

Basic Rules of Club & Tournament SCRABBLE®

This is only an overview of the Rules. All club and tournament players are expected to know and follow the Official Tournament Rules, published at: www.scrabble-assoc.com/rules

Word Source

Club uses the Official Tournament and Club Word List (OWL) to adjudicate challenges. This is essentially the same as the Official Scrabble® Player's Dictionary 3rd Edition (OSPD3), which is available in most bookstores, except that the OWL also includes about 200 expurgated words.

OSPD4 was published June 2005; OWL2 is expected mid-January 2006. The NSA has announced that OWL2 will become the official word source for club and tournament play effective 1 March 2006.

You must be a member of NSA to purchase the OWL.

Using the Clock

Game clocks are used to allot 25 minutes of playing time to each player. While this may seem short to new players, it is usually more than enough time. Most players get used to the clock very quickly.

Clock starts when first player looks at first tile.

Neutralize clock to dispute score, call for director, during challenges, etc. Do not neutralize the clock during a "hold" or to compute your score.

Your turn does not end until you hit your clock.

Order of Play

From the Official Tournament Rules, Section II.K:

Sequentially, this is how a turn proceeds:

1. *After your opponent's turn ends, record the cumulative score before beginning your play.*
2. *Position your tiles on the board. You may remove or reposition your tiles as you like to change your play during your turn.*
3. *Designate the blank, if applicable.*
4. *Declare the score.*
5. *Start your opponent's clock, ending your turn.*
6. *Record the cumulative score to that point in the game. You may NOT pre-record the cumulative score.*
7. *Draw tiles to replenish your rack.*
8. *Track tiles, if desired.*
EXCEPTION: Steps 1 and 6, recording the cumulative score, are waived if there are no tiles remaining to draw.

Drawing Tiles

Hold tile bag above eye level and avert eyes.

Show empty palm before putting hand in bag.

Draw tiles and place face down on table or directly on rack.

If you remove too many tiles from bag you must notify opponent, neutralize clock and resolve (see below).

Overdrawing

If you have overdrawn, notify opponent and neutralize clock.

Place your tiles face down on the table. Your opponent chooses 2+ the number of tiles overdrawn and turns them face up, then throws his/her choice of overdrawn tiles back into the bag.

It doesn't matter if you have looked at the tiles or not. If you have mixed drawn tiles with your rack, then opponent chooses from all tiles, otherwise just from newly drawn tiles.

Challenge & Hold:

You can challenge an opponent's play (any or all words created) any time after s/he hits the clock and before s/he draws a tile out of the bag.

Announce "**Challenge!**", neutralize the clock, write on a challenge slip the word (or words) being challenged, hold up your hand, and wait for word judge to adjudicate the play.

If there is a computer for "Software Self Lookups", you and your opponent take the challenge slip to the computer for adjudication.

You can give yourself more time to decide by announcing "**Hold!**" This prevents your opponent from drawing while you decide whether to challenge the play or let it go (your clock still runs while you are holding). Strongly encouraged for all players.

Passing

You can choose to skip a turn by announcing "**Pass!**" and hitting your clock (usually only done near end of game).

Exchanging

Note: You are allowed to exchange only if there are at least 7 tiles left in the bag (count first, to make sure!).

1. Place tiles to be exchanged face down on the table.
2. Announce "**Exchange [# tiles]**" and hit clock.
3. Remove new tiles from bag (place on face down on the table, or directly onto your rack).
4. Put old tiles back in the bag.

Scoring

You must keep track of your score and that of your opponent.

Score sheets are provided by the Club but you may use your own if you wish.

Talking, Etiquette

Club is a social event, so people talk. Tournaments are a different story—you should not speak unless you are declaring the blank, announcing your score, verifying the score, etc.

Players are expected to behave in an ethical manner and follow both the letter and spirit of the rules.

Director:

If you have any questions about rules or procedure during the game, call for a Director.