Rummy Glossary: First Life, Second Life, Wild Joker, Paplu, Tiplu and More

> **OVERVIEW**
>
> Rummy terms in plain English: pure sequence, first and second life, wild joker, drop, full count, paplu and tiplu. Short answers with examples.

Indian Rummy has its own vocabulary. Some terms are modern rule-book words (first drop , wrong show), some come from family games (life , pack), and some from the 21-card game (tiplu , paplu , nichlu). Even regular players mix these up. This glossary explains each term as it is used in 13-card Points Rummy, the version you can play free on our Points Rummy page . Where a word belongs to a different game, we say so.

Points vs Pool vs Deals Rummy

The three common formats of 13-card rummy share the same rules for sequences, sets and declaring. They differ in how many deals make a game and what a drop costs. All of them can be played free on this site.

In all four formats the full count and a wrong show are both 80 points. Our pool games have no rejoin and no split: every pool is played to one winner.

Two more games are free here, each with its own rules: 21 Card Rummy , played with three decks and 21 cards each, and two-player Gin Rummy . Their terms are explained below.

Cards and jokers

For where jokers earn most, see rummy joker strategy .

- Printed joker: one of the two picture jokers in the 106-card pack (two decks plus two jokers). It can stand in for any card and counts 0 points. Shown as “JK” in our game.
- Wild joker (cut joker): the card turned face up after the deal. Every card of that rank, in all four suits, becomes a joker for that hand. Shown with a ★ in our game.
- Printed joker as the cut card: if a printed joker is turned up, Aces are wild for that hand in our game. Some home games use a different rule (Pagat notes the variation).
- Natural card: any card used as itself and not as a joker. A wild-rank card in its own position (the 7♥ in 6♥ 7♥ 8♥ when 7s are wild) is acting naturally.
- Closed deck (stock): the face-down pile you draw from.
- Open pile (discard pile): the face-up pile. You can take its top card, except a joker.
- Finish card: the 14th card you put aside when you declare.

Groups

- Sequence (run): three or more consecutive cards of the same suit. The Ace is low (A-2-3) or high (Q-K-A), never K-A-2.
- Pure sequence: a sequence with no joker standing in for a missing card, for example 4♥ 5♥ 6♥.
- First Life: the pure sequence every valid hand needs. Older rule books and family games say original life or Life 1 (The Rummy Rulebook , Pagat).
- Second Life: the second sequence, which may be pure or impure. Once you have both lives, your sets and other sequences are protected when cards are counted.
- Impure sequence: a sequence where a joker fills a gap, such as 10♠ J♠ + joker.
- Set: three or four cards of the same rank in different suits, such as 7♣ 7♦ 7♠. Jokers are allowed. Two identical cards (7♠ 7♣) never go in one set.
- Tanala: three identical cards. It is valid only in the three-deck version of the game, not in two-deck 13-card rummy (Board Games Stack Exchange).
- Loose card (deadwood): a card that is not part of any valid group. Loose cards are what you pay for.

Moves

- Draw / pick: take one card from the closed deck or the open pile at the start of your turn.
- Discard / throw: put one card face up on the open pile to end your turn.
- Declare / show: finish the hand by laying down 13 cards in valid groups.
- Valid declaration: at least two sequences, at least one of them pure, and all 13 cards grouped. See 10 valid and invalid declaration examples .
- Wrong show (invalid declaration): declaring a hand that fails any of those conditions. It costs 80 points.
- Drop / pack / scoot: leave the hand at the start of your turn. First drop (before your first draw) costs 20, middle drop costs 40. See When to drop .
- Sort / group: arrange your cards. In our game, labels show a group's type in colour: green for pure, orange for impure, blue for a set and red for invalid.

Scoring

- Points (count): the value of a loser's counted cards: A, K, Q, J and 10 are worth 10 each, 2 to 9 their face value, and jokers 0.
- Full count: the maximum of 80 points for one hand.
- What counts: with no pure sequence, every card counts. With a pure sequence but no second sequence, everything except that pure sequence counts. With both lives, only loose cards count. Worked examples are on the Points Rummy rules page .
- Chips: the units used to settle Deals Rummy. On this site they are just a score, with no money value.

What does Paplu mean?

“Paplu” has two meanings we can source. Paplu as a game is another name for 13-card Indian Rummy: Pagat’s page on Indian Rummy is titled “Indian Rummy: Paplu” and describes the 13-card game with two decks. Paplu as a card belongs to 21-card rummy and Marriage: the card one rank above the cut card (tiplu) in the same suit. We have not found a reliable rules source for a separate 3-card game called Paplu, so this site does not describe one. If your family plays a local version, agree its rules before the first deal. To play the 13-card game online, start with Points Rummy .

Paplu, Tiplu, Nichlu and other 21-card terms

These words are often searched together with 13-card rummy, but in practice they belong to 21-card rummy and Marriage . They are not used in the 13-card Points, Pool or Deals games.

- Paplu (the game): another name for 13-card Indian Rummy, which Pagat describes as popular across India and in Maharashtra in particular (Pagat).
- Tiplu: in 21-card rummy, the card cut at random to set the jokers. In the Nepali game Marriage, the cards that exactly match it are especially valuable (Pagat: Marriage).
- Paplu (the card): in 21-card rummy, the card one rank above the tiplu in the same suit, also called the upper joker . Pagat’s Marriage page calls it poplu .
- Nichlu: the card one rank below the tiplu in the same suit, the lower joker . Pagat calls it jhiplu .
- Marriage: the nichlu, tiplu and paplu of one suit held together (for example 8♠ 9♠ 10♠ when the tiplu is 9♠). It earns a bonus in 21-card rummy: in our game, 100 from each other player still in the hand.
- Tunnela: three identical cards (same rank and suit), possible because three decks are used. It counts as a pure sequence.
- Dublee: two identical cards. Eight Dublees is a valid declaration in our 21 Card Rummy.
- Maal: the bonus value of these special cards in Marriage.

Names vary between regions and families, so check what your table means before a game. The bigger game is compared with 13-card rummy in 13 card vs 21 card rummy , and 21 Card Rummy tips covers planning three pure sequences. Our 21 Card Rummy game calls the paplu and nichlu the upper joker and lower joker , and its page lists the exact rules it uses, including value cards and the marriage.

Gin Rummy terms

Gin is a different game with its own scoring: see Gin Rummy strategy for how knocking works in practice.

Gin Rummy is a two-player game with its own words. None of them are used in Indian Rummy.

- Run: 3 or more cards in a row of one suit. In Gin the Ace is low only, so Q-K-A is not a run.
- Deadwood: the cards that are not in a run or set. J, Q and K count 10, Ace 1.
- Upcard: the first face-up card, which each player may take or pass at the start of a hand.
- Knock: ending the hand with 10 or less deadwood.

- Lay off: after a knock, the defender adds deadwood cards to the knocker's runs and sets.
- Gin: knocking with no deadwood at all. It earns a bonus (25 in our game) and can't be undercut.
- Undercut: when the defender ends with deadwood equal to or lower than the knocker's. The defender scores the difference plus a bonus (25 in our game).
- Box (line) bonus and game bonus: extra points added when the match ends: 25 per hand won and 100 for winning, in our Gin Rummy .

First Life is the pure sequence every valid hand needs. Second Life is a second sequence, pure or impure. Together they protect your other groups when cards are counted.

No. They are 21-card rummy and Marriage terms for the cut card (tiplu), the card above it (paplu) and the card below it (nichlu). In 13-card rummy only the wild joker's rank and printed jokers act as jokers. Paplu is also an old regional name for Indian Rummy itself.

A printed joker is a picture joker in the pack. The wild joker is the card turned up after the deal: every card of its rank becomes a joker for that hand. Both count 0 points, and neither can be picked from the open pile.

The maximum a losing hand can cost: 80 points in 13-card rummy. A wrong show also costs 80.

Most often, a name for 13-card Indian Rummy itself, as Pagat records. In 21-card rummy and Marriage, the paplu (or poplu) is the card one rank above the tiplu in the same suit.

We could not find a reliable rules source for a 3-card game by that name, so we do not describe one. The Paplu we can source is 13-card Indian Rummy. Other three-card games have their own rules and are not covered here.

Next read

- How to Play What Is the Maximum Points in Rummy? 80, 101, 201 and 120 Explained
- How to Play 13 Card vs 21 Card Rummy: Rules, Jokers, Scoring and Which to Learn First
- How to Play Play Rummy Free Online: No Money, No Deposit, No Download

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