

How to Play Nickels

Origin: Unknown. Though the origin of Nickels is unknown, I think we can safely assume that it was originally played for a nickel a point.

Players: 3-6 (though not much fun with only 3)

Equipment: 2-3 standard decks of cards (including jokers). The number of decks depends on the number of players.

| Players | Decks |
|---------|-------|
| 3 or 4 | 2 |
| 5 or 6 | 3 |

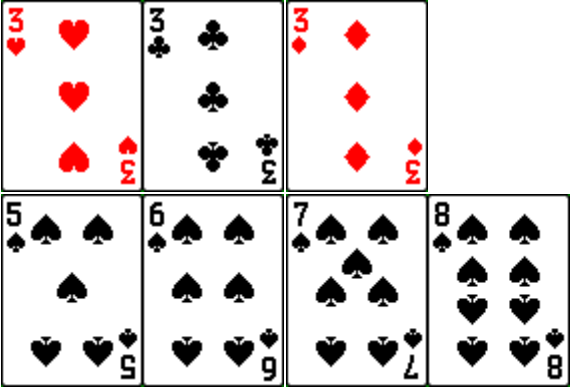
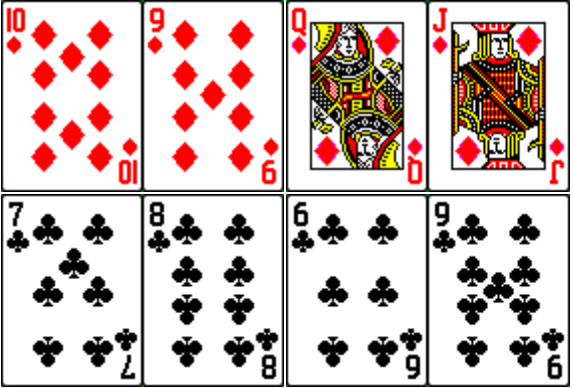
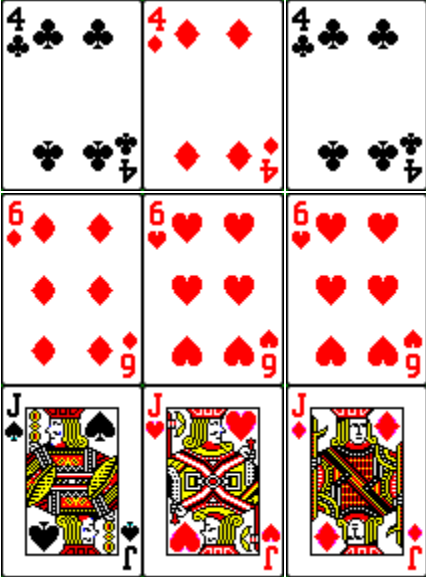
Nickels can be played with more players and more decks, but 7 players and 4 decks might be stretching it.

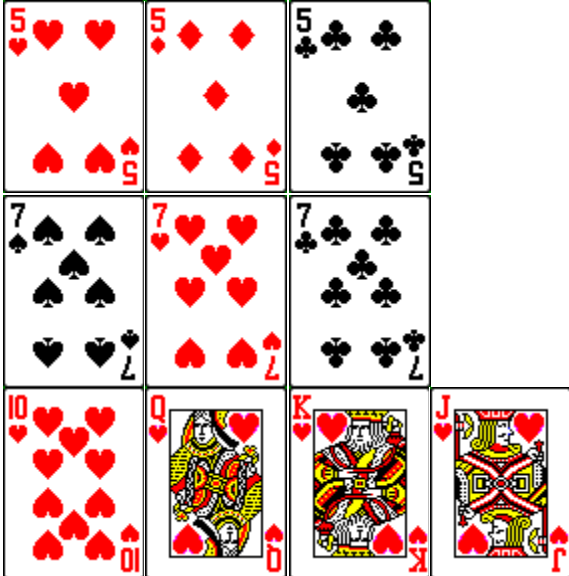
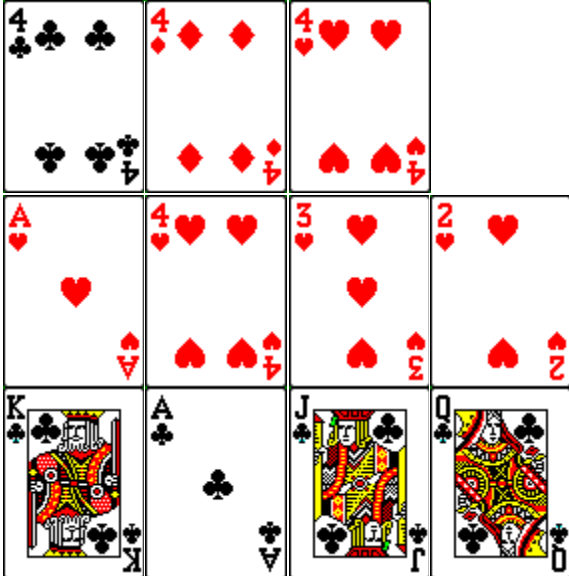
Rounds: Nickels is played over 7 rounds. At the start of each round, an equal number of cards is dealt to each player. In the first round, deal 6 cards. In each subsequent round, deal 1 more card so that in the 7th and final round each player receives 12 cards. Rounds are commonly referred to by the number of cards dealt. Thus, the first round is called the 6 hand, and the final round is called the 12 hand.

Goal: The goal is to score the fewest number of points, preferably by melding all of your cards before all other players each round. Cards still in your hand, when one person has played all his cards, count as points against you.

Melding Requirements: There is a different set of requirements to meet in each round to meld cards.

| Hand | Requirement | Example (minimum number of cards) |
|------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6 | 2 books | |

| Hand | Requirement | Example (minimum number of cards) |
|------|---------------|--|
| 7 | 1 book, 1 run |  |
| 8 | 2 runs |  |
| 9 | 3 books |  |

| Hand | Requirement | Example (minimum number of cards) |
|------|----------------|---|
| 10 | 2 books, 1 run |  |
| 11 | 1 book, 2 runs |  |

| Hand | Requirement | Example (minimum number of cards) |
|------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 12 | 3 runs | |

Definitions:

Book - 3 or more cards of the same *value*, regardless of suit

Run - 4 or more cards in sequence in the same *suit*

Wild - Jokers are wild meaning they can be substituted for any other card in a book or run

Aces: Aces may be the low (A,2,3,4) value in a run or the high (J,Q,K,A) value in a run, but not both (Q,K,A,2).

The Deal: Deal the required number of cards for the round to each player. Stack the remaining cards in the center of the table (face down) as a draw pile. Turn the top card over and place it next to the draw stack to begin the discard pile.

(Variation: If the first card turned over is a Joker, insert it randomly back into the stack. Draw a new starting card to replace it. Repeat as needed until a non-Joker is revealed.)

The Play: The player to the left of the dealer may take the upturned card for free. If he does not want to add the card to his hand, the other players in clockwise order have the opportunity to take it but must also take a penalty card from the top of the draw pile.

If one of the other players does take the upturned card, the current player may take the upturned card that was underneath it, if any. If there is no such card, he must take the next card from the top of the draw pile.



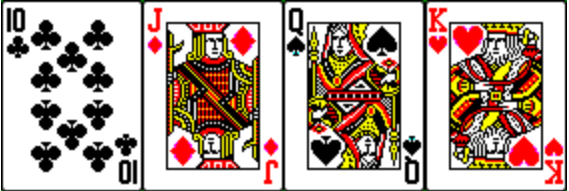
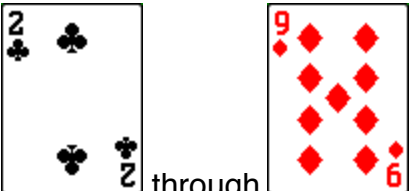
If the current player has the required cards to meld for the hand being played, he may lay those cards face up in front of him. If he then has no more cards left in his hand, the round ends and is scored. All non-melding players receive a 25-point penalty. If the player who melded still has cards in his hand, he discards one face up next to the draw pile. If he then has no more cards left in his hand, the round ends and is scored.

If after discarding the current player still has cards in his hand, he keeps them until his next turn. Once a player has melded, he can no longer take cards out of turn.

On subsequent turns, a player who has already melded draws a card as usual, either from the discard pile or the draw pile. If he can then play any of his cards on his own or other players' melds, he may do so in an attempt to get rid of all of his cards. If he can get rid of all of them, or has only one left which he can discard, the round ends and is scored.

Players may have included Jokers in their melds. If a Joker is added to a book, it stays there until the end of the round. If, however, it is added to a run, it may be replaced by the card it represents (proper suit and value) when a player is trying to get rid of cards remaining in his hand. The Joker that is picked up can be added to any book or run on the table. It could also be kept in the players' hand, but that wouldn't normally be the best play.

Scoring: When one player has played all of his cards, the round ends. The cards still in other players' hands count as additional penalty points as follows.

| Card | Points |
|---|--------|
|  | 50 |
|  | 20 |
|  | 10 |
|  | 5 |

The 12 Hand: The final round has a special requirement for melding. Only 1 player will meld and must meld all his cards at once with no discard left over. There is no 25-point penalty for the non-melding players.

Winning: Add each player's points accumulated over the course of the game. The player with the lowest score is the winner.