

Scrabble – Rules and Regulations

- The referees ruling on a play is final
- The Al-Wahda Tournament Committee Officials reserve the right to modify these rules at anytime
- The Al-Wahda Tournament Committee Officials reserve the right to eject anyone, player or spectator, for questionable conduct

Game format

- There will be a total of 8 game sessions. 7 game sessions will be played by all players using the Round-Robin Berger System, the 8th game session will be KOTH session between the four highest players for knockouts.
- Each game session will be 50mins long, with each player having 25mins total for play
- The game allocations will be based on level and will be final.
- There are going to be two levels of play based on strength not age: Advanced and intermediate.
- Advanced Players are supposed to keep score themselves. It is advised that both players keep score as it helps track of no error in score and strategic play. Score sheets will be provided at the venue. For intermediate players, referees will be arranged for score-keeping
- If a player must leave the playing area on her own turn due to an emergency, the Director shall have the power to intervene using her experience and judgment.
- Acceptable Words: Any word that is a part of speech (for example, a noun, verb, adjective or adverb), including a plural, form or tense of the word, is acceptable, as long as it can be found in a [Merriam Webster Scrabble Dictionary](#)
- Passing a Turn: A player may pass her turn anytime during the game. Passing is not exchanging. Passing is doing nothing to change the board or your rack. Score zero for passing.

Tournament Structure

- The structure of games will be generated based on number of registrants and names will be added on the day based on draw.
- Each board will have two players
- The tournament winner will be based on total score and NOT total number of games won. After game 7, four of the highest scored players will compete for the title.
- Game 8 - Final round will determine the winner. The players would draw to see who their opponent is. The highest two scoring players win, and NOT winners of the last games in Session 8.

Start of Play

- The start of play and seating is determined by the draw of tiles. The letter drawn closest to 'A' starts play. A blank tile beats any letter. All players drawing the same tiles will draw again. All tiles are to be returned to the bag before the start of play.
- The first player draws 7 tiles from the bag, without looking into the bag, or trying to feel the letters. The first player's time starts as soon as she sees her tiles. The first word should touch the pink star at the center of the board. Once a player plays a turn; the turn is complete once the player announces the points she scored on the play and hits the timer.
- Once the player says the score, or says completed the turn; she cannot move the tiles on the board.
- The game continues as players add one or more letters to those already played on the board and form a new word or words. The horizontal and vertical positioning rule remains in effect during the entire game. Any words added to the board must touch words already formed and must make new words wherever they touch existing words or letters. The player gets credit for all words formed in this fashion.
- Diagonal words are not permitted. All tiles used in any individual play on the board must help to spell one main horizontal or vertical word.

Verifying the Score

- It is advisable and appropriate to verify that your record of the scores coincides with your opponent's. However, a player should only ask for verification while her own timer is running, and NOT while her opponent's timer is on. Only if there is a discrepancy should the timer be neutralized.

Tiles

- Tiles should remain on the rack as much as possible
- Players may shuffle tiles on their rack at will, but mustn't hold them in their hands unless moving them directly to the bag (after exchanging or overdrawing), moving them to their rack (after drawing tiles or removing them from the board or picking up dropped tiles) or placing them on the board.

Overdrawn tiles

If a player overdrafts tiles, timer should be neutralized (paused) and;

- If all the tiles drawn are in the player's hand, she should place them upside down and the opponent can turn up to three of the tiles and decide extra tile of choice to be returned.

- If the tiles are placed on the rack even if the player knows which one she drew, the player needs to place ALL tiles upside down and the opponent can turn three tiles and select extra tile to be returned.

Exchanging tiles

- A player may use a turn to exchange one or more letters on the rack for new letters. The exchange counts as a turn and no word is played on the board. Announce to your opponent how many letters you wish to exchange. Spread the tiles to be replaced face down on the table, start your opponent's timer, and then draw the same number of tiles from the bag. Place them face down on the table to verify the count, put the replaced tiles into the bag, and shuffle the bag.
- A player may exchange tiles on any turn or turns, provided there is a minimum of seven tiles in the bag.

Playing the Blank tiles

- When using a blank, the player must state and print (either in the designated space on the score sheet or on a blank sheet) which letter the blank represents. This is to be done before starting opponent's timer.
- If a player challenges due to a misunderstanding about which letter the blank has been designated that turn, whether hearing incorrectly or reading incorrectly the name of the letter, then once the misunderstanding has been corrected, the challenge may be withdrawn with no penalty to either player.
- Each time a blank is placed on the board, it is the responsibility of the opponent to turn it over to verify that it is truly a blank. If it is not a blank, and the turn is completed, the player who placed it on the board must pick up all tiles played in that turn and lose that turn (score zero). If a false blank is not detected when it is played, it remains on the board as a blank with no penalty to either player.

Challenge Opponents play

- The opponent can only challenge:
 - Once the opponent has announced the points for play and before the opponent has picked the letters
 - During the same turn or play
- When a player has completed her turn, the opponent may challenge any word or words formed on that play. Once the player has started opponent's timer, the turn has ended and may be challenged. If the player does not start opponent's timer, but instead begins to draw tiles, then the turn is also considered completed, and opponent has 20 seconds to decide to challenge or hold the play.
- When challenging the opponent needs to say how many words from the current turn she is challenging.

When the Word Judge says ``Unacceptable''

- The player returns the offending tiles to the rack, loses the turn (scores zero) and then restarts the timing device for the opponent's next turn. The Word Judge will not specify which word(s) are unacceptable, and will at least pretend to look up every word challenged, to avoid revealing unnecessary information to the players.

When the Word Judge says ``Acceptable''

- If all words in the challenge are judged acceptable. The words remain on the board and the challenger loses that turn. The challenger starts the timer as the player replenishes his/her rack and starts another turn. An unsuccessful challenger scores zero for that turn.

Time Limit

- When using clocks, each player is allowed 25 minutes' time to complete all plays. There is no limit on the time taken per turn.

Exceeding the Time Limit

- If a player uses more than the allotted 25 minutes, her total score will be reduced by ten points for each minute overtime or part thereof. When using a digital clock, there is no penalty when the clock reads 0:00. When the clock is - 0:01 (25 minutes and one second has elapsed) then the 10-point penalty is enforced, and for each extra minute another 10 points are subtracted similarly.

End Of Play

- Each game will last to a maximum of 50mins. Games not completed within the allocated time will be stopped and points tallied. If one or more players have completed a round more than the remaining players at the cut off time, then they shall be allowed to complete their turns to make all rounds of play even.
- The game proceeds until one player goes out (uses all of her tiles and none remains in the bag) or when there are six successive scores of zero. A player scores zero when the players either pass, exchanges tiles or loses a challenge.
- The player going out must neutralize the timer. The opponent has 15 seconds to say "Hold!" or "Challenge!" Otherwise, the playing portion of the game is then officially over. If a "Hold!" is announced, then the opponent's timer is started until the "hold" either becomes a challenge or is rescinded.

Unplayed Tiles

- If both players have unplayed tiles on their racks, each player's score is reduced by the sum of the values of her unplayed letters.
- If one player has used all the available tiles, that player's score is increased by double the total value of the opponent's unplayed letters. The opponent's score remains the same.

Winning the Game

- The player with the highest adjusted score wins the game.

Ties

- If both players have the same adjusted score, the game is ruled a tie.