Panjpar

**Players and cards**

Two, three or four people can play. There are no partnerships. A 36 card French suited pack is used, the cards in each suit ranking from high to low: A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6.

**The deal**

Anyone can deal the first hand; thereafter the loser of each hand deals the next.

The dealer deals five cards to each player, one at a time, clockwise. The next card is placed face up on the table; its suit is trumps. The remaining stock of undealt cards is placed face down, crosswise on top of the face up card, so that the rank and value of the face up trump remain visible.

**The play**

The play is clockwise. At any moment during the game, there is an attacker and a defender, who is the player to the left of the attacker. The player to the left of the dealer attacks first.

The attacker must play one, three or five cards face up on the table, side by side. The cards played must conform to one of the following patterns:

* any single card can be played
* when three cards are played, they must be a pair of cards of equal rank, accompanied by any third card (for example heart 6-diamond 6-club 9; the third card could also be another six)
* when five cards are played, they must be two pairs of cards accompanied by any fifth card (for example club 7-heart 7-spade Q-heart Q- heart 10; the fifth card could also be a 7 or a queen) or four cards of the same number accompanied by any fifth card.

The defender may beat some or all of the cards played by the attacker, by placing better cards on top of them. Any card can be beaten by a higher card of the same suit, and any non-trump card can be beaten by any card of the trump suit. Each attack card is beaten separately, and the cards used for beating do not have to form any particular combination. For example if hearts are trumps and the attacker plays club 9-spade 9-diamond Q, these cards could be beaten by the club K, heart 6 and diamond A respectively. Any cards not beaten by the defender must be picked up and added to the defender's hand.

There are three possibilities.

* The defender beats all the cards played by the attacker. All the attack and defense cards are set aside face down in a discard heap, and not used again until the next deal. The defender becomes the new attacker, and the next player in turn is the new defender.
* The defender beats some but not all of the cards played by the attacker. The beaten cards and the cards used to beat them are put aside face down in the discard heap, and the unbeaten cards are taken into the defender's hand. Having picked up cards, the defender does not have the right to attack; the player to the defender's left becomes the next attacker and the person to this player's left is the new defender.
* The defender beats none of the attack cards, but picks them all up. The turn to attack passes to the player to the old defender's left, and the new defender is the player to the left of the new attacker as usual.

Example: There are three players - A, B and C - and diamonds are trumps. A leads spade J, diamond J, heart 9; B beats the heart 9 with the heart Q, trumps the spade J with the diamond 6 and picks up the diamond J. Because B did not beat all three cards it is now C's turn to attack, and A will be the new defender.

If after playing the attack cards, the attacker has fewer than five cards in hand, the attacker must draw sufficient cards from the top of the stock so as to hold five cards again. In the same way, if after beating some or all of the attack cards and picking up any unbeaten cards the defender has fewer than five cards, the defender's hand must be replenished from the stock after the attacker has done so. Until the stock is exhausted, all players must hold at least five cards. The trump card is drawn as the last card from the stock.

**The endgame**

The object of the game is to get rid of all one's cards. When there are no cards left in the stock, players no longer replenish their hands after attacking or defending, so may have fewer than five cards. A player who has no cards left in hand when there are no cards left in the stack drops out of the game, and the other players play on.

An attacker is never allowed to lead more cards than the defender holds, so for example if the defender has four cards, the attacker can lead one card or three, but not five.

If as a defender you use all of your cards to beat an equal number of cards played as an attack against you, and there are no cards in the stock, you drop out of the play, and the turn to attack passes to the player to your left.

When all players but one have run out of cards, the last player holding cards is the loser. The loser must shuffle the cards and deal the next hand.

A draw is possible if there are just two players left in the game, and they hold an equal number of cards each (one, three or five). If the first player attacks with all their cards, and the second is able to beat all of these cards, so that nether has any cards left, the game is a draw. In this case the loser of the previous game remains the loser and deals the cards for the next game. In Russia they say: "One old fool is a bigger fool than two new fools".