

Gin Rummy Reference

Melds, deadwood values, when you can knock, and what to track to win at Gin.

thecardcounting.com/gin/reference · for learning and practice

MELDS · THE BUILDING BLOCKS

- Set** A **set** is **3 or 4 cards of the same rank** — e.g. 7♠ 7♥ 7♦. Four of a kind is a 4-card set.
- Run** A **run** is **3+ consecutive cards of the same suit** — e.g. 4♥ 5♥ 6♥. Longer runs (4, 5, ...) are fine.
- Ace low** The Ace is LOW only: **A-2-3 is a valid run**, but **Q-K-A is not** — the king does not wrap around to the ace.
- One meld** Each card belongs to **at most one meld**. A card that could go in either a set or a run should be placed wherever it leaves you the least deadwood.

DEADWOOD · THE CARDS LEFT OVER

- A = 1** An Ace is worth **1 point** of deadwood.
- 2-10** Number cards are worth their **pip value** — a 7 is 7, a 10 is 10.
- J Q K** Every **face card** (Jack, Queen, King) is worth **10 points**.
- Total** Your **deadwood value** is the sum of the cards *not* in any meld. The lower it is, the closer you are to knocking.

KNOCKING & GIN · ENDING THE HAND

- ≤ 10** You may **knock** when your deadwood is **10 points or less**. You lay down your melds and end the hand, scoring the gap between your deadwood and your opponent's.
- Gin = 0** **Gin** is when *all ten* cards are melded — **0 deadwood** — for a bonus on top of the difference.
- The turn** On your turn you **draw one** card (from the stock or the discard pile), then **discard one**. You evaluate knocking on the 10 cards you keep.
- Hold** If your deadwood is over 10, you must **hold** and keep drawing to bring it down — or risk being undercut if you knock too high.

WHAT TO TRACK

- Discards** Watch the **discard pile**. Every discarded card is dead — it can no longer be drawn — so it tells you which cards are gone and which of your draws are still live.
- Pickups** Note which cards your **opponent takes from the pile**. They chose it over a blind stock draw, so it is a strong hint at the set or run they are building.
- Safe throws** Avoid discarding cards **near an opponent's pickup** — the same rank (a possible set) or a neighbour in the same suit (a possible run). Throw cards clear of what they collect.
- Big cards** High cards are worth **10 deadwood** each. Shed unmelded face cards early so a surprise knock doesn't catch you holding a pile of points.