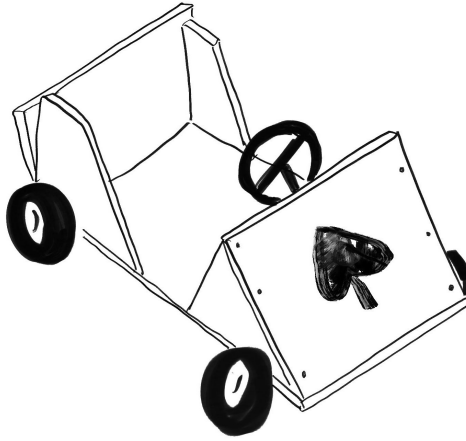




Race to the Bottom

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Art by Zoë Cappallo

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👤 2-4 ♦ Medium ⌚ 20-40 min
v1.0.4

The annual soapbox race is on, and your aim is to Race to the Bottom! Try to make your way through your deck before the others, but be careful! The other racers may be playing dirty!

1 Objective

The object of Race to the Bottom is to empty out your deck before the other players.

2 Components

To play this game you need the following:

- One standard deck per player (52 cards in 4 suits + 2 jokers)
- (Optional) A cut-card or the ad-card that comes with deck.

3 Setup

1. Each player shuffles their own decks thoroughly and deals 12 cards to themselves.
2. Place the cut-card on the bottom of the deck.
3. Choose a starting player who will lead the first meld.

Aside If you're playing with the cut-card on the bottom of the deck, you may be wondering what it's for. It's just there to tell you when you've made it all the way through and have started drawing from the cards you pitched. It has no function in the game other than that. Once you've made it all the way through the deck and the cut-card is back on top, simply throw it back on the bottom again.

4 Melds

Melds in Race to the Bottom don't care about suits only ranks. Standard Melds come in six different types:

Singles Any single card of a rank of your choice. If playing a Joker, announce its rank.

Runs Two to six cards of consecutive ranks regardless of suits.

Pairs Two cards of the same rank.

Triplets Three cards of the same rank.

Leaps Two or three consecutive pairs (e.g. 22-33 or 33-44-55).

Bounds Two consecutive triplets (e.g. 333-444).

There is also three *cheats*, which may be played "off meld":

Smokescreen Four cards of the same rank.

Oil Slick Five cards of the same rank
Beats *Smokescreen*.

Caltrops Six cards of the same rank
Beats *Oil Slick*

Note Jokers are wild for all purposes and **can** be used in cheats.

5 Aces

Aces in Race to the Bottom are special. They act as both high and low ranks.

In Singles, Pairs, Triplets, and Oil Slicks, Aces can be played over any other rank, but any rank can then subsequently be played over Aces. Think of them as resetting the counter. If Alice plays a pair of Queens, Billy can then play a pair of Aces, and Charlie can respond with a pair of 4s.

In Runs, Leaps, and Bounds, Aces can act as both the highest card in the meld and the lowest card (e.g. KQA and A23 are both allowed). Any run containing an Ace can be beat by any other run.

6 Gameplay

The lead player plays any meld into the trick. The next player in turn order may then either respond with a **matching meld**, play a **cheat**, or **pass**.

Make sure to keep the cards you play and the cards you discard separate from those of the other players as to avoid mixing the decks together.

Matching Melds When matching meld, the player must play a meld of *the same length* and also *the same type*. The meld played has to either contain the same card ranks or higher ranks.

Playing a Cheat Alternatively, the player may play a *Smokescreen*, *Oil Slick*, or *Caltrops*. These may be played in response to any normal meld, but once one player has played a cheat, the other players must also play cheats in order to stay in the round.

Note The cheats follow a hierarchy, Smokescreen < Oil Slick < Caltrops.

Passing When any player passes, that player refills their hand back up to 12 cards. After passing, that player sits out until the end of the round.

- Players may optionally *pitch* up to 6 cards from their hand on the bottom of their deck *in any order* before drawing back up. This allows you to stack the deck in your favour come future rounds.
- If there aren't enough cards left in the deck to refill to 12, simply refill as far as possible.
- If a player doesn't have any cards left in hand, they must pass unless their deck is also empty.

6.1 End of the Round

The round ends once everyone has passed. If only one player remains in a round, that player alone may keep playing over their own melds until they too decide to pass, following the normal passing rules, at which point that player refills to 12 and leads the next trick.

6.2 End of the Game

The game ends once a player has emptied both their hand and their deck. That player has crossed the finish line first and wins the race!

7 Grand Prix

If you wish to play a Grand Prix instead, play a game of three consecutive races instead. Instead of the race ending as soon as one player sheds out, keep going until all but one player sheds out.

Each player scores the following number of points depending on when they shed out:

	2 players	3 players	4 players
1st place	1 pt	2 pt	4 pt
2nd place	0 pt	1 pt	2 pt
3rd place	-	0 pt	1 pt
4th place	-	-	0 pt

After 3 races, the player with most total points wins. Tied players share the victory.

Credits

- Pyramid Love ( **This here font**) By OtherStudio and Seagull Incident.
<https://seagullincident.com/pyramidlove/>

Special Thanks

Special thanks to these wonderful people for helping bring this game to life

Eva Jacobsen	Zoë Cappallo	Jacob Landrum	Shreesh Bhat
Sean David Ross	Arthur Lacerda	Daniel Kenel	Debbie Leung

Version History

- 0.0.1** Document created.
- 0.0.2** Added soapbox car (Thanks Zoë!).
- 0.0.3** Added a cheats clarification.
- 0.0.4** Relegated *Spikes* to a variant. Re-phrased the Aces section.
- 0.0.5** Fixed mistakes caught by Shreesh
- 0.0.6** Added the missing mulligan rule
- 0.0.7** Brought the following changes:
 - Reworked the cheats
 - Reworked Aces to no longer allow cross-overs (no more KA2)
 - Capped the meld length to 6 cards
 - Increased the number of cards you can pitch from 5 to 6
 - Reduced the hand size from 15 to 12
- 0.0.8** Fix minor typos in the Melds section
- 0.0.9** Added mention of the cut-card in the setup.
- 0.0.10** Clarify pitching rules and fixed other minor stuff

- 1.0.0** Reduced player count from 5 to 4 players. Game released to the public.
- 1.0.1** Add artist credit to title page.
- 1.0.2** Added small aside about keeping cards separate.
- 1.0.3** Clarified that Jokers are wild.
- 1.0.4** Fix confusing terminology re: cheats

