

Family

AGE  
**8+** | 10 - 60 | 2 - 6  
PLAYERS

# Deluxe **ROOK**<sup>®</sup> RULES **ABOUT Rook®**



My Grandfather, George S. Parker, founded Parker Games in 1883. A few years later, he brought his two elder brothers into the business and renamed the company Parker Brothers, Inc. George was still active in the business while I was growing up. His brothers had retired.

I remember George as a kindly and devoted grandfather. More than anything else in his life he loved to play games with my siblings and me. Often my grandmother would participate, especially if it involved ROOK. This, to my knowledge, was the only game where she played a major role in its creation. George was especially proud of ROOK because it combined the great fun of trick-taking card play with bright, numerical cards, avoiding



the stigma attached to regular playing cards at the turn of the Twentieth Century. I wish you and yours much fun and enjoyment whenever you play the great game of ROOK!

Randolph P. Barton  
Former President  
Parker Brothers, Inc.

## CARD-PLAYING TERMS FOR NEW ROOK PLAYERS

There are four color-coded suits of otherwise identically numbered cards. Two players generally play against two other players in partnership. At the beginning of each hand, a dealer will shuffle the deck and deal cards to each player. Players hold their cards in their hand. Each player may then "bid" for the privilege of naming the "trump" suit. Next, each plays a card onto each "trick." The winner of each trick collects the card. When all cards are played, "scoring" occurs-certain cards have value, others don't. In some versions of ROOK, a "nest" is also part of play.

**Bid:** Before play begins, all players bid (as in an auction) for the privilege of naming the trump suit. During the hand, the player who bid the highest "takes the bid" and must win tricks to collect count cards worth enough points to equal or exceed the amount bid.

**Trump:** The player who bid highest is known as the "declarer." The declarer "picks trump," naming one of the four suit colors to be trump for that hand. Any card of the trump color beats any card of the other three colors.

**Trick:** One player "leads" a card face up on the table from his hand, and each other player-in turn-lays a card on it. The highest card of the color led "takes the trick" unless someone plays a trump; then the trump (or highest trump) card takes it.

**Ruff:** When a non-trump card is led on a trick, and later-during that trick-a trump card is played, the trump card is said to "ruff" the trick.

**Scoring:** At the end of the hand, players count up the count cards ("counters") in the tricks they have taken in order to calculate their scores. A declarer who does not collect the number of points at least equal to his bid "goes down" and subtracts the *total* amount of that bid.

**Nest:** Some versions of ROOK require that a few cards be dealt, face down, to the “nest” which is then claimed by the declarer. After adding these cards to his hand, the declarer will then replace a like number of cards into the nest. The nest is then won by the player who takes the final trick of the hand.

## RULES FOR TOURNAMENT ROOK ("KENTUCKY DISCARD")

### Partnership Game for 4 Players

The game of KENTUCKY DISCARD has been one of the most popular of all ROOK games for decades. It is the version played at most ROOK clubs and at ROOK Tournaments.

KENTUCKY DISCARD has one variation—adding the ROOK Bird Card. Including this card adds an exciting element of surprise and speeds the game up as well. Decide before play if you will include it.

Note: The tips on bidding, discarding, and play which follow these rules assume the ROOK Bird Card is not in Play. When in play, the ROOK Bird Card can be thought of as the equivalent of the 14 of Trump.

### Dealing

Pick a dealer. First, dealer removes all 1's 2's, 3's, and 4's from the deck. This will result in a deck of 40 cards (or 41 if the ROOK Bird Card is included). Dealer shuffles and offers a cut to the player seated on his right. Dealer deals 9 cards face down to each player and a face down nest of four cards (five if the ROOK Bird Card is included). The nest cards should be dealt one at a time, after each player has been dealt another card, until the nest is “full.” Place the nest in the center of the table, apart from any player's hand. If any card ranked 10 or higher is inadvertently exposed during the deal, the dealer must re-deal the hand. If any lower ranked card is exposed, it is the right of any player to demand a new deal. Deal will rotate to the left on subsequent hands.

### Object

300 points wins the game. If both sides surpass 300 points at the end of the same hand, the higher total wins. If there is a tie, play another hand.

### Scoring

Appoint a scorekeeper to keep score on a piece of paper. Count cards (“counters”) are the 14's and 10's (which are each worth ten points) and the 5's (which are each worth five points). The ROOK Bird Card (if it is used) is worth twenty points. All other

cards have no value in scoring. Captured tricks have no separate value. Total points in the deck are 100 (120 if the ROOK Bird Card is used).

The counters captured by partners are added together for their joint score for that hand. However, if the high bidder fails to make the bid, the partnership is set back the full amount of the bid, even if this gives that partnership a minus score.

## **Bidding**

After the deal, each player sorts the cards in his hand according to colors and the bidding begins with the player at dealer's left and continues clockwise around the table. Players bid for the privilege of choosing the trump color. There is a great advantage in being the player who chooses trump color, since a trump card can capture any card of any other color. Your opening bid must be at least 70 points. Bids must be divisible by 5, such as 70, 75, 80. You are bidding the number of points (from count cards) you think you and your partner will be able to capture with your hands, provided you are able to name the color that will be trump. If you capture all count cards, you score 120 points (or 100 points if playing without the ROOK Bird Card).

You should remember, there's always a risk when you take the bid. If you do not wish to bid, you may "pass."

After passing, you may not bid again on this hand.

## **Playing**

**The Nest:** The highest bidder (declarer) adds the cards in the nest to his hand and then exchanges a like amount of cards in his hand to form a new nest. Any card may be placed in the nest including (for strategic purposes) counters. After discarding to the nest, declarer places the nest aside, away from all players, and then announces the trump color. The player who takes the last trick captures the nest and scores any counters found in it.

**First Lead:** The player to the left of the dealer (who may or may not be the highest bidder) makes the initial lead and play begins. Any color may be led and play moves around the table to the left.

**Play:** Players must, if possible, follow suit (i.e., play a card of the same color that was led). If it is impossible to follow suit, any card may be played. That includes a trump card, or a non-counter of another suit, or a counter of another suit if a player believes his partner may take the trick.

**Highest Card:** The highest card of the color led takes the trick unless the trick is trumped, in which case the highest trump takes the trick.

Note: The ROOK Bird Card, when used, is the highest card, no matter what color has been chosen as trumps. It may be played at any time the holder wishes, regardless of the color led. It is the only card that has this privilege. If led, it calls for the play of the trump color. You must play the ROOK Bird Card when trump is led and you have no other trump cards.

**Next Trick:** Whoever takes the trick places it face down near him and leads a card for the next trick. Any card of any color may be led.

### **Scoring**

The winner of the final trick claims the discarded nest and includes in his score the value of any counters contained in it.

A partnership scores the value of all counters won during play. However, if declarer's partnership fails to score at least as many points as bid, the amount of declarer's bid is DEDUCTED from their current score. It is possible, therefore, for a partnership's score to be negative.

**Example:** On the first hand, you bid 80, but you and your partner only score 75 points of counters. Result: your score is minus 80 ( $0 - 80 = -80$ ). If on a later hand you fail to make a bid, the bid is deducted from your current score.

**Example:** You have 140 points and fail to make your

bid of 80. Your new score is 60 ( $140 - 80 = 60$ ).

### **After Four Hands**

One set of partners should exchange seats to change the play order of the four players. A penalty of 40 points should be taken from the score of a player who improperly discards (to the nest) or makes any suggestion to affect partner's play. If a misdeal is discovered before three tricks are taken, the cards are withdrawn and re-dealt, the deal passing to the left. If a misdeal is not discovered until later in the game, the dealer's partnership is set back 40 points for the error and the other partnership does not score. The deal then passes to the left.

If a player plays a card of a different color when he could follow the color led, the error may be corrected if discovered before the next trick is taken. If the error is not discovered until later, the "hand" is ended, and the side making the error is set back the full amount of the bid, regardless of who made the highest bid for that hand. The opponents score all the counters they captured before the error was discovered.

## PARTNERSHIP ROOK

### Major Differences Between Regular Rook and Tournament Rook

**Note:** PARTNERSHIP ROOK is akin to Contract Bridge in scope. However, the bidding is much simpler to learn.

The three major differences between PARTNERSHIP ROOK and TOURNAMENT ROOK are:

1. REGULAR PARTNERSHIP ROOK uses the entire 56 card deck.
2. The partnership taking the most tricks scores a 20 point bonus.
3. There is no nest (nor is the ROOK Bird Card in play).

REGULAR PARTNERSHIP ROOK takes longer to play each hand, simply because each player begins with fourteen cards rather than ten. Because taking the most tricks earns a bonus score, players need to plan their hands to try and win the eight tricks needed to score this bonus.

In REGULAR PARTNERSHIP ROOK, the opponents of the declarer have a much better opportunity

to save their counters because it is more difficult for declarer to void one suit, let alone two, and declarer is not likely to have a commanding control over trumps, since there are 4 more trump cards in play.

A player should be more cautious when risking a counter. Cards as high as a 12 should be played with caution. The discard principle used by the player to declarer's left—either risking a counter or making the best effort to capture each doubtful trick—doesn't work nearly as often here. Instead, it is best not to waste a high middle card (cards higher than 10, but not the highest unplayed card of the suit) except when there is a high probability of an opposing 10 taking the trick, thereby saving itself.

Declarer wins a smaller percentage of tricks and counters in REGULAR PARTNERSHIP ROOK. More small cards and fewer high middle cards are led by declarer's partner. The opponents do not lead 5's hoping declarer will have to trump them. A knowledge of standard leads is more important in this game than in TOURNAMENT ROOK.

## The ROOK PARTNERSHIP

### Game for 4 Players

#### Object of the Game

Be the first partnership to reach game score of 200

**points** by capturing count cards (“counters”) in tricks, namely: 14’s, 10’s, and 5’s. If both sides exceed game score at the end of the same hand, the higher total wins. In the case of a tie, play another hand to determine the winner.

#### **Choose partners**

If you wish, draw for partners. High cards play against low cards.

#### **Choose the dealer**

Players draw cards for first deal. Highest card deals.

#### **Dealing**

The basic deck consists of all 56 cards, numbered 1 through 14 in each of four different colors (Green, Red, Black and Yellow). Shuffle and cut the deck, then deal out all cards, face down, one at a time, until each player has 14 cards. There is no nest. Players sort their cards in their hands according to color. At the start of each hand, the player to the left of the previous dealer deals.

#### **Misdeal**

If any card as high as a 10 is exposed during the deal, a new deal is required. If any card, even though it is lower than a 10, is exposed, it is the right of any player to demand a new deal. In either case the same dealer re-deals.

#### **Bidding**

Players bid for the privilege of choosing the trump color. There is a great advantage in being the player who chooses trump color, since a trump card can capture any card of any other color. Bidding can start at any number. Bids must be divisible by 5, such as 70, 75, 80. You are bidding the number of points you think you and your partner will be able to capture with your hands provided you are able to name the trump color. If you capture all of the count cards and take more tricks than the opponents, you will score 120 points. You should remember that there's always a risk when you take the bid!

*Note:* To calculate what you should bid, count up the value of the count cards in your hand and look at the number of high cards you have. Also, look at the distribution of colors. If you have no cards of one color you can trump that color when it is led and win the trick. Bidding starts with the player on the dealer's left and passes clockwise.

You may, but need not, bid on your turn. Either bid at least 5 points higher than the last bidder or say, “I pass.” Having passed, you may not bid again on this hand. Bidding continues in turn until no player will bid higher.

**Bidding example:** Four people (Norma, Steve, Ellen,

and Wes) are playing. Steve has six high Green cards and some each of the other colors. Norma, on the dealer's left, examines her hand and bids 70. Steve bids 80. Ellen, having a poor hand, passes. Wes bids 85. Norma then has a chance to bid again, and bids 90. Steve, having a strong hand, bids 95. Ellen, having already passed, may not bid again. Next, Wes passes. Now Norma passes. Steve takes the bid at 95 and announces, "Green is trump."

### **Playing**

After trump color has been announced, the player to the left of the dealer (who may or may not be the highest bidder) "leads" any card of any color face up to the center of the table. Play passes to the left, each player in turn playing one card face up.

**Note:** You must "follow suit" if possible (if you have a card of the color led, you must play that color).

If you can't follow suit, you may throw away a worthless card, or play a trump. The highest card of the color led takes the trick unless trump is played, in which case the highest trump takes the trick. Remember, you and your partner will add your counters together so, if you think your partner may take the trick, play a counter.

The person who takes the trick makes the next lead. When you take a trick, place it face down on

the table, criss-crossing them to make counting tricks easier at the end of each hand. With the exception of the one just played, tricks may not be reviewed until the hand is completed. Any card of any color may be led.

### **Scoring**

Only certain cards in the deck, called "count cards" or "counters," have point values:

Each 5.....	5 points
Each 10.....	10 points
Each 14.....	10 points

The counters are the only cards that have value for scoring. Each partnership's score is the sum of all the count cards in the tricks they captured.

**Note:** If declarer and his partner do not capture enough counters to make a score equal to (or greater than) the bid, their partnership is set back the full amount of the bid, and they get no credit for the counters that they did capture. If they capture more than their bid, full credit is given for all counters. If your partnership did not win the bid, you still receive points for your count cards.

### **Most Tricks**

The partnership taking more tricks than their opponents will score a bonus of 20 more points. (If each partnership takes 7 tricks, no bonus is awarded.)

On each hand, 120 points are at stake (100 points for counters and 20 points for the most-tricks-won bonus).

**Scoring example:** The partnership that took the bid at 90 collected only 75 points in count cards and did not take more tricks than their opponents. The full 90 points is deducted from their score; they do not score the 75 points that they did collect. A score can drop below zero, so if it's the first hand, their score would be -90. Their opponents, who collected the remaining count cards, are given 45 points: 25 points for counters and a 20 point bonus for taking the most tricks.

#### **Winning**

The first partnership to reach 200 points wins.

#### **Penalties**

A penalty of 40 points is deducted from the score of the partnership of any player who discards the incorrect number of cards to the nest or makes any “table talk” suggestions to affect the partner’s play.

If a player “reneges” by playing a card of a different color when he could have followed suit, the error may be corrected if discovered before the next trick is taken. If the error is not discovered until later, the “hand” is ended, and the side that made the error is set back the full amount of the bid, regardless of who

made the bid for that hand. The opponents score all the count cards they captured before the error was discovered.

### **VARIATIONS ON THE ORIGINAL ROOK GAME**

These variations follow the same format as established in the rules for both TOURNAMENT ROOK and PARTNERSHIP ROOK. The basic rules are not repeated for each variation.

#### **More Partnership Games**

### **DIXIE**

#### **A Partnership Game for Four or Six Players**

DIXIE is similar to TOURNAMENT ROOK except that each captured 13 card, instead of each captured 14 card, counts 10 points.

#### **Dealing**

Use the basic deck of 56 cards. Deal out the entire deck plus a nest of four cards for four players or a nest of two cards for six players.

#### **Object**

300 points wins the game.

#### **Scoring**

Each 5 card counts 5 points, each 10 card counts 10 points, and each 13 card counts 10 points.

Note: The 14 card is not a count card, but is still the most powerful card in each suit. The side taking the majority of the tricks wins the nest (which scores 20 bonus points). If each side takes the same number of tricks, the 20 points go to the opponents of the high bidder. There are 120 total points “up for grabs” during each hand. Partners’ scores are both added together at the end of each hand. If the high bidder and his partner fail to make their bid, they are set back the total amount of the bid (and score nothing for the count cards they did capture).

### **Bidding**

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK. The opening bid must be at least 70. Remember that your score is counted together with your partner’s. However, bids rarely exceed 95.

### **Playing**

The high bidder may exchange any cards in his hand for cards in the nest. He may leave or place counters in the nest. The player who takes the last trick also takes the nest, counting it as an additional trick. After the exchange, the high bidder announces trump color. The player who deals makes the opening lead. DIXIE is the most successful and interesting when played by six players—three against three—friend and rival alter-

nating around the table, so that no two partners sit side-by-side.

### **Winning at DIXIE (“Life with the Counter 13”)**

DIXIE is a great partnership game for 4 or 6 people because of its twist—the 13 in each suit is a counter instead of the 14. But the 14 is still the high card in each suit.

#### **Bidding**

When bidding in DIXIE, remember that the 13 can not be led on the first trick. You have to wait for the 14 to be played before risking it. Always count 20 points for cards because usually a hand strong enough to take the bid will win the nest and make eight tricks.

The blank suit count is 10 points: 4 points for a 13 not held, 4 for the 10 and 2 for the five. After picking up the nest, and holding seventeen cards in hand, it is always possible to discard each counter not in a suit four cards long. Thus, counters in the declarer’s hand should score their full value. Only consider suits of four, five or six cards in length.

Your fourth (and shortest) suit has a value of 22 points because the opponents are likely to save a counter from this suit by playing it on a trick led by another suit.

## Playing the Hand

A thirteen, if not in a suit that is at least four cards long, should be discarded to the nest. If you hold a thirteen and at least three other cards in the same suit, it will be safe and it will win a trick and “save” itself.

Many times a 10 is lost because declarer holds back his 14 waiting for the 13 to appear. 13's are in little danger unless part of a doubleton or if the 13 is a singleton. Depend on your partner to take care of the 13 if it is held by your left-hand opponent.

As left-hand opponent, you shouldn't play a 13 until the 14 of the same suit has been played. This is true unless your 13 is only guarded once. Another way of remembering this rule is: “Hold onto your 13 until the next to the last chance to play it.”

As right-hand opponent, you have a more sane existence. This is because you generally play last on a trick. You're likely to save your 13 unless it is a singleton, and even then the 14 may not be played right away, enabling you to save it.

As partner, hold back your 14 to finesse the opponent at declarer's left unless there is a chance for a 10 to be lost.

## THE ORIGINAL GAME

### A Game for Three Individual Players

This is the same as THE ORIGINAL GAME for 2 players except there is no “dummy.” The third player plays his own hand.

## THE ORIGINAL GAME

### A Game for Five or Six Individual Players

#### Dealing

Use the basic deck of 56 cards. (Do not use the ROOK Bird Card.) For 5 players, deal a 6-card nest. For 6 Players, deal a 2-card nest.

#### Object

150 Points wins the game.

#### Scoring

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK. Total points for each hand are 100. If the declarer fails to make the bid, declarer receives no score for counters and is set back the amount bid.

#### Bidding

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK except the minimum bid is 30 points.

#### Playing

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK.

## **HIGH CARD PARTNER**

### **A Partnership Game for Five Players**

#### **Dealing**

Remove all 1's, 2's, 3's and 4's from the deck. Add the ROOK Bird Card, which gives you a deck of 41 cards. Deal out the cards to each player plus six cards to the nest.

#### **Object**

500 points wins the game.

#### **Scoring**

Same as in PARTNERSHIP ROOK. The ROOK Bird Card counts 20 points. Each partnership's score is the total of the count cards captured by both players in the partnership. However, if the declarer fails to make the bid, their partnership is set back the amount of the bid.

#### **Bidding**

Same as in PARTNERSHIP ROOK.

#### **Playing**

The declarer may exchange any cards in his hand for cards in the nest and then announces trump color. Declarer then names a particular card (usually the highest cards that declarer does not hold). The person holding that card becomes declarer's partner. The remaining three players become partners against

this pair. The player to the left of the dealer makes the opening lead. The winner of the last trick also takes the nest.

## **PARTNERSHIP FOR SIX**

### **A Partnership Game for Six Players**

#### **Dealing**

Use the basic deck of 56 cards, plus the ROOK Bird Card—8 cards for each player and 9 cards for the nest.

#### **Scoring**

Count cards score as in TOURNAMENT ROOK. The ROOK Bird Card counts 20 points. Captured tricks have no additional value. This is a game of two partnerships of three players each. Players should be seated so that no two partners sit next to each other. The score for each partnership is the sum of the points captured by all three players.

#### **Bidding & Playing**

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK.

## THE ORIGINAL GAME

A Game For Two Players

### Dealing

Remove all 1's, 2's and 3's from the deck, leaving 44 cards. (Do not use the ROOK Bird Card.) Deal the cards as if there were three Players, dealing the third hand to the imaginary "dummy" to your right. Stack the dummy's cards face down as you deal. Deal all but the last five cards in this manner, then set the five remaining cards face down at your left to form a nest.

### Object

150 points wins the game.

### Scoring

Score counters as in TOURNAMENT ROOK. In addition, score 2 points for each trick captured. Total amount for each hand is 126 points. If the player who took the bid makes the bid in tricks and count cards, both players record their separate scores. But if the player who took the bid fails to make it, he scores nothing for that hand, and the opponent's score for that hand is **doubled**. Dummy's score may, but need not, be kept.

### Bidding

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK except that the opening bid only needs to be at least 30 points.

### The Nest

The declarer may exchange any two of the cards in his hand for any two in the nest. Declarer then names trump. Then, declarer removes the nest from the table.

### Playing

Refer to the rules for TOURNAMENT ROOK. The opponent starts the game by "leading" any card face up to the table. The dummy's card is then played by the dealer, who lifts the top card from the dummy's hand and plays it on the trick. Remember that the dummy's cards are kept face down throughout the game. Dealer then plays a card. If the dummy's card takes the trick, it is put near the dummy's hand and the dealer leads the dummy's top card for the next trick.

## TENNESSEE FOR TWO

A Game for Two Players

### Dealing

Remove all 1's, 2's and 3's from the deck. Use the remaining 44 cards plus the ROOK Bird Card. Deal out the cards until both players have 11 cards. Next, deal five cards face down to the center of the table to form the nest. Place the remainder of the deck face down on the table to the left of the

dealer, halfway between the two players. This is the drawing pile. Place the top card face up next to the drawing pile.

#### **Object**

300 points wins the game.

#### **Scoring**

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK, with the following additions. The ROOK Bird Card has a value of 20 points. Each captured trick counts 2 points. Total count for each hand is 160 points. If the declarer fails to make the bid, he does not score. In that case, declarer's opponents score double for that hand.

#### **Bidding**

Same as in TOURNAMENT ROOK except that the opening bid must be at least 80 points.

#### **Playing**

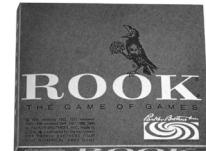
The declarer may exchange any of the cards in the nest for cards in his hand. Declarer is not allowed to leave or place count cards in the nest. The nest is removed from the table after the exchange has been made.

The declarer's opponent makes the opening lead. A player may lead trumps or any other color of his choice. The ROOK Bird Card acts as the highest trump. After a player has captured a trick, he has his

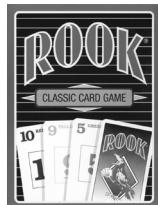
choice of drawing the top card from the drawing pile or the exposed card alongside it. The other player must draw the other card. After both players have drawn, the next card on the drawing pile is turned face up. Players continue to draw and take tricks until the drawing pile is exhausted. At that point, each player will be left with 11 cards, and play continues without the drawing pile until the last card is played.



ROOK game, 1977



ROOK game, 1965



ROOK game, 1992

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