

# Fan Tan

Fan Tan is also known as Card Dominoes, Parliament and Sevens, and must not be confused with the well-known gambling game that is played in China under the same name. In fact, the Chinese game is not a card game at all.

## Number of players

Any reasonable number may play, with perhaps four to six being the best.

## Cards

The standard 52-card pack is used, with cards ranking from King (high) to Ace (low).

Players cut for the deal, the drawer of the highest card being first dealer. Thereafter the deal passes to the left.

This game can be played with sweets or coins to make it more fun. Before each deal each player should place the number of coins or sweets (let's call them 'units') that they want to play for into a pool. The cards are then dealt one by one, face downwards, until the pack is exhausted.

## How to play

Play begins by the player on the left of the dealer placing a 7 face upwards in the centre of the table. If he has no 7 he contributes one unit to the pool, and the player on his left now has to play a 7 to the centre of the table or contribute one unit to the pool, and so on.

As soon as a 7 has been played to the centre of the table, the next player

must play either the 6 of the same suit on its left, or the 8 of the same suit on its right, or the 7 of another suit below it. The game continues clockwise round the table, the players building up to the Kings on the right of the 7s and down to the Aces on the left of them.

Any player who is unable to play in his turn contributes one unit to the pool, and if he revokes, by failing to play when he could do so, he forfeits three units to the pool, and five units each to the holders of the 6 and 8 if he fails to play a 7 when he could and should have played it.

The game is won by the player who is first to get rid of all his cards. He receives all that is in the pool and from each of the other players one unit for every card that that player holds.

Skill comes into the game by holding up the opponents. As a general rule a 7, unless it is accompanied by several cards of the same suit, should be kept in hand for as long as possible; and, if a player has a choice, he should choose the card that will allow him later to play a lower or higher one of the same suit, rather than one that can only help the opponents.