Trick and Trade

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Players: 3-5; Length: ~30 minutes; Ages: 10+

Players are traders who trade cryptocurrency. When all tricks are completed, the value of the acquired cryptocurrencies is determined. This is a trick-taking game that uses two types of cards: tricks and trades.

COMPONENTS: 40 trick cards; 42 trade cards; 1 lead player card; 1 rulebook

The trick cards come in ranks 1 to 10 in four suits; each card also has a value, ranging from 9 to 0. The trade cards contain icons for 1 or 2 different cryptocurrencies, and may have multiple of the same currency.

SETUP: Shuffle the trick cards and deal them evenly to the player 13/10/8 cards each in a 3/4/5 player game.)

Shuffle the trade cards, and place them as a deck on the table. Remove 3/2/2 cards in a 3/4/5 player game, returning them to the box.

A market area is created next to the trade card deck. In two rows, reveal a total of 6/8/10 cards in a 3/4/5 player game.

Near this will be an area called the "winners' area"; the strongest card played to each trick will be played here, and sorted by suit.

Determine the lead player by rock-paper-scissors and give them the lead player card.

ABOUT TRICK-TAKING: Before going into the detailed rules, let us talk about trick taking in "Trick and Trade".

Beginning with the lead player, one trick card per player is revealed from each player's hand, in clockwise order. When all players have revealed their cards, the ranks are compared. This comparison of card strengths is called a "trick". A number of tricks are played equal to the number of cards in hand.

The higher the rank, the stronger the card. If the values are the same, the later played card is stronger.

The rule of may-follow applies to tricks in this game. In this may-follow, the suit played by the lead player has priority over the other suits. However, there is no limit to which card a player can play (any card in hand can be played).

The cards played will be ranked in order of strength, so if there are four players, they will be ranked from 1st to 4th in order of strength of their cards.[1]

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[1] The order of the explanation in this section is not clear. The strongest cards are the cards of the lead suit, in order from highest rank to lowest; then, the other suits are evaluated together, from highest rank to lowest. If there is a tie among the off-suit cards, the one player later is stronger.

FLOW OF THE GAME: The game proceeds by repeating the following flow:

- Perform the trick-taking piece, rank players, and take cards
- Acquire trading cards
- Replenish trading cards

The game is over once the flow has been repeated a certain number of times.

WINNERS' AREA: Players are ranked according to the previous explanation. The strongest card played is placed face up in the "winners' area", beneath the market area. The other cards can be discarded face down.

The values (not ranks) on the winning cards are cumulative, and a value for each suit will be summed.

ACQUIRING TRADE CARDS: After the players have been ranked, they draft cards from the lower row of the market area in order; alternatively, a player could also take the lead player card.

First, the player who played the strongest card takes either a trade card from the bottom row of the market or the lead player card. Then the next lower ranked players each take a card in rank order. If a player takes the lead player card, then they will receive the last trade card which no other player chooses. If a player has already taken the lead player card, another player may not choose it. If no one chooses the lead player card, then it is given to the lowest ranked player.

REPLENISHMENT OF TRADE CARDS: When the first row of trade cards in the market area is out, the second row is moved down to the first row, and a new row of cards for the number of players is revealed from the deck to form the second row. If the deck is exhausted, no more trade cards are replenished.

SCORE CALCULATION: At the end of the game, the value of each cryptocurrency is determined by checking the total value of each suit (from the winners' area). For each symbol a player has on a trade card of the most valuable suit, they earn 3 points; for the second most valuable suit 2 points; third most valuable 1 point; and fourth most valuable -1 point. If two or more suits have the same value, they both have the value of the higher position (e.g. if two suits are tied for first, they are both worth 3 points, and no suit is worth 2 points.)

Each player sums their scores for each suit and the player with the highest score is the winner. If there is a tie, then the player with more symbols of the most valuable currency wins; if this is also a tie, the players share the victory.

TIPS: Keep an eye on the current value of your cards. Taking the lead makes it easier to control the winning suit. Winning a trick with a small rank will increase a suit's value dramatically.