

Cutthroat a Game for Three Players

Cutthroat is Pétanque singles with a *nasty twist*. Each singles player must employ the services of a *designator shooter* two times each end. Cutthroat provides shooting experience in game conditions. People love cutthroat so much that when six players are available, instead of playing triples, they divide into two simultaneous games of cutthroat.

The Designated Shooter: The third player is a designated shooter. The singles player not holding the point may choose to command the shooter to shoot a specified boule. After each shot the shooter's boule is immediately removed from play; the designate shooter's boules are never are used to determine point allocation at the completion of the end.

The Jack as a Target: The jack may be a specified as a target only if it is not screened and can be directly shot.

Scoring: The end is scored like a conventional singles game. The shooter accumulates points on-the-fly, based on each shot's effectiveness. A clean miss scores zero points. The shooter scores points by directly striking the designated boule. Indirectly striking the specified target boule after rebounding off of another boule or by hitting another boule which subsequently rebounds into the target boule is not scored as a hit!

Exception: As in a game of pool, the shooter may call a "combination shot" and specify that he will purposefully strike a certain boule which in turn strikes the target boule. This protects the shooter from being directed to shoot a target which is screened by other boules.

Shooter Point Allocations (after each shot)

- ⓘ (0 points) clean miss – doesn't touch any other boule or the jack
- 👍 (+1 point) incidental hit (nick, cap, tick ... any metal on metal contact) regardless of effectiveness
- 👍 👍 (+2 points) shot moves the target boule more than 1.5 meters
- 👍 👍 👍 (+3 points) shooting the jack and moving it further than 1.5 meters
- ☠️ (-1 point) directly striking a non-designated boule or jack (except as a declared combination)

Choosing the Initial Roles: 1) Lead Player, 2) Second Player and 3) Designated Shooter

The players stand side-by-side and the jack is tossed a legal distance. At a count of three each player tosses a boule. The player closest to the jack chooses the first role. The second closest chooses one of the two remaining roles. Obviously, the furthest from the jack accepts the one remaining role.

Role Rotation: At the completion of the end player announces their current score. Then the roles are rotated as specified in the illustration.

Strategy:

The game is called "cutthroat" because the score may dictate that players (usually the two behind in the score) form a temporary (and uneasy) alliance. The shooter might purposefully miss a shot that would benefit the leader, or even purposefully shoot the wrong boule and lose a point, perhaps giving his collaborator a point or two, if it has a greater negative impact on the leader.

When the shooter is in the lead, although each player must use him twice per end, they may designate difficult target boules or force complex combination shots. Specifying the jack as a target is a gamble; it is a low percentage shot but yields three big points. Alliances are temporary and fluid, and change with the player's roles, skills and the current score.

