

SAMBA IN CAROLINA

These instructions have been written for people who are already players of Carolina Hand and Foot. Since other groups have different rules when playing this game, there may be differences found. As long as the group agrees on the rules, all is well.

What is the game “Samba”? Samba is a game that goes a step beyond “Canasta” and “Hand and Foot” in that it includes runs. There are a few other differences as well. For example, hands and feet are 15 cards to start, not 11, red 3’s are good and the scoring is different. The game is suitable for 2,3,4 or 6 players.

What is a Canasta? A canasta is a collection of seven cards of the same rank. If all 7 cards are “natural”, the canasta is a red canasta and worth 500 points during scoring. If a canasta has any wild cards in it, 2’s or jokers, it is considered a black canasta and is worth 300 points during scoring. (Note: during game play, there can never be more wild cards than naturals in any canasta.)

In Samba, a canasta or Samba is limited to seven cards, there are no point cards added, no “tucking”. NOTE: A clean canasta of 7’s is considered a Samba and is worth 2000 points. If a wild card is used on a canasta of 7’s, the value drops to 300 points.



For a team to “go out” in Samba, they must complete 5 red canastas and 1 black in addition to the required Sambas. Red canastas are worth 500 points and black canastas are worth 300 when scoring.

What makes up a “Samba”? There are two kinds of sambas.

The first is like a canasta – a group of seven cards of the same rank. Teams must make a canasta of 7’s and a canasta of wild cards (7’s and jokers) in order to go out. Those canastas are called Sambas and are worth 2000 points. Other ranks are considered regular canastas and don’t have the same value.

The second is a “run samba”, a run of 7 cards, an uninterrupted sequence, of the same suit. The run can be from 4-10, from 5-J, from 6-Q, from 7-K or from 8-Ace.

Each team can only start one “run Samba” in each suit.

Duplicate Sambas are allowed in the case of wild cards and 7’s.



What is the value of a “Samba”? A “Samba” is worth **2000** points.

For a team to “go out” in Samba, they must complete a Samba of 7’s, a Samba of wild cards and at least one Samba run in any suit in addition to the required 5 red canastas and 1 black.

Partnership SAMBA for 4 players (variations to follow.)

Player, Cards, Deal

Partners sit opposite each other. Eight decks of cards are used, including two jokers per deck. (Eight decks are best for 3-handed “Cut Throat” game, a common occurrence with our group, so we always uses 8 decks. Other clubs may use less.)

Some groups pick up 3 cards per turn for every hand. The pick up piles are placed in three piles as shown and one card is drawn off of each pile



Our group prefers to change that for each hand played. We decide before playing just what those numbers will be. Sometimes we start with three piles, then go to 4 and end with 5. Most times, we start with 4 piles and advance to 5 and 6.

These things are decided before play starts.

STARTING PLAY

Players each cut from a random stock pile to decide who goes first. Joker is considered a high card, followed by the 2 (a wild card), then the Ace, King and so on.

Once it has been determined who is going first, that player takes some cards from each stock pile attempting to pick up exactly 30 cards. Player can NOT count as they pick up the cards but once they have picked up from each pile, they may look at the side of their pile (not fan them out) and pick up more or return some to the stock piles.

Players then deal from their piles to make 2 piles of 15 cards. They must alternate between the piles when doing this, 1,1, 2,2, 3,3, 4,4,... If they are short, they simply take more from the stock piles. If they are over, they return the extra cards to the stock piles.

Any player who has picked up exactly 30 cards earns 100 bonus points for their team.

Without looking at the cards, the player passes the pile on his left to the player on his left - - that will be that player's "HAND". The pile on the right is retained for the first player's "FOOT".

ACTIVE and KEEPER

When there are 4 players, each team has two partners. One partner, the ACTIVE, will control all the unfinished books and the other, the KEEPER, will hold all the completed Sambas and canastas. The team decides who will play which role.

BEGINNING PLAY

The player who won the cut begins the play. His turn begins when he takes a single card from the top of each stock pile and ends when he discards. Between the time the player draws and discards, they can meld, play cards on his teams's spread, or start new spreads. At the end of his turn, play moves to the left.

3 DEALS, 3 MELDS - 4 DEALS, 4 MELDS

Melds may change depending on the group's preferences.

For a 3 deal game, 50, 90 and 120 is popular. For a 4 deal game, 90, 120, 150 and 180 is popular. The group determines the melds before the game starts.

Our group has adopted this - - meld is equal to the number of piles times 30. If we are playing with 3, 4 then 5 piles, the melds are 90, 120 and 150. If we play a 4, 5 and 6, the melds become 120, 150 and 180.

A player can "get their team on the board" by melding the necessary number of points for that deal. If a player draws and can not "meld", he simply ends his turn by discarding.



120



150 180

CARD VALUES

Joker – 50 points
8-King – 10 points

Aces and 2's – 20 points
4-7 – 5 points

In Samba, red threes are NOT bad but desired. When a player holds a red three, once he has added to his team's spread he can turn in the red three to the player holding his team's completed canastas and Sambas and draw another card from the stacks. During scoring, each red three is worth a hundred points.

CANASTAS and SAMBAS

Canastas and Sambas all require 3 cards to start.

At ALL times during the game, there has to be more natural cards than wild in any canasta. No wild cards are allowed in a 2000 point Samba EXCEPT for the required Wild Card Samba.

Canastas and Sambas that are incomplete are held by the ACTIVE. They are placed face-up on the table for all to see. Canastas are lined up by rank in numerical order. Cards are placed overlapping so all players can see the cards and suits at all times.

If there are no wild cards in the canasta, the top card should be red (indicating a "red canasta" potentially worth 500 points.) If there is a 2 or joker in the rank, the top card should be black (indicating a "black canasta" worth 300 points.)



During play, top card indicates if the canasta is red or black. The crossed card indicates 6 cards in pile and needs only one to complete.

The 7's in this image should be separated to show a Samba, potentially worth 2000 pts.

THE PLAY

A player's turn consists of three parts –

1. - Take one card from the top of each stock pile.
2. – Meld or add to the team meld on table.

Any time a player uses a wild card, they must tell the partner holding the cards where that wild card should be placed. The partner can tell them what canastas can hold more wild cards, but can not point out where the card should or should not be placed.

3. – Discard.

OR OR OR

The player may choose to take cards from the discard pile instead of taking one from each stock pile.

There are rules regarding this play.

1. Player must hold two cards of the same rank OR, if being used for a run Samba, two cards that are in sequential order with the card being taken from the discard pile. All three of those cards must be played immediately.
2. Player is not allowed to look at the discard pile before removing the top card. Taking the top card starts the play and is not reversible.
3. The top card MAY be used in an initial meld. All other cards must come from the hand.
4. The player must also take 6 more cards. These do NOT come from the top of the discard. Instead, the player picks up the entire discard pile and deals 6 cards, face down, FROM THE BOTTOM. Those cards can't be added to the players hand (or foot) until after he discards and ends his turn.
5. If there are not enough cards in the discard pile to do this, a minimum of 7, the move is forbidden.
6. Play and discard continues as normal.

COUNT CARDS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN SAMBA.

A PLAYER CAN NOT MAKE ANY PLAY CHANGES AFTER DISCARDING.

If the meld is insufficient, the cards must be returned to the player's hand.

In addition, if agreed on beforehand, a team may be fined 100 points for revealing the cards to teammates giving them an unfair advantage. (Not all groups do this.)

GOING INTO THE FOOT

Unlike Hand and Foot, once a player has contributed to his team's meld and discarded, he immediately picks up his foot and can play it on his next turn. He can be reminded to pick up his foot by any player.

THE KEEPER

The KEEPER holds all completed Sambas and canastas as well as all red threes. They must be clearly displayed at all times and separated by values.



This is what a KEEPER's station looks like when his team is close to going out.

The wild cards, 7's and run Sambas are worth 2000 points each. The red canastas are worth 500 pts. The black is worth 300 pts and each red three is worth 100.

A team may want to continue to complete more wild card or 7 Sambas or canastas.

Remember, the end score is what determines the winner.

GOING OUT

When a team has completed enough Sambas and canastas, they have the option of going out. Both partners have to agree to go out. No count cards (tucking) are allowed. A discard is allowed but not necessary.

If there are less than 3 cards (5 if playing “cut throat”) in stack, the game ends immediately and no team gets the 2000 points for going out.

BLACK THREES and CLOSING

The team member going out can be holding 3 black threes and close. Not one, two or four, exactly three. They don't get any penalty for those cards. They put them on the table as if starting a canasta of black 3's.

If a player has the last turn of the game and he picks up a red three during his draw, he does NOT have to be able to replace the card in order to go out. He gives the red three to the keeper for scoring but forfeits the replacement card.

SCORING

Cards left in players' hand are subtracted from the team's spreads. (Black threes = -5)
Score sheet lists points.

Each player gets 100 points for cutting exactly 30 cards.

The team that went out gets 2000 points.

Sambas, 7's and wild cards are worth 2000 points.

Red Canastas are worth 500 points each.

Black Canastas are worth 300 points each.

Red 3's are worth 100 points each.

Once those values are recorded, each team does a card count.

Jokers – 50 points Aces and 2's - 20 points

K-8 – 10 points 7-4 – 5 points

AND THE WINNER IS.... The player or team with the largest score when all hands have been played.

Variations –

6 players - 6 players play in 2 teams of three.

Cut Throat - 2 or 3 players play, each make up their own team putting together their own spreads. The rules remain the same except each player draws 5 cards.

EXTRA INFORMATION

ORGANIZING THE CARDS

A “Hand and Foot” hand consists of 11 cards and a player has to play all those cards before opening his foot. Many players find it impossible to organize and play the game without using a card holder. In Samba, the starting hand is 15 cards and the foot can be opened as soon as a player melds or adds to the team’s meld. A player may find himself with more cards than he ever had to deal with before. With cards being saved for run Sambas, wild card and 7 Sambas as well as canastas, a board is a necessity

Most Hand and Foot boards are 12 inches long. The one I use is longer, 18 inches wide, and will be the one I show here to explain organizing cards



There are 23 cards on the rack, the number a player would have after 4 draws and discards. They are organized as follows

Top rows are dedicated to run Sambas as they have a high scoring value and should be considered a priority. Cards from 8 to Ace are put here immediately, divided, by suit, because the player is trying to complete run samba. After the cards are organized, duplicates can be moved down on the board but it is most helpful to start with them sorted as explained here

The K, Q, and J of diamonds could be put down but they wouldn't meet the meld needed so must be held. The player could rush to meld and put down the wild card and two sixes, but must consider the value of a wild card Samba is 2000 points while a black canasta yields only 300 points. Most players would hold off

The run Sambas are followed by the other 2000 point collections, the wild cards and 7's. When I am teaching the game, these are put in the center row

Red threes must be held until the player has melded or added to the team's spread. They are also put in the third row. Once a player adds to the spread he gives the red 3's to his team's keeper and draws a replacement card from the stacks. Finally, I advise players to put all the other cards in numerical order that can be used in red or black canasta



NOTE: There are two club aces on the board. One is on the row dedicated to the high-scoring Samba. The other can safely be used in a canasta at this point. Same thing with the queen of hearts

Serious players will watch what cards their partners play and may assume the player starting a canasta with an ACE has a duplicate being held in reserve. That may be a correct assumption but could lead the second player to play yet a third ace of the same suit only to find out the partner did NOT have an ace in reserve. This is something that I didn't understand when I was a new player so I want to point it out. Unless you know and trust the partner to really be on top of this strategy, don't assume he has a back up card

I am just sharing my method of organizing my hand - - all players are free to organize and play their hands as they see fit. NO PLAYER can tell another player how to organize or play their cards

.Having said that, I will share yet another tip here

TIP

In Hand and Foot, it is often wise to play on a meld and increase it from 3 to 4 cards and NOT add to make it an unfinished canasta of 5 or 6 cards. Why? If a player has a large number of wild cards and needs to get rid of them, they can play up to three wild cards on an unfinished canasta of 4 cards. OR, OR, OR... If a player has two cards of the same rank in his hand but the team has 5 cards on the table already, the player can NOT pick up the card because he can't play it immediately. A team can not have two canastas of the same rank on the table at one time

Remember, red threes are NOT a concern here. Picking up a potential loss of 500 points, as in Hand and Foot, is not possible