

Sheepshead Terms

Blind - The two cards left face-down in the middle of the table that are not dealt to any players constitute the blind. These cards are taken by the picker and added to his hand. The picker must discard two cards before play begins.

Deal - To distribute the cards to the players.

Dealer - The player who deals the cards.

Double on the Bump - The picker pays double when they lose.

Fail - The 18 fail cards are 7, 8, 9, 10, Kings, and Aces of all suits except Diamonds. There is graphic of these on the rules page. Fail cards always lose to trump cards, but differ in point value. A common term is "fail off" which means use one of your fail cards instead of a trump.

Grandma Hand - An extremely powerful hand.

Habener - When playing with four players, each player must, in succession, sit out for the hand they deal. The "habener", from the German word "haben" (v. – to have), is free to have a bathroom break or trip to the bar, or if they are the scorekeeper, they can work on the scoresheet.

Leaster - When no player decides to pick, a leaster is played. The object of a leaster is to get the fewest amount of points. If a player takes no tricks, they receive double, 4 points and \$0.50 from the other two players.

Long Suit - The fail suit you have the most cards in.

Maurer - A player who passes the opportunity to pick the blind despite having a powerful hand. The term "mauer", used as a noun, is loosely translated as "coward." In German "Mauer" is a stone wall – like a city wall; "der Mauerer" is the stone mason who builds such walls, and is used in card games to describe a very cautious player; the verb is "mauern."

Pass - If a player decides he cannot win the game with his cards plus the unknown cards in the blind, he must decide to pass the option on to the next player. That player may pick up the blind, or pass again. If every player passes, a leaster is played.

Partner - When someone picks, the remaining two players are "partners."

Pick - If a player decides he can win the game with the cards in his hand plus the unknown cards in the blind, they may pick. The picker takes the two cards from the blind and adds them to his hand. They must discard two cards before play can begin.

Picker - The player who chooses to take the blind, who must then discard an equal number of cards from his or her hand and is obligated to try to win at least 61 points

Schneider - If the picker wins and the opposition fails to get 30 points (has a total 29 points or less), the picker schneiders the opposition and wins double what they would have.

Schmeer - When a partner plays a card with high point value (like an ace or ten), thinking/hoping their partner will be able to take the trick.

Schwartz - When the picker does not get 31 points in a game (has a total of 30 or less), the opposition schneiders them, which is called schwartz, and each player on the opposing team gets 2 points (scorekeeper please circle so that it is not counted as a play) the picker loses 4 and pays \$1.00 to each of the other players in the hand.

Short Suit - The fail suit you have the least amount of cards.

Trick - One round of discards, or one hand of Sheepshead, is called a trick. Each game of 3 handed Sheepshead is made up of ten tricks.

Trump - The 14 trump cards are the four Queens, the four Jacks, and the rest of the Diamond suit: Ace, 10, K, 9, 8, and 7. Trump cards always beat fail cards in strength, but their point values differ. To "trump it" is to take a trick using one of your trump cards.