

This guide is meant to teach you the basics of Fano as you play a 2-player game and assumes you have not read the rules. Read each step aloud together as you play: have black read for red and vice versa. For a better experience, try playing with the official deck or a print and play copy provided at www.fano.com.

To begin have **player 1 (black)** take all 13 spades or clubs out of the deck and have **player 2 (red)** take all 13 hearts or diamonds. In Fano each player plays with a single suit.

Both players: Remove the Jack, Queen, and King (commander cards) and place them in front of you, stacked face-up from Jack (top) to King (bottom). The commander represents you, the player. Both players start as a Jack and will eventually “level-up” to the Queen and finally King. The first player to reach King wins.

Black: Arrange your remaining cards: **6, 5, 3, 9, 1(A), 4, 10, 2, 8, 7**. Place them face-down next to your commander pile (6 on top). This will be your draw pile. On the other side of the commander will be your discard pile. In front of these you have up to *four* field slots for cards considered “in play”.

Red: Arrange your remaining cards: **2, 4, 1, 3, 7, 9, 6, 8, 5, 10**. Place them face-down next to your commander in the same way (2 on top).

In a normal game you may decide who plays first at random but for this quick-start guide, let’s have **black** play first.

Black: To begin, **draw three cards (6, 5, & 3)**. A player’s turn is broken into three phases: Draw, Main, and End-turn. You have just completed the Draw phase and are on the Main phase. All Main phase actions can only be made with cards in play. Currently, you do not have any cards in play. Skip right to the End-turn step. You have three options to choose from:

- 1) play: play a combat card [1-7] from your hand into an empty field slot.
- 2) discard: discard any number of cards from your hand face-down onto your discard pile.
- 3) substitute: discard a card from play and then play a combat card from your hand.

Option 3 is not available yet because you do not have cards in play. Let’s go with option 1. **Play 6, a combat card. Playing ends your turn.**

Red: Draw three (2, 4, & 1). You must also skip to End-turn but which combat card should you play? *Combat cards* in play have three abilities:

- 1) attack: a card may fight an enemy combat card if the enemy card is vulnerable to the attacking card and the attacker has the correct support card in hand. The cards engaged in combat are discarded face-up and the support card is played, replacing the attacking card.
- 2) combine: a card may add its value to another card if you have the sum in hand. The sum is played and the cards used to combine are discarded face-up. The player has the option to return one of the cards discarded back to hand.
- 3) recruit: two cards may recruit another card to an empty field slot if all three cards share a cycle.

Black has only one combat card in play (6). They can't perform the combine or recruit options on their next turn but depending on what you play, they might be able to attack your cards. You want to avoid playing a vulnerable card. Take a look at the attack/recruit cycles reference sheet (attached to this document) or examine the cycles printed on the PnP/official cards and find the three cycles with 6 in them. These cycles are like the game paper-rock-scissors. Numbers clockwise of 6 are vulnerable to an attack by 6 (these numbers are 1, 3, & 7). However, 6 is vulnerable to an attack by the numbers counterclockwise to 6 (these numbers are 2, 4, & 5).

Question: Which card(s) in your hand can attack the 6?

Answer: Your 1, if played, would be vulnerable to an attack but your 4 and 2 can attack the 6.

Your 4 and 2 can attack the 6 but require different support cards to make an attack. Look back at the cycles. To attack a card (clockwise) you will need a support that can take your place (counterclockwise). To use our paper-rock-scissor analogy again, paper can attack rock but needs scissors as support to take its place.

Question: what support card do you need for 2 or 4 to attack 6?

Answer: 2 can attack 6 if you have 7 as support. 4 can attack 6 if you have 3 as support.

You don't have the support cards in hand. So, you can play either. **Play 2, ending your turn.**

Black: Draw one card (9). You drew a prestige card. Notice these cards are not in any of the cycles. The only ability they have is combine. However, these cards are needed to advance your commander and win the game. You must have all three (8, 9, 10) in play to advance to the next level. Prestige cards can not be played at the end of turn. The only way to get them in play is to combine cards already in play. You will not be able to combine your 6 and 3 for 9 this turn because 3 is not yet in play. You can play your 3 during your End-turn phase but 3 is vulnerable to the enemy 2 and might be attacked on their turn.

Question: Is there another way to get the 3 in play next turn safely?

Answer: Your 5, if played now, can attack the enemy 2 next turn with 3 as support.

If you played 5 now, and the opponent 2 remains on their field until your next turn, your 5 can attack the enemy 2. The 5 and 2 would be discarded and 3, the support card, would enter the field during your Main phase, allowing you to then combine for the 9 in the same Main phase. **Play 5, ending your turn.**

Red: Draw one card (3). We didn't know which card you would draw but had you played the 4 last turn instead, you would be able to attack the enemy 6 this turn with 3 as support. Black played a 5 which can attack your 2 if they have a 3 in hand. You do not have the support for your 2 to attack and you need more cards to combine or recruit so skip to End-turn.

Question: Which end turn option can discard the 2 from play?

Answer: The substitute move can be used to discard the 2 first, before playing another card.

If you used the substitute move to discard your 2 and play the 4 you will remove the enemy threat and have a card that can attack either enemy card—a great option. But, we can do something a little craftier and set a trap. When a card is attacked, a player has two options to counter:

- 1) combine counter: another card in play can assist by combining with the attacked card for a higher combat card.
- 2) recruit-combine counter: another card in play can assist by recruiting a card which can then combine with the attacked card.

In each option, the attacker is now faced with fighting a different combat card—changing their support needs. If the attack is invalid, the attacker is the only one discarded. If the new attack is valid (including the new support) the combined card and the attacker are discarded and the new support is played.

Question: which card(s) if played can set up a counter if the opponent 5 attacks your 2?

Answer: playing 1 enables a combine counter. Playing 4 enables a recruit-combine counter.

With 1 on the field, you could combine 1 and 2 for a 3 in the event of an attack. The opponent 5 would then be attacking your 3, an invalid attack that would result in 5 being discarded. Alternatively, if 4 is on the field you could have 4 and 2 recruit 1 which can then combine with your 2 for 3. Again, the attack would be invalid but with this way you will have more cards in play. **Play 4, ending your turn.**

Black: Draw one (1). 5 and 6 are part of a cycle together and can recruit 1.

Question: if you attacked the enemy 2 with 5 first, would you be able to still recruit?

Answer: no, if 5 attacks it will be discarded for a supporting 3.

First, have 5 and 6 recruit your 1. It is still your Main phase so you may attack. **Have 5 attack the enemy 2 supported by 3.**

Red (counter): Red, they have sprung your trap. **Have 2 and 4 recruit your 1, then have 1 combine with 2 for a 3.** You may now choose to have one of the discarded cards return to hand. Your 4 needs 2 as support to attack the opponent 1. **Return 2 to hand.**

Black (continued): Your attack was redirected to a 3, an invalid attack. Your 5 is discarded face-up and it is still your Main phase. Your 6 and 1 can't perform any actions so switch to End-turn. Red returned 2 to their hand after the combine which puts your 1 in danger.

Question: what can you do to stop the opponent 4 from attacking your 1 and still play the 3?

Answer: the substitute option can discard a card in play for another combat card.

Substitute your 1 for 3, ending your turn.

Red: Draw two (7 & 9). The only Main phase action your cards can perform is to combine for a 7. While this may allow you to play 2 during End-turn to achieve the 9 next turn, 7 is vulnerable to both 3 and 6.

Question: what is the probability that black can attack 7 with their 3? With their 6?

Answer: (0% chance) 3 needs 1 as support to attack 7 which is in the discard pile.

(50% chance) 6 needs 2 as support. They will have 3 cards in hand and 3 cards to draw.

The enemy 6 can also attack your 3 with a 50% chance if they draw 4 as support but you can counter that attack if you keep 7 in your hand. Your 2 can attack both cards and you could always combine for a 7 next turn and still achieve the 9. **Play 2, ending your turn.**

Black: Draw 2 (4 & 10). You now have 2 prestige cards in your hand. During your Draw phase, if you draw into the 8, 9, & 10 you may choose to keep the hand or discard all three face-up to draw three more. With 4 in hand you now have three Main phase options available. You could combine 3 and 6 for 9. Or, you can attack the enemy 3 with your 6 and 4 as support.

Question: What is the last Main phase option?

Answer: 3 and 6 can recruit your 4.

Have 3 and 6 recruit 4. Performing a linear set of Main phase operations is called a sequence. Sequences can be as small as 1 operation or longer than 4 operations. Some also branch off of other sequences. So far, we have played with small 1-2 step sequences. At the start of this turn, you had five different sequences to choose from. Three of those required you to recruit the 4. Putting yourself in a position to have many options is a great way to play. Your opponent is poised for a turn with many more potential sequences should their field remain the same. If a player runs out of cards during their Main phase, they draw three more cards and continue. It is tempting to combine 6 and 4 or 6 and 3 and return the discarded 6 to hand for End-turn but your opponent will surely stop you before you prestige again. You need to reduce their field cards this turn.

Question: what sequence(s) can you perform to attack the enemy cards?

Answer: have 4 and 6 combine for 10 and return the 6 followed by 3 attacks 4 for 6 support.

Have 4 and 6 combine for 10, return 6 from discard.

Have 3 attack the enemy 4 supported by 6.

Red (counter): Red, they attacked your 4 and you were prepared. You could allow the attack to go through as normal, or combine counter. If you combine counter for the 7 their 3 would now be attacking your 7, a valid attack; however, they would need 1 in support and that is in their discard pile.

Have 3 and 4 combine for 7. Neither of the discarded cards are important. **Leave both cards in the discard to draw more next turn.**

Black (continued): Your 3 is discarded face-up. At first glance, this may seem like it was a bad sequence. However, Red only has two cards now and many fewer potential sequences next turn. Additionally, their 2 can't attack your 6 with 7 in play. **Play 6, ending your turn.**

Red: Draw two (6 & 8). You're at the point in the game where determining the remaining cards can really be helpful for deciding future sequences. Your enemy has yet to use the discard option at End-turn and should have all cards in the discard pile visible.

Question: What are the remaining cards your opponent has in hand or yet to draw?

Answer: the opponent will have some combination of 2, 7, 8, and 9 on their next turn.

Your 7 is the only card truly threatened here given their remaining cards. You could combine for the 9 directly but you have better sequences available. **Have 2 and 7 recruit your 6.** Now you two sequences to choose from drew the card you need to complete your cycle. **First complete the cycle by playing the 6.** Now, you have a choice of combining for 8 or 9. Remember, 7 is the only vulnerable card. **Have 2 and 7 combine for 9, return 2 from discard. Play 2, ending your turn.**

Black: Draw two (2 & 8). Your cards in play can't attack or combine. The opponent 2 can't attack your 6 either because the supporting 7 is in their discard. In fact, because they chose not to discard at End-turn, you know what they will have next turn.

Question: what cards will red have in hand next turn?

Answer: red will have 5, 8, & 10 in hand.

Play 2, ending your turn.

Red: Draw two (5 & 10). Have your 2 and 6 combine for 8, return 6 from discard. It is arguably better to leave both cards in discard and play 5. You would draw 2 next turn and 5 can attack 2, 6, & 7. But, we are playing a tutorial and for the sake of it: **play 6, ending your turn.**

Black: Draw one (7). You could attack the opponent 6 but you would lose out on any prestige cards. **Have 2 and 6 recruit 7.** 7 is the most vulnerable. **Have 2 and 7 combine for 9, return 2 from discard. Play 2, ending your turn.**

Red: You have run out of cards to draw from. When you have no cards to draw, players shuffle their discard piles and continue to draw until they have three in hand. **Shuffle the discard pile and place the 4 on top** (we're cheating for the sake of the tutorial). **Draw one (4).** They will most likely combine next turn for their final prestige. Your cards are safe. **Play 4, ending your turn.**

Black: You have run out of cards. Shuffle and draw two (???). The cards you draw aren't part of the rest of the tutorial, keep them concealed. You have 4 cards in play.

Question: could you play or recruit a card?

Answer: no, you have a maximum of 4 field slots including prestige cards.

Have 6 and 2 combine for 8, choose to return a card or leave both in discard. Congratulations! You have all three prestige cards in play. **Promote your commander** by discarding all three from play and become the Queen. You are half-way to winning. Collect them one more time to win. You also have an empty field now. **Finish your turn however you decide.**

Red: Draw one (???). This card isn't part of the tutorial. **Have 4 and 6 combine for 10, choose to return a card or leave both in discard.** Congratulations! You too have made it. **Promote and end your turn however you decide.**

At this point, the tutorial is over. If you were playing until Queen, black would have won by a single turn. However, you should continue the full game and play first to King using what you've learned in this tutorial. Good luck!

P.S. If you liked this tutorial and want to hear how it *sounds* check out my website. I wanted to make the game more accessible, so I mapped each card to different notes/chords. I'm hoping this will enable blind players to play Fano. It also just sounds really cool. Hope you enjoyed.

