

© 2026, Sana

WELCOME TO RISHTA, AUNTIES KNOW BEST

Ages 11+ | 4 - 10 players | 45 - 60 mins

If it's your first time playing, follow this guide. Otherwise, scan the QR code here for a new game generator and expansion for Hard Ole Auntie Mode.

Game Contents:

- GAME BOARD (1)
- TOKENS: SUITOR TOKENS (8) | ROUND TOKEN (1) | SABR TOKEN (1)
- CARDS: GOSSIP CARDS (80) | HOW TO PLAY CARDS (10) | PRIORITY CARDS (10) | RESULT CARDS (16) | AGENDA CARDS (30) | AUNTIE CARDS (10) |SUITOR CARDS (8) | HOW TO PLAY CARDS (10)

⚠ CONTENT NOTE:
Please review and replace any gossip cards that feel too sensitive.

BECOME AN AUNTIE

Choose your Auntie Card

Sara just finished grad school and is home for the summer until she starts her job. Which means if her family doesn't get her engaged to a good man now, they may never.

Sara has three non-negotiable priorities for her husband. She thinks the most important thing is finding her perfect match.

YOU ARE NOT SARA. YOU KNOW BETTER.

You are the aunties who have gathered to ensure Sara marries the perfect match for the family. Choose a character and see how you are related to each other

DAD'S SIDE:

- **DADI:** Dad's Mom
- **CHACHI:** Dad's Sister
- **FAIJI:** Married into the family

MOM'S SIDE:

- **NANI:** Mom's Mom
- **AMMI:** Mom
- **KHALA:** Mom's Sister
- **MAMI:** Married into the family

CHOOSE:

- **COUSIN:** Pick your mom
- **BHABHI** Pick your mother-in-law

AUNTIE: You're not related, just nosy

GUIDE SARA

Deal Agendas Facedown. Each player picks one. Discard the rest of the deck.

- If 4-6 players, pick from:
  - A1, A3, A4, A8, A17, A18, A20
- If 7+ players, also include:
  - A12, A13, A19

YOU know what makes a perfect match that's not just best for Sara, but for the family.

Your Agenda Card is your motivation and win condition. You can look at it, but it MUST be kept a secret from everyone else. Agendas can be:

- NO Dates with a specific suitor
- THREE Dates with a specific suitor
- At least THREE okay dates
- Sara marries her DREAM DATE
- Sara goes on a date with all EIGHT suitors
- Set off the sabr (patience) tracker

REMEMBER YOUR YOUTH

Dadi must read this page. Deal the 3 Priorities facedown.

Sara has three priority traits for a husband. She thinks these traits make a DREAM DATE. Sara trusts Dadi with her priorities.

Dadi will reveal one Priority of her choice at the start of Round 1, Round 2, and Round 3.

⚠ IN SECRET, DADI, DRAW THE FOLLOWING PRIORITY CARDS AND PLACE THEM FACE DOWN:

- ARGUABLY HOT
- SAME RELIGION
- EASY MOTHER-IN-LAW

There are 9-10 total traits possible. Each suitor only has FOUR of these. They are:

- Citizenship
- Traditional
- Easy Mother -in-law
- Sense of Humor
- Same Religion
- Family Reputation
- Educated
- Settled Down
- Arguably Hot
- Good Job

POINT FINGERS

Accuse an Auntie of a specific agenda.

Though everyone has a secret agenda, you do NOT want to reveal your agenda. If you suspect someone of having a specific agenda, ACCUSE them. Accusations can happen at any time.

To accuse:

- Name the Auntie and their Agenda
- If you are CORRECT:
  - They must reveal their Agenda Card
  - They must give you their gossip cards
  - They CANNOT be chaperone or vote in the final engagement
- If incorrect:
  - Your must reveal YOUR agenda
  - You must give THEM your gossip cards
  - You CANNOT be chaperone or vote in the final engagement
  - Sara's Sabr Tracker goes down by 1

You can still win even if your agenda has been revealed.

UNDERSTAND MODERN ARRANGED DATING

Set Suitor Tokens on the board.

Sara will go on dates chaperoned by her aunties across four rounds:

- three dates
- three dates
- two dates, and
- two dates.

After her final date round, she will have her Engagement.

All of her aunties will decide who she marries. There must be a majority vote, and majority rules.

If there is a continued tie, Dadi is the tie-breaking vote.

MEET THE SUITORS

Place Result Cards, WITHOUT looking, under their respective Suitor Cards

Zayn: R2, Mohammed: R16, Daniyal: R3, Hamza: R10, Raheem: R12, Mustafa: R4, Abbas: R7, Ali: R9

There are eight eligible men in the community that Sara can date. She can date each man up to three times. The engagement round counts as a date for the purpose of agendas.

Sara will share with her aunties how she felt about each date. She can have a:

- BAD DATE: 0-1 OF HER PRIORITIES MET
- OKAY DATE: 0-2 OF HER PRIORITIES MET (HIGH RISK)
- GREAT DATE: 2-3 OF HER PRIORITIES MET (LOW RISK)
- DREAM DATE: ALL 3 OF HER PRIORITIES MET

TEST SARA'S PATIENCE

Set the Sabr Tracker Token on the board

You are testing Sara's sabr (patience) through this process. She only has so much to spare. Her sabr drops when:

- She goes on a bad date
  - First date: -1
  - Second date: -2
  - Third date: -3
- An auntie make a false Agenda Accusation
- (Optional) timer for the round goes off

When it hits zero, Sara loses her patience entirely. The person to trigger the counter will shuffle the Suitor Tokens and randomly remove one. That suitor is eliminated.

The tracker resets and CAN go off again, even in the Engagement Round.

GATHER YOUR GOSSIP

Pull out the Gossip Cards. Set 7 cards aside. That is the chaperone pile. Deal out the rest of the gossip cards facedown between the Aunties.

- If 4-6 players, pull:
  - 4, 5, 9, 12, 19, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 39, 46, 47, 48, 50, 57, 58, 67, 69, 71, 73
- If 7+ players, also include:
  - 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 25, 36, 40, 41, 45, 54, 56, 62, 64, 65, 66, 70, 74, 77, 78

That being said, YOU get to choose who she dates and why. Other Aunties have given you helpful gossip about the suitors' red flags. They tell you what a suitor does NOT have.

Keep them secret for now. You'll reveal them conversationally through game play and physically at the end of each relevant round.

CHALO, LET'S GO

Dadi chaperones the first round. Reveal one of Sara's priorities. Then, choose three men for her first three dates.

All Aunties can talk and share opinions. You can further your agenda by hinting at, conjecturing from, imagining wildly, and confusing others about what you think about your gossip cards and the suitors. However, Dadi makes the final call for this round.

It's optional to set the 5 minute timer.

After Dadi has made her choice, turn to the next page.

DEBRIEF DATES WITH FAMILY

Reveal the top row of each Result Card for the chosen suitors.

This is what Sara told you. You must honestly and publicly share up to one Gossip Card in your hand for any of the suitors who went on a date this round. It is encouraged to read the text aloud. If you have no relevant cards, say so.

CHOOSE NEXT CHAPERONE

The previous chaperone chooses the next chaperone.

The rounds of dates must continue! The current chaperone decides how they will choose the next chaperone. Chaperones can choose by:

- Requesting additional gossip cards to be shown publicly
- Deciding based on how aunties are playing and / or related to them

CONTINUE GAMEPLAY

Game play will continue in the following pattern:

- **DATE ROUND:**
  - Chaperone decides which suitors Sara will date
- **RESULT REVEAL:**
  - Chaperone shows the next row of how the dates went
- **CHAPERONE GETS NEW GOSSIP:**
  - After the first round, every chaperone gets to draw as many gossip cards as the suitors who went on dates. (second round = 3 cards, third round = 2 cards, fourth round = 2 cards).
- **FAMILY DEBRIEF:**
  - Everyone reveals up to one gossip card they have about ONE OF THE suitors who went on THE dates
- **CHAPERONE PETITION:**
  - Whoever wants to be chaperone can petition and has the option to play additional gossip cards

CONTEXT & DEBRIEF

Rishta: Aunties Know Best can bring up a lot of feelings around the said and unspoken expectations for daughters and marriage. Questions to process the end of the game:

- How did you feel about playing your character? Do you feel that you played like someone you know?
- How do you feel about Sara being voiceless? What does this make you think about daughters in general?
- Have you seen family dynamics like this before? Does this feel similar to an experience you've had or heard of?
- Did your agenda feel like yours or someone else's?
- What do you think influences marriage processes for daughters?
- How did you feel about the traits prioritized for each boy? What did it bring up? What felt familiar? What felt unexpected? Do you think different family members hold different definitions for the same traits?
- What gossip felt unjustified? What felt valid?
- Was there a moment where you wanted to tell Sara something directly and couldn't? What did you want to say?

CREDITS

GAME & NARRATIVE DESIGNER: Sana Ali
ART DIRECTOR & GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Divya Tak

PLAYTESTERS

Devan, Ashish, Maitreyi, Alissa, Fatma, Prisha, Beca, B, Nujum, Janae, Audrey, Chris, Eshaan, Astro, Liyan, Caroline, Sahal, Ashna, Ray, Yafira, Alanna, Sylvia, Shloka, Ian, Ryan, Olivia, Cathy, Ranjani, Helen, Siddhi, Sofia, Phil, Alan, Patrick, Noah P, Nikolai, Jasmine, Anika, Justin, Ryan, Akhil, Vaishnavi, Sanjana, Sakina, Anjum, Zoeb, Sakib, Ibrahim, Rios, Ali , Sharon, Christina, Sharleen, Ellen, Nasif, Dean, Noah D, Callie, Adrian, Tanika, Mashaal, Ridha, Malika, Fozia, Monazza, Javeria, Mari, Correne, Saleha, Ambreen, Sobia

SPECIAL THANKS

Chris Toh, Omi Bahuguna, Risa Puno, Rita Orlov, Peter Droste, Erika Svanoe, Shing Yin Kor, Neeti Sivakumar, Christina Kaputsos, Arooba, Nureen, Maitreyi, Diandra, Charu, Mariyah, Divya, Zinobia, Shammi, Naqia, Ruqaiya, Ikra, Vreeti, Alishah, Naaziah, Sai, Mansi, Smruti, Sidikha, Sanjana, Vaish, Ashna, Prachi, John, Prisha, Ashish