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#### BASIC PEGGING TECHNIQUES #4

So what are some known effective pegging strategies?

You hold a 2-3 or 1-4 couplet, lead the larger card. Your intent is to score a 15-2. Don't lead the smaller card of this couplet as knowledgeable player will drop the five on the 2 or 1 and you cannot score a fifteen-for two. Force the dealer to put the 10-point card on your lead. The dealer is not likely to drop a five on either a 3 or 4 lead.

Lead from your strength in other cases (from a pair, e.g.). If paired, you score six points. In some rare situations, you may want to pass up the six points. Some experienced players will not pair your opening lead anyway. The safest card to pair is the second card played. So with more sophisticated players, you might drop one of the cards that comprises the pair. After seeing the exposed card of your opponent, you may decide that holding the pair until end of play represents good pegging potential. This is especially true of small pairs (1-1, 2-2). Of course, if you have good position and pegs are unimportant, the mathematically correct thing to do is to lead from the pair.

If you hold 6-9 couplet in your hand, lead the six. A lone nine is worse lead in cribbage in the opinion of most. If opponent plays 9 for fifteen, you pair the nine for safe pair and a count of 24. If you lead the 9, opponent may play 6 for fifteen. If you pair the six for 21, anything can happen. Dealer can safely triple the six for making count 27, can set up a run situation off the six and be perfectly safe that you cannot play. Leading from these cards tells your opponent that you do not have a better lead.

Try not to let the dealer get off free. If you have 4-5-6-7, lead the four. If dealer pairs, you play the seven for a 15-2. If you have a 3 with a nine, lead the trey. If dealer pairs, you stay even by taking fifteen-for-two. Look ahead and reduce the pegging advantage of the dealer with such plays.

#### SHOOT FOR THE 31 TARGET!

Your hand is 3-3-5-J. As non-dealer, lead the 3. If dealer makes count 13 with a jack, pair the jack for two and a count of 23. Dealer will likely drop a five at that point and make a count of 28. You play your remaining 3 for 31. If dealer plays any other 10-pt card, drop the 3 for a count of 16. Dealer will force count to 26 and you claim 31-for-2 with the play of the five. Notice the magic eleven combinations (eleven from heaven) comprised of the 3-3-5! Look beyond the opening play and focus on that 31. IT'S THE SAFEST TWO POINTS YOU CAN SCORE IN CRIBBAGE SINCE IT CLOSES THE PLAY!

**REMEMBER DEALER HAS PEGGING ADVANTAGE.  
PLAN YOUR GAME ACCORDINGLY!**

Now let's analyze possible leads for non-dealer and dealer responses to those leads.