



A quick deck-building card game for 2-4 players by Nico Reuter

PLAYERS 2-4	AGE 8+	TIME 15-25 min.	MATERIAL 1-2 decks
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1. Game Idea

In *Straight Up*, you build a stronger deck turn by turn. Use money cards to buy better cards from the market, remove weak starting cards, and prepare your display.

Your goal is to complete a run of **J - Q - K - A**. But the market is tight, and the other players can buy important cards before you do or, once per game, strike one of your displayed cards. Whoever improves their deck well and chooses the right moment to play their cards wins.

2. Components

Players	Components
2	1 deck with 52 cards + 2 jokers
3 - 4	2 decks with 52 cards each + 3 or 4 jokers total

Suitable cards include poker, rummy, or bridge cards; backs may differ. Jokers are not shuffled into the deck.

3. Card Types

Type	Cards	Function
Starting cards	2, 3, 4	are in your deck at the start; count as money cards
Money cards	2 - 10	provide their value as money when buying
Goal cards	J, Q, K, A	build the straight; provide no money
Joker	1 each	shows whether your strike is available

Card suits do not matter in this game.

4. Costs

Money cards cost their own value.

Goal cards cost: **J = 10, Q = 15, K = 20, A = 25.**

5. Setup

- Take **1 or 2 decks** according to the number of players.
- Each player gets **1 joker** as a strike marker; return unused jokers to the box.
- Each player gets these 6 cards as a starting deck: **2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4.**
- Shuffle your starting deck and place it in front of you as your draw pile.
- Remove all remaining **2s, 3s and 4s** from the game.
- All remaining non-joker cards form the shuffled market deck, which is placed in the middle of the table.
- Set aside a start-player marker, e.g. the card box.

6. Round Sequence

Step	Sequence
1	Fill the market to player count + 2 cards
2	Starting with the start player, each player takes 1 turn clockwise
3	If nobody bought and all market cards are still out, put them on the market discard and reveal a new market
4	Pass the start-player marker

7. Your Turn

When it is your turn, draw up to **3 hand cards** and choose exactly **one** action:

1. Buy a market card

Buy 1 face-up market card and place it on your discard pile. Your hand must provide enough money value.

2. Remove a starting card

Remove 1 starting card from your hand from the game permanently. It can be a 2, 3, or 4.

3. Play a goal card

Play 1 goal card from your hand to the table, fitting it into one of your straights. Details under section 9.

4. Strike an opponent's display card

Play 1 higher goal card from your hand to strike the highest card of an opponent's straight. This is only possible while your joker is in front of you. More under section 10.

5. Pass

Do nothing.

8. After Your Turn

After your turn, all played and remaining hand cards always go onto your discard pile. When your draw pile is empty, shuffle your discard pile to form a new draw pile.

9. Building Straights

- You may have at most **2 of your own straights** at the same time.
- A straight is always built in this order: **J → Q → K → A.**
- J starts a new straight. Q may only be placed on J, K only on J → Q, and A only on J → Q → K.

10. Strike a Display Card

- You may strike the **highest card** of an opponent's straight.
- Your played goal card must be higher. Order: **J < Q < K < A**.
- Both cards go onto their owners' discard piles.
- Then put away your joker. You cannot strike again this game.

11. Market Deck

- If the market deck is empty, shuffle the market discard pile to form a new market deck.
- If too few market cards are available, play only with the available cards.
- If there are no market cards left at all, continue without a market.

12. Game End

Straight Win and Special Case

Straight win: As soon as you have J - Q - K - A fully in one of your own straights, you win immediately.

Rare special case: *If any player ever owns all cards of one goal-card rank (e.g. all kings), they also win immediately. With 2 players, this is 4 cards; with 3-4 players, this is 8 cards.*

Quick Reference

- 2 players: **1 deck**. 3-4 players: **2 decks**.
- Starting deck: **2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4**.
- Market size: **player count + 2**.
- Exactly **1 action** per turn:
 - buy a market card
 - remove a starting card
 - play a goal card
 - strike an opponent's goal card (once per game)
 - pass
- Goal: a complete straight **J - Q - K - A**.



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