

## SCPD CANASTA GAME RULES

Canasta is played with 4 players, (2 teams) and is played with two decks of cards, dealing 13 cards to each player. (If playing 3-handed, deal 15 cards to each player.) The person to the right of the dealer (if available) cuts the deck and from these cards places the **four bottom cards** down in the tray, then the next **three bottom cards** are placed crossways, and the balance of cut portion of the deck is placed on top. This is called the '**talone**'. Leftover cards from the dealer are placed on the top of the talone. This is your "drawing pile". The first person on the left of dealer starts the play by drawing one card, then discards.

There shall be **no discussion, body signals or showing of the cards** dealt between the partners while playing. **Players must play at a 'pace' consistent with others at their table; otherwise form their own foursomes according to their own pace.**

**GAME:** Starts with a meld of 125 points to go down.  
When you have a score of 3,000 points, you need to meld 155 points to go down.  
When you have a score of 5,000 points, you need to meld 180 points to go down.  
The game ends when a score of 8,500 is reached.

**MELD:** To meld you **must have** 3 of a kind (or clean) and you may use wild cards (deuces or jokers) with two of a kind for the additional point count. You may use all but one card in your hand to meld so that you have a discard (unless you are picking up the discard pile). You must have the required count **without using the top card in the discard pile**. To pick up the pile you must have 2 of a kind in your hand **or on the table as part of your meld**. Then you may lay down that pair and pick up the discard pile. **A CANASTA IS 7 CARDS**. If all are the same, it is a clean canasta – if with wild cards (two only) it is a dirty canasta. When **melding you may move your WILDCARDS around** to make the meld, however, **you may never move cards once you have picked up the discard pile or discarded**. Any cards that are displayed, must be played and not put back in your hand. **IF YOU LAY DOWN AND DISPLAY ANY PART (OR ALL) OF AN INITIAL MELD THAT IS SHORT IN THE REQUIRED COUNT, PICK UP CARDS DISPLAYED, BUT NOW YOU MUST ADD A PENALTY OF 10 POINTS TO THE REQUIRED MELD TOTAL.**

**PLAY:** The first player that melds, discards then takes 4 cards from the draw deck. These 4 cards cannot be played until the next time around. The second team player that melds and discards, takes 3 cards from the draw deck. These 3 cards may not be played until the next time around. A player may remind his/her partner to pick up his/her 4 or 3 cards. If they are not picked up by the time the next person draws, they are lost. **These 4 or 3 cards may never be taken from the bottom 4 cards in the talone.**

- You can use a maximum of 2 wildcards in a canasta.
- You cannot discard a 7 or Ace if the discard tray is empty, **unless you are going out**.
- You may look back at the top 3 cards in the discard pile **when it is your turn**.
- Once you discard, no additional play can be made until your next turn.
- As a warning to all players, you should announce when you have 3 or less cards in your hand.
- When a player takes the last card in the pile and discards, but does not go out, the next player may pick up the pile with a pair and play the hand, or the hand is over.
- You should ask your partner if he/she wants to "go out". This is a courtesy only and not mandatory. However, you **must ask before** you play your cards and go out. This could save penalties for having 7's or Aces in your partner's hand. **You may ask your partner to "go out" as many times as you want.**
- You must have a minimum of 2 canastas and a discard to go out. When you go out the game stops.
- You may discard a wildcard when going out; or if all you have are wildcards. You must show your hand to prove that you only have wildcards. **Your opponent cannot pick up the pack with a pair of wildcards.**
- If you do not make any canastas, all cards in your hand and on the table are against you including the threes.
- '5<sup>th</sup> position' – If there are 5 cards showing on the table, you **may not pick up** the discard pile with a pair in your hand. This is because the total would make 8 cards and only 7 are allowed in a canasta.
- At the end of play, you must lay your hand down **FACE UP** for all to see that you are not holding more than 2 Aces or 2 Sevens.

**THREES:** If you are dealt any 3s, you lay them down and pick up 1 card to replace each 3 and 1 card as your draw. If you draw 3s in the Talone, continue to draw as usual. If the **last card** in the draw pile is a 3, you lay it down as part of your base score, **but no play or discard is allowed** and this ends the hand. You cannot lay down any cards from your hand, and the hand is over.

**ACES:** In your original meld, you may use up to two wild cards with the Aces. Aces picked from the discard pile **on the original meld must stay clean**. Aces laid down **after the initial meld must be clean**. If your partner has already melded with Aces, you may pick up the pile with 2 in your hand. If you make a clean canasta of Aces, it is worth 2,500 points; however, if you are caught with more than two Aces in your hand, you will be penalized 1,500 points. Also, if you go for a

clean canasta of Aces and don't make it, you are penalized 2,500 points. You may discard an ace into an empty tray **only if you are going out.**

**SEVENS:** Sevens **must always be clean** and if you make the canasta, it is worth 2,500 points; if you don't make the canasta, you will be penalized 2,500 points; and, if you have more than 2 in your hand at the end of the hand, you will be penalized 1,500 points. You may discard a seven into an empty tray **only if you are going out.**

**SPLASH:** A splash is a **clean canasta** (7 cards of one kind, including 7s and Aces, and wildcards) in your hand – you must lay all 7 cards down at once. You may meld with a splash without the initial meld count and it is worth 500 points, or, if you meld with 7s or Aces, it is 2,500 points. If you meld with wildcards, it is 2,000 points (or if it contains all 4 Jokers) it is 2,500 points or, if all deuces it is 3,000 points. **You may not use the top card** in the discard pile to make the splash.

**PAIR HAND:** A pair hand canasta is worth 3,500 points and must be **played before you or your partner has melded** with **absolutely no wild cards.** You must have 7 pairs (no duplications) in your hand and no discard (the 14<sup>th</sup> card is from the draw pile that you picked up). Your partner's hand and 3s are not counted against you. The other players count their points as usual and, if they are caught with more than two Aces or 7s, in either or both of their hands, they are counted as separate penalties.

**WILDCARD CANASTA:** On an initial meld of wildcards (jokers and/or 2's) **you may not use a wildcard** with any other cards on the table as the wildcard canasta must be closed first. If the wildcards add up to the required meld count, no other cards are needed to meld. If not, you need **three of a kind** or more to make the count. You may **discard a wildcard into an empty tray only if you are going out.**

**BASE COUNT:**

- Going out value = 100 points
- Natural (clean canasta) = 500 points each
- Mixed (dirty canasta) with a maximum of 2 wildcards = 300 points each
- Pair hand (7 pairs, no wildcards) = 3,500 points
- Mixed wildcard canasta = 2,000 points
- Mixed wildcard canasta including all 4 Jokers = 2,500 points
- All 2s = 3,000 points
- All Aces (clean) = 2,500 points
- All 7s (clean) = 2,500 points

**VALUE OF 3s:**

- No canastas = All 3s are minus
- One canasta = All 3s have no value (cannot be counted)
- Two canastas = All 3s are counted as below:
  - 1 red or 1 black 3 = 100 points
  - 2 red or 2 black 3s = 300 points
  - 3 red or 3 black 3s = 500 points
  - 4 red or 4 black 3s = 1000 points
  - Red & Black 3s cannot be mixed, i.e. – must be all red or all black**

**CARD POINT VALUE:**

- Jokers = 50 points
- 2s (wildcards) = 20 points
- Aces = 20 points
- 8s to Kings = 10 points
- 4s to 7s = 5 points
- 3s in hand = 5 Points

**PENALTIES:**

- In your hand** – At the end of the hand if you have 3 or more 7s or Aces (alive or dead) = minus 1,500 points.
- On the table** – At end of the hand: uncompleted 7s or clean Aces = minus 2,500 points.
- On the table** – At the end of the hand: uncompleted Wildcard canasta containing all 4 Jokers = minus 2,500 points;  
or if mixed wildcards (2s and Jokers) = minus 2,000 points;  
or all 2s = minus 3,000 points.