

# 8 1/2 GAME INSTRUCTIONS

A social card game for 2-5 players, ages 8 and up.

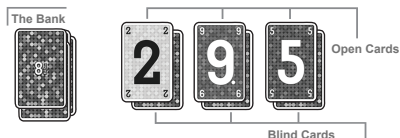
**The game contains:** Cards 1, 2: four times each. Cards 0, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: six times each. Cards Half, Ghost: eight times each. 72 cards total, and instructions.

## Dealing the Cards

Shuffle all the cards and deal the entire deck equally among the players (do not worry if one or two players are dealt an extra card). Each player keeps his cards in a face-down pile. This is his Bank or personal draw pile. Before starting, each player places 6 cards in front of him in the following way:

- Take the top 3 cards from your Bank and place them in front of you face-down. These cards are called "The Blind Cards."
- Take another 3 cards from your Bank and this time place them face up, one on each of the 3 Blind Cards. These cards are called "The Open Cards."
- Draw 3 more cards and hold them in your hand.
- During the game each player must constantly keep 3 cards in his hand, from which he chooses the one to play.
- After discarding, the player must draw a new card from his Bank to return the number of cards in his hand back to three.

**A player may not use the cards on the table until he has played all the cards in his Bank, as well as the last three cards in his hand.**



## Rules of the Game

The player holding the lowest yellow card in his hand is given the honor of playing the first card. This player places that card in the center to start a discard pile. Play continues going clockwise and each player must discard one card onto the discard pile. This can be any card as long as it is HIGHER THAN OR EQUAL TO THE TOP NUMBER in the discard pile. **A player who holds several identical cards like two 3's or three 7's may discard them all in one turn.** The player may also use one of the Wild Cards (see "The 3 Wild Cards" below), which can be used on almost any number. **A player who cannot play must collect the discard pile – he takes these cards and puts them aside. These cards will not be played anymore but at the end of the game they will be counted against him. After a player collects the discard pile the next player starts a new pile with any card from their hand.**

## The 3 Wild Cards

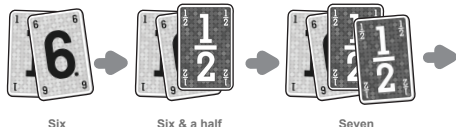
### Ghost

The Ghost can be played on any number. It is an "invisible" card that leaves the discard pile unchanged. The next player should refer to the card underneath.



### Half

Half may be played on any number except "Eight and a Half" (see "The Rules of Eight and a Half"). It "sticks" to the number on which it is played and raises the discard pile by half.



### Zero

0 can be played on any whole number. It zeros the discard pile and the next player may play any number or wild card. 0 cannot be played when the discard pile is not a whole number (a "Number and a Half").

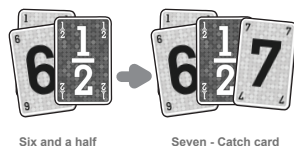


## Special Cases of the Discard Pile

### Getting Caught

A player who caused the discard pile to become a "Number and a half," takes a risk and may be caught and penalized. The next player may penalize them by playing a Catch card. The Catch card is not a special card but is always the next whole number after any "Number and a half" in the discard pile. For example: 4 is the Catch card for "Three and a half," 7 is the Catch card for "Six and a half," etc. The player that gets caught must collect the discard pile and the player who caught him starts a new pile.

NOTE: If you play a Ghost on a "Number and a half," you take on the risk and can now be the player who is caught and penalized.



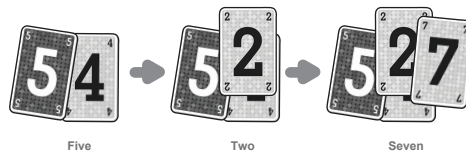
Note that catching the player who laid the half card (or ghost on top of one) is not required. The next player may play ANY other legitimate number. In this case, the player gets away and the game continues as usual.

## The Rules of Eight and a Half

1. A player who has both cards: an 8 card and a Half card, may discard both of them at the same time to form "Eight and Half" in the pile.
2. When the discard pile is "Eight and Half," the next player cannot play a Half card or a Zero card. The only possible plays are: Ghost, 8 + Half, and of course 9, which catches whoever laid the "Eight and Half."

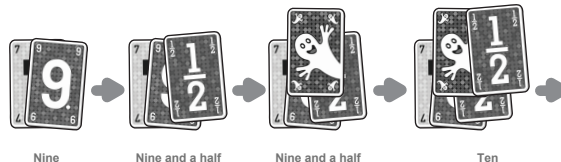
### Five

When the top card on the pile is "Five," the next player, and only him, must play 5 or lower. 5 is not a wild card and can be played only on a "Five" or lower card.



### Nine

The 9 card is red to indicate that it is the highest number card and to distinguish it clearly from the 6 card. Note that when the discard pile is "Nine," players may still play the following: 9, 0, Ghost or even raise with Half cards.



## When a Player Runs Out of the Cards in his Bank

When a player runs out of cards in his Bank, he keeps playing the last 3 cards in his hand. Only after he plays the last one may he play the cards on the table. First, he must play all 3 Open Cards. The Open Cards stay on the table and in each turn, he selects one to play. Only after all three Open Cards have been played may he play the 3 Blind Cards. They are left face down and in each turn, one is selected blindly and played. If it is a "good" card (following the order of the pile or a wild card), the turn goes to the next player. If it is not, he must collect the pile including his Blind Card.

**After a player has started to play from the table, each time he is forced to collect the pile he must take those cards into his hand. NOTE: He might have to hold more than 3 cards. He must get rid of his hand before he may resume playing from the table. The cards he has collected before he started playing from the table stay aside.**

## The End of the Game

The winner of the round is the first player to get rid of all his cards. The player who ends up with the most cards in his possession (counting the cards collected and the cards that still haven't been played) among the rest of the players is the Big Loser. In the next round, the winner will have the right to exchange one of his Open Cards on the table with one of the Open Cards of the Big Loser.

## Scoring

The winner of the round gets 2 points. The player who ended up with the fewest cards gets 1 point. If the winner himself ends up with the fewest cards, he would get a total of 3 points. After 6 games have been played, players total up their scores. The player with the highest total score is the winner of the game.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q - Whose turn is it to play after a player is caught and collected the pile?  
 A - The player who caught them.

- Q - Can a Half card be played if the discard pile is not a whole number?  
 A - Half cards can be used at all times except on "Eight and a Half." Using it to make a whole number does not catch the previous player.

- Q - Can a player discard more than one Half?  
 A - Sure. Two Halves raise the discard pile by "one," three Halves raise it by "one and a half." If at the end of a play the discard pile is a whole number, then the next player cannot catch you.

- Q - What happens if a player finished all his cards, but was caught by the next player on his last card?  
 A - The player who finished all his cards does not win and must collect the discard pile, add them to his hand and continue playing.

- Q - What happens when the discard pile is "Five" and the next player plays a Half card?  
 A - The discard pile becomes "Five and a Half" and the next player must play a higher card.



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Invented by Haim Shafir

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