Undercard

Official rules · a card game of captures, latches and sweeps

2	36	4 × 9
players	cards, 5 to K	grid

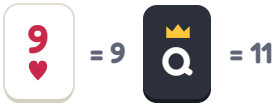
Goal: capture **5 of your opponent's 6 Face cards** to win instantly, or have the **most points** when the Stalemate Clock runs out.

1 Setup

- **Cards:** a standard deck with the Aces, 2s, 3s and 4s removed.
- **Sides:** choose Red (♥ ♦) or Black (♠ ♣). You move only your own color.
- **Who goes first:** each player cuts a card; the higher card chooses. Face cards all count as 11, so cut again on a tie. Then reshuffle.
- **The deal:** all 36 cards face-up in a 4 × 9 grid. The grid starts full.
- **Misfire:** if the first player has no latch anywhere, gather, reshuffle and redeal.

2 Card values

Each card has one number, its **value**: its attack, its defense and its points when captured.



Number cards (5–10) are worth their rank. Face cards (Jack, Queen, King) are worth 11.

3 Movement

One move per turn, with one of your cards. Cards stay on the grid and move into empty squares, unless capturing or latching.

- **Odd (5, 7, 9):** 1 space diagonally
- **Even (6, 8, 10):** 1 space up, down, left or right
- **Jacks:** knight's L-shape, leaping over cards; can't land on their own
- **Kings:** 1 space in any direction
- **Queens:** up to 2 spaces in a straight line; no jumping

4 Capture or latch

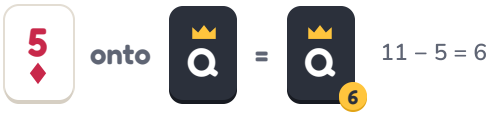
Move onto an opponent's card. Its **current value** is its value minus any card latched on it.

Capture

Your value is **equal or higher** (a tie captures): it goes to your score pile; your card takes the square.

Latch

Target is **stronger**: stack on top. New value = its value − yours.



5 About stacks

- A stack stays with its owner and moves like the **bottom card**.
- One latch per card; a latched card can't be removed.
- A stack can't latch, but can capture using its new value.
- Capture a stack with a card that equals or beats its new value. The bottom card scores; the latched card is **discarded**, even yours.

6 Opening, passing and the clock

- **First move:** must be a latch, not a capture.
- **Passing:** no moves left? Pass. It counts as a move on the clock.
- **Stalemate Clock:** before your move, on your turn, start it. You both then have **6 moves in total** to capture or latch. Any capture or latch cancels it; either player may start it again later.

7 Winning

Clean sweep

Capture 5 of your opponent's 6 Face cards: you win on the spot, whatever the points.

On points

When the clock runs out, add up your score pile: number cards score their rank, Face cards 11. Cards on the grid and discarded cards don't count. Most points wins; equal scores tie.