

Trench

A Card Game for 2 Players
By Matt Worden, August 2007

Components: 1 standard 52-card deck of playing cards

Standard (or “Short”) Game

Setup

Each player starts with the 13 cards from a single suit. The other 2 suits of cards are not used in the game.

Each player shuffles his cards thoroughly and flips the top card. The winner, according to normal battle rules (below), will go first. On a tie, the next card is flipped until a winner is decided. The players re-form and shuffle their decks of cards again.

Each player deals 7 cards (facedown) into 2 trenches: a front trench made up of 3 cards, and a back trench made up of 4 cards. The front trench is placed closer to the opponent, and the cards in the back trench are placed to fill-in the gaps between the 3 cards of the front trench.

Like this:

```
(Player 1's Trenches)
Back Trench ==> [] [] [] []
Front Trench ==> [] [] []

Front Trench ==> [] [] []
Back Trench ==> [] [] [] []

(Player 2's Trenches)
```

The remaining 6 cards are kept in the player's hand for later use in the game.

Throughout the game, each player is allowed to peek at his own cards to remind himself of where his cards are.

Playing the Game

Starting with player who won the right to go first, play then alternates between the two players.

On a player's turn, he may take exactly 1 of the following actions (detailed below): **Shift**, **Recon**, or **Attack**.

The player is not allowed to take the same action that he took on his previous turn. And the "Recon" action can only be taken when the player's opponent has fewer than 3 face-up cards.

- **Shift** ... The player swaps the position of two adjacent cards. The cards may be side-by-side in the same trench, or may be adjacent between the two trenches. (Note: there are 2 cards in the back trench adjacent to each card in the front trench.) The swap can also be between the back trench and the player's hand. Later in the game, when there are open slots in the back trench, a back-trench card can be shifted into an open adjacent slot.
- **Recon** ... The player flips one of his opponent's trench cards face-up. The card remains face-up until it has taken part in a battle, or has been swapped back into its owner's hand. *This action can only be done when the opponent has fewer than 3 face-up cards.*
- **Attack** ... The player selects a card from his front trench that will attack the card directly in front of it in the opponent's front trench. Both players flip their cards face-up (if they aren't already face-up), and the battle is resolved.

Battle Resolution

- For cards 3 through King, the higher ranked card wins, following traditional card ranking.
- Aces and Dueces (2's) are special cards:
 - Aces beat any face card (Jack, Queen, King), but lose to any numbered card (including Dueces).
 - Dueces beat Aces and any face card, but lose to any other numbered card.
- The winning card is returned to its owner's hand.
- The losing card is removed from the game.
- In the case of a tie, both cards are returned to their respective owner's hand.

After the Battle

After a battle is concluded, and the involved cards have been removed from their spots, each player ...

1. ... slides an adjacent card from the back trench into the open slot in the front trench. (Later in the game, if there are no adjacent cards in the back trench, any card from the back trench can be moved into the open slot in the front trench.)
2. Then, if he has any cards remaining in his hand, he plays a card from his hand (facedown) into the open slot in the back trench.

Winning the Game

When one of the players is down to just the 3 cards in his front trench (no cards left in his back trench or hand), the other player is declared the winner.

Long Game

The long game is played similarly to the short game, with the following changes...

Setup

Each player starts with 26 cards of the same color (hearts/diamonds versus clubs/spades).

After dealing out the 7 cards to start in the front and back trench, the player places the remaining 19 cards facedown as a personal draw deck, and draws 6 cards into his hand.

After the Battle

After taking the normal steps of removing the card that had taken part in the battle, sliding a back trench card into the open front trench slot, and playing a card from his hand into the open back trench slot ...

3. If the player who lost the battle has any cards remaining in his personal draw deck, he draws the top card into his hand.