



9-5-2

ABOUT THE GAME: 9-5-2 (952) is basically simplified bridge for three players, with a forced card-switching twist thrown in. 952 is a social game and not suitable for gambling since there is a degree of trust required in a couple of elements of the game.

THE DRAW:

Cut for deal; high card deals first. For each hand, the dealer has an automatic contract to make 9 tricks. The player to the dealer's left must make 5 tricks and the player to the dealer's right must make 2 tricks. Deal rotates in a clockwise fashion.

THE DEAL:

Any player may shuffle, with dealer shuffling last. Dealer deals 16 cards to each player, one by one. In addition, a "kitty" of 4 cards are dealt aside.

THE TRADE:

Except on the first hand and in subsequent hands in which every player exactly made their contract, cards must be traded between players depending on the results of the previous hand.

Players who had overtricks in the last hand trade cards with the players who did not make. You trade one card per overtrick. The player receiving a card must give the player who passed him the card the highest card of that suit in his hand (or if the given card is the highest, then the card is returned).

Should two players score overtricks, the one with the bigger contact gets to receive cards from the third player first. Should two players be "down", then the player who met his contract gives cards to both of them simultaneously – he cannot see what he receives from one of the players before he gives cards to the other player.

CALLING TRUMP, AND THE KITTY:

After all switching of cards is done, the dealer, who must make 9 tricks, declares the trump suit, which can be hearts, spades, clubs, or diamonds. A call of NO TRUMP is permitted, in which case there is no trump suit. After declaring trump, the dealer picks up the kitty, so he now has 20 cards. He may then discard any 4 cards. After these 4 cards are discarded play begins. The cards are not part of the play and are not revealed to the other two players.

THE PLAY:

Player to the left of the dealer (i.e. the player who must make 5 tricks on this hand) leads to the first trick. Players must follow suit to the card led. If suit cannot be followed, then any other card may be played. A trick consists of one card from each player, played in a clockwise direction. If any trump cards are played, then the winner of the trick is the player who played the highest trump card. If no trump cards are played, then the winner of the trick is the player who played the highest card of the suit led. The winner of a trick leads to the next trick.

SCORING:

A player scores +1 for every trick made in excess of his contract. If a player has to make 9, and makes 11, then he is +2. A player scores -1 for every trick less than his contract. If a player has to make 5 and makes only 2, then he is -3. Scoring is cumulative and the first player to reach +10 (or other suitable number that is agreed upon before the game) is declared the winner.

STRATEGY:

As dealer

- Eliminate all outstanding trumps if possible
- Given choice of two trump suits, prefer the longer one over the stronger one
- Count the number of outstanding trumps.
- Attempt to establish a side suit.
- When discarding the 4 cards, try to create a void.

As non-dealer

- Force the dealer to use trumps.