

# Tongo Rules and Game Play

Based on the fictitious game featured in Star Trek Deep Space Nine  
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## The Cards:

Tongo is played with 3 decks of cards. 2 “round” decks of 49 cards each, and 1 “square” deck of 30 cards.

Round cards, or “ASSET” cards, are numbered 1 through 7 and are divided into colored sets of red, blue, yellow, green, purple, orange, and black.

Square cards, or “ACQUIRE” cards, contain 28 random “good” commands, and 2 “bad” commands.

## The Table:

The Tongo table is comprised of an outer green ring, and a rotating inner red ring with a pot located in the center.

Both the inner and outer rings are divided into 8 sections on a “standard” sized Tongo table, and 4 on a “personal” sized table.

## Set Up:

A minimum of 4 players is required for a game of Tongo.

The Dealer “loads” the table with 7 asset cards per section face down. These extend in a line from the center of the table and stay within its section dividers.

The Dealer then “loads” 3 acquire cards at the bottom of each section face down. The acquire cards follow the curve along the bottom of the table.

## Dealing:

Once the table is “loaded” the dealers gives it a small spin (at least once round) to randomize the cards. Players then pick up 4 of the 7 asset cards in front of them without looking at the cards before hand.

The Dealer then “re-loads” the table and game play begins.

## **Game Play:**

There are 3 stages in Tongo game play.

### **STAGE ONE - Risking**

Dealer begins game play by announcing an “opening risk,” followed by the opening “purchase” and “sell” price, depositing the “risk” amount into the pot. The Dealer then spins the table.

Starting to the dealer’s left, players take turns throwing in “risks” equal to, if not exceeding, the “opening risk.” If a player believes their hand to be fairly good, they may wish to raise the “risk,” in doing so they must also state both a new “purchase” and “sell” price. Subsequent players must then meet the current “risk” price, or “retreat.”

Once everyone has deposited their latinum and made their “risks” the person next to the dealer stops the table from spinning.

### **STAGE TWO - Assessment**

Once the table is stopped players are allowed to look at the asset cards in the section in front of them and decide on one of the following moves, with the player who stopped the table having the first turn.

Players may discard one asset card from hand to pick up one asset card from the table at no cost.

Players may “purchase” a card (or multiple cards) at the current “purchase price.”

Players may “sell” their entire hand at the current “sell price” and pick up the same amount of cards they “sell.”

Players may “purchase” an acquire card at the current “purchase price.”

Players may “confront” their opponents, thus moving to STAGE THREE.

Players may “retreat” from the game.

If no one “confronts” or after a “confront” (STAGE THREE) that does not end the game, then the player, which stopped the table, now begins the next round

by issuing the a new “opening risk.” This “risk” is built on the previous “risk,” and continues building throughout game play or until someone is eliminated and winnings are distributed.

### STAGE THREE - Confront

When a player believes their hand is strong enough to win they may “confront” their opponents by saying, “Confront” during their turn of the “Assessment.”

Once a “confront” is called, the “confronter” enters their “risk” into the pot equal to the current “risk.” They may not raise the “risk” at this point.

Play continues from the “confronter’s” left and circles the table until returning to the “confronter.”

During a Confront each player has the option of doing the following:

Players may enter the current “risk” into the pot, moving play onto the next player to their left.

Players may raise the current “risk,” thus increasing the current “purchase” and “sell” cost as well.

Players “evade” by discarding 3 of their cards and by paying the cost of one and half times the current purchase price. An “evade” ends the current Confront round and play returns to the Risking round with the “evader” taking spin of the table.

Players may “retreat,” leaving the game with their current loses and returning their asset cards, acquire cards, and discard pile back to the Dealer. A “retreat” also ends the Confront round, and play returns to the Risking round with the player to the left of the player that “retreated” taking spin of the table.

If the “risk” makes it back to the “confronter,” and is met by the “confronter” paying the current “risk,” cards are displayed and winnings are paid out.

### Winning Hands: (in order of strength)

FULL MONOPOLY - 1 through 7 of every seven colors.

MONOPOLY - 1 through 7 of any one color, or any numbers one of all 7 colors.

FULL CONSORTIUM - Either 7 of the same number, or the same color.

CONSORTIUM - A Monopoly or Full Consortium achieved by use of an acquire wild card.

MATERIAL CONTINUUM - 2 pair of both number and colors. Example: two red sevens, two blue threes.

TREASURY - 5 of a kind; numbers or colors.

RESERVE - 2 of a kind; same number or color.

### **Winnings Pay Outs:**

GAME END - The last player remaining receives the entire pot.

AN ACQUISITION - If a “confronter” wins a hand with no indexing or buy-ins, they receive 50% of the pot and the remainder is divided among the remaining players.

A PARTNERSHIP - If a player other than the “confronter” successfully indexes the margin, or leverages the buy-in, they receive half that percentage added into their share of the pot. Example: if a margin were successfully indexed at 10%, that player would receive an additional 5% of the pot.

### **Definitions:**

Opening Risk - The first wager of the game or round.

Risk - A wager cast, in turn, by current players.

Purchase - The cost to discard an asset card from hand and replace it with an asset card from the table section currently in front of you. Also the price to pick up an acquire card. Not less than half the current risk price.

Sell - The cost of switching out your entire hand with the asset cards in front of you. Cannot exceed 1 1/2 times the current risk.

Acquire - The purchase of an acquire card based on the current purchase price.

Confront - Happens when a player believes their hand is stronger than their opponent's hands. All players must hold 7 cards before a player can confront.

Retreat - Cutting your losses and voluntarily leaving the game. Should only occur when a player can't meet the current risk, or has no playable hand during a Confront.

Evade - When a player stops a Confront round by discarding 3 of their cards. Evading costs 1 1/2 times the current purchase price.

### Advanced Game Play:

While Tongo is an easy game to learn the basics of, players will quickly see the intricacies of strategy involved. Experienced Tongo players may wish to employ a number of the following advanced options to both increase the risk involved, and subsequently the possible reward.

INDEXING THE MARGIN - If a player wants to risk more than they currently hold or wish to afford during a Confront they may "index the margin" in an attempt to up the "risk" and gain more of the winnings. In essence the player is borrowing the money from the winnings with a pay off in interest. However, this must be done cautiously, because if a confront is stopped or fails, the player must refund the margin into the pot, or "retreat."

Example: Confront takes place with a "risk" at 40, a "purchase" at 20 and a "sell" at 60. The next player in queue may increase the risk to 80, but only place 40 in the pot, thus indexing the margin by 50%. The following player must meet the risk of 80. If they cannot, they must increase the margin by a minimum of 5%; making the risk 84, and adding themselves to the possible payoff along with the possible fail.

If the confront is a success and total of the pot is 100, then each player who rode on the margin would receive half of their percentage plus their share of the pot. In this example the margin player's winnings would break down as follows...

Confronter:  $50\%$  of  $100 = 50$

Margin Player #1: Half of  $50\% = 25\%$  - -  $25\%$  of  $50 = 12.5$

Margin Player #2: Half of  $5\% = 2.5\%$  - -  $2.5\%$  of  $50 = \text{approx. } 1.5$

However, if the Confront failed, margin player #1 would have to pay the amount they borrowed (in this example 40 strips of gold pressed latinum) into the pot to remain in the game, as well as every subsequent player who rode the margin after them.

**LEVERAGING THE BUY-IN** - Similar to “indexing the margin” except instead of raising the “risk” using latinum borrowed from the “margin” the player is drawing out of funds from a possible Confront completion, and hopefully win.

This method is good if a player wishes to participate in the current “risk” but doesn’t have the funds available to do so. The player will be able to remain in the game, but will have to pay back the “borrowed money” out of their possible winnings. If the Confront fails or is stopped, the player is automatically exited from game play due to insubstantial funds.

Example: Confront takes place with a “risk” at 40, a “purchase” at 20 and a “sell” at 60. The next player in queue only has 20 strips of gold pressed latinum left, but is holding a Full Consortium. They can say, “I’m going to leverage the buy-in at 50%,” and then pays in their full 20 strips of latinum. If they win their winnings would break down as follows with a pot of 100 strips of gold pressed latinum...

$$50\% \text{ of } 100 = 50$$

With a leveraged buy-in at 50%, half the winnings are then used to pay back the “loan” leaving the total winnings at 25.

Not as good as if they had the funds in the first place, but better than being out of the game.

**BRIBING** - If a player is desperate they may wish to offer a bribe in the form of either latinum, asset cards, or acquire cards to another player. This might be helpful to stop someone from a Confront, or to simply gain advantage at any other given time. Bribes are completely dependant upon the demands of the person being bribed... and must be witnessed by all other players, and agreed upon as valid and forthright.

