

# Rules for Speed Scrabble®

variant #1: Speed Scrabble® (aka basic rules, PSC rules, Seattle rules)

variant #2: Idaho (aka Idaho Scrabble®, Idaho rules, Scoring Speed Scrabble®)

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## Speed Scrabble®

**PLAYERS:** 4 or 5 players only. (It simply doesn't work with fewer than 4, and more than 5 gets very awkward unless you add a second set of tiles). If you have more than 5 people, the *winner* rotates out after each game.)

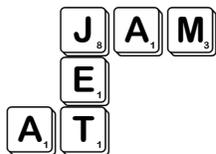
**LENGTH:** Each game tends to be 3 to 7 minutes, however, the game is addictive and sessions of many hours are not unusual! Obviously, the game goes quicker with 5 players. Three player games can last 20 minutes!!

**SETUP:** Take the tiles from a standard Scrabble® set (100 tiles in English); you don't use the board. Spread the tiles upside-down in the center of the table; make certain that each player has plenty of room to work. Each player chooses 7 tiles and leaves them upside down in front of them.

**BEGIN:** The previous winner is the *GOSAYER*. (This is important!) If it is the first game of the day, one person in the room, preferably not a player, is chosen as the *GOSAYER*.

**THE PLAY:** When the *GOSAYER* says GO! all players turn over their tiles and begin making words, attempting to use all of their letters in a single crossword layout. The players boards DO NOT interact in any way. When one player has used all of their letters in words that cross each other, with no letters left over (see example) that player calls out GO!

EXAMPLE:



**A GO!:** When a player calls GO!, EVERY PLAYER takes another tile and continues working.

This means that at all times, all players should have the same number of tiles. If two people call GO! simultaneously it is treated as only one GO!.

WINNING: When all the letters are gone, the next person to call GO! is the winner, and the *GOSAYER* for the next game.

Usually at this point everyone compares words and looks for "style points" (really cool words). You also check to make certain that the winning board is legal. Most people become fanatical about finishing their board.

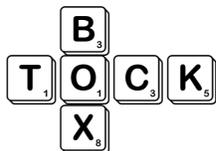
RULES: Same as in regular Scrabble®: only English words are allowed, no proper nouns, no slang, no abbreviations. If there is a word that is in question, the player should call it out and the group of players will vote on whether it is allowed. People often ask the group about spellings too.

NOTES: You can rearrange your word at any time if you feel it will be useful. (And, in fact, strategy usually dictates that you use 2 & 3 letter words at the start and then midway through the game rearrange for longer words!)

There are 100 tiles in a full set, so with 4 or 5 players, there should always be an exact number of tiles left on the last GO! . If there isn't, someone didn't take a tile on every GO!.

If after an *extended* period it becomes clear that NONE of the players can use all their tiles to complete a board every player should pull one tile. (This almost NEVER happens with unless you have only 2 or 3 players.)

Blanks are wild cards that can be any letter, but they must represent the same letter in every word they are in. In the example below, the words could be TOCK and BOX, but not TACK and BOX.



There are only two blanks in a set -- KEEP AN EYE OUT, a common cheat is to flip a letter upside down and use it as a blank for a couple of turns!

## Idaho

PLAYERS: 2 to 5 players (It works best with 2 or 3 people.)

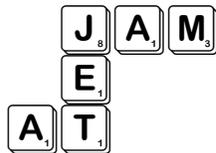
LENGTH: Each game tends to be 5 to 12 minutes. The more players, the quicker the game goes! This variant is not as addictive as the regular version.

SETUP: Take the tiles from a standard Scrabble® set (100 tiles in English); you don't use the board. Spread the tiles upsidedown in the center of the table; make certain that each player has plenty of room to work. Each player chooses 7 tiles and leaves them upside down in front of them.

BEGIN: The previous winner is the *GOSAYER*. (This is important!) If it is the first game of the day, one person in the room, preferably not a player, is chosen as the *GOSAYER*.

THE PLAY: When the *GOSAYER* says GO! all players turn over their tiles and begin making words, attempting to use all of their letters in a single crossword layout. The players boards DO NOT interact in any way. When one player has used all of their letters in words that cross each other, with no letters left over (see example) that player calls out PICK!(or GO!)

EXAMPLE:



A PICK!: *{here is where it differs from variant #1}* When someone calls out PICK!, every player takes enough tiles to leave them with 7 unused tiles. (So if you have all of your tiles used, you pick 7, if you have 1 unused, you pick 6, if you have 2 unused you pick 5, and so on. If you have 6 unused, you only pick one and if you have 7 or more unused, you don't pick at all.) You want as many tiles as you can get; More tiles = more points. If two people call PICK! simultaneously it is treated as only one PICK!.

WINNING: The game ends when there are no letters left and someone calls PICK! -- everyone stops work. After comparing words and checking to make certain all the boards are legal, each person adds up their points (any letter that is used in two words, counts twice!) and subtracts any unused letters. The person with the most points wins!

Generally the counting is done by separating the 'doubles' (letters which are in two words, and therefore count double) and the singles and then lining them up in rows equal to 10 points.

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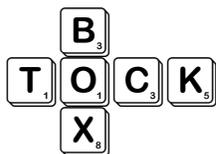
slang, no abbreviations. If there is a word that is in question, the player should call it out and the group of players will vote on whether it is allowed. People often ask the group about spellings too.

NOTES: You can rearrange your word at any time if you feel it will be useful. (And, in fact, good strategy usually dictates that you watch your opponents and stick letters in low scoring words when others are close to a PICK! and then rearrange to make better words when others are going slower.)

The winner is determined by points, so it is important to try to double up your multi-point tiles. Blanks always count zero points.

Sometimes a player can get really stuck, especially early in the game. If someone has 7 letters that are truly impossible to work in (ie, no vowels) then every player in the game pulls ONE extra tile. This gets the stuck player going, but the game is still usually pretty hopeless for the vowelless person.

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There are only two blanks in a set -- KEEP AN EYE OUT, a common cheat is to flip a letter upside down and use it as a blank for a couple of turns!