

BOARD GAMES



A board game is a game that involves counters or pieces moved or placed on a pre-marked surface or "board", according to a set of rules. Games can be based on pure strategy or chance (e.g. rolling dice), or a mixture of the two, and usually have a goal that a player aims to achieve. Most modern board games are based on defeating opposing players in terms of counters, winning position, or accrual of points (often expressed as in-game currency). There are many varieties of board games. Their representation of real-life situations can range from having no inherent theme (e.g. *checkers*), to having a specific theme and narrative (e.g. *Cluedo*). Rules can range from the very simple (e.g. *Tic-tac-toe*), to those describing a game universe in great detail (e.g. *Dungeons & Dragons*).

SCRABBLE



Scrabble is a fun and educational board game where two to four players need to use their creativity to come up with and spell correctly different words to strategically fit onto the Scrabble board. This game is a fun way to practice spelling, math, vocabulary & communication skills.

Players form interlocking words on the Scrabble board. They score points by placing tiles, each bearing a single letter. The tiles must form words in crossword fashion, flow left to right in rows or downwards in columns. The words must be defined in an Official Scrablstandard dictionary. Specified reference works (e.g., the Official Tournament and Club Word List, the Players Dictionary) provide a list of officially permissible words.

Points are assigned to each letter and depending on the square the letter is placed, these points can double or triple in value. Each player competes for high score by taking advantage of the latter tiles as well as the premium squares on the board. In a 2-player game, a good player scores in the 300-400 point range. Playing time is 30 - 60 min.

Objects:

1 letter-tile pouch, 4 letter-tile racks and 100 letter-tiles



In an English-language set, the game contains 100 tiles, 98 of which are marked with a letter and a point value



ranging from 1 to 10. The number of points of each lettered tile is based on the letter's frequency in Standard English. **Alfred Butts** manually tabulated the frequency of letters in words of various length, using examples in a dictionary, the Saturday Evening Post, the New York Herald Tribune, and The New York Times. This was used to determine the number and scores of tiles in the game.

The commonly used letters such as vowels are worth one point, while less common letters score higher, with Q and Z each worth 10 points. The game also has two blank tiles that are unmarked and carry no point value. The blank tiles can be used as substitutes for any letter; once laid on the board. Other language sets use different letter set distributions with different point values.



There are **100 letter-tiles** (A-9, B-2, C-2, D-4, E-12, F-2, G-3, H-2, I-9, J-1, K-1, L-4, M-2, N-6, O-8, P-2, Q-1, R-6, S-4, T-6, U-4, V-2, W-2, X-1, Y-2, Z-1, blanks-2)

Total face point value is 187. Point value is as follows:

- (1 point)-A, E, I, O, U, L, N, S, T, R
- (2 points)-D, G
- (3 points)-B, C, M, P
- (4 points)-F, H, V, W, Y
- (5 points)-K
- (8 points)-J, X
- (10 points)-Q, Z

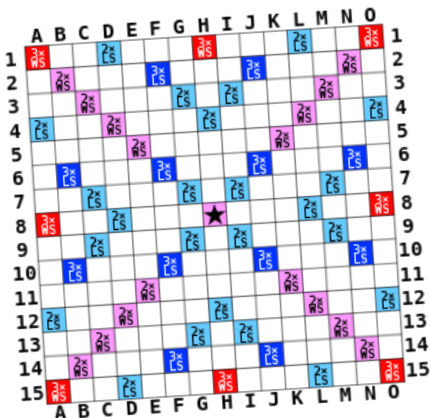


Tiles are usually made of wood or plastic and are 19 by 19 millimeters (0.75 in × 0.75 in) square and 4 mm (0.16 in) thick, making them slightly smaller than the squares on the board. Travelling versions of the game often have smaller tiles (e.g. 13 mm × 13 mm (0.51 in × 0.51 in)); sometimes they are magnetic to keep them in place. The capital letter is printed in black at the centre of the tile face and the letter's point value printed in a smaller font at the bottom right corner

Scrabble game board divided into a 15×15 grid of squares. There are 225 squares on a Scrabble board. In the notation system common in tournament play, columns are labeled with the letters "A-O" and rows with the numbers "1-15". (On Scrabble boards manufactured by Mattel as well as on the Internet Scrabble Club, rows are lettered while columns are numbered instead.)

The board is marked with "premium" squares, which multiply the number of points awarded: eight dark red "triple-word" squares, 17 pink "double-word" squares, of which one, the center square (**H8**), is marked with a star or other symbol; 12 dark blue "triple-letter" squares, and 24 light blue "double-letter" squares.

In 2008, Hasbro changed the colors of the premium squares to orange for TW, red for DW, blue for DL, and green for TL. Despite this, the original premium square color scheme is still the preferred scheme for scrabble boards used in tournaments.



Square	Original and Mattel version	Current Hasbro version
Double letter	Light blue	Blue
Double letter	Dark blue	Green
Double word	Pink	Red
Triple word	Red	Orange

Acceptable words are the primary entries in some chosen dictionary, and all of their inflected forms. Words that are hyphenated, capitalized (such as proper nouns), or apostrophized are not allowed, unless they also appear as acceptable entries;

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Before the game, a resource, either a word list or a dictionary, is selected for the purpose of adjudicating any challenges during the game. The letter tiles are either put in an opaque bag or placed face down on a flat surface.

Next, players decide the order in which they play. The normal approach is for each player to draw one tile. The player who picks the letter closest to the beginning of the alphabet goes first, with the blank tiles taking precedence over A's.



The first word played must cover H8, the center square. The word must consist of at least two letters, extending horizontally or vertically. H8 is a premium square; the first player to play a word receives a double word score.

A proper play uses one or more of the player's tiles to form a contiguous string of letters that make a word (the play's "main word") on the board, reading either left-to-right or top-to-bottom. A blank tile may take the place of any letter.

At the beginning of the game, and after each turn until the bag is empty (or until there are no more face-down tiles), players draw tiles to fill their "racks", or tile holders, with seven tiles, from which they will make plays. Each rack is concealed from the other players.

During a turn, a player will have seven tiles on his or her rack. On each turn, the player has three options: 1) Pass, forfeiting the turn and scoring nothing; 2) Exchange one or more tiles for an equal number from the bag, scoring nothing, an option available only if at least seven tiles remain in the bag; 3) Play at least one tile on the board, adding the value of all words formed to the player's cumulative score

After playing a word, the player announces the score for that play. Then the player draws tiles from the bag to replenish his or her rack to seven tiles. If there are not enough tiles in the bag to do so, the player takes all the remaining tiles.

Under North American tournament rules, the game ends when either (1) one player plays every tile on his or her rack, and there are no tiles remaining in the bag (regardless of the tiles on his or her opponent's rack); (2) at least six successive scoreless turns have occurred and either player decides to end the game; or (3) either player uses more than 10 minutes of overtime. (For several years, a game could not end with a cumulative score of 0-0, but that is no longer the case, and such games have since occurred a number of times in tournament play, the winner being the player with the lower total point value on his or her rack.)

When the game ends, each player's score is reduced by the sum of his or her unplayed letters. In addition, if a player has used all of his or her letters, the sum of the other player's unplayed letters is added to that player's score; in tournament play, a player who goes out adds twice that sum, and his or her opponent is not penalized.

Any combination of these is allowed in a play, given that all the letters placed on the board in one play lie in one row or column and are connected by a main word. Plays must read either left-right or top-bottom. Diagonal plays are not allowed

HISTORY

There were many victims of America's Great Depression in 1929. But in 1933 an out of work architect named Alfred Mosher Butts invented a game that would lift the spirits of millions.



Butts had taken to analyzing popular games, defining three different categories: number games, such as dice and bingo; move games, such as chess and checkers; and word games, such as anagrams.

He noted, "...there is one thing that keeps word games from being as popular as card games: they have no score." Attempting to combine the thrill of chance and skill, Butts combined the elements of anagrams and the classic crossword puzzle into a scoring word game first called LEXIKO. This was then refined during the early 1930s and 1940s to become CRISS CROSS WORDS.



THE SCRABBLE GAME IS BORN

Legend has it Butts studied the front page of "The New York Times" to make his calculations for the letter distribution in the game. This skilled, cryptographic analysis of our language formed the basis of the original tile distribution, which has remained constant through almost three generations and billions of games.



Nevertheless, established game manufacturers unanimously slammed the door on Butts' invention. It was only when Butts met James Brunot, a game-loving entrepreneur that the concept became a commercial reality.

In 1948, James Brunot bought the rights to manufacture the game in exchange for granting Butts a royalty on every unit sold. Though he left most of the game unchanged, Brunot slightly rearranged the "premium" squares of the board and simplified the rules.

Together they refined the rules and design and then, most importantly, came up with the name SCRABBLE – a real word which means 'to grasp, collect, or hold on to something or to scratch frantically' – the word that truly captured the essence of this remarkable concept. And so the SCRABBLE Brand Crossword Game was trademarked in 1948.

Pushing on, the Brunots rented a small, red, abandoned schoolhouse in Dodgington, Connecticut. Along with some friends, they turned out 12 games an hour, stamping letters on wooden tiles one at a time. Only later were boards, boxes, and tiles made elsewhere and sent to the factory for assembly and shipping.

In fact, the first four years were a struggle. In 1949 the Brunots made 2,400 sets and lost \$450. Nevertheless, the SCRABBLE game gained slow but steady popularity among a handful of consumers.

According to legend, Scrabble's big break came in 1952 when Jack Straus, president of Macy's, played the game on vacation. Upon returning from vacation, he was surprised to find that his store did not carry the game. He placed a large order and within a year "everyone had to have one".



Today the SCRABBLE game is found in three of every five American homes, ranging from a Junior edition to an Electronic Scoring edition with many versions in between including: standard, deluxe, and travel-sized games. The game is sold in 121 countries and is available in 29 languages; approximately 150 million sets have been sold worldwide.



Scrabble logo used by Hasbro within and Canada until 2013



Former Scrabble brand logo, used worldwide by Mattel outside U.S. and Canada until 2014

In 1984, Scrabble was turned into a daytime game show on NBC. Scrabble ran from July 1984 to March 1990. The show's tagline promotional broadcasts was, "Every man dies; not every man truly Scrabbles."

In 2011, a new TV variation of Scrabble, called Scrabble Showdown, aired on The Hub cable channel, which is a joint venture of Discovery Communications, Inc. and Hasbro.

Scrabble was inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame in 2004. The name Scrabble is a trademark of Hasbro, Inc. in the United States and Canada. Prior to 1999, it was sold as a Milton Bradley game. Outside the United States and Canada, Scrabble is a trademark of Mattel



GAME ON!

Like chess and bridge, competitive SCRABBLE game play is hugely popular and continues to add players every year.

Each year, the North American SCRABBLE Players Association (**NASPA**) hosts a National SCRABBLE Championship in a major U.S. city. The tournament attracts more than 500 highly-skilled and competitive adult SCRABBLE players who compete in 31 rounds of one-on-one play over a five day period.

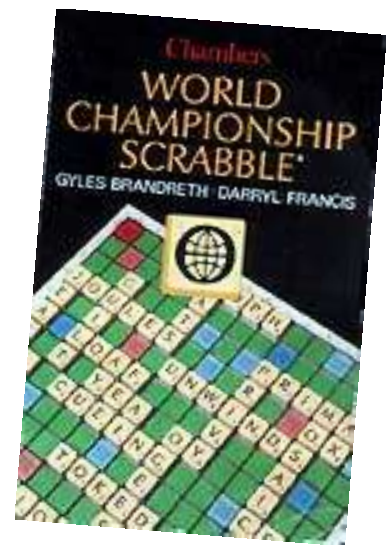


The **NASPA** has thousands of players with official tournament ratings who compete in weekly competitions at sanctioned clubs across the U.S. and Canada. You can get involved and find out more about the **NASPA** by visiting scrabbleplayers.org.



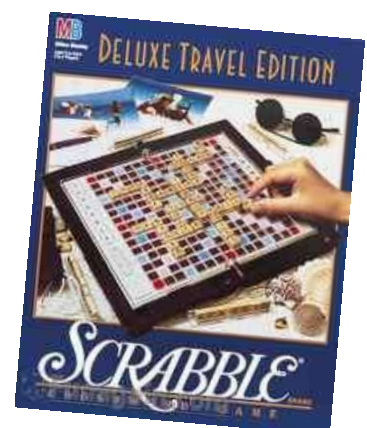
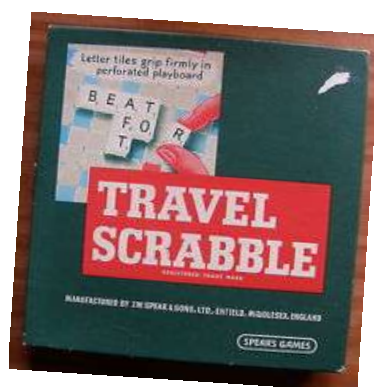
Tens of thousands play club and tournament Scrabble worldwide. All tournament (and most club) games are played with a game clock and a set time control. Notable and regularly held tournaments include:

1. **The World Scrabble Championship:** held in odd years up until 2013, when it was announced by Mattel that it would be called the Scrabble Champions Tournament and be held annually in subsequent years.[16]
2. **The National Scrabble Championship:** an open event attracting several hundred players, held around July/August every year or two in the United States.
3. **The National Scrabble Championship** of the United Kingdom, held every year.
4. **The Brand's Crossword Game King's Cup:** the largest tournament in the world. Held annually in Thailand around the end of June or beginning of July.
5. **The UK Open:** the largest Scrabble tournament in Europe, held annually in Coventry, United Kingdom since 2008.



Other important tournaments include:

1. **The World Youth Scrabble Championships:** entry by country qualification, restricted to under 18 years old. Held annually since 2006.
2. **The National School Scrabble Championship:** entry open to North American school students. Held annually since 2003.
3. **The Canadian Scrabble Championship:** entry by invitation only to the top fifty Canadian players. Held every two to three years.
4. **The Singapore Open Scrabble Championship:** international Singapore championship held annually since 1997.



WORDS DON'T ALWAYS COME EASILY...

Whatever the stakes, at home or locking intellectual horns in a tournament, competitive players are able to check and challenge their SCRABBLE words using Merriam-Webster's "Official SCRABBLE Players Dictionary."

The fifth edition of the dictionary was released in 2014, and has added more than 5,000 words since its last update. One notable word that was added was "GEOCACHE", a word chosen by fans in the SCRABBLE Word Showdown which took place on Facebook in 2014.

For school aged SCRABBLE enthusiasts, The National School SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT brings together contestants from across the U.S. and Canada, unearthing the youngest rising SCRABBLE stars. Students who compete in the tournament are generally members of a school SCRABBLE club where they learn the rules of the game, practice their vocabulary, and learn the benefits of teamwork.

Parents, teachers, and coaches can go to www.schoolscrabble.us to learn more about the event and to register students for the tournament, held annually in the spring.



THE MOST COMMONLY ASKED SCRABBLE QUESTIONS

1. HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE YOUR SCRABBLE GAME SKILLS?

Learn the 101 two-letter words, as well as the three-letter words that can be formed from these two-letter words by adding a letter either to the front or back (ex: ya, pya, rya, yah, yak, yam, yap, yar, yaw, yay). By learning and taking advantage of these few hundred words you will probably increase your scores at least 50 points per game. Also, read *Everything SCRABBLE®*, published by pocket books, isbn 0-671-86686-9, written by Joe Edley, three-time national SCRABBLE champion, and John D. Williams, Jr., executive director of the National SCRABBLE Association. This is the only current all-purpose book that can take a novice or intermediate player to a higher plateau of skills. This book has many strategy hints, word lists, puzzles, methods for finding seven- and eight -letter words quickly, examples of master Scrabble® play and more!

2. IF YOU SCORE 400-450 POINTS PER GAME COULD YOU BE CONSIDERED AN EXPERT?

Not necessarily. At SCRABBLE clubs and tournaments, experts average between 330-450 points per game. However, the competition is probably much stiffer than you encounter, and you may have to adjust your thinking to adapt to the typical 25 minute time limit per person per game when using a chess clock. A better measure of skill is determining the "average points per turn" score. If you average 30 or more points per turn, not counting tile exchanges, then you may very well be a SCRABBLE expert. The very top SCRABBLE players average 35 or more points per turn, not counting exchanges. We suggest you visit and play at a SCRABBLE club or tournament and see how you fare. Everyone who plays in a National Scrabble® Association sanctioned tournament earns a rating. Anyone with a rating above 1600 is considered an expert in SCRABBLE. The National Scrabble® Association recognizes over 300 SCRABBLE experts.

3. IS THERE AN "OFFICIAL" DICTIONARY FOR SCRABBLE PLAYERS?

Yes, Merriam-Webster's Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition (OSPD4). For club and tournament play, it is the Official Tournament and Club Word List, Second Edition (OWL2), also published by Merriam-Webster, Inc., and sold exclusively through www.wordgear.com. It is derived from the Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition, supplemented with nine-letter words and their inflected forms taken from Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (MW11). This book contains words only, no definitions or part-of-speech labels, and includes all inflected forms spelled out in full.

4. DO YOU MAKE GAMES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

Regarding games designed for people with special needs – there are thousands of products designed especially for the blind, low vision, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, arthritic, and the physically challenged.

5. IF YOU LOOKED UP A LEGITIMATE WORD USING THE SCRABBLE ONLINE DICTIONARY AND IT WASN'T THERE - WHY NOT?

The SCRABBLE online dictionary offers only words found in the *The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition* which lists over 100,000 playable two- to eight-letter words. For a word to be included in *The Official SCRABBLE Players Dictionary*, it must be found in two of the five most popular American dictionaries.

Additionally, *The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary* lists shorter words and longer words are included as inflections of the shorter word. The SCRABBLE online dictionary is only able to search the shorter listings. For example, searching for FOCUS in our online

THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES...

The SCRABBLE game has also reached a new community of players in the digital age with digital versions of the game from Hasbro licensee Electronic Arts. Available on Facebook, iPhone, iPad, and Android devices, these digital versions are a continuing testament to Alfred Mosher Butts and his wonderful game of words. The dictionary will also turn up FOCUSED and FOCUSING, but searching for either of the longer words will turn up no results.



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