L'Hombre (3p) ⊘⊘⊘⊘⊘

About

L'Hombre is a game played today in Denmark which is a descendent of the very old Spanish game 'Ombre'. A version of the original Spanish 'Hombre' is still played in Spain today under the name 'Tresillo'. The game of L'Hombre retains many of the major distinctive features of Ombre, but the scoring has been simplified, and some additional contracts have also been added.

Players Cards & Deal	3 players. All playing for themselves. 40 cards (A – 7, J, Q, K) in four suits: ♥♦♣♠ *Remove the 8s, 9s and 10s from an standard international 52 card deck.* Deal 9 cards each in packets of three, then place remaining 13 cards in a face down pile to form the 'talon'.

Card Ranking	**When not trump suit….**
	  Black suits: K Q J 7 → 2
	  Red suits: K Q J A → 7
	
	4th highest in red trump suit is the 'ponto' (Ace)
	
	When trump suit…
	  Black suit trump: S 2 B ↘ K Q J 7 6 5 4 3
	  Red suit trump: S 7 B P K Q J 2 3 4 5 6
	
	S = 'Spadille' (ace of spades) and B = 'Basta' (ace of clubs) are permanent 1st and 3rd trumps. Second trump is called M = 'Manille' which is the 2 (if black suit trump) or the 7 (if red suit trump). The top 3 trumps are known as 'matadors'.

Auction	*See overleaf for what to do if all players pass.*

The player left of the dealer is called forehand (Fh), the next player is called middlehand (Mh) and the dealer is called rearhand (Rh). The auction (bidding) is begun by forehand^ and is initially only contested by Fh and Mh. Players can make more than one bid and the auction between Fh and Mh continues until one of these players passes. Once the outcome of bidding between Fh and Mh is clear, Rh then speaks and the auction continues between Rh and the winner of the bidding between Fh and Mh.

'Self' bids
A player earlier in the rotation may overcall a player later in the rotation if they match the bid by saying 'self'… e.g. If Fh bid 'game' and Mh responded with 'spades game' then Fh could say 'self' (they now bid a spades game too).
This this overcalls Mh. Fh can overcall both Mh and Rh in this way.
Mh can overcall Rh in this way. Rh can overcall no-one in this way.

^ If Fh passes first opportunity, next to speak is Mh.

A declarer who won the bid with 'Game' may raise to Spade Game, Tourné, Nolo or Grand Tourné before exchange. Similarly, a declarer who won the bid with 'Solo' may raise to Spade Solo.

The bids from highest to lowest: *the winning bidder is called the 'declarer'*

	Bid	Description	Win / Draw	Loss		Tout
	Game	Simple game. All exchange – 1st declarer #, then other players in order of play. *Win – take more tricks than both the defenders separately (i.e. not combined)* *Draw – declarer and either one (or both) defenders have equal number of tricks* *Loss – at least one of the defenders has more tricks than the declarer.*	1	2		1
	Spades game	Simple game, with spades as trump. All exchange #. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'game'.*	1	2		1
	Tourné (Turn)	The top card of the talon is turned face up to make trumps. All exchange – 1st declarer @ (who takes the 'turn up' as first card), then other players in order of play. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'game'.*	2	3		1
	nolo	Take no tricks. No-trump. Only declarer # exchanges. *Win – declarer takes no tricks* *Draw – declarer takes 1 trick* *Loss – declarer take 2 tricks*	2	3		n/a
	Grand Tourné	Same as tourné, but must have been **dealt** the spadille and basta. All exchange @. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'game'.*	3	4		1
*	Solo	Same as 'game', though only the defenders can exchange. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'game'.*	3	4		1
*	Spades solo	Same as solo, but with spades as trumps. Only the defenders can exchange. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'game'.*	4	5		1
*	Pure nolo	Same as nolo, but no players exchange. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'nolo'.*	4	5		n/a
*	Nolo ouvert	Same as pure nolo, but just before playing their first card, the declarer, places all their cards face up on the table and plays the entire hand 'open'. No players exchange. *Win, loss and draw same as for 'nolo'.*	6	7		n/a

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Win – Defenders each pay declarer   **Draw or Loss – Declarer pays each defender**

Note that in Game, Spades Game and Nolo, the declarer must exchange at least 1 card.
@ *Note that in Tourné and Grand Tourné the declarer must exchange at least 1 card in addition to the 'turned' card.*

| **All pass** | *There are a number of mechanisms to avoid the re-deal. These can be researched on-line. We use the method outlined below.* |

The tournament rules of the Danish L'Hombre Association say if all pass there is shuffle and re-deal. Alternatively, if all pass, the holder of the spadille (ace of spades) must play (or the dealer if it is in the talon). This player looks at their hand and names trump OR turns the first card to establish trumps (this will become the first card exchanged). Exchange and play are as normal. The hand scores as for 'game' (1 | 2).

| **Play** | |

Exchange:

The declarer exchanges first (if allowed), followed by the defenders (if allowed) who exchange in the order of play i.e. first the player left of the declarer, followed by the player to their left. At their turn to exchange a player can exchange up as many cards as they like (providing enough are still present in the talon). They first place their discards face down, announce the number of cards to be exchanged, and then draw this number, unseen, from the top of the talon. Any cards that remain 'unexchanged' stay face down and unseen by any player.

Rules of play:

The player left of the dealer leads to the first trick. Highest card of lead suit wins the trick, or the highest trump if any trumps are played. Players must follow suit. If unable to follow suit, they may play any card. Players are not required to play a higher card or beat any previous cards played to the trick. Players store their ticks separately (the opponents do not combine them).

In a trump game, following suit does not apply fully to the 'matadors' i.e. the top 3 trumps (the Spadille, Manille and Basta):

> *The spadille, manille and basta cannot be forced out by the lead of a lower trump. For example, if a player holds the basta and the leader to the trick plays the king of trumps, the holder of the basta is not required to play it (though they would still need to play another trump if they had one). The basta can only be forced out by the lead of the manille or spadille. The manille can only be forced out by the lead of the spadille. It follows that the spadille can never be forced out. Note that to be forced out, the higher card must be **led** to the trick. So, for example if player 'A' plays the king of trump, and player 'B' plays the spadille, player 'C' who holds the basta, is not compelled to play it as the spadille was not **led** to the trick.*

If the declarer takes the first 5 tricks: *not relevant in nolo contracts*

If the declarer takes the first 5 tricks (therefore taking more of the 9 tricks than either opponent), they must decide whether to continue. If they play to the 6th trick, they are considered to be trying for 'tout' (taking all tricks). Successful tout wins a bonus of 1 point (unsuccessful a penalty of 1 point) which is paid separately to the payment for the contract.

| **Auction – Further Specifics** | |

Some further specifics about auction.

'Born Contacts'	Born Contracts (labelled with an *) are contracts that must be bid <u>outright</u>. They cannot arise from a bid of 'Game'. If a player wins the bid with 'Game' they cannot then go on to announce a Solo, Spades Solo, Pure Nolo or Nolo Ouvert. These contracts must have been named outright during the auction.
Finer points	Forehand should pass or begin with 'Game' (except if they intend to play a 'Born Contract') – as any other bid would give away information about the cards. If the other players pass straight away, the declarer has won the bid with 'Game' and can now name…. Game, Spades Game, Nolo, Tourné, or Grand Tourné…. but **NOT** one of the 'Born Contracts' – *because if intending to play one of these, forehand should have <u>bid this outright</u>.*
	So, if forehand thinks that they want to play a 'Born Contract' they should open the auction with this. If they open the auction with 'Game' and others pass, they would not be allowed to raise to a 'Born Contract' after.
	Auction example: If forehand begins with Game and middlehand overcalls with Nolo, then…
	• Forehand can say 'self' to match the nolo…. If this wins the bid, forehand **MUST** play nolo
	• Forehand can say Tourné to match (equal) the nolo… If this wins, forehand **MUST** play Tourné
	• Forehand can say Grand Tourné to overbid the nolo… If this wins, forehand **MUST** play Grand Tourné
	• Forehand can bid one of the 'Born Contracts' to overbid the nolo
	In general:
	• A player earlier in the rotation need only match / equal the bid.
	• A player who wins with 'Game' **is able to raise** to Spades Game, Nolo, Tourné, or Grand Tourné.
	• A player who wins with Spades Game, Nolo, Tourné, or Grand Tourné **MUST play that contract**.
	• A player who wishes to play a 'Born Contract' should say so at their turn to bid.