



Safari Pals™ Playing Card Games

Complete list of Game Rules and Variations

Up to date as of:

21 January 2009

Safari Pals Ltd regularly updates the list of game rules and variations that can be played with their Playing Card Packs. This compendium of rules is up to date as of the 21st January 2009 but please do visit www.safaripals.com to ensure that this is the very latest list.

If you have your own game rules or variations that you enjoy playing with Safari Pals cards, why not let us know so we can share them with everyone.

Game Rule and Variations Compendium

Last updated: 21 January 2009



Happy Safari - Rules

This game is loosely based on the classic card games of 'Happy Families' or 'Go Fish' but with one or two wild twists.

Object of the game: to collect the most sets of cards.

Shuffle the cards well and deal out 7 cards each (5 each if you are playing with the Junior pack or if there are more than 4 players). Place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile.

The youngest player starts by asking a specific another player for one card from a specific group to add to some they already have. For example, if Jim holds a Vegi-mate he might say "Anne, have you seen any Vegi-mates?" If Anne has any Vegi-mate cards she must hand one of them to Jim. Jim then gets another go. He can ask another player or ask Anne again and can ask for the same group or a different one that he already holds.

If Anne does not hold any Vegi-mate cards she says "Loot!", this is like an African word for "I've seen nothing". Jim must then pick up a card from the stock pile. If the card he picks up is a Vegi-mate, Jim can show it to the others and then have another turn, if the card he picks up is not a Vegi-mate then that is the end of his go and the turn now moves to Anne.

As soon as a player collects a set of all 4 cards in a group (such as all 4 Vegi-mate cards), they can be shown to the others and placed face-up in front of them. You can only do this during your turn. If you do this and have no cards left this is called 'going out'.

Play continues until either someone goes out or the stock pile runs out. The winner is then the player who has placed the highest number of sets of cards in front of them.

The game can get quite strategic since there is no point going out if you do not have the highest number of sets placed in front of you. Holding sets in your hand to confuse your opponents is allowed but be careful they don't go out first!

Happy Safari – Variation 1

In this simple variation, instead of handing over just one card if you are asked for a group, you have to hand over all the cards from that group that you hold.

Suggested by : Alfie Curtis from Essex, Aged 11

Happy Safari - Variation 2

This variation can be played once everyone has become familiar with the Safari Pals pack being played as it relies on memory as well as skill.

The game is set up and played in the normal way except that instead of asking 'Have you seen any Vegi-mates?' you have to ask for a specific animal, so you would ask 'Have you seen any Giraffe?' You must still hold a Vegi-mate card already to ask for another one though.

In the event that a player cannot remember the name of any other animal that they can legally ask for, they skip their turn and play passes to the player to their left.

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Happy Safari – Variation 3

This variation is ideal for families or can be played when some players are more familiar with the Safari Pals pack being played as it relies on memory as well as skill. In this variation players are divided into Trackers and Spotters. Trackers are normally adults or experienced players. Spotters are normally younger players or people new to a pack.

The game is set up and played in the normal way except that instead of asking 'Have you seen any Vegi-mates?' Trackers have to ask for a specific animal, so you would ask 'Have you seen any Giraffe?' You must still hold a Vegi-mate card already to ask for another one though.

Spotters play as usual asking for the group, for example 'Have you seen any Vegi-mates?'

In the event that a Tracker cannot remember the name of any other animal that they can legally ask for, they skip their turn, they don't pick up a new card and play passes to the player to their left.

Happy Safari – Variation 4

Since the winner of the standard game is the player with the most sets of cards at the end of the game and not necessarily the first player to go out, in this variation when a player goes out, they pick up 5 new cards from the stock pile and play continues until the stock pile runs out.

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Safari Trumps – Rules

Object of the game: to win all the cards in the pack.

Shuffle the cards well and deal out all the cards so that each player has as equal a number of cards as possible. Each player holds their cards in a pile face up. Each player only looks at the top card for each turn and is not allowed to change their order.

The shortest player starts by reading out the name of the animal on the top card of their pile then picking a data item to challenge the other players with. For example if the top card in Jim's pile is a Lion he might say "a Lion, it weights 180kg." The other players then read out their top cards so Anne might say "a Fish Eagle, it weights 3kg" and Toby might say "a Sable Antelope, it weights 230Kg." The player with the best or highest value (in this case Toby) wins and collects all the top cards played and places them with his own at the bottom of his pile. It is then the winners turn next (in this case Toby).

If two or more cards share the highest value, then all the top cards are placed in the middle and the original player plays again from their next card. The winner of that round collects all the cards in the middle as well as the ones from the new round.

The game ends when one player has collected all the cards and they are the winner.

The game can take a long time with the Classic pack so you might want to play with fewer cards each. In this case shuffle the pack well and deal out 10 cards each then play as normal.

In describing "Size" we have picked the most relevant measure (length or height) depending on the type of animal. If we had simply said height, then a Crocodile would have been described as being smaller than an Owl.

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Safari Match – Rules

Object of the game: to get rid of all your cards.

Shuffle the cards well and deal out 5 cards each (7 if playing with just two), place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile. Take the top card from the stock pile and place it face up to start a discard pile.

The player to the dealers left starts by trying to play a legal card face up on top of the discard pile. A legal card is an animal card that is from the same group (for example a Heavyweight) or has something in common with the top card on the discard pile such as "they are both browsers" or "they are the same weight" or "they share a common habitat". If the player cannot go then they must pick up a card from the stock pile. That is the end of their turn even if the card they pick up would have been a legal match.

Be careful when thinking of things in common between the current card and your cards. A match can be rejected if all the other players feel that your match is not true or is too easy. For example, "they both have two eyes" is far too easy. If your match is rejected you must pick up 2 cards from the stock pile. You might want to agree levels of match difficulty at the start of the game and allow easier matches for younger players. A good variation is to play themed games where, for example, only 'habitat' or 'behaviour' matches are legal. In a habitat themed game, matches might include 'they both live in waterholes'. In a behaviour themed game a good match might be 'they both hunt at night'.

If the stock pile runs out, keep the top card in the discard pile then turn the others upside down to make a new stock pile, there is no need to shuffle it.

The first player to get rid of all their cards is the winner.

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Last updated: 21 January 2009



Safari Rummy – Rules

This game is only suitable for the 'Classic' range of cards.

Object of the game: to get rid of all of the cards.

Shuffle the cards well and deal out 7 cards each, place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile. Take the top card from the stock pile and place it face up to start a discard pile.

The player to the dealers left starts. Each turn must start by picking up either the top card of the discard pile or the stock pile. The player can then try to lay down a new set of at least 3, but no more than 5, matching cards. Sets can be by group (e.g. Heavyweights) or by some other link such as habitat, food type or behaviour. The other players must all agree that a set is based on a sensible link and is not too easy, for example "they all have two eyes" is far too easy. During the same turn, a player can also add cards from their hand to any existing sets provided they have already laid down a set of their own during the game and providing the sets do not exceed 5 cards. At the end of the turn the player must discard a card onto the discard pile.

Existing sets can be split to make new ones but at the end of a turn, all the sets must have at least 3 and no more than 5 cards in them. For example if a player holds the Crocodile and Pied Kingfisher cards and there is already a set of 4 Heavyweights cards on the table, they could split the Heavyweights set to make a smaller set of 3 Heavyweights cards and use the Hippo card to form a new "waterhole habitat" set with the Crocodile and Pied Kingfisher cards in their hand.

The first player to get rid of all their cards is the winner. Remember that each turn must end by placing a card on the discard pile. This includes the winning last turn, they are not allowed to go out purely by placing all their cards into sets, they must still put a card on the discard pile to go out and win the game.

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Safari Spotter – Rules

This game is played in your car or safari vehicle while on Safari.

Object of the game: to get rid of all your cards by spotting the animals for the cards you hold.

Deal out 7 cards each and place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile. You might want to keep the stock pile in the pack box to keep them safe in the vehicle.

At the beginning of the game, each player can trade up to two of their cards for replacements from the top of the stock pile (no peeking though). This could be useful because if you have a very rare animal in your hand, you might want to risk trading it and hopefully get something easier to spot.

Each player tries to spot the animals that they have the cards for. When a player spots an animal that matches one of their cards they point to the animal and shout "Spotted". If you're playing with the Classic cards, read out the Fun Fact about the animal. The card is then handed in and placed at the bottom of the stock pile. At this point every player has the option to trade one of their cards for a replacement from the top of the stock pile.

If no players have spotted any of the animals in their hand for a long time, each player has the option to trade one of their cards for a replacement card taken from the top of the stock pile.

The first player to get rid of all their cards is the winner.

Remember not to scare the animals though, if you are in a hide or an open vehicle, don't shout "Spotted", whisper it.

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Last updated: 21 January 2009



Warthog - Rules



This game is loosely based on the family card game 'Pig' (sometimes known as 'Hog').

The object of the game is to be the first player to collect a complete group of cards, for example all four Heavyweight cards.

Deal out 4 cards each. Place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile. Turn over the top card of the stock pile to create a discard pile.

The player to the dealer's left starts. A turn consists of either picking up the top card from the discard pile or the top card from the stock pile. The player then must discard a card onto the discard pile. This could be the same card that they just picked up from the stock pile.

Play continues clockwise until a player wins the game by collecting all four cards of a group. If the stock pile runs out, keep the top card in the discard pile then turn the others upside down to make a new stock pile, there is no need to shuffle it.

As soon as a player has collected all four cards of a group, they shout "Warthog", show the set of cards to the other players and win the game.

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Safari Knockout - Rules



This game is loosely based on Knockout Whist but utilises the animal data on each of the Safari Pals cards.

The game consists of 7 rounds and the object of the game is to win the most number of turns in total.

In the first round, deal out seven cards to each player. The player to the dealers left starts the first turn. They choose one of their cards to play and place it face-up between the players. They read the animal name and then pick a data item to challenge the other players with. For example they might choose to play a Lion and pick weight as the challenge. The other players then each pick one of their own cards to challenge the Lion. If they don't have a card that will beat it, or they don't want to play a winning card this time round, they can choose to play a weaker card. The winner of the turn is the player who plays the winning card, in this case the card with the highest weight. The winner takes the played cards and places them in front of them as a set.

The turn then moves clockwise to the next player until all seven turns have been played.

At the end of the round, count up how many turns each player won during the round and make a note of the scores, 1 point for each turn won.

The second round is played with 6 cards each and third with 5 cards each and so until the final round of 1 card each. Keep the scores of all the turns win during each round of the game. After the final round, the scores are added up and the player who won the most number of turns during the whole game is the winner.

Safari Knockout - Variation 1

A variation of this game is to include an elimination factor. Any player who fails to win any turns during a single round is eliminated from the remaining rounds of the game. This can mean that the game ends before the last round if there is only one player remaining. The winner of the game is still the player that accumulated the highest number of winning turns at the end of the game. It is possible therefore to be eliminated half way through the game but still be the ultimate winner.

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Last updated: 21 January 2009



Safari Tracker – Rules



This game is only suitable for the 'Junior' range of cards.

This game is a memory game and the object is to collect the most pairs of cards.

Shuffle the cards well and then place them face down on a large table in four rows of eight cards. Arrange the rows so that each card can be easily turned over without disturbing the other cards around it.

The oldest player goes first. They pick two cards and turn them over, if the two cards belong to the same group (for example, a pair of Noisy cards) then they shout "Tracked" and remove the two cards and put them as a set in front of them. If the two cards are not from the same group then once everybody has seen what they were, they are turned back and left face down in their original position.

Play continues clockwise until all the cards have been Tracked into pairs. The player who collected the highest number of pairs is the winner.

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Odd-One-Out - Rules



The object of the game is to get rid of all yours cards by discarding matching pairs of cards.

Shuffle the cards well then remove the top card and place it face up between the players. Deal out the rest of the pack as evenly as possible.

Each player then looks at their cards and discards any matching pairs that they hold. A pair consists of two cards from the same group, such as two Noisy cards. Only discard pairs of cards, if you hold three cards from the same group, only discard two of them. Discarded pairs are placed face-up in front of each player.

Once everyone has discarded all their pairs, the player to the dealers left takes the first turn. A turn consists of picking and taking a card from the player to their right. The player to the right should hold their hand of cards in a fan to allow a card to be picked, but the picking player should not be able to see what card they are picking. The player then looks at the card they have picked, if it forms a new pair with a card they already hold, the pair is discarded face-up in front of them. If the new card does not form a pair, the player adds it to their hand. Whether the new card formed a new pair or not, that is the end of their turn.

Play continues clockwise until someone goes out by getting rid of all their cards. This could be either through creating a pair or being left with one card that is then picked by the player to their left. The first player to go out is then the winner.

Odd-One-Out - Variation 1

When playing with more than two players, play can continue after someone has won, with players going out until eventually someone is left with a single card. They are then the loser.

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Last updated: 21 January 2009



Crazy Safari – Rules

This game is played with a Classic pack and a Wildcard pack.

Object of the game: to get rid of all your cards.

Add one Wildcard pack to the standard Classic pack. Shuffle the cards well and deal out 5 cards each (7 if playing with just two), place the remaining cards face down to form a stock pile. Take the top card from the stock pile and place it face up to start a discard pile.

The player to the dealers left starts by trying to play a legal card face up on top of the discard pile. A legal card is an animal card that is from the same group (for example a Heavyweight) or has something in common with the top card on the discard pile such as "they are both browsers" or "they are the same weight" or "they share a common habitat".

If the player holds a Wildcard then this can be played on top of any card. The player then nominates a group which the Wildcard could belong to. So for example, if playing a Snow Leopard the player could nominate "Cool Cats" as the group for the next player to match.

If the player cannot go then they must pick up a card from the stock pile. That is the end of their turn even if the card they pick up would have been a legal match.

Be careful when thinking of things in common between the current card and your cards. A match can be rejected if all the other players feel that your match is not true or is too easy. For example, "they both have two eyes" is far too easy. If your match is rejected you must pick up 2 cards from the stock pile. You might want to agree levels of match difficulty at the start of the game and allow easier matches for younger players. A good variation is to play themed games where, for example, only 'habitat' or 'behaviour' matches are legal. In a habitat themed game, matches might include 'they both live in waterholes'. In a behaviour themed game a good match might be 'they both hunt at night'.

If the stock pile runs out, keep the top card in the discard pile then turn the others upside down to make a new stock pile, there is no need to shuffle it.

The first player to get rid of all their cards is the winner.

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Wild-One-Out - Rules



This game is played with a Classic pack and a Wildcard pack.

The object of the game is to get rid of all yours cards by discarding matching pairs of cards.

Add one Wildcard pack to the standard Classic pack. Shuffle the cards well and deal out the whole pack between the players as evenly as possible.

Each player then looks at their cards and discards any matching pairs that they hold. A pair consists of two cards from the same group, such as two 'Creepy Crawly' (or two Wildcard) cards. Only discard pairs of cards, if you hold three cards from the same group, only discard two of them. Discarded pairs are placed face-up in front of each player.

Once everyone has discarded all their pairs, the player to dealers left takes the first turn. A turn consists of picking and taking a card from the player to their right. The player to the right should hold their hand of cards in a fan to allow a card to be picked, but the picking player should not be able to see what card they are picking. The player then looks at the card they have picked, if it forms a new pair, the pair is discarded face-up in front of them. If the new card does not form a pair, the player adds it to their hand.

Play continues clockwise until someone goes out by getting rid of all their cards. This could be either through creating a pair or being left with one card that is then picked by the player to their left. They are then the winner.

Wild-One-Out - Variation 1

When playing with more than two players, play can continue after someone has won, with players going out until eventually someone is left with a single Wildcard. They are then the loser.

Wild-One-Out - Variation 2

The object of the game is reversed, now the winner is the player who finishes holding a single Wildcard. When playing with more than two players, play continues after players go out until eventually the winner is left holding a single Wildcard.

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Last updated: 21 January 2009



Scoring games

The games described here are all based on someone winning each time a hand is played, but you could make the games even more exciting by keeping a score.

There are lots of ways that you could do this. You could simply get a point for each card that your opponents have left in their hand. But, it might be more fun to use some of the data on the cards.

For example, when playing with the Junior cards you could get points by adding up all your opponents remaining "Rareness" values. When playing with the Classic cards you could get points by adding up all the "Group" values on the cards your opponents are left with. Just don't get left with the Termites card!

Regular Card Games

The Classic cards have a standard suit and number in the bottom right hand corner. You can play any regular card game you like by using the cards held upside down so you can see the suit in your hand. Last time we looked there were over 600 different card games that use a standard pack.

Your ideas

If you have more game ideas or variations that you enjoy playing with Safari Pals cards, why not share them. Post your ideas using the suggestions box at www.safaripals.com