Schnapsen Rules

Two players, 20 cards and five cards in each hand. Reach 66 card points through tricks and marriages. A round earns 1 to 3 game points; the first to 7 game points wins the match.

Austrian Schnapsen uses 20 cards and five-card hands. This reference is not a universal rulebook for every Sixty-Six variant.

Card values: German and French suits

German rank	French rank	Card points
Ass / Daus	Ace	11
Zehner	Ten	10
König	King	4
Ober	Queen	3
Unter	Jack	2

Highest to lowest. The 20 cards total 120 card points. A trump beats a card of any other suit.

Two players - one round at a time

Deal: Each player receives five cards. Turn up a card to determine trumps and place the remaining stock across it. The non-dealer leads first.

Tricks: The higher card of the suit led wins, unless trumped. If the cards are different non-trump suits, the lead wins. The winner draws first, then the opponent; the trick winner leads next.

Open stock: You need not follow suit or win the trick. Once the stock is exhausted or closed, following suit and overtaking become compulsory.

Marriages: King and Queen of one suit count 20 card points, or 40 in trumps. Announce when leading and play one of the pair. You need a trick for the points to count.

Trump exchange: When leading with the stock open, you can exchange the trump Jack for the face-up trump card. The Cash variant has stricter conditions.

Winning: 66 card points win the round. The round earns 1, 2 or 3 game points depending on the opponent. First to 7 game points wins the match; the loser receives a Bummerl.

Three worked examples

1. Following suit comes before trumping

Hearts are trump. Your opponent leads the leaf/spade Ace. You hold the leaf/spade Jack and heart Ace. With the stock exhausted or closed, you must play the Jack of the suit led, not your trump Ace.

2. Closing the stock: the risk

Your opponent has 20 card points when you close. If you reach 66, the standard rules award you 2 game points. If you fail, your opponent gets at least 2. Winning the last trick alone does not save a failed close.

3. Card points versus game points

You have 68 card points after a trick and your opponent has 27: you win 2 game points. An opponent with at least 33 means 1 game point; an opponent without a trick means 3.

Common Schnapsen rules questions

When must I follow suit?

Once the stock is exhausted or closed. Play a higher card of the suit led if possible, otherwise a lower card of that suit. Only when you have none of that suit must you play a trump.

How much is a marriage worth?

A King and Queen (König and Ober) of one suit count 20 card points, or 40 in trumps. Announce the pair when leading and play one of its cards. Marriage points count only if you also have a trick.

Who wins if neither player reaches 66?

With the stock not closed, the player who wins the last trick wins 1 game point. After closing, the closer must reach 66; the last trick alone is not enough.

Are Schnapsen and Sixty-Six exactly the same?

They are related, but this guide describes Austrian Schnapsen with 20 cards and five-card hands. Other Sixty-Six rules use a different deck or deal. Agree on the variant before playing.

Cash and Flip are separate variants. See the linked webpage below for their additional rules.