

PINATA

a game for two players
by Stephen W. Glenn © 2002-2012

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54 Playing Cards
(45 color, 9 wild)



5 "Medal" Cards



45 Colored Candies



4 Mats



1 Bag

Setup

Place the 4 mats in a row between the two players. At the beginning of the game it does not matter which sides are face up. Place the 45 candies in the bag and mix them. Place candies on the mats. 1 on mat number 1, 2 on mat number 2, 3 on mat number 3, and 4 on mat number 4.

Shuffle the cards and deal eight cards to each player. Each player takes his cards into his hand, keeping them secret from his opponent during the game.

Place the remaining cards face down as a supply next to the board. A discard stack will form next to it. If, during the game, the supply is exhausted, shuffle the discard stack and place it face down as the new supply.

Place the five "medal" cards face up near the board.

The players decide who will start. The players then alternate turns.

Choose a start player using any method you prefer.

Playing the game

On a player's turn, he selects a card from his hand and places it face up next to the mat of his choice. Typically, he plays the card on his side of the mat. However, he may play the card on his opponent's side of the mat if the required number of cards is already on the current player's side of the mat (see below). Then, he draws the top card from the supply and adds it to his hand.

If a player is not able to play a card, he must show his cards to his opponent. He may then discard as many cards from his hand as he chooses and draw that many. If he is able to play now, he must. Otherwise, he shows his hand to his opponent and his turn ends immediately.

Rules for Placement

The number of candies on a mat determines the number of cards that must be played on each side of that mat.

The colors of the candies on a mat determine the colors of the cards that must be played on each side of that mat.

The players place the cards so that they overlap. In this way, all of the played cards can be seen.



If a player's side of a mat does not have the required number of cards, he must play on his side of the mat. However, if the player's side of the mat does have the required number of cards, he may play on his opponent's side of the mat, following the aforementioned rules of placement.

Scoring

When the required number of cards has been played on both sides of a mat, it is scored. If the mat is a HIGH mat, the player whose sum of cards is the highest wins all of the candies on the mat. If the mat is a LOW mat, the player whose sum of cards is the lowest wins all of the candies on the mat. Any candies won in this fashion are placed face up before the player who won them.

Note: A player may not play the final card to a mat if it would result in both sides having equal values.

Once the winner receives the candies, the mat is flipped over to its opposite side and it is refilled randomly using candies from the bag. Discard all cards played to the mat.

If there are not enough candies to fill this mat, it is discarded and the game continues with fewer tiles. No candies are placed in this case.

After a mat is scored, the next turn is always taken by the player who lost in the scoring. Usually this means the player who did not initiate the scoring. However, if the current player initiates scoring for his opponent, the current player will take another turn immediately.

Wild Cards

When a wild card is played to a mat, it can act as any color in the required configuration. The player does not announce the color of a wild card when it is played. Thus, the wild card is not assigned a color and does not thereby restrict the placement of later cards.



Medal Cards

Any time after a player receives candies, he checks to see if he may collect a medal card. To do so, he must have obtained the same number of that color candy that is listed on the card. He places the medal card face up in his play area. A player cannot lose a medal card during the game once it is taken.

End of Game

The first player to collect three medal cards wins the game.

Variant

For a more interactive game, players may choose the option to play on their opponent's side of the mat at any time.



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