# JASSEN -

Jassen is the Swiss national card game. It is played by four people, in teams of two. The two team members sit opposite each other.

The aim is to score as many points as possible. You win if your team has scored more points than the opposing team.

There are four suits of nine cards. Each player gets dealt nine cards. Players take it in turn to decide what's trumps. If your cards are not good enough to call trumps, you can pass the decision to your team partner.

You then play out your first card (if it's your turn). Then the other players play theirs, it goes round anti-clockwise. Whoever has the highest ranking card, gets to keep the whole trick (all four cards), and can play out the next card. At the end of each game each team adds their points, and writes them down. The points always add to 157.

Each card has two different sets of values, the point value, and the ranking value (see page 3) Both can vary, depending on what is trumps:

- The point value is what you count at the end of the game. Some cards always have the same value: King is 4, Ober is 3, Ten is 10, and Seven is zero points. The other cards vary.
- The ranking value: This decides which card wins each trick. It varies not only depending on what's trumps, but also depending on the stage of the game. Example: Ace of roses is the highest of the roses. Is has been played already in the first round. Now king of roses is the highest of that suit.

When you decide which card to give, you have to take both its point value and it's rank value into consideration. It varies depending on the stage of each game. (and very much depending on everyone else's opinion!!)

Page 3 of this gives you the values and the ranking of each card, depending on what's trumps.

## SUITS of cards

**Schelle** (bells), **Schilte** (shields)**, Rose** (roses), **Eichle** (acorn)

## 157 THE MAGIC NUMBER
Apart from the points as above, you get five extra points for taking the last trick of each game, called '**de Letzti'**(the last). The points in a game always add up to 157.

## YOU HAVE SEVEN CHOICES if it is your turn to call trumps. They are:

- Any of the four suits
- **Obenabe** (top to bottom, 'no trumps'), all four suits are equal, all jacks are worth 2, nines are not worth anything. Aces are the highest, 6 the lowest. 8s count 8 points.
- **Unenufe** (bottom to top, no trumps): Six beats all others, seven next highest etc. 6 counts 11 points, Ace counts nothing.
- **Schiebe ('pass') :** your partner decides.

## WHAT BEATS WHAT? (IE: how to win a trick)

**Cards that are NOT trump:** Ace is the highest, 6 the lowest.
**Within trump suit:** Highest is Jack, second highest Nell, then as above
**Trump beats every other card:** any trump is higher than any of the other cards. Eg: If your opponent plays an Ace of a non-trump suit, and you have the six of trumps, you win the trick. If the player next to you puts a higher trump on, they win the trick.

## YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW SUIT -  EXCEPT….

- If you don't have any cards left of that suit, you can give any others. See below for 'schmiere'
- If you still have trumps, you can use trump any time, even if you have cards left of the suit that is being played (this is different from playing 500). If a player before you has put in a trump in the hope to win a trick you can put in a higher trump, but you are not allowed to put in a lower one.
- If trumps is played, you do not have to give the Jack, keep it for rainy day (ie another round).

# HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT TRUMP TO CALL?

Nelly's mother's rules, if it's YOUR turn to call trumps. You should have at least:

- Jack and Nell and one other card of the suit (ie 3 altogether)  or
- Jack, no Nell, and three other cards (ie four altogether)  or
- Nell, anc Ace, and three others  (five altogether)  or
- At least four, preferably five tricks that you are sure to win with 'unenufe' or 'obenabe' , eg,six and seven of one suit, six, seven and eight of another.

If you don't have any of these, you pass. These rules change sometimes, if you happen to not have ANY cards of one suit (called 'Drei-Färber', three suiter) , because it is not uncommon that your partner decides on just that one for trumps that you don't have.  In that case some people call trumps with a bit less than the above.

If your partner has passed, and you have to call trumps: As above. If you don't have what's needed, bad luck, just anything close. Always good to have a Jack. Never make 'unenufe' oder 'obenabe' in that situation if you have only one suit which will bring you tricks, because your partner is not likely to bring you the right suit.

# JASSEN IS GOOD MEMORY TRAINING : Try to remember ☺

- What's trumps
- How many trumps have gone (ie how many you still have to be afraid of , taking your good cards). In the beginning of the game there are 9 trumps.
- What's 'bock' (see below), especially of the suits you happen to have a few cards.

# SOME COMMON TERMS AND THEIR MEANING

**Bock** is the highest ranking card of a suit that's still in the game. It will win the trick (except if there are strill trumps around). Try to remember which of your cards are Bock. Eg: If you have a king and one or two others from a suit, make a mental note when the Ace has been played, so your king will be 'bock', and you will win that trick when it's your turn to play.

**Aazüche** (Indicate a suit you would like to play, ie you have good cards of). If it's your turn to give the first card out in a round, and you don't have a 'bock', start with a lower card of a suit you eventually hope to have 'bock'. Eg: You have King, Under and seven of Schilte, start with the Under. Hopefully the Ace will go, and your partner knows to bring a low Schilte when it's his term, so you can win that trick.

**Verwerfe** (throw away): This is the only way you are allowed to show your partner what you DON'T want: When you cannot follow suit the first time, you give a card of the suit that you have least of, and are not likely to make 'Bock'. Of course it does not always work out, sometimes you don't have any cards of that suit. And sometimes you want to 'schmiere'.

**Schmiere:** (Translation difficult, 'bribe' or 'grease' does not quite hit it. Best is 'add value'): When you can see , or hope,  that your partner is going to win the trick, you want to give him (and you) extra points. If you happen to have a ten, that's the best, you throw that in. You do have to follow suit first though. The same happens with 'obenabe' with 8's. Sometimes with 'unenufe' too.
Aces are only used to 'schmiere'  when you have the King and perhaps the Ober too. It can sometimes be useful to do it, it is a legal way to indicate to your partner that you have the highest card of that suit.

**Jagen** (Chase): Sometimes you may know that your oponent still has trumps, but you just want them to be played. So you bring a high card, usually an ace, just so s/he puts in a trump in his greediness, and later on you can play your good cards without them being taken.

**Stechen**  Putting in a higher card than the last person, so that you and your partner will win the trick.

**Wiise** (Indicate) We don't do this at the Swiss club, but you may have heard: If you have three or more cards in a row of one suit, or four of the same value (eg four tens), you say that in the beginning of the game and get extra points for that. The same applies for **Stőck** (Sticks), Ober and King of trump.

# JASSEN - Winning tricks and scoring

| TRUMP game | Value (points) | | OBENABE (from top down) | Value | | UNENUFE (from bottom up) | Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ranking (Top is highest) | | | Ranking | | | Ranking | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Jack of trumps | 20 | | Any Ace | 11 | | Any Six | 11 |
| Nine (Nell) of trumps | 14 | | Any King | 4 | | Any Seven | 0 |
| Ace of trumps | 11 | | Any Ober (Queen) | 3 | | Any Eight | 8 |
| King of trumps | 4 | | Any Jack | 2 | | Any Nine | 0 |
| Ober (Queen)of trumps | 3 | | Any Ten | 10 | | Any Ten | 10 |
| Ten of trumps | 10 | | Any Nine | 0 | | Any Jack | 2 |
| Eight of trumps | 0 | | Any Eight | 8 | | Any Ober | 3 |
| Seven of trumps | 0 | | Any Seven | 0 | | Any King | 4 |
| Six of trumps | 0 | | Any  Six | 0 | | Any Ace | 0 |
| Any other Ace | 11 | | | | | | |
| Any other King | 4 | | | | | | |
| Any other Ober (Queen) | 3 | | | | | | |
| Any other Jack | 2 | | | | | | |
| Any other Ten | 10 | | | | | | |
| Any other Nine | 0 | | | | | | |
| Any other Eight | 0 | | | | | | |
| Any other Seven | 0 | | | | | | |
| Any other Six | 0 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Extra points last trick | 5 | | | 5 | | | 5 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total | 157 | | | 157 | | | 157 |
| | | | | | | | |