

How to play Dominoes

1. Using any browser go to <http://pileofdots.herokuapp.com> . Note: not <https://pileofdots...> Just <http://pileofdots...> Note2: I have not run this on InternetExplorer or 'Edge' and recommend Chrome, Safari or Firefox.
2. Enter the password.
3. Enter a table name. This can be any name (case is important). If the table exists, you'll join the existing table. If the table does not exist, it will be created.
4. Other players in your party should enter the same table name.
5. One player should then start a 'New Game'.
6. One at a time, players should 'Join' the game. Order determines teams: #1 will be partnered with #3 and #2 will be partnered with #4 etc.
7. When all players have joined, all initial dominoes will be dealt and player #1 will have the first turn for the first hand.

Alternatively, instead of players joining in separate windows, a single player may click 'Add Auto'. This adds a new simulated player to the game. In this way one player can Join and add Autos for solitary play. Or two players/windows can play a 4 handed partner game with 2 Autos, etc. See further auto notes below.

Table layout: Your dominoes are laid out on the left border. You can select one domino to play, then click on a red 'blank' to play on a chain.

Other players hands are shown on the left. Each player's chain is built from left to right.

The starting domino for each hand is the double domino at the top of the screen; this is called the 'spinner'.

You can rearrange the dominoes in your hand and strategize by selecting two dominoes in your hand – they will swap places.

Typical play proceeds as follows:

- You are partnered 'odds' vs. 'evens'.
- You start with the highest double domino in the 'pack'. E.g. Double 9 is default.
- You play multiple hands with each starting with a double spinner down to double blank. Each hand is over when any player runs out of dominoes.
- Rules are similar to Mexican Train dominoes (except there is no 'public Mexican train'):
- On your turn you can either play on your train/chain or another 'blocked' player's chain.
- Play on a chain by matching a new domino to the exposed ending number on the chain.
- If you cannot play you may pick once from the pile and try to play that domino.
- If no play is possible click on the spinner or the 'Pass' button.
- When you play a double you must 'finish' it with another matching domino. If a double is left unfinished that chain is blocked (the chain, not necessarily the player playing). There are several different published rules for playing doubles in dominoes. Other variations may be added in the future.
- To advance through the 'auto players' click on any played domino on the board (including the spinner).

Scoring

When a player 'goes out' the score for that team is zero and the score for the other team is the sum of all dots in their hands.

Game Modifications

Use a keyboard to change game setup. You can see the keys to change rules in parenthesis in the lower righthand box. They are:

n – change the domino set (up to double 12). Default is 9.

- change the number of players (default is 6).

d – change the # of dominoes dealt for each hand (default is 9). This number is not allowed to be set larger than the total number of dominoes divided by the number of players.

On a tablet (since you don't have a keyboard) you can click on 'rules box' at the bottom right to cycle through these choices. Just set all three number and click through the prompts.

New shortcut buttons:

'C' – puts your dominoes in 'longest chain order'

'F' – put table in 'gofast' mode

'T' – a short cut to 'top' – put dominoes in longest chain order, select top domino, play it on players chain.

Notes:

- There are two ways to organize the dominoes in the player's hand:
- Click two dominoes and they swap position
- Click 'C' shortcut and the dominoes are put in 'longest chain order'.
- The game has not been tested in a comprehensive way – send email with questions or problems or bugs.
- The 'tables' do not 'persist'. That is, they only live as long as someone is logged into them. When a new player joins a table the game settings for the new player are set to the default. To adopt the settings from the existing table reset one of the values in the existing table. Any change made by any player will be broadcast, along with all the settings, to all players at that table.
- The 'Player Labels' (numbers in small boxes) change depending on whose turn it is. They are highlighted with bright red when a player's turn is active. When another player at another table has a turn the label is 'shadowed'.
- Sometimes the host (Heroku) restarts the server, you get an hourglass and play stalls – just wait and things should continue cleanly when the prompt changes.
- Note that if a player refreshes the page the game is over and the score is lost.

