SKIP·BO

PLAYING GUIDE

The classic sequencing card game — outplay 1 to 5 opponents by being the first to empty your stockpile. Two pages: setup, turns, scoring, and winning strategy.

1 The Goal

Be the **first player to play every card from your personal stockpile**. Everything else — building piles, discard piles, wild cards — is a means to that single end.

2 The Deck & Setup

The deck has **162 cards**: twelve each of the numbers **1–12**, plus **18 Skip-Bo wild cards**. Number cards are color-coded — 1–4 blue, 5–8 green, 9–12 red.

STOCKPILE SIZE BY PLAYER COUNT

Players	Stockpile cards
2 – 4	**30**
5 – 6	**20**

AREAS OF PLAY

Area	What it is
Stockpile	Your face-down pile; top card face-up
Hand	5 cards, refilled each turn
Discard piles	4 personal piles; only tops playable
Building piles	4 shared piles in the center
Draw pile	Remaining deck, face-down

Deal each player their stockpile face-down and flip the top card up. Deal 5 cards to each player's hand. The rest of the deck becomes the draw pile, with room in the center for four building piles.

3 Your Turn, Step by Step

1. **Draw up to 5.** Start every turn by drawing until you hold five cards.
2. **Play cards onto the building piles.** Play as many cards as you can from your **hand**, the **top of your stockpile**, or the **tops of your discard piles**.
3. **Empty hand? Redraw.** If you play all five cards from your hand, immediately draw five more and keep playing.
4. **Discard to end your turn.** Place one card from your hand face-up on one of your four discard piles. Your turn ends — plan this card carefully.

> **REMEMBER**
> You may only ever touch the **top card** of your stockpile and of each discard pile. Cards buried underneath stay locked until the cards above them are played.

4 Building Piles & Wild Cards

Each of the four shared building piles must **start on a 1** and climb in strict sequence to 12. When a pile reaches 12 it is swept aside, freeing the space for a new pile.



A pile climbing 1 → 2 → 3 → 6 → wild (played as a 7) → … → 12. Color groups: 1–4 blue, 5–8 green, 9–12 red.

Skip-Bo cards are wild: play one as any number the pile needs next. They are the most powerful cards in the deck — a wild from your stockpile is always playable somewhere.

> **IF THE DRAW PILE RUNS OUT**
>
> Shuffle the completed 1–12 piles to form a new draw pile and play on.

5 Winning & Scoring

The first player to empty their stockpile **wins the round**. For a longer match, play a series of rounds and keep score — the first player to **500 points** wins the match.

Round score = 25 + 5 × (cards left in rivals' stockpiles)

Example: you win and three opponents still hold 6, 11 and 4 stock cards → 25 + 5 × 21 = **130 points**.

6 Strategy Tips

A **Stockpile first.** Playing your stockpile top is the only move that actually wins the game — take it whenever it's legal, and set up sequences that uncover it.

B **Stack discards in descending order.** Put high cards at the bottom of a discard pile and low cards on top. Small tops are easy to unload, and buried runs (9-8-7-6) come out in perfect sequence.

C **Hoard your wilds.** A Skip-Bo card is worth most when it cracks open your stockpile or finishes a pile at 12 — don't spend one just because you can.

D **Watch the other stockpiles.** Everyone's stockpile top is face-up. Avoid building a pile to exactly the number a rival needs next if you have an alternative.

E **Empty your hand on purpose.** Playing all five hand cards earns five fresh ones — a full extra draw. Discarding smart so you can run your hand dry is a powerful tempo play.

F **Don't fear the discard.** Ending your turn early to preserve a perfect discard stack is often better than a marginal play that helps the table.

Skip-Bo · Playing Guide — matches the rules implemented in the SKIP·BO Classic Card Showdown web game (2–6 players, human vs. AI).