

# TOURNAMENT BASICS

Revised 3/09

**MOST IMPORTANT:** Never hesitate to call "Director" to ask for clarification of a rule. We are always willing to explain things. Stop your clock if you call for a director. At a tournament you should give yourself every opportunity to play well, while still being polite and respectful to other players. Your opponents will expect you to play exactly within the rules and you should expect the same of them. The time to have fun and socialize is before or after the game. During the game you should be focused and be fully aware of what is happening during the game in order to make sure both you and your opponent comply with the rules.

## WHO PLAYS FIRST:

The player with the fewer firsts plays first

If the players have an equal number of firsts, the player with the most seconds goes first

If the players have an equal number of firsts and seconds, each player draws a tile from the bag. The player with the tile earlier in the alphabet (blank coming before A) is first. Note your firsts and seconds on your score card

## ORDER OF PLAY:

1. After your opponent's turn ends, record the cumulative score before beginning the play.(may be waived if the bag is empty)
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. If you have played a blank, clearly state the designation and write it on the blank designation slip. If you do not properly designate the blank before the end of your turn, your opponent may request you do so and restart your clock
4. Declare the score.
5. Start your opponent's clock, ending your turn.
6. Record the cumulative score to that point in the game (may be waived if the bag is empty). You may not pre-record the cumulative score.
7. Record your play, if desired
8. Draw tiles to replenish your rack.
8. Track tiles if desired.

## DRAWING TILES:

Hold the bag at eye level or at arm's length away from your body, looking away from the bag. Show empty palm before putting your hand in the bag. Do NOT hold tiles in one hand while drawing with the other  
Place the drawn tiles face down on the table or directly on your rack. Do not put your hand back in the bag until your hand is empty.

If you inadvertently overdraw, notify your opponent and neutralize the 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 whether you have looked at the tiles or not, If you have mixed drawn tiles with your rack, your opponent chooses from all the tiles, otherwise just from newly drawn tiles. If you are not certain what to do, call a director!

## USING THE CLOCK

Clock is set so that each player has 25 minutes of playing time.

Clock starts when first player looks at his first tile.

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

Your turn does not end until you hit the clock.

## SCOREKEEPING:

Players must keep a running score for both themselves and their opponents.

You may use the scoresheets provided, or your own.

Verifying the score aloud several times during the game is advised, but please do so ONLY when your clock is running.

### **HOLDING AND CHALLENGING A PLAY:**

You may challenge an opponent's play (any or all words created) within 20 sec AFTER he/she hits the clock or BEFORE he/she takes a tile from the bag.

If you want to think about a word your opponent has played and decide whether to challenge, say "Hold" to notify your opponent not to draw tiles.

While you have put your opponent on hold, your clock will continue running. You may hold as long as you want but your opponent may draw new tiles after 1 minute, keeping them separate from any unplayed tiles. If you then successfully challenge, your opponent shows the tiles to you and returns them to the bag..

If you decide to challenge, stop the clock and say "Challenge". Write the word(s) that you are challenging on a challenge slip. If there is a computer for self-lookups, you and your opponent take the challenge slip to the computer and adjudicate the play.

If you decide not to challenge, say "OK" and your opponent may draw new tiles.

### **COMPUTER ADJUDICATION:**

Challenger writes the challenged word(s) on a challenges slip. Both players verify the spelling.

Both players place unplayed tiles face down, and walk to the computer station without speaking,

Challenger types the word(s) being challenged. All words are entered separated by space or comma. Do NOT judge each word separately!.

Mark the results on the challenge slip and return to seats without speaking.

Start the clock after all tiles are reracked.

### **NO UNNECESSARY TALKING DURING GAMES, PLEASE!**

No cell phones or other electronic equipment.

Keep your voices low when finished playing or leave the room if other games are in progress

Do not speak during the game unless you are announcing your score, declaring the blank, verifying the score, etc.

Do not make editorial comments about your plays. Mispronouncing a word, making comments which might lure your opponent into challenging, and other such comments are considered poor sportsmanship.

### **PLEASE RESPECT THE EQUIPMENT:**

If you must eat and drink during a games, try to be extra careful so you don't get the equipment sticky or wet.

Arrange the tiles in groups of 25 after each game so the next people to play at the board can see that they are all there.

Do not hit the clock buttons—a gentle touch works just as well.

### **WHEN YOUR GAME IS OVER:**

Fill in your game tally sheet and turn in ASAP.

Please either leave the playing room when your game is over and you have turned in your tally sheet, or if you stay in the playing room, talking should be done in a very soft voice.

### **BE A GOOD SPORT AND HAVE FUN PLAYING!**