



Wilcox War (v2)

By Jeff Wilcox

Wilcox War is a variant of the classic game of War, adding strategy and bluffing, making a fun game for everyone in the family!



OVERVIEW

In traditional War, you play through the deck once or by play until one player has all the cards.

These rules are for two players using two decks – playing through the decks once. At the end are rules for single-deck games, as well as games where you play until someone has all the cards.

SET-UP

1. Remove any jokers and rule cards included in the decks.
2. One deck goes to the first player and the other deck goes to the second player.
3. Each player shuffles their deck and places it *face up* on the table in front of them and it becomes the **draw pile**.

BEGINNING THE GAME

1. Both players deal three cards off the top of their deck face-up on the table. *Yes, both players can and should review each other's cards. (See picture at right.)*
2. Each player picks up their cards and these create their **hand**. Cards won during game play are placed face down next to their draw pile making the **scoring pile**.

At right, each player has their three cards face up and their draw piles are face up to one side. The far player's draw pile has an Ace of Spades on top, while the near one has a 2 of Hearts.



PLAYING THE GAME

Each turn, players simultaneously choose one card from their hand, place it face down on the table, and then reveal that card.



WHO WINS?

If one card is of higher value (with an Ace being highest), the winner takes both cards and places them face down into their scoring pile.

At left, the far player's Queen beats the near player's 5. The far player takes both cards and places them face down in their scoring pile.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE TWO CARDS ARE THE SAME?

If both cards have the same value (both are 5s, or Jacks, or 10s, etc.) then the players are in a war and:

1. Players draw one card (so they each have three cards in their hand again.)
2. Players set aside their hand (for now) *and turn their draw pile face down.*
3. Players take two (2) cards from the top of the now-face-down draw pile and place them overlapping their card in the war. These are the hidden prizes for the winner of the war. Then players turn their draw pile face up.
4. Players pick up their hand, choose one card to play and place it face down on the table, and then reveal the cards simultaneously. High card wins the war – and the winner places all cards in the war (all face-up and face-down cards) face down into their scoring pile after revealing the hidden prize cards to both players.
5. Players draw one card and add it to their hand and then show their hand to the other player. The game continues.

The players at right both played a 10 and were in a war. They drew one card into their hand immediately, and then turned over their draw pile. They both put two cards from their draw pile face-down onto their own 10. Then they each drew one card from their hand and revealed it at the same time. The near player won all eight cards with their Jack.





WHAT HAPPENS IF THE FINAL REVEALED CARDS ARE ALSO THE SAME?

If the final revealed cards have the same value, repeat the steps for resolving a war.

The players on the left initially played two 10s. The final revealed cards of that war were 9s so they followed the same steps for the 9's war. The far player's Ace won the wars and the far player now puts all fourteen cards into their scoring pile.

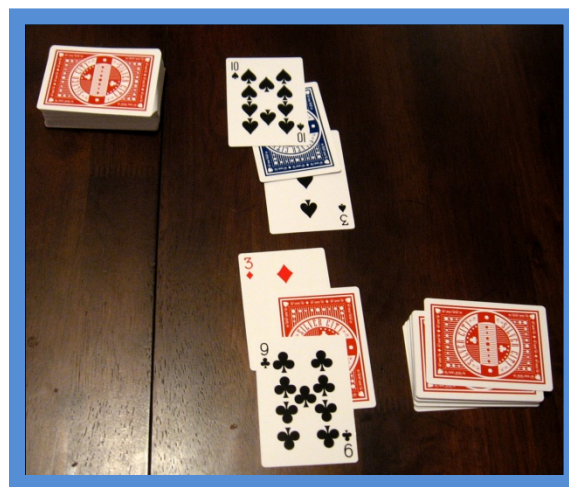
WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE NO CARDS LEFT DURING A WAR?

If a player needs a card and it isn't available, they skip any steps of the war they can't complete due to the lack of the cards, but DO complete any steps they can.

Example: You are in a war. You can draw a card to your hand so you do so, but then you have no cards left in your draw pile for the hidden treasure. Skip placing down two hidden treasure cards since you are out of cards. Then you both play one card down simultaneously to see who wins the war.

Once the war is over the game has ended. Any cards in player's hand go to their own scoring pile. [See "WHEN DOES THE GAME END AND WHO WINS?" below.]

The players at right played 3s and are at war. They drew one card to their hand. They discovered they only had one remaining card in their draw pile so they put it into the war as hidden treasure and skipped putting the second a second hidden treasure card down. They then played down a card from their hand. The far player's 10 won the war and the far player now puts all six cards into their scoring pile.



WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE NO CARDS LEFT WHEN NOT IN A WAR?

If a player needs a card and it isn't available the game ends. [See "WHEN DOES THE GAME END AND WHO WINS?" below.]

WHEN DOES THE GAME END AND WHO WINS?

The game ends when players need to draw a card but can't. If in a war, complete all complete-able steps of the war. Once the war is over, the game ends. Each player puts their hand in their own score pile and then counts the number of cards in the score pile.

Whoever has the larger number of cards in their score pile wins. If both players have the same number of cards, they tie.

OTHER WAYS TO PLAY

Playing With a Single Deck

If you only have a single deck, here are the rule adjustments to use:

1. Start by giving all red cards to one player and all black cards to the other.
2. Only put one (1) card down as the hidden treasure during wars.

Continuing Play Until Someone Has All the Cards

Some people prefer to play until someone wins all the cards. In the Wilcox War variation of this, you play until one player's score pile (when they must shuffle it) has too few cards. Here are the rules and rule adjustments to use:

1. Put three (3) cards down as the hidden treasure during wars.
2. Play doesn't end when your draw pile is empty and you need to draw a card. Here is how it works:
 - When you need a card but you have none in your draw pile, immediately turn your score pile face down. (Make sure you have 14 or more cards in the pile. If you do, then continue with these instructions.) Shuffle the score pile and then place it face down. It becomes your new draw pile and you continue the game.
 - If you have 13 or fewer cards in your score pile when you need to make it your draw pile, your opponent has won the game and the game ends – even if you are in the middle of a war.

Continuing Play Until Someone Has All the Cards – When Using One Deck

Here are the rules and rule adjustments to use:

1. Start by giving all red cards to one player and all black cards to the other.
 2. Put two (2) cards down as the hidden treasure during wars.
 3. Play doesn't end when your draw pile is empty and you need to draw a card. Here is how it works:
 - When you need a card but you have none in your draw pile, immediately turn your score pile face down. (Make sure you have 8 or more cards in the pile. If you do, then continue with these instructions.) Shuffle the score pile and then place it face down. It becomes your new draw pile and you continue the game where you were.
 - If you have 7 or fewer cards in your score pile when you need to make it your draw pile, your opponent has won the game and the game ends – even if you are in the middle of a war.
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