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ISPA-Canada generally complies with the International Skat Order and Skat Tournament Order published by DSKV and ISPA World, with minor deviations adjusted to Canadian circumstances. All ISPA Canada Skat clubs and members must strictly adhere to the ISPA Canada Tournament Agreement proposed by the ISPA Canada executive and ratified by its membership in 1994/95. Nonconformity by clubs or individuals may result in disciplinary action by the ISPA Canada executive and could lead to expulsion from the International Skat Players Association.

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## Foreword

The Skat Order is the internationally binding set of rules for all Skat players.

The Skat Order represents the culmination of a long and rich historical endeavor to standardize the rules of the most popular card game in German-speaking regions.

The following version presents a comprehensive system which makes it possible for Skat to be played all over the world according to absolutely uniform standards.

The Skat Order is not to be viewed as rigid dogma, but as a living document. Those charged with responsibility for its maintenance are open to new ideas and developments which may arise from practical experience in playing the game.

The Skat Order provides the foundation for deciding all technical issues. Its strict application is the foremost prerequisite for the avoidance of disputes and disagreements.

The uniform Skat rules were adopted on November 11, 1998, in Halle/Saale by the 27<sup>th</sup> German Skat Congress, by agreement between the German Skat Union (DSKV) and the International Skat Players Association (ISPA World).

The International Skat Court (ISkG), along with its referee organizations, is responsible for interpretation and supervision of the rules.

Amendments to the International Skat Order are possible only upon the official decision of both partners. All proposed amendments must be circulated, with adequate notice, between the partners, who must promptly publicize their decision.

Altenburg, November 2014  
International Skat Court

# International Skat Order

## Table of Contents

	<b>English Translation</b>	<b>German Original</b>
<b>International Skat Order</b>	<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Seite 4</b>
<b>1.0 Overview</b>	<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Seite 5</b>
1.1 The Game of Skat	Page 4	Seite 5
1.2 The Deck	Page 4	Seite 6
<b>2.0 Basic Rules</b>	<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Seite 6</b>
2.1 Possible Games	Page 4	Seite 6
2.2 Determining the Game Class	Page 5	Seite 7
2.3 Ranking of the Cards	Page 5	Seite 7
2.4 Multiplier	Page 5	Seite 8
<b>3.0 Starting the Game</b>	<b>Page 5</b>	<b>Seite 8</b>
3.1 Table Seating	Page 5	Seite 8
3.2 The Deal	Page 5	Seite 9
3.3 Bidding	Page 6	Seite 9
3.4 Game Declaration	Page 7	Seite 11
3.5 Parties	Page 8	Seite 15
<b>4.0 Execution of the Game</b>	<b>Page 8</b>	<b>Seite 16</b>
4.1 The Lead	Page 8	Seite 16
4.2 Following Suit or Trump	Page 8	Seite 18
4.3 Shortening the Game	Page 9	Seite 19
4.4 Tricks	Page 9	Seite 20
4.5 General Rules	Page 10	Seite 22
<b>5.0 Determining Game Value</b>	<b>Page 11</b>	<b>Seite 24</b>
5.1 Basic Values	Page 11	Seite 24
5.2 Game Multiplier	Page 11	Seite 24
5.3 Game Values	Page 12	Seite 26
5.4 Overbid Games	Page 12	Seite 27
5.5 Score Sheet	Page 12	Seite 28
5.6 Game Value Chart	Page 14	Seite 30

## Tournament Game Order

	<b>English Translation</b>	German Original
<b>1.0</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Legal questions</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Scoring</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Tournament Plan</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Conducting a Tournament</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Seating</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>7.2</b>	<b>Score Sheet</b>	Page 17
<b>7.3</b>	<b>Course of the tournament</b>	Page 18
<b>7.4</b>	<b>End of the tournament</b>	Page 18
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Game Rules (from the Skat Order)</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Tournament Provisions</b>	<b>Page 19</b>

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### Definitions of persons referenced in the Skat Order and the Skat Tournament Order

- Participant:** Every person playing in an event.  
**Playing Partner:** Each of the three to five persons playing at the same table.  
**Player:** Each of the three playing partners involved in the game in question.  
**Declarer:** The player who wins the bidding.  
**Defender:** Each of the two players who play against the declarer.  
**Opposition:** All of the playing partners at a table except the declarer.  
**Kibitzer:** A non-playing partner who is watching a game. Tournament organizers and referees are not considered kibitzers.

# International Skat Order

## 1.0 Overview

### 1.1 The Game of Skat

- 1.1.1 Skat is a card game played by three or more players. Each game is played by a declarer against two defenders.
- 1.1.2 The game originated in Altenburg, Germany, during the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was developed by combining elements of several older card games.
- 1.1.3 Two cards dealt face down, called the skat, give the game its name. The word skat is derived from Italian *scartare* and French *écarter*, which refer to the laid away cards.

### 1.2 The Deck

- 1.2.1 A Skat deck consists of 32 cards in four suits. The suits are ranked, high to low, in the following order: clubs, spades, hearts, diamonds.
- 1.2.2 The eight cards in each suit have the following values:

1. Ace	11 points
2. Ten	10 points
3. King	4 points
4. Queen	3 points
5. Jack	2 points
6. Nine	0 points
7. Eight	0 points
8. Seven	0 points

The card values in each suit total 30 points, so the entire deck contains **120 points**.

## 2.0 Basic Rules

### 2.1 Possible Games

- 2.1.1 There are games where the declarer picks up the skat, and 'Hand' games where the declarer does not pick up the skat. In both instances there are three types of games which may be played:

Suit games (Clubs, Spades, Hearts, Diamonds)  
 Grand games  
 Null games

- 2.1.2 The possible games are:

Game Class	Class I		Class II		
Game Type	Games with skat pick up		Games without picking up the skat (Hand games)		
Suit Games	Diamonds		Diamonds	Hand	Diamonds Open
	Hearts		Hearts	Hand	Hearts Open
	Spades		Spades	Hand	Spades Open
	Clubs		Clubs	Hand	Clubs Open
Grand Games	'Grand'		Grand	Hand	Grand Oouvert
Null Games (Oouvert = Open)	Null	Null Oouvert	Null	Hand	Null Hand Oouvert

## **2.2 Determining the Game Class**

- 2.2.1 The skat always belongs to the declarer.
- 2.2.2 In games where the declarer picks up the skat and looks at it, he must put any two cards of his choice back into the skat, that is, he “buries” them face down on the table. He then declares the game to be played.
- 2.2.3 In Hand games, the skat remains face down, unseen by any player. The declarer’s game declaration is thus based on the ten cards in his hand.
- 2.2.4 The declarer designates one suit as trump (Suit game) or chooses a Grand game or a Null game.
- 2.2.5 In an open game, the declarer, before the opening lead, must lay down his ten hand cards face up and clearly visible. If the declarer does not promptly expose his cards, the opposition may compel him to do so.  
  
The declarer’s cards must be arranged by suit and in sequential order. Noncompliance with this rule entitles the opposition to properly arrange the cards.

## **2.3 Ranking of the Cards**

- 2.3.1 In a Suit game, only one suit is trump. The other three suits are ranked below the trump suit and are equal to each other.
- 2.3.2 The highest trumps in a Suit game are the Jacks, ranked in the same order as the suits (see 1.2.1). The next cards in the trump suit are ranked according to their value (see 1.2.2).
- 2.3.3 In a Grand game, only the four Jacks are trump, ranked in the same order as the suits (see 1.2.1).
- 2.3.4 In a Null game there is no trump suit or trump cards. The Jacks are just another suit card. The order of the cards changes to: Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten, Nine, Eight, Seven.

## **2.4 Multiplier**

- 2.4.1 The top trump cards, in an uninterrupted sequence from the Jack of clubs down, constitute a multiplier.
- 2.4.2 If the declarer’s cards, including the skat, contain the Jack of clubs, he is said to play “with” a specific multiplier. If the declarer’s cards do not contain the Jack of clubs, then additional absent top trump cards come into consideration, and he is said to play “without” a specific multiplier.
- 2.4.3 Suit games may have a multiplier of up to “with 11” (4 Jacks and 7 trump cards) or “without 11” (no Jacks or trump cards). Grand games may be played “with” one to four multipliers or “without” one to four multipliers.

## **3.0 Starting the game**

### **3.1 Table Seating**

- 3.1.1 The order in which the playing partners sit at a table may be either drawn or predetermined. Playing partner No.1 first chooses a seat. The remaining playing partners then sit in clockwise order beginning at the left of Player No. 1.
- 3.1.2 A new playing partner may join a table only at the start of a new round. If he does not replace a departed playing partner, he must sit to the right of playing partner No. 1.

### **3.2 The Deal**

- 3.2.1 Playing partner No.1 deals the first hand. The playing partner to his right must deal the last game of a round.

- 3.2.2 The dealer must thoroughly shuffle the cards. The player to his right must then cut the deck one time. The cards are then dealt from the top.
- 3.2.3 If the cards are shuffled in a riffing manner, they must be shuffled one more time in the overhand or Hindu manner before being cut.
- 3.2.4 Cutting the cards is obligatory. A minimum of **four** cards must either be lifted up or left on the table.
- 3.2.5 If a playing partner at a table with more than three playing partners is temporarily absent, the playing partner to his immediate right may cut the cards unless the absentee has expressly reserved his right to do so. If there is an extended absence, a referee determines how to proceed.
- 3.2.6 Beginning with the playing partner to the left of the dealer, the cards are dealt in the following order. One round of three cards to each player. Two cards as the skat. Then four cards to each player and finally three cards to each player.
- Each player is responsible for making sure he has received the correct number of cards.
- 3.2.7 If there are four playing partners at a table, the dealer does not receive any cards. If there are more than four playing partners, the two persons seated to the immediate left of the dealer and the person seated to the immediate right of the dealer are the three players.
- 3.2.8 If during the deal one or more cards is exposed, regardless of whose fault, the cards must be shuffled, cut and dealt again.
- 3.2.9 If the cards are misdealt resulting in an unequal distribution, they may be redealt only if the error is detected before the end of the bidding or if both parties (declarer and opposition) have an incorrect number of cards (see 4.5.6).
- 3.2.10 Any objection relating to the shuffling, cutting or dealing of the cards must be lodged before the person objecting picks up his cards.
- 3.2.11 If a playing partner deals a hand out of turn, the game is void, even if it was completed or was the last game in the round. A round is completed when the first game of the next round has been declared. The last round in a series is completed when the score sheet is signed (**see 4.1.1.**).
- 3.2.12 If, within a round, there has been a deal out of turn, all games must be replayed from the point where the unauthorized deal occurred.
- 3.2.13 If games were dealt out of turn in previous rounds, all completed games in subsequent rounds remain valid. However, the round in progress must be replayed, beginning with a deal by playing partner No. 1.
- 3.2.14 A player who looks at or exposes the skat during or after a valid deal is barred from bidding.
- 3.2.15 A player who during or after a valid deal picks up the skat with his cards is barred from bidding. In such cases, the offending player must shuffle his twelve cards, from which the dealer shall draw two cards as the new skat. The original skat may be restored only if all three players can unequivocally identify it.
- 3.2.16 After every valid deal there must be a valid game. A passed in game is deemed a valid game (see 3.3.7).

### **3.3 Bidding**

- 3.3.1 After the deal, the declarer is determined through a bidding process, that is, the offering and acceptance (holding) of game values. The minimum bid is 18 and the maximum bid is 264.

- 3.3.2 The bidding starts by the player to the left of the dealer (forehand) responding to the bid of the player to his left (middlehand). Middlehand and the third player (rearhand) must offer valid game values but may skip values. To avoid misunderstandings, bids should be in numbers only.
- 3.3.3 If forehand does not want to play a game at the same or higher value than the value offered by middlehand, he must pass. Rearhand then bids to middlehand in the same manner or passes.
- 3.3.4 If middlehand does not want to play, or if his highest offer is accepted (held) by forehand, he must pass. Rearhand may then continue bidding to forehand or pass.
- 3.3.5 The player who offers or accepts (holds) the highest bid always becomes the declarer.
- 3.3.6 If middlehand and rearhand both pass, forehand may pick up the skat without bidding (or he may declare a Hand game). Forehand is then required to play a game. If forehand has no bid of 18, he may not pass until middlehand bids. If middlehand passes, forehand may not pass until rearhand has either bid or passed.
- 3.3.7 If all three players pass, the hand is passed in and the next playing partner deals. Under no circumstances may the same playing partner deal two hands in a row after a valid deal (see SkTO 9.4).
- 3.3.8 The announcement of a pass, bid offer or bid acceptance (holding) is irrevocable.
- 3.3.9 If, before the end of the bidding, a player picks up or looks at the skat or looks at the cards of another player, he is barred from bidding. In addition, the other two players are no longer bound by their bids. This rule also applies if the dealer or another playing partner looks at the skat before the bidding has ended. A player who passes before being offered a bid may not re-enter the bidding (see also 3.2.15).
- 3.3.10 If, after completion of the bidding, only the defenders have an incorrect number of cards, the declarer is deemed to have won a game with a value based on the last bid and the number of present or absent multipliers. If the declarer elects to play a game, the number of cards must first be corrected (see also 3.2.15). If only the declarer has an incorrect number of cards, he is deemed to have lost the game.
- 3.3.11 If, after completion of the bidding, it is noticed that the skat was exposed prior to the completion of bidding, then the declarer has the option of playing or passing.

## 3.4 Game Declaration

- 3.4.1 The successful bidder (declarer) must declare a valid game (see 3.4.4 and 3.4.7). The declaration must be stated without pauses and must be complete. For example, Hand games and Overt (Open) games must be so declared in order for the declarer to receive the enhanced game value. A declaration is irrevocable.
- 3.4.2 The declarer may declare any game that has a value equal to or higher than the highest value bid.
- 3.4.3 If the declarer looks at the skat and finds a Jack which makes it impossible for him to win his intended game, he may declare a game that satisfies his bid and concede a loss (see 5.4.1).
- Examples:**
1. A player intends to play spades “without four” (maximum bid 55) and wins the bid at 50. The Jack of clubs is in the skat. Favorable game declaration: Hearts (with 1, game 2, Schneider 3, Schneider Announced 4, Schwarz 5 x 10 = 50)
  2. A player intends to play clubs “without four” (maximum bid 60) and wins the bid at 59. The Jack of spades is in the skat. Favorable game declaration: Clubs (with 1, game 2, Schneider 3, Schneider Announced 4, Schwarz 5 x 12 = 60) or Hearts (with 1, game 2, Schneider 3, Schneider Announced 4, Schwarz 5, Schwarz Announced 6 x 10 = 60).
- 3.4.4 A game declaration is invalid if it is apparent to all playing partners that the declaration violates basic game rules. This includes the declaration of Hand games, open Suit games and Grand Overt after picking the skat. Changing the buried skat cards or declaring a different game are not

permitted. Declaration of a no longer playable Null game results in a loss of a Suit or Grand game at a value commensurate with the last bid and the number of present or absent multipliers.

- 3.4.5 An invalid game declaration is not penalized but should be corrected immediately. However, the newly declared game must be of the same type (Suit, Grand or Null) as the invalid declaration. Example: Declarer wins the bid at 18, picks up the skat and declares “Hearts Hand”. He may correct the bid to “Hearts” but not to a different suit, Grand or Null.
- 3.4.6 Following a valid deal, the declarer is deemed to have lost if he declares a game while holding more or fewer than ten cards in his hand. The loss is computed at the basic level without counting Schneider or Schwarz. A card led by the declarer before declaring a game counts as a held card. The same applies to cards laid down by the declarer in Open (Ouvert) games.
- 3.4.7 A valid game declaration may not be modified.
- 3.4.8 After declaring a valid game, the declarer may not look at the skat or change its contents. Violation of this rule results in a lost game at the basic level without counting Schneider or Schwarz.

### **3.5 Parties**

- 3.5.1 The playing partners are divided into two parties. The declarer is one party. The other party, called the opposition, is comprised of the two defenders and any other playing partners
- 3.5.2 Each opposition member bears equal responsibility for the successes or failures of the defenders. Each opposition member is held liable for any rule violation or concession of any of its members
- 3.5.3 In money games, the declarer is entitled to collect the full value of his win from each opposition member. Conversely, the declarer must pay each opposition member the full value of his losses.
- 3.5.4 A playing partner who is not involved in the current game may look at the hand of only one player. However, this is not a right but a privilege.

### **4.0 Execution of the game**

#### **4.1 The Lead**

- 4.1.1 The game begins with the game declaration. After the declaration, forehand makes the opening lead. Thereafter, the player who takes the trick leads to the next trick. If the declarer leads out of turn before declaring a game, he is deemed to have lost a game with a value based on the last bid and the present or absent multipliers.
- 4.1.2 A led or played card cannot be taken back. A card is considered led or played if it lies completely on the table. In Open (Ouvert) games, the announcement of a card to be led constitutes a lead of that card. If play continues after violation of this rule, appropriate corrections must be made.
- 4.1.3 Playing out of turn (or other rule violations) ends the game. The game is won or lost at this point based on the accumulated points at the time of the violation (4.1.4).
- 4.1.4 If a player plays out of turn or otherwise violates a rule before the game is decided, the offending party loses the game at the basic level (not Schneider or Schwarz). A higher score must be based on proof that, absent the violation, it would with certainty have been achieved.
- 4.1.5 If the declarer is forced to achieve a higher multiplier (e.g., Schneider) to win the game and a defender leads out of turn or otherwise violates a rule, the declarer is deemed to have won the game at the enhanced value. This exception applies unless the defenders have already taken sufficient points to render the enhanced value impossible to achieve (see 5.4.3).
- 4.1.6 An offending party must continue playing if the other party demands it. The rule violation is then deemed waived.



- 4.1.7 If a lead out of turn is not noticed until after the trick is complete, the lead is deemed to have been properly made (see 4.4.1).
- 4.1.8 An opposition member is not allowed to prevent a defender from leading out of turn or breaching another rule. Violations of this rule are governed by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 (see also 4.2.9).
- 4.1.9 If a defender accidentally plays two or more visible cards or drops a visible card or improperly exposes a card, the game is terminated in accordance with rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.

If the declarer accidentally drops or exposes a card in such a manner that does not adversely affect the defenders, there is no penalty (advantage to the defenders).

- 4.1.10 A lead out of turn on the last trick is irrelevant.
- 4.1.11 Every participant is entitled to promptly assert a rule violation.

## **4.2 Following Suit or Trump**

- 4.2.1 After a lead, the player to the leader's left plays a card, then the third player. If possible, the card played must be of the same suit or same designated trump.
- 4.2.2 If a player does not have a card in the suit led, he is entitled to play a trump card or a card of different suit. If a trump card is led and a player has no trump card, he may play any card.
- 4.2.3 If a player is able to follow a suit or trump lead but fails to do so, the game is terminated in accordance with 4.1.3 to 4.1.6. However, the non-offending party may demand that the misplay be corrected and that the game continue.
- 4.2.4 If a failure to follow suit or trump is not noticed until later in the game or after the game is over, play is stopped and reviewed retroactively from the point of the violation, and is scored according to 4.1.3 to 4.1.5.
- 4.2.5 The right to retroactively assert a failure to follow suit or trump expires when both parties have thrown in their cards.
- 4.2.6 If, after a valid deal, it is discovered during the course of play that a player has too many or too few cards because he "buried" incorrectly, played two cards at once or did not play at all to a previous trick, or for some other reason ended up with an incorrect number of cards, the game ends in favor of the party with the correct number of cards, and is scored in accordance with 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.2.7 A defender is not allowed to prematurely play a card or to separate a card from the others in his hand in a manner that may influence the outcome of a game. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply.
- 4.2.8 If during the game any playing partner looks at the skat or exposes it, the game is immediately terminated. The outcome of the game is determined by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.
- 4.2.9 All playing partners must refrain from comments and gestures which could disclose their cards or influence the outcome of the game. Violations are governed by rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6.

## **4.3 Shortening the Game**

- 4.3.1 In general, every game should be played to the end. However, the declarer is entitled to concede his declared game as lost, as long as he still holds at least nine cards and his hand correctly reflects his bid and the number of present or absent multipliers.
- 4.3.2 With fewer than nine cards in his hand, the declarer may concede the game only with the permission of at least one opposition player (joint liability).

- 4.3.3 A game is immediately terminated if one opposition player gives up. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply (joint liability).
- 4.3.4 If the declarer, playing a Suit or Grand game, lays his cards on the table or shows them (even if to only one defender) without an explanation, he is obligated to take all remaining tricks. If the declarer offers an explanation, he must fulfill it in every respect. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 are applicable. The declarer's display of his cards in a Null game indicates that he will not take a trick.
- 4.3.5 A defender may reveal his cards only if the declarer cannot take another trick under any line of play. If this is not the case, the rest of the tricks belong to the declarer. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 will apply.
- 4.3.6 If a player throws in his cards, the game is ended and that player's party may count only the tricks and points taken up to that point (but see 4.3.1).

## **4.4 Tricks**

- 4.4.1 A trick consists of one card each from forehand, middlehand and rearhand. A trick is complete as soon as the third card lies on the table.
- 4.4.2 Assuming valid play, a trick belongs to the player who
- Played the highest ranking card in the suit led, as long as the trick contains no trump card, or
  - Played the highest ranking trump card in the trick.
- A player who takes a trick is allowed to lead a card to the next trick before he gathers in his trick.
- 4.4.3 Tricks must be gathered in in such a manner that the last card played is visible to every player. A player who has not yet led a card or played a card on the next trick, is entitled, upon request, to see the last trick again.
- 4.4.4 Each trick must be gathered in, stacked in the order taken, and maintained face down until the game is over, in such a manner that the game can be reconstructed.
- 4.4.5 If the declarer does not gather in one or more successive tricks, he indicates that he will take all remaining tricks. If he fails to do so, the game is deemed to have ended, retroactive to the last trick properly gathered in by the declarer. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 are applicable. For the defenders, only rule 4.4.4 applies.
- 4.4.6 Looking at, counting or exposing face down tricks by any playing partner terminates the game. Rules 4.1.3 to 4.1.6 apply (but see 4.4.3).

## **4.5 General Rules**

- 4.5.1 The overriding principle of the Skat Order is to follow and enforce its individual points so as to promote uniformity in the game.
- 4.5.2 Every participant should conduct himself in a sportsmanlike and fair manner and never assert frivolous claims.
- 4.5.3 The cards must be dealt in such a manner that their faces cannot be seen by any player. To avoid unnecessary disputes, players should pick up their cards only after a valid deal is completed (see 3.2.10).
- 4.5.4 The skat may be viewed only by a person who has a right to do so (see 2.2.1, 3.3.9, 3.4.8 and 4.2.8).
- 4.5.5 Each player must pick up and hold his cards so that they are not visible to the other two players. A player is not permitted to look into another player's cards or to receive information about them.
- 4.5.6 Each player must count his cards after the deal and report any discrepancy in the distribution of the cards (see 3.2.9).

- 4.5.7 Each party must gather in its own tricks.
- 4.5.8 No playing partner is allowed to count trumps or points out loud (see 4.2.9).
- 4.5.9 A playing partner may leave the game only after a round is complete. Moreover, he must announce this intention before the round begins.
- 4.5.10 Every participant should immediately report any violations of the International Skat Order and the Skat Tournament Game Order.
- 4.5.11 All disputes shall be decided by an appointed referee. Objections to a referee's decision must be made before the next series starts. After the last series in a tournament, an objection must be made within 15 minutes after the tournament has ended, and resolved by a referee committee before the tournament results are announced (but see also SkTO 7.3.3).

## 5.0 Game Value Assessments

### 5.1 Basic Values

- 5.1.1 Every Suit game and Grand game has a constant basic value:

Diamonds	9
Hearts	10
Spades	11
Clubs	12
Grand and Grand Ouvert	24 (see 5.2.6)

- 5.1.2 Each Null game has a distinct value:

Null	23
Null Hand	35
Null Ouvert	46
Null Ouvert Hand	59

### 5.2 Multipliers

- 5.2.1 In Suit and Grand games, the following multipliers apply:

Level	Class I	Games where the skat is picked up
1	Basic game	Won or Lost
2	Schneider	Won or Lost
3	Schwarz	Won or Lost
Level	Class II	Games where the skat is not picked up (Hand games) (Not picking up the skat adds one multiplier)
2	Basic game	Won or Lost
3	Schneider	Won or Lost
4	Schneider Announced	Won or Lost
5	Schwarz	Won or Lost
6	Schwarz Announced	Won or Lost
7	Open	Won or Lost

- 5.2.2 **The declarer wins a basic game by taking 61 or more points, including the two skat cards.**

- 5.2.3 A party is Schneider with 30 or fewer points.

5.2.4 A party is Schwarz if it does not take a single trick.

**5.2.5 Schneider Announced or Schwarz Announced** will be so scored only if the declarer, in a Hand game, actually made the respective announcement in his game declaration. If the declarer does not achieve the announced level, he loses the game at the announced or higher level. If he wins at a level higher than the announced level, the higher level counts. If he loses at the announced level, his loss is not redoubled (there is no so-called “own Schneider”).

**Example:** The declarer plays Grand Hand “with two” and announces Schneider. The defenders take 32 points. The declarer’s loss totals 288 points: Grand, with 2, game 3, Hand 4, Schneider 5, Schneider Announced  $6 \times 24 = 144 \times 2$  (loss) = 288.

**5.2.6 Open (Ouvert)** is a valid multiplier only in Suit and Grand games. The declarer must win every trick. These games encompass all the multipliers through Schwarz Announced. For example, a game of Clubs Ouvert with two Jacks would count  $12 \times 9 = 108$  points. A game of Grand Ouvert with four Jacks would count  $24 \times 11 = 264$  points.

5.2.7 The declarer wins a Null game if he does not take a single trick.

5.2.8 If there is a disagreement, the opposition must prove that the declarer lost, and the declarer must prove that he achieved the claimed win level.

### 5.3 Game values

5.3.1 The game value of each game is expressed in value points (points). Except for Null games, the value points are calculated based on the class, type, and basic value of the game, combined with the win level and number of multipliers credited to the declarer.

5.3.2 Multipliers and win levels are added together to calculate a sum. The two game classes yield the following possibilities :

	<b>Class I Games where the Skat is picked up</b>	<b>Class II Games where the skat is not picked up (Hand games)</b>
Multipliers	1 to 11	1 to 11
+ win levels	1 to 3	2 to 7
<b>= Sum</b>	<b>2 to 14</b>	<b>3 to 18</b>

5.3.3 Suit and Grand games “with” multipliers compute at the same win level as games “without” the same number of multipliers.

5.3.4 Each lost game is entered on the score sheet as a negative number equal to twice the value of the game played.

### 5.4 Overbid games

5.4.1 An overbid game where the skat has been picked up must be calculated using multipliers sufficient to cover the bid. On the score sheet, a game in which the game value is unachievable should be marked as “overbid”.

Examples:

Bid 50, Jack of clubs is in the skat.

Game declared: Hearts.

Score sheet entry: Hearts with one “overbid” = - 100 points

Bid 59, Jack of spades is in the skat.

Game declared: Clubs or Hearts

Score sheet entry: Clubs or Hearts with one “overbid” = - 120 points

- 5.4.2 If the declarer cannot achieve his bid in a Hand game because there was a Jack in the skat, the declarer has overbid and loses the game even if he takes more than 60 points. The score must be calculated with sufficient multipliers to cover the bid.

Example:

Hearts Hand “without 3” is played following a bid of 36. The Jack of clubs is in the skat. Even if the declarer takes 61 points, he loses the game because he actually played “Hearts Hand with 1”, and is therefore deemed to have bid to 40: Hearts, with 1, game 2, Hand 3, Schneider  $4 \times 10 = 40 \times 2$  (loss) = 80 minus points.

- 5.4.3 A game which, before the first trick is played, is theoretically impossible to win (for example, Schwarz Announced where a defender holds the Jack of clubs), cannot be converted to a win due to a rule violation by a defender.

## 5.5 Score sheet

- 5.5.1 Immediately after a game is over, it must be entered on the score sheet as won or lost, along the game value for the declarer. The game value must be added to or subtracted from the declarer’s previous point total, so that the current score of each playing partner is always apparent.
- 5.5.2 In tournaments, the score sheet must indicate the basic value and all applicable multipliers. Null games are scored according to their distinct values.
- 5.5.3 Errors on the score sheet may be corrected only upon agreement of all playing partners up until the end of the current series. Otherwise SkTO 7.2.5 is in effect.
- 5.5.4 If playing for money, the stakes must be set prior to the start of play. The maximum stake is 1 cent per point. Fractions are rounded up. A lost game is rounded up prior to doubling the value.
- 5.5.5 At the end of the last round, wins and losses may be computed as follows:

### Version 1

This version can be used if the final plus scores of all players exceed the minus scores.

Player	A	B	C	D
Final points on the score sheet	+ 196	+ 33	- 12	+ 85
Four times the final points (with four players)	+ 784	+ 132	- 48	+ 340
Sum of final points (Plus points - minus points)	- 302	- 302	- 302	- 302
<b>Win or loss if played for 1 cent per point</b>	<b>+ 482</b>	<b>- 170</b>	<b>- 350</b>	<b>+ 38</b>

(The 302 points as a sum of final points represent debts which each player has incurred. Therefore this sum must be subtracted.)

### Version 2

This version can be used if the sum of all the players’ scores is a negative number.

Player	A	B	C	D
Final points on the score sheet	+ 44	+ 33	- 420	+ 130
Four times the final points (with four players)	+ 176	+ 132	- 1680	+ 520
Sum of final points (Plus points - minus points)	+ 213	+ 213	+ 213	+ 213
<b>Win or loss if played for 1 cent per point</b>	<b>+ 389</b>	<b>+ 345</b>	<b>- 1467</b>	<b>+ 733</b>

(The 213 points in each column represent credits, not debts.)

### Version 3

The final numbers can also be calculated directly. The differences in scores are entered as a plus for one player and a minus for the others. Win and loss totals are the sum of the final points and the comparison points.

Player	A	B	C	D
Final points on the score sheet	+ 120	- 75	+ 200	- 40
Comparison AB, AC, AD, BC, BD, CD	+ 195 - 80 + 160	- 195 - 275 - 35	+ 80 + 275 + 240	- 160 + 35 - 240
<b>Win or loss if played for 1 cent per point</b>	<b>+ 275</b>	<b>- 505</b>	<b>+ 595</b>	<b>- 365</b>

If the stakes are ½ cent or ¼ cent per point, then the sum of the final points must be divided by 2 or 4, respectively.

### 5.6 Game Value Chart (see 5.3.1)

Game	Basic Value	Sum (Multipliers + win levels)																	
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
		<b>Game Value</b>																	
Diamonds	<b>9</b>	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108	117	126	135	144	153	162	
Hearts	<b>10</b>	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	180	
Spades	<b>11</b>	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132	143	154	165	176	187	198	
Clubs	<b>12</b>	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	
Grand	<b>24</b>	48	72	96	120	144	168	192	216	240									
Grand Overt	<b>24</b>								192	216	240	264							
									(with	1	2	3	4	multipliers)					
	<b>Null</b>			23															
	<b>Null Hand</b>			35															
	<b>Null Overt</b>			46															
	<b>Null Overt Hand</b>			59															

# Tournament Game Order

## 1.0 General

- 1.1 Tournaments are events organized by clubs or individuals. Their purpose is to bring together all players for an enjoyable game of Skat.
- 1.2 Tournaments provide a means of assuring that Skat is played according to the uniform rules of the Skat Order and does not become tainted by unorthodox play or customs.
- 1.3 All differences in age and occupation are set aside at the Skat table. The friendly but competitive atmosphere of the tournament as a whole and at each table, as well as the changing alliances during the play of the game, all serve to unite the participants. The satisfaction of executing a difficult play and the recognition of one's own and other's analytical or judgmental errors trigger gratifying emotions; civility then tempers their expression. In this manner, Skat tournaments promote and strengthen character and personality, and convert community spirit into a reality.
- 1.4 Skat tournaments may be open either to all Skat players or restricted to a limited constituency (leagues, clubs, qualifying or final contests).
- 1.4 Depending on the terms of the tournament advertisement, tournaments are played for individual prestige, money, trophies or merchandise, in both individual and team competition.

## 2.0 Legal Questions

- 2.1 Skat tournaments are subject to local, state, provincial or national law.
  - 2.1.1 The tournament plan governs the rights and duties of the participants. They constitute a quasi-contract which is binding on both the organizer and participants.
- 2.2 The organizer and appointment management are responsible for conducting the tournament.
- 2.3 Tournaments are subject to commercial and trade regulations.

## 3.0 Organizer

- 3.1 The organizer must be identified as such in the tournament advertisement and the tournament plan, and if necessary, must register with local tax authorities.
- 3.2 The organizer may delegate the running of the tournament to management. Referees may be appointed to settle disputes. Such persons should be sufficiently familiar with the rules of the game, in particular with the Skat Order; be capable of making swift, fair and correct decisions; possess a sense of responsibility; and be considered trustworthy in every respect.
- 3.3 The organizer and management are responsible for strict compliance with the Skat Order. They establish the conditions of play and prize schedules, manage and supervise the overall event, and upon completion of the event are obligated to provide an accounting. The organizer alone is responsible for distribution of prizes.
- 3.4 If a tournament must be prematurely terminated or proves to be unworkable, whether due to too few participants or for some other reason, the organizer and management remain obligated to conduct an abbreviated tournament. They must either refund all entry fees or award prizes on a percentage basis.

## 4.0 Participant

- 4.1 The right to participate is established by acquiring a non-transferable start card or by being named in the list of participants. Payment of the entry fee commits both parties.
- 4.2 Every participant is required to strictly abide by the Skat Order and the provisions of the tournament plan. He must familiarize himself with the tournament provisions and conduct himself in a manner which does not cause disruption.
- 4.3 Upon verifiable proof of a deliberate violation of the rules, the organizer and management have the right to summarily expel any participant from the tournament. All participation fees are forfeited. A request to re-register may be denied. The organizer further has the right to bar anyone from participating in a tournament.
- 4.4 All participants are required to play each series to its end. They may not allow another player to take their place in a game. If a participant acrimoniously leaves a game, or in case of an emergency, management may designate another person to rightfully and responsibly take the place of the prematurely departing person.
- 4.5 Organizers and members of management are allowed to participate in the tournament on the same basis as all other participants, as long as supervision of the tournament is assured.

## 5.0 Scoring

5.1 The performance of participants is scored as follows:

Game points achieved and number of games played are combined on the score sheet. For each won game, the player receives a bonus of 50 points. For each lost game, the player loses 50 points. At a table with three playing partners, each playing partner is awarded 40 bonus points for each lost game of the other playing partners. At a table with four playing partners, each playing partner is awarded 30 bonus points for each lost game of the other playing partners. A playing partner's game points, plus the bonus points for games played, plus the bonus points for others' lost games yields his final score.

### Scoring Formula

Game points + bonus for games played + bonus for others' lost games = final score.

In case of a tie, the player with the most won games prevails. If there is still a tie, the player with the fewest number of losses prevails. Should there still be a tie, lots are drawn or a coin tossed to determine the winner.

Example at a four-player table: Player A: Final Score 937 points, 18 games won, 3 games lost. Players B, C, D together lost a total of 14 games.

Adding the points on the score sheet:

Game Points	937	937
Won Games	18	
- Lost Games	<u>3</u>	
	15X50	750
+ Lost Games of others	14 x 30	420
		<hr/>
	Final Score =	2107

- 5.2 This scoring system supersedes the former system, which was based solely on game points. Under the current system, winning large games is not the sole deciding factor. Rather, winning numerous smaller games is also rightly considered and can influence the outcome. Moreover, the bonus points for others' lost games reward good defensive play. They also compensate a player who may have lost opportunities to play games due to overbidding by other players.



## **6.0 Tournament Plan**

6.1 The tournament plan should be concise but complete. It must comply with the Skat Order, be precise, clear and free of any contradictions.

6.2 The following information must be included:

### **A. General**

- a) Organizer
- b) Stakes, Entry Fees
- c) Number of Series
- d) Number of Players at a Table
- e) Expenditures
- f) Organizer's Right to Bar or Expel Participants
- g) Arbitration Committee (see ISkO 4.5.10, SKTO 7.3.2 and 7.3.3)
- h) Signatures

### **B. Game Provisions**

- a) Reference to the Skat Order and Skat Tournament Order as governing authority
- b) Supervisory Determinations
- c) Penalty Determinations
- d) Scoring
- e) Stakes (per point)
- f) Game Material (new cards only, supplied by the organizer)

6.3 The tournament plan must be posted during the tournament and available at all times to all participants.

## **7.0 Conducting the Tournament**

### **7.1 Seating**

7.1.1 Seating at tables is set by management or by drawing table seating cards. Every table has four seats. At most there may be three tables with three players.

7.1.2 A participant who changes his assigned table seat without permission of management is subject to expulsion.

7.1.3 The assigned table seat must be retained until the end of a series.

7.1.4 A table seating card is valid only for the series for which it was drawn or given.

7.1.5 Only players with the correct table seating cards are permitted at the table. Kibitzing is not permitted.

### **7.2 Score Sheet**

7.2.1 Upon completion of each game, the score must be correctly, completely and clearly entered on the score sheet.

7.2.2 The playing partner in seat No. 1 is normally the scorekeeper. Under exceptional circumstances and with permission of management, a different playing partner may keep score. Every playing partner is responsible for the correct marking of the score sheet, which must be available at all times for inspection. The dealer should always check to see that the previous game was correctly scored.

7.2.3 The score sheet must be signed by every playing partner.

7.2.4 The management has the right to:

- a) Check the score sheet at any time
- b) Declare as invalid a deficient, illegible or incomplete score sheet.

- 7.2.5 Errors on score sheets may be corrected by management by entering the lowest possible point value. If all playing partners agree, missing or corrected scores may belatedly be entered on the score sheet (see ISkO 5.5.3).

### **7.3 Course of the Tournament**

- 7.3.1 The Skat Order and the Skat Tournament Order govern the course of a tournament.
- 7.3.2 Tournament management and appointed referees shall decide all disputes and disagreements in accordance with the Skat Order.
- 7.3.3 Objections to a decision of management or referee may be made in writing to a referee committee, which will decide only cases dealing with rule technicalities. Proceedings in civil law courts are not affected (see ISkO 4.5.10 and SkTO 7.3.2).

### **7.4 End of the Tournament**

- 7.4.1 At the end of a tournament all score sheets and start cards must be returned to management. Only then can there be a valid basis for the awarding of prizes.
- 7.4.2 Participants who have finished playing are not allowed to kibitz at tables where games are still in progress.
- 7.4.3 After the results of the tournament are compiled, the prizes are awarded. If a prize is to be mailed or delivered, the recipient must pay expenses.
- 7.4.4 The organizer must retain all score sheets, start cards and any other tournament documents for a period of 6 months.

## **8.0 Game Rules (from the Skat Order)**

- 8.1 The provisions of the Skat Order must be strictly followed.
- 8.2 The cards must be dealt in batches of 3, 2 (skat), 4, 3.
- 8.3 When cutting the deck, at least four cards must be lifted from the top or left on the table.
- 8.4 Rules are strictly enforced. For example, leading or playing out of turn or failing to follow suit or trump immediately ends the game in favor of the non-offending party, unless the game has already been decided.
- 8.5 The dealer may not look at the skat. Nor is the dealer allowed to look into the cards of both the player to his right and to his left; he may look only into one hand. However, there is no right to look into any player's hand.
- 8.6 Taking a second look at a turned-over trick or mixing up the cards in a trick is prohibited. Every trick must be gathered in.

A Null game has a value of 23, Null Hand 35, Null Ouvert 46 and Null Ouvert Hand 59. The basic value of Grand is 24, so the minimum Grand game value is 48. The basic value for Grand Ouvert is also 24, so if played with four Jacks the value is 264.

- 8.7 Either party is played Schneider if it takes 30 or fewer points.
- 8.8 In Open (Ouvert) games, the declarer must lay all of his cards face up on the table before the opening lead. He must take all the tricks to win. In Null games, he loses if he takes a single trick.

- 8.9 Games where the skat was looked at can be played only at the basic level, with three possible multipliers: Game, Schneider, Schwarz. In Hand games, there are seven possible multipliers: Game, Hand, Schneider, Schneider Announced, Schwarz, Schwarz Announced, Open (Ouvert). Each lost game is scored as minus the doubled value of the game.
- 8.10 After each game, the points are added to or subtracted from the declarer's previous total, so that the score sheet will always reflect the current score of each playing partner.
- 8.11 At the end of a series, each playing partner receives a 50-point bonus for each game won, and 50 points are deducted for each game lost. For every lost game at a table of four, each playing partner receives a 30-point bonus for each loss of the other playing partners. At a table with three playing partners, the bonus is 40 points.

**Example at a four-player table:**

The final score for playing partner A: 937 points, 18 games won, 3 games lost. Playing partners B, C, D together lost a total of 14 games.

Calculating the points on a score sheet:

Game Points		937
Won Games	18	
- Lost Games	3	
<hr/>		
Lost Games of B, C, D	15 x 50	750
	14 x 30	420
<hr/>		
	Total Score = 2107 for playing partner A	

**9.0 Tournament Provisions**

- 9.1 Playing partners must use the new deck of cards provided to each table.
- 9.2 Unless all playing partners at a table agree to play for specified stakes, the game is not played for money (see ISkO 5.5.4). If there was no agreement before the start of play, the series is not played for money.
- 9.3 The playing partner in seat No. 1 usually keeps score. If all agree, a different playing partner may keep score.
- 9.4 If each player passes, the game is marked as "passed in". The next dealer then deal the next game. The same person is never allowed to deal twice in a row. If a playing partner deals twice in a row after a passed in game, all playing partners are banned from playing the game so dealt.
- 9.5 Every game must be played to the end. The defenders may not "gift" a game to the declarer (but see ISkO 4.3.1 to 4.3.6).
- 9.6 The current dealer is obligated to check the score sheet for accuracy. All playing partners are responsible for making sure that the score sheet is free of error.
- 9.7 No person may play as a substitute for any playing partner.
- 9.8 Organizers and appointed referees have the right to examine the score sheet at any time.
- 9.9 Kibitzing is strictly forbidden.
- 9.10 All disagreements are to be settled by management or referees. Objections to a decision must be made to the referee committee before the start of the next series. After the last series of a tournament, an objection must be made within 15 minutes. The decision of a referee committee is final (see ISkO 4.5.10, SkTO 7.3.2 and 7.3.3).

- 9.11 The score sheet must be signed by every playing partner at the end of a series. Deficient, illegible or erroneous score sheets may be declared invalid. (see SkTO 7.2.4 and 7.2.5).
- 9.12 After every series, the score keeper may keep the deck of cards, unless the organizer has provided otherwise.
- 9.13 At the end of a tournament, the completed score cards (for individuals or teams) must be, upon request, given to the organizer. Failure to surrender a score card precludes a participant from receiving a prize.