



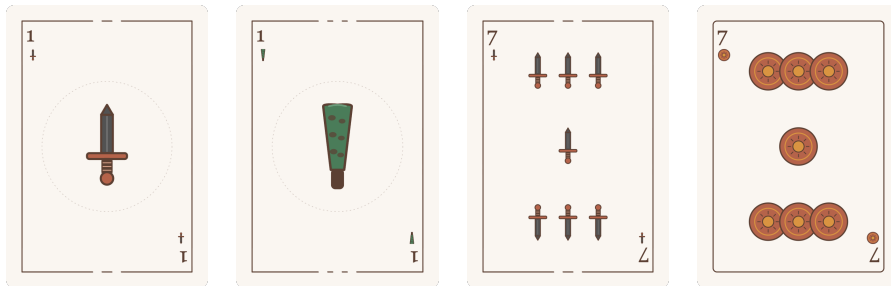
SPANISH MINDS
Your Spanish, Your Journey

REFERENCE MANUAL

Truco Argentino

The complete rules of the 2-player game.

This is the source-of-truth for the Spanish Minds Truco app — the same rules powering Luna, Martín, and Don Benicio. The defaults here reflect the most common modern Argentine practice: *sin flor*, 30-point match, modern falta math, strict second-card cutoff for envido.



Las cuatro bravas — the four matadores.



CHAPTER 00

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CHAPTER 01

The deck

Truco is played with the **40-card Spanish deck** (*baraja española*): four suits, ten ranks per suit, with the 8s and 9s removed. No jokers.

OROS

Coins. Traditional gold disc.

COPAS

Cups. Chalices and goblets.

ESPADAS

Swords. Straight daggers.

BASTOS

Clubs. Knobbly cudgels.

The ranks

1 (As / Ancho), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, then the three court cards: **10 — Sota**, **11 — Caballo**, **12 — Rey**. All three court figures are male; there are no Queens.



Slang: *negras* = the face cards (Sota, Caballo, Rey — they count as 0 for *envido*). *Anchos* = the 1s. *Bravas / matadores* = the four top cards (see next chapter).



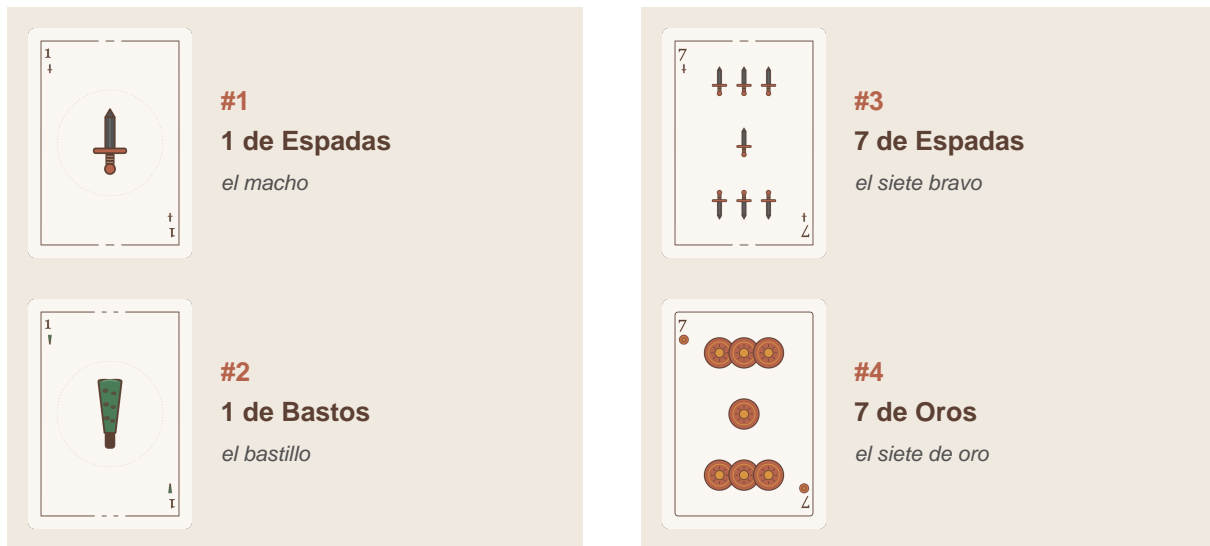
CHAPTER 02

Card ranking for trick-taking

The ranking below is used **only for winning tricks** (the truco phase). It has nothing to do with envideo scoring. It's the most important thing to memorize.

The four matadores (bravas)

Unique cards — they cannot tie with anything. Memorize this order:



The bulk ranks

Cards of the same number tie (a *parda*) unless noted.

Rank	Cards	Note
5 (top of bulk)	All 3s	Tie among themselves
6	All 2s	Tie
7	1 de Oros, 1 de Copas	<i>Falsos anchos</i> — looks strong, but mid-rank
8	All 12s — Reyes	Tie
9	All 11s — Caballos	Tie
10	All 10s — Sotas	Tie
11	7 de Copas, 7 de Bastos	<i>Falsos sietes</i> — beginner trap



Rank	Cards	Note
12	All 6s	Tie
13	All 5s	Tie
14 (lowest)	All 4s	Weakest in the deck

Beginner trap: not all 1s and 7s are equal. Only the four matadores listed above are elite. The 1 de Oros, 1 de Copas, 7 de Copas, and 7 de Bastos are mid-rank.



CHAPTER 03

Hand structure

Dealing

The opponent cuts after the shuffle. The dealer deals 3 cards each, one at a time, starting with the non-dealer. The **non-dealer is mano** — they lead the first trick and win all ties. Deal alternates each hand.

Three tricks per hand

Each hand has three potential tricks: *primera*, *segunda*, *tercera*. Mano leads primera; whoever wins a trick leads the next.

Winning the hand (with parda logic)

Primera	Segunda	Tercera	Hand winner
A wins	A wins	—	A
A wins	B wins	A wins	A
A wins	B wins	B wins	B
Parda	A wins	—	A (segunda decides)
Parda	Parda	A wins	A (tercera decides)
Parda	Parda	Parda	Mano (always)
A wins	Parda	—	A (primera winner)
A wins	B wins	Parda	A (primera winner)

The compact rule: parda primera → next trick decides. Parda later → primera winner takes it.
All three parda → mano wins.

Se va al mazo (folding)

A player can say '*me voy al mazo*' at any time. Treat as a 'no quiero' at the current live call level. Any already-accepted envideo still pays.



CHAPTER 04

Envido phase

A side bet on the value of your three cards, played **only during primera, before the second card is played**.

Calculating envido points

- Face cards (10 / 11 / 12) count as **0**.
- Numeric cards (1–7) count as their pip value.
- Two or more cards of the same suit → **20 + the two highest pips of that suit**.
- No same-suit pair → score = **your single highest pip value** (face cards still 0).
- Maximum: **33** (7 + 6 of one suit).

Hand	Envido
7 espadas + 6 espadas + Rey copas	20 + 7 + 6 = 33
1 oros + 4 oros + 12 copas	20 + 1 + 4 = 25
Rey + Caballo + 3 (mixed)	3
Sota + Caballo + Rey (mixed)	0

The calls

Call	Accepted	Rejected	Raise with
Envido	2	1	Envido (once more), Real, Falta
Envido + Envido	4	2	Real, Falta
Real Envido	+3 on top	previous (or 1)	Falta
Falta Envido	points to 30	previous (or 1)	—

The ladders

- Envido alone → 2 / 1
- Envido + Envido → 4 / 2
- Envido + Real Envido → 5 / 2
- Envido + Envido + Real Envido → 7 / 4
- Real Envido alone → 3 / 1



- Real Envigo + Falta Envigo → falta / 3
- Falta Envigo alone → falta / 1

Falta envigo math

Falta = points the **leader** needs to reach 30. Leader at 22 → falta = 8. Leader at 5 → falta = 25. One winning falta envigo can close out a match.

Declaring (cantar los tantos)

1. **Mano declares first** — says a number ("veintisiete").
2. Pie either says a higher number, concedes with '*son buenas*', or matches (mano wins ties).
3. Mano can say '*son mejores*' to decline to state their exact number — a power move.

El envigo está primero

If your opponent calls ¡**Truco!** during primera before the second card is played, you can still respond with ¡**Envigo!**. The truco call pauses, envigo resolves, then the truco call resumes with quiero/no quiero. This is one of the most distinctive rules of the game.



CHAPTER 05

Truco phase

The escalating bet on who wins the hand.

Call	Spoken	Accepted	Rejected
(no call)	—	1	—
Truco	¡Truco!	2	1
Retruco	¡Quiero retruco! / ¡Retruco!	3	2
Vale Cuatro	¡Vale cuatro!	4	3

Rules

- Either player can call **Truco** at any point during the hand.
- **Retruco** can only be called by the side that *accepted* the Truco.
- **Vale Cuatro** can only be called by the side that *accepted* the Retruco.
- Responses: **quiero** (accept), **no quiero** (reject), or **re-raise**.

CHAPTER 06

Match scoring

The match (un chico)

- **Standard match: 30 points** — 15 malas + 15 buenas.
- Short match: 15 points (malas only).
- Tournaments often play best-of-three chicos.

Scorekeeping

Traditionally tracked with matchsticks (*fósforos*), beans (*porotos*), or paper tally squares. Each completed square + diagonal = 5 points. Malas and buenas drawn on separate sides.



CHAPTER 07

Vocabulary & cantos

Game positions

Mano	The non-dealer — leads primera, wins ties
Pie	The dealer — plays second in each trick
Chico	One full 30-point match
Malas	The first 15 points
Buenas	Points 16–30
Tanto	Point (especially for envido)
Parda	Tied trick

The cantos

¡Envido! Bet on envido (2/1)	¡Real envido! +3 on top	¡Falta envido! All-in to 30
¡Truco! Bet on hand (2/1)	¡Retruco! Raise to 3/2	¡Vale cuatro! Final raise (4/3)
¡Quiero! I accept	¡No quiero! I reject	

Declarations & concessions

"Veintisiete" (or any number)	I have 27 envido points
"Son buenas"	Yours are better — you win the envido
"Son mejores"	Mine are better, but I won't say how many
"Me achico"	Casual "no quiero"



"Me voy al mazo"

I fold the hand

"¡El envido está primero!"

Reminder envido trumps a pending truco

Folk sayings

- '*Primera la gana cualquiera*' — anyone can win the first trick. Don't over-commit.
- '*Al que no le gusta, la levanta*' — if you don't like it, raise it.
- '*La mesa enseña*' — the table teaches. Learn by playing.
- '*¡Quiero retruco y vale cuatro en las narices!*' — braggadocio re-raise.



CHAPTER 08

Strategy

Beginner

- Identify matadores and 3s/2s instantly.
- Envido thresholds: call with **28+** as mano, **30+** as pie. Accept simple Envido with **26+**.
- Don't lead with your best card on primera unless you're locking a win.
- Don't call truco without at least one 3 or better.

Intermediate

- Bluff truco with marginal hands when mano has lost primera.
- Read the opponent's first-card choice — a very high lead often signals weak backup.
- As mano: be aggressive. As pie: more conservative on envido, look for parda lines.
- Use 'el envido está primero' as a trap — call truco on primera to draw out envido.

Advanced

- Count matadores still in play. Probability opponent holds at least one in their initial 3-card hand: roughly **27%**.
- Equilibrium thresholds: ~27 for Envido, ~30 for Real, ~31+ for Falta.
- Bluff with tuned frequency: ~22% on primera, tapering to ~8% on tercera.
- Score-state-dependent play: fold marginal calls when opponent is 1–2 from winning.

CHAPTER 09

Pedagogical sequence

Recommended 10-step path from zero to confident:

- 01 The deck** — suits, no 8s/9s, ranks, court names.
 - 02 Truco rank** — the four matadores; learn the falsos trap.
 - 03 Simple trick-taking** — 3-card hands, no calls, just 2-of-3 and pardas.
 - 04 Envido math** — $20 + \text{two highest, face cards} = 0$.
 - 05 The basic Envido call** — call/declare/accept/score.
 - 06 Envido stacking** — Real Envido, Falta Envido, the full ladder.
 - 07 The Truco call** — Truco/Retruco/Vale Cuatro in isolation.
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- 08 Combined gameplay** — full hands, 'el envido está primero' rule.
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- 09 Full match scoring** — malas/buenas, Falta Envido math.
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- 10 Strategy and the farol** — thresholds, bluffing, reading opponents.
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CHAPTER 10

Variants & defaults

Truco has regional variants. The Spanish Minds app picks the most common modern Argentine choices.

Variation	App default	Notes
Flor	Off	Most common casual preference; can't bluff flor
Match length	30 points	15-point quick match optional
Falta math	Modern (points to 30)	Cleaner than traditional malas-cap rule
Real Envido	Enabled	Standard in Argentina
Second-card envido cutoff	Strict	Matches most rule sources
Pieza / muestra	Off	Uruguayan / Litoral variant
"Me achico"	Alias for "no quiero"	Teach as casual vocabulary
Envido-Envido chain	Capped at 2	2+2=4 before Real/Falta

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Compiled from authoritative Argentine sources for the Spanish Minds Truco app.