

# Pandánte

2nd Edition • Rulebook

Gambling • Lying • Pandas

*Sirlin*  
games



# Introduction

Pandante is a gambling game played by the Pandas of the Pandalands. In this game, lying is encouraged (humans use the softer term “bluffing”). You’ll often have to claim you have a hand that you don’t really have. Be careful though, because other players can call you out for fun and profit.

## Object of the Game

Your goal is to be the first player to accumulate enough gold to win.

# players	Gold to Win
2 players	75 gold
3 players	90 gold
4 players	120 gold
5 players	150 gold
6 players	175 gold



Gray sections of this rulebook give boring details that you can probably skip the first time through. For example:

At the end of each gambit, check if anyone has enough gold to win. If multiple players do, the one with the most gold wins, or they share the win if they’re tied. If the game ends quickly, then play another one.

## Components

### (2nd edition base sets)

- ◆ betting board
- ◆ 150 chips
- ◆ deck of 79 cards
  - ◆ 6 Panda Champion cards
  - ◆ 12 Casino cards
  - ◆ 61 main deck cards
- ◆ 6 large reference cards
- ◆ 12 challenge tokens
- ◆ dealer button
- ◆ golden Panda coin
- ◆ how-to-play pamphlet
- ◆ rulebook

### (Expansion)

- ◆ betting board
- ◆ 6 Panda Champion cards
- ◆ 12 Casino cards
- ◆ 6 large ability reference cards
- ◆ 12 challenge tokens
- ◆ golden Panda coin
- ◆ how-to-play pamphlet
- ◆ summary sheet of rules changes
- ◆ rulebook

# Game Modes

There are lots of ways to play Pandánte. Let's start off with the standard mode which uses the Light Panda abilities. It's a joyful experience, but if your friends prefer cutthroat gameplay, you can switch to Dark Panda abilities later.

**Pandánte** **Light Abilities** 

Do 0, 1, or 2 during the ability phase

-  **Raise** Each opponent pays 5 gold to the pot or folds.
-  **Draw** Draw a card, then discard a card. Reveal a card you kept.
-  **New Hand** Discard your hand then draw a new hand. You may lower your claimed hand by one space.
-  **Add** Deal a 6th community card. If there already is one, discard the new card or pay the last Adder 5 gold to replace the old card.
-  **Peek** Privately see one random card from any player.
-  **Sleep** Fold. You start next gambit with an extra card. Discard a card when you bet on the Splash. (Can't use with other abilities.)

Pair 	Three of a Kind 	Straight 	Flush 	Full House 
Rainbow Straight 	Four of a Kind 	Flush 	Five of a Kind 	Straight Flush 

Exposed liars pay 5 gold • False-accusers pay 5 gold x # of players!

After a couple games, try adding some extras. You can combine all these features however you want:

## Casino Cards

Each gambit, your group visits a new casino in the Pandalands. Each casino plays the game a little bit differently!



## Panda Champions

Each player takes on the role of a famous Panda. Choose Pandas however you want before the game starts and stick with your Panda throughout the game. Each Panda gives a different special power.



## Diamond Dreams Mode

The blue diamond chips are power ups in this mode. Spend them wisely to get big boosts when you need it. (See page 12 for the rules.)

The Light & Dark abilities, Casinos, Panda Champions, and Diamond Dreams mode options give you 16 possible combinations of game modes. In addition to that, the 17th mode is a seriousface gambling mode. *Are you Panda enough to risk real money?*

# Setup

## Chips

Each player starts with 44 gold because 44 is a lucky number in the Pandalands.

- ◆ 8 white chips worth 1 gold
- ◆ 8 red chips worth 2 gold
- ◆ 4 black chips worth 5 gold



## Cards



**Pandante** **Light Abilities** *Sirlin Games*  
Do 0, 1, or 2 during the ability phase

- Raise** Each opponent pays 5 gold to the pot or folds.
- Draw** Draw a card, then discard a card. Reveal a card you kept.
- New Hand** Discard your hand then draw a new hand. You may lower your claimed hand by one space.
- Add** Deal a 6th community card. If there already is one, pay whoever added it 5 gold to replace it or discard the new card.
- Peek** Privately see one random card from any player.
- Sleep** Fold. You start next gambit with an extra card. Discard a card when you bet on the Splash. (Can't use with other abilities.)

Pair X X	Three of a Kind X X X	Straight 2 3 4 5 6	Flush O O O O	Full House X X X O O
Rainbow Straight 4 5 6 7 8	Four of a Kind X X X X	Flush G G G G	Five of a Kind X X X X X	Straight Flush 3 4 5 6 7

Exposed liars pay the challenger 1 gold • False-accusers pay the truth-teller 5 gold x # of players!



Panda Champion cardback



Private cards

Give each player one of the large **reference cards**. If it's your first game, use the Light Abilities side of the card, rather than the Dark side. Also give each player a **“!” challenge token**, a **no challenge token**, and a **color card** to assign player colors (ignore the Panda Champion abilities on the back for your first games).

The main deck has 61 cards: 6 colors of cards numbered 1 through 10, plus a single Joker that counts as any color and any number. Shuffle the deck, then **deal each player two cards** face down. These cards are private, so you can look at your own but you can't see anyone else's. You'll get new private cards at the start of each gambit.

## Dealer button

Randomly choose which player starts with the dealer button. That player acts last in each round of decisions. The player left of the dealer button acts first, then play continues clockwise around the table. At the start of each new gambit, pass the dealer button to the next player in clockwise order (pass it to the left).



You might want the most experienced player to actually deal the cards the whole game and only pass the dealer button to determine who acts last each gambit.

## Gambits

The game is played as a series of gambits. The winner of a gambit takes all the gold in that gambit's pot. The losers might find themselves low on gold, but fear not, the Gold Fairy will save you.

### The Gold Fairy

Whenever you end a gambit with less than 20 gold, a magic fairy fills your gold back up to 20! This refill happens just before the ante phase of the following gambit (we'll get to that in just a minute).

If you ever go below 0 gold during a gambit though, that's a more serious matter. The magic fairy will pay all your debts for you and you can continue playing the rest of that gambit, but you'll have to frolic with her the entire next gambit (you'll have to sit out of the game). She'll then refill you back to 20 gold at the start of the following gambit, then you can continue playing normally. Try to avoid going below 0 gold because someone else might win the game while you're sitting out.

Also, if you're below 0 gold, you cannot challenge anyone's hand in the Showdown (see page 8.)

Even if you win the pot, you'll still have to sit out next gambit if you went below 0 at some point. The fairy will refill you back to 20 gold if you have less than that.





At the start of each gambit, deal each player two private cards, then follow these steps:

- 1) **Ante** (each player antes 3 gold to the pot)
- 2) **THE SPLASH** (3 community cards dealt face up)
  - a) Betting round
  - b) Snacks
- 3) **THE PAWS** (4th community card dealt face up)
  - a) Betting round
  - b) Snacks
- 4) **THE TAIL** (5th community card dealt face up)
  - a) Betting round
  - b) Ability round (no snacks)
- 5) **Upgrade**. Last chance to claim a higher hand (costs 2 gold)
- 6) **Tie-break**. Players tied for the highest “say” more info about their hands.
- 7) **Showdown**
  - a) Challenge highest hand(s)
  - b) Winner takes the pot, or if no one survived the challenge, challenge the next highest hand(s).

## Ante

Each player puts 3 gold into the pot (one white chip and one red chip).

## The Splash

For the Splash, deal 3 cards from the deck to the table, “flopping” them down for everyone to see. These community cards are shared by all players. You’re trying to make the best Pandante hand you can using any combination of the community cards and your private cards.



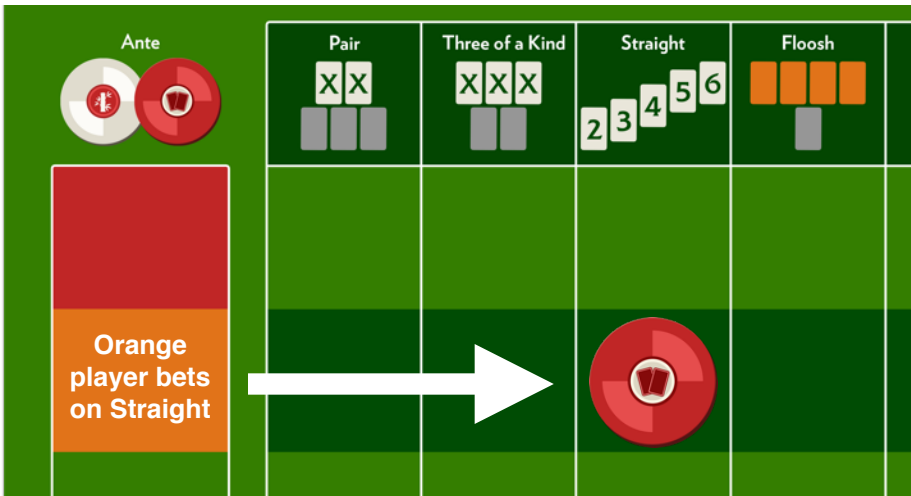
The 10 possible hands in Pandante are on your ability reference card, pair is the lowest and straight flush is the highest:



## Betting Round

After the dealer splashes the three community cards, it's time to bet. Starting with the player left of the dealer button and go around the table exactly once.

To bet, put 2 of your gold (a red chip) on the board on the space corresponding to the best hand you are claiming to have. Use the row of the board that corresponds to your player color. For example, if you're the orange player and you claim to have a straight, put your red chip in the orange row and the column that says "Straight." You don't (and can't) reveal your hand when you do this. We have no idea if you're telling the truth at this point! You also can't bet any other amount of gold.



Why not claim the highest possible hand? Because you can't lower your claim later on in a gambit (you *can* raise it later on though). If you claim 5 of a kind, you are promising to have at least that in the end, so you better make everyone believe it. That said, you might claim a higher hand than you really have because it will make your snack cheaper or free (see below).

You can also fold instead of betting. If you fold, move your betting chips off the board into the pot. You are out of this gambit except you can still challenge other players' lies during the Showdown; you cannot win the pot. You don't need to fold nearly as often in Pandante as in Human Poker.

## Snacks

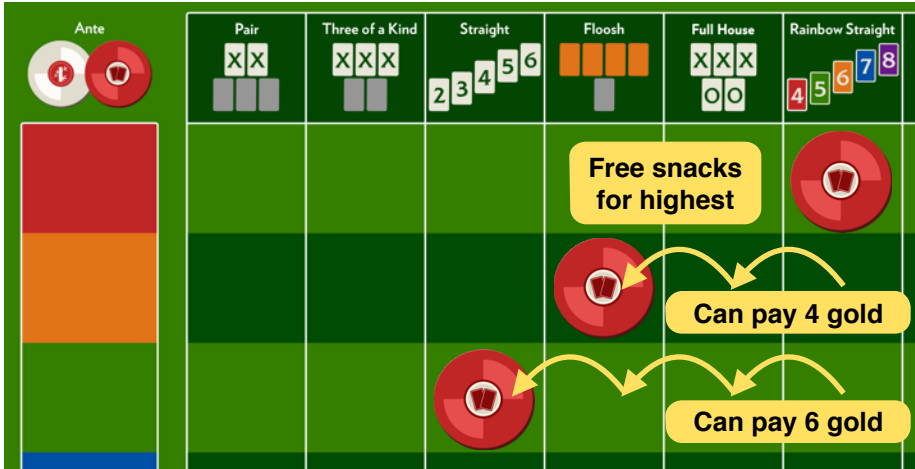
Snacks let you improve your hand by drawing a card, then discarding a card (face down). The discard pile is always face down in Pandante, by the way.

Starting with the player left of the dealer button, each player can get a snack card. Snacks are free for the player with the highest claimed hand and for any players tied for the highest claimed hand.




If you don't have the highest claimed hand and you want a snack, you can pay 2 gold to the pot for each space below the highest your claimed hand is.

For example, if you claim a hand two spaces below the highest, you could pay  $2 \times 2 = 4$  gold for a snack; if you're three spaces below the highest, you could pay  $3 \times 2 = 6$  gold for a snack.




Buying snacks is optional, so if you don't want to pay, just pass.

### The Paws

For the Paws, the dealer deals a  fourth community card face up on the table next to the other three. Then there's another betting round and another snacks round. You can fold rather than bet, if you want.

Whenever you fold, move your bets off the board into whichever area your group is using for the pot. This way it's easier for the remaining players to tell who is still in the gambit.

### The Tail

For the Tail, the dealer adds  the fifth community card to the table. Then there's another betting round (you can fold if you want), but there isn't a snacks round this time. Instead, there's an ability round.

### Abilities

In turn order, each player can do 0, 1, or 2 abilities. There are six abilities to choose from on your reference card. It is legal to do the same ability twice; the only restriction is that if you do the Sleep ability (or Long Shot from the Dark Panda side), you can't do any other abilities that gambit.

Announce all your abilities, then resolve them one at a time. If your abilities require you to say a target, such as which player you'll Peek at, then that has to be part of your initial announcement.

## Upgrade

Go around the table one last time and each player has one chance to “upgrade” their hand to a higher hand than they previously claimed. If you want to do that, put a red chip (2 gold) on the board space corresponding to your new, higher claimed hand. This isn't a bet; no one else has to match that to stay in and it's purely optional. You might want to do this if an ability gave you a higher hand, or if you want to bluff that you have the best hand.

## Tie-break

If any players are tied for the highest claimed hand, try to break the tie by having each of them (in turn order) SAY more detail about their hand. They don't have to say the truth, and no one reveals any cards yet.

- ◆ If you have any type of straight, say the highest number in the straight.
- ◆ If you have a flush or floosh, say the number on your highest private card that's part of the flush or floosh and the color (to specify which floosh).
- ◆ For any other hand, just say what you have. For example, “three 7s.”

## Showdown!

Whoever has the highest claimed hand is now in the Showdown. If multiple players are still tied for the highest even after we tried to break ties, then they're *all* in the Showdown. Any players claiming lower hands are not in the Showdown, but they still have a chance to get into it if everyone above them is forced to fold by being exposed as liars.

The Showdown player earliest in turn order is now in the *hotseat*. Everyone else—even players who folded already—can challenge the hotseat player's hand as being a lie. Challenges are simultaneous. Everyone other than the hotseat player simultaneously reveals a “challenge” or “no challenge” token. If multiple players challenge, only the first one in turn order is valid; ignore any other challenges. The hotseat player always reveals their hand if they're challenged.

Be careful what you say, because you might have to back it up later. If you claimed a straight along with other players, then during the tie-break step you say “7 high straight,” you have to actually have a 7 high straight, not just any straight, if someone challenges you during the Showdown.

There are no “kicker” cards in Pandante, so a 77773 is tied with a 77775; they're both “four 7s”.

Table talk IS allowed. Feel free to discuss challenges before you do them if you want. Nothing you say is binding. You could tell everyone you're going to challenge, then reveal “no challenge” if that's a good strategy for you.

There are three possible outcomes from the challenge:

1) *No one challenged the hotseat player.*

Perception becomes reality and their hand becomes real no matter what it actually was.

2) *The hotseat player was challenged, but they really had the hand they claimed.*

False-accusing a real hand is the highest crime in Pandánte. The challenger must pay the truth-teller a whopping 5 gold PER PLAYER in the game. So in a 4-player game, the false-accuser pays the hotseat player 20 gold.

3) *The hotseat player was challenged and lied about their hand.*

They must fold and pay the challenger 5 gold.

If there was only one player in the Showdown (because there were no ties), skip this paragraph. Otherwise, the next Showdown player in turn order is now in the hotseat and accepts challenges from everyone. **Each Showdown player gets their turn in the hotseat no matter what the results of any of the challenges are.**

Now we know which Showdown players “had their hand” and which lied. If you were in the hotseat but no one challenged you, that counts as “having your hand.”

Here are the possible outcomes:

- 1) No players had their hand, so everyone in the Showdown had to fold. If ALL players have now folded, the pot rolls over to the next gambit. But if there are any players who haven't folded yet, the player with the highest claimed hand is now in the Showdown. If multiple players are tied for highest, see if saying their specific hands out loud breaks the tie before sending them to the Showdown.
- 2) Exactly one player had their hand: they win the pot! If they won by lying, they can reveal their fake hand now to get a Golden Panda Coin (see below).
- 3) Exactly two players had their hand: they split the pot. If there's an odd number of gold, leave 1 gold in the pot for the next gambit.
- 4) Three or more players had their hand: no one wins and the entire pot rolls over to the next gambit.

## **End of Gambit**

Check if any player had enough gold to win. If not, gather up the entire deck and shuffle it for next gambit. Pass the dealer button left, to the next player.

## Joker

The Joker counts as any number and any color, but it can only make hands that normally exist (your hand can't have two red 10s for example).

The Joker loses ties to "natural" hands. For example, a hand of 8888 beats a hand of 888+Joker.

If you challenge someone's hand and they are using a Joker (as one of their private cards), then you don't have to pay them any gold.

If you have a Joker but no one challenges your hand, they won't know you have a Joker and your hand becomes real. This lets your 888+Joker tie with a hand of 8888. If you get challenged, everyone will see you have 888+Joker though, and you'll lose to a natural 8888. Lying and getting away with it lets you overcome the Joker's weakness.

## Panda Coin

Whenever you perform the most daring maneuver, you receive the Gold Panda Coin!

To get it, you must **win a gambit by lying**. If someone else already has it, then you steal it from them—they probably should have used it while they had the chance! Also, you have to win the gambit alone; you can't tie with other players.



The Gold Panda Coin is a one-time-use power up that you can use during the ability phase in place of one ability. It lets you **draw 5 cards, then discard 5 cards**.

Winning by lying means that you don't have the hand you said you have. Note that if you have 4 of a kind, saying you have 3 of a kind doesn't count as a lie (you have 3 of a kind and 4 of a kind in that case). Also, you have to make the best possible hand you can. If the board has 23459 and you have 2 and 6 in hand, you really do have a straight. You can't claim a straight then later say you "lied" because your hand is "really" 22345. Your best hand is 23456 there.

If you win the coin, it usually means no one decided to challenge your lie. **Hand challenges only happen during the Showdown**, so if everyone folds **before** the Showdown except for you, and you don't have the hand you claimed, you get the panda coin without anyone even having a chance to challenge you. (Maybe they shouldn't have folded!)

# Dark Abilities

The Dark Panda abilities give you a new way to play Pandante. It's harder to have a good hand because some disruptive abilities can screw you over. This is a more cutthroat alternative to the joyful Light Panda mode.



Before the game starts, make sure all players are playing Light Abilities or all players are playing Dark Abilities. Either way, you can choose to use Casino cards or not, Panda Champions or not, and Diamond Dreams mode or not.

# Casinos

This is an optional feature, but we highly recommend you try it. Visiting a new casino each gambit makes each one play differently than the last. Shuffle up the casino deck and reveal a new card each gambit. Each one changes the rules in some way. That's it!



# Panda Champions

This is an optional feature that lets you play the role of a famous Panda. Each Panda has a special power. Choose a Panda however you like before the game starts, then stick with that Panda throughout the game. You might let the least experienced players choose their Pandas first.



# Diamond Dreams Mode



In this mode, the blue diamond chips are power ups.

## Getting Diamonds

Players each start the game with 3 diamond chips.

Each gambit, the bank antes this many more to the pot:

- ◆ 1 diamond chip for a 2-player game
- ◆ 2 diamond chips for a 3 or 4-player game
- ◆ 3 diamond chips for a 5 or 6-player game.

Whenever you fold from an ability, take a diamond chip from the pot if possible.

Folding from a Raise or Sleep (Light side) or Long-Shot (Dark side) all let you take a blue diamond chip from the pot.

## Spending Diamonds

Whenever you spend diamond chips, they go back to the bank, NOT to the pot. You can spend them to get Big Snacks and/or Big Abilities. In both cases, that's in addition to your normal snacks and normal abilities.

## Big Snacks

If you're going to snack during the 2nd snack phase (during the Paws), you can pay any number of diamond chips to the bank first to get TWO extra snack cards per diamond spent. Pay the costs for your standard snack and your Big Snack before you look at any snack cards, then get them all at once. As usual, discard however many snack cards you draw.

Big Snacks are powerful. Spending just one diamond chip plus your normal snack cost lets you draw 3 cards (1 natural snack + a Big Snack), see them all, then discard 3 cards from your hand.

You can't Big Snack unless you are going to get a regular snack.

## Big Abilities

During the ability phase, you can pay any number of diamond chips to the bank to do that many Big Abilities, in addition to your regular abilities. For example, you could pay two diamond chips then: Raise, Draw (normal abilities), Big Draw, Big Draw (Big Abilities). As usual, announce all your abilities first, then do them one at a time.

◆ **Big Draw:** Draw two cards, discard a card, then put a card face down on top of the deck.

◆ **Big Add:** Deal two cards (face up), then you may add one as the 6th community card. If there already is one, pay whoever added it 5 gold to replace the old card. Discard the unused card(s).

# Real Money Mode

Ignore this section if you're playing Pandante as a social game. If you're playing Pandante as a real gambling game though, players won't magically get 20 more gold when they run out.

You should use the Light side abilities when playing with real money. You shouldn't use Diamond Dreams mode and you probably shouldn't use Panda Champions either, though you could if you want. It's ok to use Casino cards in this mode if you want.

You can play the gambling mode in a tournament style where eliminated players are out of the tournament, or as a drop-in / drop-out game where players can come as go as they please. Either way, the rules are similar.

In these modes, you must buy in with at least 104 gold; the normal 44 you start with plus 3 blue chips worth 20 gold each.

If you ever **go below 0 gold**, OR if you **end a gambit with less than 44 gold**, you're eliminated. In the drop-in / drop-out style game, you can choose to buy in for 104 gold to keep playing. If you'd ever have to pay out more gold than you have (which is unlikely), then pay all you can to the players in turn order.

Also, you cannot challenge a hand unless you have enough gold to pay for the challenge if you're wrong.

## Tournament Tips

If your tournament has more than 6 players, then run multiple tables at the same time. Each table has up to 6 players. As players get eliminated over time, consolidate the remaining players to fewer and fewer tables.

No matter how many players you have, you'll need a "tournament multiplier" starting at 1x to increase the stakes over time. Increase the multiplier every 15 minutes: 2x at the 15 minute mark, 3x at the 30 minute mark, 4x at the 45 minute mark, etc. Multiply all bets, antes, upgrade hand costs, all gold amounts mentioned in abilities, and all gold amounts for challenging hands by the tournament multiplier. The ratcheted up multiplier takes effect at the start of the next gambit.

This helps eliminate players. Also as players are eliminated, the remaining players have more gold so these higher and higher stakes are needed for the tournament to work. By using time on the clock to increase the multiplier, rather than number of gambits played, this keeps all tables of the tournament at the same multiplier and reduces the incentive to stall.

# FAQ

## General

### **What counts as a straight?**

A straight is five consecutive numbers, but they can't wrap around.

Examples:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6 is a straight

6, 7, 8, 9, Joker is a straight (The Joker is wild; the Joker is a 10 in this case)

9, 10, 1, 2, 3 is not a straight (can't wrap around)

### **What's a rainbow straight?**

Like a straight, it's five consecutive numbers. In addition, those five cards are also five different colors.

### **Can I bet a different amount than 2 gold per bet?**

No.

### **In a betting round, after I claim to have a certain hand, can I change my claim later in that *same* betting round?**

No. You get only one chance to claim a hand per betting round. After everyone makes their claim or folds, move on. In the *next* betting round that gambit, you can claim a higher or same hand, but you can't lower your claim.

### **What if everyone except one person folds before the Showdown?**

The remaining player wins the gambit by default. End the gambit immediately; there are no hand challenges (that's only when you reach the Showdown), that player wins the pot, and move on to the next gambit. If that player lied about their hand, they can show it to get the Panda Coin guaranteed. If everyone folded so quickly that the remaining player hadn't even bet on a hand yet, they can't win the Panda Coin because they didn't actually claim anything to lie about.

### **What if you say you have a straight, but you really have a better hand like a flush? If someone calls you out during the Showdown, does it count as lying?**

Yes. You said you had a straight and you don't. It doesn't matter that your real hand was higher ranked. You probably should have claimed your real hand.

### **Can players look through the discard pile?**

No. The discard pile is face down in Pandante because it contains some cards that were never public information. Players can't look through it. At the end of each gambit, the community cards and discards are shuffled back into the deck, so the discard pile is empty at the start of each new gambit.



### **If I use the Add ability twice, do I “pay myself” 5 gold?**

Yes. In other words, you don't really have to pay if you replace the card that you yourself added.

### **Which gold is in the pot?**

The pot is the set of chips that you can potentially win each gambit. The antes and bets are all part of the pot. You should have a separate area for the rest of the pot to hold costs from snacks and the Raise and Dilemma abilities. When a player folds, move their bets to that separate area.

### **What if a player sits out a gambit from frolicking with the gold fairy, does the dealer button skip over them?**

No. The dealer button advances one player to the left each gambit no matter which players are or aren't sitting out with the gold fairy.

### **Can a player who is frolicking with the gold fairy still challenge hands?**

No, the player is too busy for that.

## **Casinos**

**Bunny Hop Hotel.** You ante the usual 3 gold, then put 5 more into the pot. If Fern (Black Panda Champion) steals the antes, he only steals 3 gold per player, not 8 gold. Cassy's ability (the Blue Panda) does nothing here. Delete (Dark ability) works as usual here.

**Doublepaw Den.** Whenever you snack, you can look at the snack card then decide which hand you'll add it to. If you Big Snack in the Diamond Dreams mode, you'll have to add all snack cards to the same hand.

**Hard Times Mill.** You can still use Add here (and Big Add); you can still add to the “sixth” slot even though there's no fifth slot here. Delete (Dark ability) does nothing here. Fern's ability also does nothing. Cassy's ability still works.

**Liar's Lair.** If no one challenges you and you have the highest claimed hand, you have to reveal your hand. If you really have the hand, it's as if you folded. You can't win the gambit, the money stays in the pot, and the rest of the players keep playing to see if any of them win. If none of them do either, the pot rolls over to the next gambit.

**Quince's Palace.** When you use the Add or Delete abilities, you have to name which row you're targeting before you do it. Cassy (Blue Panda) gets to see the 4th community card in row 1 and the 4th in row 2, but not the 5th card in either row.

**Oracle's Dreamery.** Normally, a hand of 555 beats a hand of 55 + Joker. With tie-break runes though, 55 + Joker +1 tie-break rune beats 555 + no runes.

## Panda Champions

**Lea-Leafa, Green Panda.** You must discard the extra card “Just before the ability phase.” If there’s a Fern player (Black Panda), the order of events is: green Panda discards her extra card, Fern can steal the 5th community card, then the ability phase starts. If you Big Snack in Diamond Dreams mode with the Green Panda, you only get to keep one extra card total.

**Cassy, Blue Panda.** When the dealer splashes the first community cards, they should deal the Cassy player the next two community cards face down. Cassy must not mix these with her private cards. Cassy can look at the next two community cards, then place them where the 4th and 5th community cards will go. Cassy can choose the order of these cards. Choose wisely which will be the 5th card if there is a Fern player, because Fern can steal that card.

**Fern, Black Panda.** If the 5th community card is black, Fern can steal it, then put it right back in order to steal everyone’s ante.

Rulebook version 2.3





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