

Dominoes “Dominos”

Dominoes is a game played throughout the Caribbean. Each island has its own dominoes rules and traditions. For example, in Cuba it is popular to play with Double 9 Dominoes. In Puerto Rico, Dominoes is played with the traditional Double 6 Dominoes. Dominoes (“El Domino”) is not just a game of strategy, but an activity around which bonds are built and sustained. In addition, Dominoes touch on aspects of math skills, concentration, planning/problem solving, memory-cognitive function and friendly banter.

In Dominoes, one of the key team offensive and defensive strategies is to defend your partner, by observing what dominoes they are playing and playing to both your strengths. Around the domino table, the players interact developing/increasing bonds and formulating individual strategies to support their teammate without speaking or signaling one another.

Object of the Match

A Domino Match is made up of several individual games. The first player/team to reach the agreed upon in advance score wins the overall match. Typical match scores are 100 or 200 points (Cien/Doscientos).

Basic Rules

Domino Set: The standard double 6 set with 28 bones.

Players:

- Two or three play each by themselves.
- Four, two against two as partners, facing each other.

The Deal:

- All bones are shuffled face down and each player draws 7 bones.
 - In 2 or 3 player games the remaining bones are laid out together on the side (the boneyard) to pull from as needed or until they run out.
- Each player keeps his dominoes secret to himself regardless of how many players are playing.

The Game:

- In the first game of a match, the player who holds the double 6 starts the game.
 - In 2 or 3 player games, if the double 6 wasn't drawn, then the highest double starts the game.
- In subsequent games in the same match, the winning player of the previous game starts the game with any bone he wants, preferably a double bone as this limits his opponent's opportunity of one number option to play versus two number options to play.
- Once the first domino is played, the next player to the opener's RIGHT plays a bone to the layout, draws or passes, and the game continues counterclockwise.
 - Due to our Spanish origins, most games are played to the right (counterclockwise), instead of to the left as in most other games.
- If a player can't legally play a bone, (in 2 or 3 player games) he must draw from the bone yard until he can play.
 - If the bone yard is exhausted, (or in 4 player games) he must pass. If a player has a bone in his hand that can be played legally, he can't draw from the bone yard and must play from their hand.
 - Drawing from the bone yard in the hope of finding a more strategically sound play is illegal and considered "Trampa" and the game must restart.
- In a 4 player/team scenario when a player passes, it is customary to knock one of his bones on the table as a signal that he is passing. Alternately he can signal the pass by saying the word "Paso" (Pass).
 - When a player passes, the opposing team which caused the pass gets 10 pts (or whatever pts are agreed upon in advance). If your partner also passes, the pass is free for your partner.

- **Premiums/Bonus:** Incentives to help speed up the scoring process.
 - 20 pts - Winner(s) of game #1
 - 10 pts - Winner(s) of game #2
 - 20 pts - "Capicu" -The winning bone can play on either open end for the win.
 - 20 pts - "Chuchazo" -Winning the game with the double-blank.
 - 10 pts - "Paso"/Pass- Your opponent passes as they do not have the bone to play.

Game End:

- The game ends when one player plays/lays down ("se acuesta") his last bone or the game is locked ("trancado"-all players have consecutively passed as all seven numbers of a suit have been played.).
- The player or team with the lightest hand in a locked game, wins the game. He/she (or their team in 4 player games) scores points equal to the number of pips on the bones left in the hands of all the players (including their partner, and their own in a blocked game, in addition to any premiums active for that game).

SOME DOMINO TERMS

- "**Mano**" - A single hand or game. A dominoes match is made of several games (manos).
- "**Chuchazo**" - When the winning bone is the double-blank ("la Chucha).
- "**Capicu**" - When the winning bone can play on either open end of the layout. Doesn't apply when the winning bone is a double.
- "**Trancado**" - A locked game. The last bone played before the game got blocked is called the "Tranque".
- "**Ahorcado**" - A hanged double. A double that can no longer be played because all the other 6 dominoes in that suit have been played.

"Puerta" -

The last bone remaining for a particular number i.e. When on one end of the layout you can only play for example a "3", and there is only one "3" left, the player holding that "3" is said to have "la Puerta del 3".

- In other words, said player is the only player who can play in that spot of the layout.

