. The game should be dynamic.

Sharp cards of
Smoking Cat

