

How to Play Dominoes

There are a number of different versions of dominoes. For simplicity's sake we have included the rules to one of the most straightforward versions here. It is suitable for 2, 3 or 4 players:

1. Place the dominoes face down and spread them out randomly.
2. Each player then draws a number of dominoes – depending on how many players there are:
 - 2 players: 8 dominoes each
 - 3 players: 6 each
 - 4 players: 5 each

3. Each player makes sure that no one else can see their dominoes: traditionally this is done by placing the tiles on their horizontal edges facing inwards – but with our homemade version we suggest you hold them like cards.

4. The player with the highest double (a tile with the same number of dots on either side of the middle line) plays first, by placing this tile down, face up. (In the unlikely event that no player has a double, re-shuffle and start again).

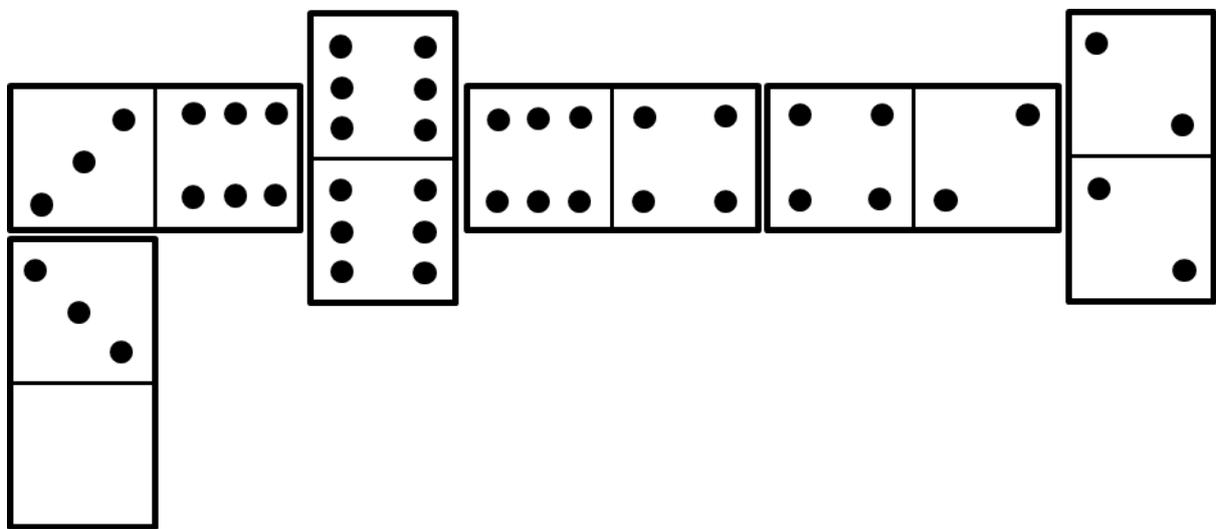
5. Players now take turns to play their dominoes, forming an ever growing chain. They can only add their domino to either the head or tail of the chain and they must ensure the number of dots on the side of the domino they are playing matches the number of dots on the side of the one they are placing it next to.

Whenever a double is played, it is placed perpendicular to the next domino. Whenever a non-double is played it can either be placed in the same direction as the next domino, or at right angles to it. None of these choices makes any strategic difference – players simply choose to sometimes play the domino at right angles to save space.

In the example shown below, the game began with a double 6 being played. See how the dominoes on either side of the double have been laid perpendicular to it and that each one has 6 dots on the side touching the double 6.

Note also, that the “2-4” domino was laid in the same direction as the “4-6”. The “0-3” tile could have been laid in the same direction as the “3-6” but on this occasion the player chose to lay it at right angles (to save space). Either method is acceptable.

The next player will need to either lay a tile with no dots on one side next to the “0-3” or a tile with 2 dots on one side next to the double 2.



6. If a player cannot lay a tile, they forfeit their turn.

7. The game ends when either:

- a) One player has used up all of their dominoes – they are the winner; or
- b) No player is able to make a move – in which case the player with the least number of dots in total on their remaining tiles is the winner.

8. You can choose to give 1 point to the winner, or, total up the number of dots across unplayed dominoes of the other players (subtracting the dots from any unplayed dominoes of the winner if necessary) and awarding this number to the winner. As more games are played, a tally is kept, with the first player to reach a pre-determined point – for example 100 – being the overall winner.