

# Thirty-One

Thirty-One, also known by the French name *Trente et un*, has been played in Europe since the 15th century and is still popular today.

## Number of players

Any number of players from two to 15 or so may play.

## Cards

This is played with the full pack of 52 cards. Three cards are dealt face downwards to each player, and three cards are placed face upwards in the centre of the table as the widow hand.

## How to play

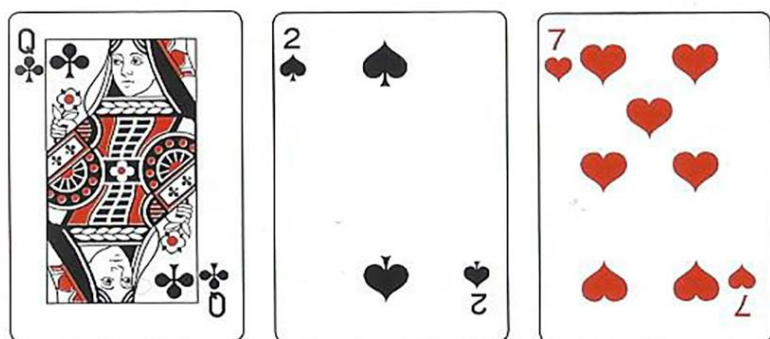
Before each deal the players contribute an agreed amount of tokens to a pool.

In turn each player, beginning with the one on the left of the dealer, must exchange one of his cards (and never more than one) with a card from the widow. He cannot pass. Counting the Ace as 11, the court cards as 10 each and all the other cards at their pip values, the object of the game is to hold three

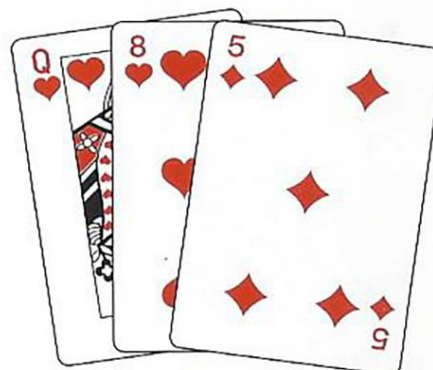
cards of the same suit which add up to 31. Next in value is a hand that contains three cards of the same rank. Failing either, the pool is won by the player who holds the highest total in any one suit.

The exchange of cards with the widow continues until a player has a hand of 31. As soon as a player holds such a hand, he exposes it on the table, claims the pool, and the deal passes. At any stage of the game, however, a player who thinks he has a hand good enough to win may rap the table. The other players now have the right, in turn, either to stick with the cards they hold, or exchange one more card with the widow. The players then expose their cards and the one with the best hand wins the pool.

This player might be advised to exchange his  $\spadesuit 5$  with the  $\heartsuit 7$  and then rap, because 25 is not a bad score



Widow



Hand