

When does the game end?

The friends decided that they'd like to have a goal for each hike.

But they didn't want to set themselves a target for the whole holiday, so the game has no defined end-score.

Instead, Take a Hike is a bit like the best kind of holiday - it lasts as long as you want it to.

① Play for an agreed number of rounds.

Four player games have four hikes in each round: three in the three player game.

Your first game will take longer, whilst you are learning how it works.
But later games will probably take about 20-30 minutes a round.

Do remember, though, it's a trick-taking game. Hikers and card games can't be rushed.

② You can play for an agreed length of time.

③ You can play to an agreed score, using the cumulative scorecard.
High scores can take a long time to be reached.

Scoring is described at the bottom of page 10

Keen walkers may keep a record of each game's scores.

P.S. The hiking friends don't mind if there's a tied score at the end of the game.

**Take a hike in your lunch break
or on the train journey
or for all of January**

Peter Tyler - August 31st 2026



Take a Hike

Some happy hikers take a holiday in Snowdonia - North Wales.

Each morning, they enjoy a twelve kilometre hike to a nearby small summit.

Each is set a goal to lead the hike for a certain distance - each has a different goal.

They are competitive. All want to do better than their friends - to lead for longer.

If they exceed their personal goal, they'll stride towards the summit.

Sadly, any who are held back by blisters have to stagger back towards their bed.

But they are friends. So their colleagues come to their assistance with sticking plasters - as you'll discover later.

If you are new to trick-taking card games, see page 8

If there are only three players, remove all cards above 10.



Ending the game ...
see the last page

Starting the game ...
see the next page



Before starting their first hike, the friends worked out a plan.
They needed to set their goals, and to measure whether they achieved them.
They followed their plan carefully.

(Here it is, for you to follow.)

The **FIRST** hike

❶ Place the two **trump reminder** cards and the **scoreboards** on the table.

❷ Randomly choose who will deal the cards for this first hike.

❸ Put a **Hike-score card** in front of each hiker.

See the brief note on the back.

Four players Starting at the dealer, they go 5 - 4 - 2 - 1.

Three players Starting at the dealer, they go 6 - 4 - 2.



❹ Each hiker takes three scoring counters.

Put one on the individual Hike-score cards they just received - on zero.
The others will be used for game-scoring.

The friends hope that there will be more hiking holidays to come.

They feel happy with the way they've organised this one, but they begin to wonder (*over a pint of delicious Welsh ale*) whether they might sometimes do things differently.

As the saying goes, "variety is the spice of life".

After a few games, you might like to try some hiking variety

A - there's no Yeti. Leave it out of play.

You don't need to remove a card from the deck before dealing.

B - blistered hikers receive their plasters before the dealer announces trumps, and before the dealer takes the picnic.

C - play as pairs : four-player only.

Use the cumulative scorecard and just one counter to record the tricks won by each pair during each hike.

Hikers sitting opposite each other play as a pair.

Each hike, as usual, trumps are announced, and there is a picnic, and plasters are given for blisters.

Sometimes a blistered player may call for plasters from their partner, which makes things interesting.

"Sergeant Major" was the stimulus for Take a Hike. Though not a popular game, its rules can be found online. It's played with ordinary playing cards, but the Take a Hike ones will work too.

*You might like to compare the two games - they're **very** different.*

The Yeti

This mysterious Himalayan creature is quietly waiting, ready to jump in.

Whoever holds the Yeti card can play it whenever they wish.

They do not need to follow suit - the Yeti truly is wild.

The holder can play it as the first card in a trick if they want to. The other hikers can play **whichever** suit they prefer.

It is powerful, beating every other card - including the top trump. It always wins.

Everyone knows there are no Yetis in North Wales, where the hikers are on holiday. There are lots of sheep though. It must be one of the locals having a joke !



Keeping score

Hike-score cards show how well individual hikers do during each hike. There's a brief explanation on the back of each card.

The **Hike-by-Hike** board shows the effects of each hike as the game progresses. It reflects the number of blisters hikers develop, and the number of strides they've been able to make towards the summit.

The **Cumulative** board shows the **number of tricks** each hiker has won. Move their counter, guided by the white-on-black score on their individual scorecard.

You can use either Hike-by-hike or Cumulative scoring - both together if you wish. They give different pictures of how hikers are performing.

5 The dealer shuffles the playing cards.

One card is put out of play. It will not be used in this hike.

The next four are laid face down near the dealer.

These four will be the **picnic** - see page 9

6 Deal the remaining cards face-down, starting with the hiker to the dealer's left. There will be twelve cards each.

7 Dealer announces **trumps** and puts the trump reminder-card in view.

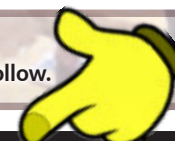
Trumps are explained on page 9

8 → only now is the dealer allowed to take the **picnic** - if they choose.

Read pages 6 & 7, then you're ready to start the first hike. The hiker on dealer's left will play the first card of the first hike.

The first hike is different to later ones.

So the friends created a slightly different guide for the hikes that follow.



After the last trick in this first hike, follow the guide on the next page

One hike **ends** and another begins

In their first hiking game, the friends got a bit mixed up.

When the first hike ended, they wrongly rushed to start the next one, forgetting to check if anybody had blisters.

So they wrote this mini guide for everything that comes after the first hike.



At the end of **every hike, take care!
Do not move hikers' score-cards
or their counters - **not yet**.**

This is what you do

- 1 First, score the hike that just ended. Scoring - see page 10
- 2 The hiker left of the last dealer becomes the Dealer. They now shuffle all the playing cards including the four picnic cards and the one that was set aside.
- 3 Dealer puts one card aside, then places the four picnic cards face-down.
- 4 The remaining cards are dealt - twelve to each hiker.
- 5 The dealer announces trumps and places the trump reminder card.
They do **not** picnic yet.

→→→→→ First, the next major step **MUST** be taken.



Everybody needs to know about picnics

Picnics



Every hike, the dealer will try to lead for longest, so they need extra energy.
So the friendly hikers allow dealers to have a picnic before each hike begins.
They don't have to take it - it's their choice.

Each hike, the dealer sets four cards aside - before hikers are dealt their twelve cards.
These cards are the **picnic**, which will be available to the dealer a bit later.

Every hike, before the first card is played, the dealer has a choice.
They can choose to discard four cards from their hand, and take all four picnic cards.

Not looking at the picnic first, not less than four, and not one at a time.

What does "trump" mean?

Trumps

The trump suit is the most powerful of the four suits.

Each hike, after looking at their cards but **before** they take the picnic, the dealer chooses one of the suits to become trumps for that hike.

Trumps are very likely to change from hike to hike.

The trump suit is so powerful that even the 1 of trumps beats all the cards in the three other suits. **Only** a bigger trump than the 1 of trumps can beat it.

→ But even the highest trump can be beaten by the **Yeti**, described on page 10.

What is a trick?

A review for those who are new to trick-taking card games.

Hikers start each hike with twelve cards in hand.

At each turn, each chooses one card from their hand and plays it face up on the table.

They go in turn clockwise after the starting player has played their first card.

They play their cards so that their suits and values can be seen by everyone.

Once all have played their cards, the turn ends.

The cards they played are called a **trick**.

The hiker who played the highest card wins the trick.

They gather the cards and pile them in front of themselves.

Here, the hiker who played the 7 of bees won the trick.
(In a three-player hike.)



For each trick a hiker wins, they achieve one kilometre more as leader of the hike.

They record each trick they win on their own Hike-score card.

The player who won the last trick always starts the next trick.
Their first card is the first to be played.
The others then play, going clockwise.

6 Blisters must be treated.

Hike-score cards show if anybody was **blistered** during the last hike.

If so, they get plasters from hikers who were **up**.

For each blister, blistered hikers choose a non-trump card from their hand, putting it face down in front of a hiker who was **up**.

They can choose which up-hiker, if more than one was up.

If there were no blisters, there will be no exchange.

→ Do these exchanges **one** card at a time. Not altogether.

The **up-hiker** looks at the card, and puts their **next** highest card in the same suit face down near the blistered hiker.

(Not the highest, nor the 'next', but the next highest.)

With no higher cards in that suit, they slide the card back, face down.

Blistered hikers are allowed to look at cards received or slid back to them.

NO HIKER yet picks up the cards they received.

If more than one hiker has blisters, the one who just had the highest distance-goal goes first. They then go in turn, one card at a time.

→→ When blister exchanges are finished, all can pick their cards up.

7 **Now** hike-score cards for the last hike are passed to the left - not the counters.

8 **Now** the dealer can **picnic** if they choose to.

Now the next hike begins. Hiker left of dealer plays the first card.
ALL hikes now follow the steps listed on these two pages.

Hikes - and goals

For every hike, each hiker will act as hike-leader for a few kilometres.

Each hiker has a different distance-goal.

In each hike, there are several turns - or tricks.

Tricks are explained on page 8

Individual Hike-score cards show how well hikers are doing during the hike.

For each trick that a hiker wins, they notch up a kilometre as hike-leader.

So, winning more tricks means more kilometres in their favour.

Though good friends, the hikers are only human.
They like to feel a little bit superior.
So each tries hard to lead the hike for more than the goal they're set.

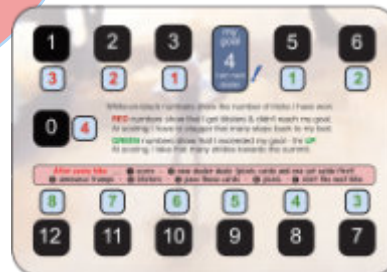
If a hiker leads for longer than their goal, they're **up**.

Extra tricks have a **green** number by them.

But a hiker may have developed **blisters**, making them unable to lead for the goal they were set.

They're **down** !

Red numbers on their Hike-score card show how many blisters they got.



If a hiker does exactly what they agreed to, they will be neither up nor down.
In this example, their counter would be on 4, showing neither **green** nor **red** numbers.

They get no gain in **hike-by-hike** scoring, but they'll suffer no pain either.

If you are using **cumulative** scoring, their tricks will be counted as usual.

Play - tricks, trumps, and Yeti

Hikers **must** play a card of the same suit that started the trick if they can.

With no cards in that suit, they can play a card from the trump suit.
Or they can discard a non-trump card that they don't want.

Trumps are introduced on page 9



bees



crows



deer



frogs

The Yeti is different to all other cards.

The Yeti always wins - it never loses.

Read about the **Yeti** on page 10

→→ For every trick, the highest card that was played wins the trick.

Each trick that's won is 1 kilometre more as hike leader.

Only after a trump has been used to 'trump in'
can trumps be played as the first card in a trick.
Unless the hiker only has trumps in their hand.