

## Sabacc Anyone?

The game of sabacc has been played for thousands of years, dating back to the ancient days of the Old Republic. Sabacc tables can be found in the most expensive luxury casinos, or dangerous hole-in-the-wall establishments, and anywhere else.

Sabacc is played with a deck of 76 card-chips. Through the use of micro-circuitry in the cardchips, card values change randomly, triggered by electronic impulses sent out by the dealer.

There are four suits in the deck: sabers, staves, flasks and coins. Each suit consists of eleven numbered cards (marked one to eleven) and four ranked cards: the Commander, the Mistress, the Master and the Ace (numbered 12 to 15).

There are also sixteen face cards (two each of eight different cards), with special names, symbols and values. They are the Idiot (0), the Queen of Air and Darkness (-2), Endurance (-8), Balance (-11), Demise (-13), Moderation (-14), the Evil One (-15), and the Star (-17).

When a hand is dealt, the dealer pushes a button on the table which sends out a series of random electronic pulses, which shift the values of the cards. Card values can change at any time and this wild randomness has been credited with making sabacc so popular.

Through several rounds of bluffing and betting, players watch and wait for their card-chips to shift. They can lock any or all of their card-chip values by placing them in the table's interference field (located at the center of the playing surface) — the card is "frozen" at that value.

Sabacc is played in both hands and games (a game can have many hands). The object of sabacc is to have the highest card total which is less than or equal to twenty-three. A total which is more than twenty-three, less than negative twenty-three, or equal to zero is a *bomb out*. Each player is dealt two card-chips to start and must always have at least two card-chips in his hand.

Sabacc has two different pots. The first pot, called the *hand pot*, is given to whoever wins a particular hand. The

second pot is the *sabacc pot*, which can only be won one of two ways.

With sabacc hands, a player wins if everyone else folds or if he locks in the highest card total less than twenty-three. If two or more players tie, they participate in a *sudden demise* — each player is dealt one card-chip from the deck which must be added to their locked-in hand. The best hand after this deal takes the hand pot. If there is still a tie, the pot is split.

There are two ways to win the sabacc pot. The first, when a player has a total of exactly 23, is called a *pure sabacc*. The second is an *idiot's array*, which means the player has an Idiot face card (0), and a two value card and a three value card — a literal twenty-three! At most tables, an idiot's array beats a pure sabacc. The game is over when the sabacc pot has been won.

Some players have found a way to cheat at sabacc by using a rigged card-chip called a skifter. A skifter allows the player to change its value by tapping the corner of the card. The player waits until it produces the exact value he desires. Of course, being caught using a skifter is a good way to end up on the wrong end of a blaster ...

**p.84** The Thrawn Trilogy Sourcebook

## D6 Rules for Sabacc

Sabacc being such a popular game in the galaxy, your character is bound to be attracted to the strategy, the random luck, and the high stakes of such a complicated game. Though without sabacc tables being as accessible to gamemasters as they are to intergalactic casinos, playing the game may pose a challenge.

Complete sabacc decks are available both in computer formats and in out of print West End Games materials. Unfortunately, none of these truly capture the rules described in *Thrawn Trilogy Sourcebook*. Furthermore, characters may wish to play sabacc without players wanting to take up time playing cards rather than roleplaying.

In order to simulate a game of sabaac, players will have to make a series of die roles using the *gambling* skill. At the beginning of each round, players must

---

make two antes. The first ante is for the hand pot, the second is for the sabacc pot. The dealer establishes the antes.

All players involved in the game then make *gambling* rolls and keep the results secret. The highest die roll will eventually win the hand. In the mean time, the players (and non-player characters) begin betting for the hand. Once all the players have folded or called, then all players reveal their die rolls. The hand pot goes to the highest die roll. If there is a tie between two characters, they will re-roll the Wild Die. The roll is added to their score and the winner takes the hand. If the re-rolled die results in a tie, then the pot is split.

In order to win the sabacc pot, a player must have a six on the Wild Die *and* have the highest die roll. (A player does not win the sabacc pot if he or she rolls a six on a re-rolled die for a tie- breaker.) Any player rolling a one on the Wild Die bombs out the hand.

**“I suggest a new strategy...”**

The galaxy is filled with scoundrels and scum of every sort imaginable, and cheating is nothing new in the galaxy. Some of these miscreants make their way by scamming, conning and making use of skifters. Players may not be able to beat ‘em, but they sure can join ‘em!

After a player has found and purchased a skifter, it takes great finesse and timing to use one in a game. Characters wishing to use this sort of “advantage” must use a new *Dexterity* skill: *sleight of hand*.

The character must make a *sleight of hand* roll for each skifter he or she plans to use (multiple action penalties apply). Each skifter increases the character’s roll by +1 and increases the chances that he or she will win the sabaac pot. If a player is using a single skifter, the player may roll a five or a six on the Wild Die and have the highest roll to win the sabaac pot. With two skifters, the player receives a +2 bonus and may win the sabaac pot on a four, five, or six roll with the Wild Die.

The use of additional three or more skifters will add an additional +2 bonus each, but will not reduce the necessary roll of a Wild Die below a four.

**Dexterity: *sleight of hand***

*Time taken:* One round

*Specializations:* Specific kinds of actions – *poisoning drinks, magic tricks, etc.*

Sleight of hand is a blanket term for a range of deceitful actions or conjuring tricks requiring manual dexterity. A character may decide to switch datapads or comlinks without someone’s notice. These actions are most often done in plain view, and must be made against an opposed *Perception* or *search* roll.

**Example:** Dex Starlancer is involved in a high stakes game of Pazaac, and is trying to cheat his way into an easy victory. He attempts to pull a winning card out of his sleeve to turn the tide of the game. He uses his *sleight of hand* skill of 4D against an unwary opponent. Dex makes his *sleight of hand* roll of 14. The gamemaster rolls the opponent’s perception skill of 3D and gets an 11. Since Dex’s roll is higher than his opponent’s, Dex successfully slips the card out of his sleeve and into his hand.

**Modifiers:**

**+5 to the target’s roll:** quiet environment and with few distractions.

**+10 to the target’s roll:** the character is well known for such acts of deception and the target(s) are particularly wary.

**+5 to the character’s roll:** the character has conned the targets into thinking he or she is a trustworthy or incapable person

**+10 or more to the character’s roll:** congested and loud atmosphere with many visual and audio distractions.

*“Your eyes can deceive you. Don’t trust them.”*

- Obi Wan Kenobi

Remember to use skifters carefully!  
Anyone caught with a skifter is likely to lose more than just a hand of sabacc. Many would-be winners have found themselves on the wrong side of an airlock for their cheating ways.