

Connections

The first step to advanced games

should be preceded by at least 1 or 2 hands of **Region Rummy**.

Object: To score through partnerships with other players where cities of two or more regions are joined into larger sets.

Number of Players: 3 to 6.

Card Deck and Dealing: Use all 42 colored cards plus 12 white centered cards (do **NOT** use the white "South Pole" card). Deal according to how many are playing.

Rules: Take turns being dealer. Deal the cards as in **Region Rummy**.

3 players – 8 cards to each player

4 players – 7 cards to each player

5 players – 6 cards to each player

6 players – 5 cards to each player

After dealing, place the remaining cards within reach of all players. The game also uses a discard pile from which players may draw cards. Trading cards between players is also allowed, as explained below.

1. Play. Player to the left of the dealer goes first and either draws a card and discards (thus establishing the discard pile), or plays down 3 cards of the same color. Other players do the same, in turn. When a 3-card set is played, the player finishes the turn by drawing the top card from either the main deck or the discard pile.

2. White-centered cards are valuable "links" that can be added to a 3-card set when they have a color section matching the color of the 3-card set. For example, Chicago can be added to 3-card set of Atlantic North America or Pacific North America. Some connectors join 3 regions. For example, Gibraltar can be added to card sets of: Western Europe, Mediterranean or Africa.

3. After adding a linking card to a set the player, on his/her next turn, can add a card matching another section of the linking card. In this way the white-centered linking card links two or more regions. More importantly, a player who has played a linking card can invite another player to join in a partnership by playing a card from an adjoining region. When a partnership is formed both players can proceed to play single cards of the regions linked by the colors on the white-centered connector card.

4. All partnerships are organizations of 2-players only, as defined (and evidenced) by a particular white-centered linking cards. However, the regional cards of a single player can be used by that

player in a second partnership. For example, player Anton with *Western Asia* cards is in a partnership with player Boris who has *Eastern Europe* cards. They are linked by **Istanbul**. Player Kathy with *Southeast Asia* cards invites Anton to join a partnership around **Lahore**. At the end of the round Anton's *Western Asia* cards add to the value of the partnership with Boris, and the same cards add to the value of his partnership with Kathy. But Kathy and Boris share no points even if Boris holds a stray card of *Southeast Asia* or Kathy a stray card of *Eastern Europe*. In the case of a 3-colored linking card, the two partners (and only two) can score by playing cards of three regions.

5. Trading of single cards is done as described in **Region Rummy**. Trading cannot be done **during** either player's turn to draw or play down. All trades must be one-for-one.

Ending the Round. As in Region Rummy, any player can announce that the round is over as long as all players have had at least 6 turns. The announcement must be made **before** the player takes a turn, and the player has no more turns. All other players then get 2 more turns, the round is over and the scores are counted (see below). This does **NOT** apply to the final round—the last round dealt. The final round is over when on two successive turns by all players, no one is able to play down a card.

Ending the Game: The game is over when all players have dealt 1 round each. If agreed upon ahead of time, this rule can be modified by the players so that each player deals more than one round. This modification is more reasonable with a small number of players. With six players each player dealing only one round is generally preferable.

SCORING. With card sets potentially as large as 11 (two complete regions plus a connecting white-centered card) points can go quite high, and so can the penalty for unplayed pairs. Points are scored as follow:

Cards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Points	0	-20	4	8	15	30	60	125	250	500	1000

Only the cards played down count for points. Except for unplayed pairs (having negative points), cards in a player's hand have no value when a round ends. The point value of any partnership is split between the partners. When splitting an odd number of points, the odd number goes to the partner who played the linking card. Players cooperate to form partnerships, but in scoring points are calculated for each player individually.