

ALL or NOTHING: How to Play

This game is for 3-6 players. With 3 or 4 players, deal each player 10 cards. With 5 or 6 players, deal each player 8 cards. There will be cards left over with anything other than 6 players. Set the extra cards aside for the next dealer.

Players start with 100 points, the goal is to get to 0 points or to have the lowest score at the end of 10 hands. This is called "winning".

Select the dealer by cutting cards. The order of the players is: The lowest card is the dealer, the next highest is to the left of the dealer, and so on. ALL and NOTHING cards are FLIPPED during the cuts. (More later.)

The player to the left of the dealer bids first, then clockwise around the table. Bidding is simple, you bid to either take ALL of the tricks, or NOTHING, taking none of the tricks. The scorekeeper notes the bids of each player on the score sheet, which is available to download and print in .pdf format.



Play Sequence

The player to the left of the dealer is the first to lead. That player plays one card. If the player is attempting to take ALL tricks, that will probably be a high card. If the player is attempting to take NOTHING, that lead will probably be a low card. Play continues clockwise, following the suit of the first suited card. You can play an ALL or NOTHING card, or the associate FLIP cards (more later) at any time, regardless of whether you have suit in your hands. The ALL or NOTHING cards are shown in the photo to the left. Nice, right? They look like they're wearing tuxedos. To a card brawl.

ALL or NOTHING cards are special, and will be described below in full so you understand the card hierarchy (big word). What's important to know now is that the highest card always takes the trick. The person who takes the trick is the person who leads next. This process continues until all cards in the players' hands are played, one per trick, completing that hand.

Got it so far? It's an easy game as far as rules go, but with lots of interesting and twisting strategy variations. Easy to learn, difficult to master as no Zen Master ever said. But if he'd played, he would have said that.

ALL
OR
NOTHING

Scoring:

If a player bids NOTHING and took no tricks, that player loses 20 points from their score. Yes, in ALL or NOTHING losing points is good! For example, if you had a score of 100 and successfully bid NOTHING in hand 1, your score would be 80 at the start of hand 2. If a player bids ALL and successfully takes every trick in the hand, that player loses 100 points from their score. When a player reaches 0, the game is immediately over and that player is the winner. For those of you with degrees in math, you can see that it's entirely possible to win the game in the first hand by successfully completing an ALL bid. Yay! Don't get too excited, it's rare.

If a player fails to make their bid, either ALL or NOTHING, they gain 10 points for each trick they failed their bid by. So if you bid ALL and two tricks were taken by other players, your score goes up 20 points. If you bid NOTHING and take 1 trick, you gain 10 points on your score. Gaining points is not the road to victory.

Card Hierarchy: (there's that word again)

There are 48 cards in the ALL or NOTHING deck. 40 numbered cards and 4 each of the ALL and NOTHING cards.

Cards come numbered 1 thru 10, in 4 suits. Larger numbers beat smaller numbers. Players must follow suit with the following exceptions:

They play an ALL card from their hand.

They play a NOTHING card from their hand.

They play a FLIP (don't worry, it will be explained) from their hands.

They have no cards left in the suit for that trick, in which case they can play any card they choose. If you are later found to have that suit, you gain 20 points to your score.

ALL cards are high, the first one played is highest. The catch is that the first ALL card can be FLIPPED to a NOTHING card, giving the hand to the second ALL played unless it is also FLIPPED.

NOTHING cards are low, again the first played is higher than the later NOTHINGS played. The catch is NOTHING cards can be FLIPPED to become all cards, giving the trick to that sly dog who thought they had it made.

You will notice some cards have yellow suit symbols below the numbers instead of black or white. These are FLIP cards. They FLIP the associated ALL or NOTHING card to the opposite state. So the 1 of Spades, for example, would FLIP the NOTHING card on the previous page to an ALL card.

A 2 of Hearts would flip the ALL on that page to a NOTHING. Notice there is a second card shown with each ALL or NOTHING card. Either card can FLIP the ALL or NOTHING card, and if the other is played, it FLIPS back. So in the example above, the NOTHING card becomes an all card if the 9 of Clubs is played, then a NOTHING again if the 1 of Spades is played.

You want to pay attention to when FLIP cards are played if you have ALL or NOTHING cards in your hand. FLIPPING those cards successfully may be critical to making your bid. Conversely, pay attention to the FLIP cards you have in your hand. This is how you ruin the best planned bids of your fellow players, by inconveniently FLIPPING their cards to the opposite state and making them take a trick they didn't want or lose a trick they did want. One successful FLIP can waylay the plans of two other players, which is where the fun of this game comes into play. Make your bids while causing your opponents to fail in theirs.

Optional rules are available at WWW.ALLORNOTHINGCARDS.COM that will provide the details of team play, harder bidding, and create more opportunity for you to rise to stunning heights of success.... or crash and burn. This game is about unexpected chaos. There is no perfect hand, no absolutely imperfect hand. You are in control.

Thank you so much for playing this game. We (the developers) appreciate every customer, every smile that the game makes. If you love playing cards as much as we do, you're in for a treat. So go FLIP someone!



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