

Loo – Also called Lanterloo or Pam



Background

A 17th century game that originated in France and may have reached England in 1660 with the restoration of King Charles II, who may have learned the game of Loo while in exile in France. There is a 1685 reference to the game “*Pam at Lanterloo.*” There are two versions; Three Card Loo and Five Card Loo. This is a trick taking game with some elements that are similar to poker.

Use a standard 52 card deck (commonly called a French deck) and is generally played by 3 to 8 players, but up to 16 players are possible in Three Card Loo and up to 10 players are possible in Five Card Loo.

The ranking of the cards is – A-K-Q-J-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2 and no suit is higher than any other.

Pam

The jack of clubs is call the “pam” card and is always the top trump card, regardless of the trump suit.

Three Card Loo

Pool

Players place a chip (representing a pre-determined amount of money) into the pool for division to the winners of tricks after each hand. Prior to the deal, the dealer places either three or five chips into the pool (depending on the version of the game). After the play of a hand, players who fail to take a trick also pay into the pool for the next hand.

- ❖ **Single - The original pool or a pool with no chips held over from the last hand**
- ❖ **Double - The pool with chips held over from the last hand**

Dealing

The dealer is selected by the player who draws the lowest card with the ace representing the number 1 and is the lowest. The dealer placed three chips into the pool and deals three cards to each player and one card to an additional hand called the “Miss”

Establishing the Trump Suit

Once the deal is complete, the remaining cards are placed face down and the top card is turned up to indicate the trump suit. As mentioned above, the jack of clubs (the Pam) is always the highest trump, regardless of the trump suit.

Announcements

Beginning to the dealer's left, each player in turn announces whether they will:

- ❖ **Play their hand as is**
- ❖ **Pass and throw their hand in**
- ❖ **Exchange their hand for the Miss hand**

Miss Hand

Only one player can exchange for the Miss hand and must do this sight unseen. Once exchanged, the player must remain in the game and play the hand received.

After the Announcements

- ❖ **If all pass (throw in their hands), the dealer wins the pool**
- ❖ **If one player exchanges for the Miss and all others pass, that player wins the pool**
- ❖ **If just one player before the dealer decides to play (without exchanging for the Miss) the dealer must:**
 - **Play the hand with or without exchanging for the Miss**
 - **Announce the he/she elects to “defend the Miss”**

Defending the Miss

Once the dealer declares that he/she will defend the Miss, play goes on as usual, but the dealer cannot win or lose to the pool, only the other player can win or lose.

Playing the trick

Of those remaining in the game, the player to the dealer's left leads the first card of the trick. Other remaining players play one card in turn moving in a clockwise motion.

- ❖ **Players must follow suit.**
- ❖ **Players who can't follow suit must play a trump card if they have one, otherwise, they are free to play any card.**
- ❖ **If the Pam is led, it is considered trump and players must follow with a trump if they have one.**
- ❖ **The trick is taken by the highest card played following suit or by the player who plays the highest trump card.**
- ❖ **The winner of each trick leads the next card and must lead with a trump card if held.**

First Card Played

The player who plays the first card must lead with a trump card (if he/she has one).

- ❖ **If that player has the ace of trump, it must be played.**
- ❖ **If the ace of trump is the card turned up, the player must then lead with the king of trump if he/she has it.**
- ❖ **If playing against only one opponent, the first card played must be the highest trump card in his/her hand, otherwise, it may be any trump card.**

Pay-Off

Each trick taken earns that player one third of the pool. A player who takes all three tricks takes the entire pool.

Looed

All players who fail to take a trick are considered “loosed” and must put three chips into the pool for the next round of play, making the pool a double.

Five Card Loo

All of the above rules apply unless specified.

Dealing

The dealer is selected by the player who draws the lowest card with the ace representing the number 1 and is the lowest. The dealer placed five chips into the pool and deals five cards to each player in batches of three then two and one card to an additional hand called the “Miss”

Announcements

Beginning to the dealer's left, each player in turn announces whether they will:

- ❖ Play their hand as is**
- ❖ Pass and throw their hand in**
- ❖ Exchange their hand for the Miss hand**
- ❖ Optional rule – if the trump is clubs, all players must stay in the game**

Discards

Once the announcements are over, each player remaining may discard any number of cards from their hand and then be dealt that same number of replacement cards by the dealer (as in modern poker). This can only be done once and the players must remain in the game after receiving their new cards.

Flush

Any player who has all five cards of the same suit or has four cards of the same suit and the jack of clubs (Pam) has a flush. If there are more than one flush, the best is the one holding the Pam, the next is the flush of all trump, the next is a plain flush with the highest card. The player holding the best flush (even after exchanging for the Miss) is automatically the winner of all five tricks without play and is paid by a pre-determined amount by all players who don't hold the pam or a flush.

Pam be Civil

If the ace of trump is led, that player may say "Pam be civil" whereupon the holder of the jack of clubs (pam) may not play it unless that is his/her only trump.

Pay-Off

Each trick taken earns that player one fifth of the pool. A player who takes all five tricks takes the entire pool.

Looed

All players who fail to take a trick are considered "loosed" and must put a pre-determined amount of chips into the pool for the next round of play, making the pool a double.