

Q&A

Q: What's the Tel-Aviv Scrabble Club all about?

A: Having fun. If you don't enjoy yourself, we haven't fulfilled our goal. You're here to meet people over a Scrabble board and have a good time. No one is expelled for losing all their games (but if you win too often, maybe then we'll consider expelling you... ☺).

Q: How does club Scrabble differ from what you're used to playing at home?

A: Well, it's organised Scrabble with a variety of opponents using an agreed upon official dictionary (CSW19), a handful of rules, and a time limit for each game. We need one dictionary so there is no confusion as to what constitutes a word and what doesn't. All acceptable spellings (UK and US) are in the book. The rules are almost the same as living-room Scrabble (ask your opponent or the director about a rule if you're not sure). Why a time limit? So we can all have a break in between games (for refreshments, chatting, whatever) and start the next game together.

Q: I'm very inexperienced. How can I possibly compete against seasoned players?

A: You won't compete against them. You'll start off by playing other beginners. Since the pairings of each round are based on your previous performance, you'll mostly be playing people at the same level as you.

Q: But my opponents play all these ridiculously weird words! How will I know if they're good or not?

A: First of all, if your opponent plays something you don't know, challenge! Sometimes people make mistakes. It's even legitimate in Scrabble to intentionally play a word you're not sure of. Eventually, you'll be playing your own share of ridiculously weird words (let's see how long it takes you to play QI... ☺).

Q: I'll never master the whole dictionary. How will I ever get better?

A: Scrabble is one of the simplest games in the world to learn. You can master the rules, even the more subtle ones, in a few minutes. The most fascinating aspect of the game - you will improve indefinitely. The more you play, the more you learn. No one knows all the words. All one needs to play well is a few basic words, especially the 2-letter words, and a few tactical principles (see the next page).

A few words on strategy...

So, we've already said the game is simple, right? In fact, it's so simple that your goal can be summarised in a single sentence: The object of the game is to score more than your opponent. Of course, if you play some nice words in the process, that's an added bonus. But it's by no means a prerequisite. If you can win the game by playing CAT and DOG, that's all you need to do.

Remember, there are three important things you have to consider before you play your word:

1. **Score** - you want to score as many points as possible. This can be done by aiming for the premium (coloured) squares, especially trying to place your high scoring tiles there. Of course, playing all 7 tiles in a single move - a bingo - is the best way to score well, as you'll get a 50-point bonus!
2. **Leave** - you want to leave yourself with manageable letters (VVGC are not considered manageable...) so you'll be able to score well on your next move. A couple of principles to follow: the more a letter is worth, the quicker you must get rid of it (don't hold on to Qs and Vs...). S's and blanks must be "saved" for good moves, allowing you to "hook" words off words on the board and, possibly, to play a bingo. Try to keep an even number of vowels and consonants - too many of either is not a good thing. Also, don't hold on to duplicate tiles, if possible.
3. **Opening** - scoring well is important, provided you don't open up too many scoring opportunities for your opponent. What's the use in scoring 20 points if you give your opponent a potential 50-point play? Remember - the objective is to score **more** than your opponent, not merely to score well.

Two Letter Word List:

AA AB AD AE* AG AH AI AL AM* AN AR AS
AT AW* AX* AY BA BE BI BO BY CH* DA DE*
DI DO EA ED EE* EF EH EL EM EN ER ES
ET* EW* EX* FA FE FY* GI GO GU HA HE HI
HM* HO ID IF IN IO IS* IT JA* JO* KA KI
KO KY* LA LI LO MA ME MI MM* MO MU MY*
NA NE* NO NU NY OB OD OE OF* OH OI OK*
OM ON OO OP OR OS* OU OW* OX* OY PA PE
PI PO QI RE SH* SI SO ST* TA TE TI TO*
UG UH* UM UN UP UR* US* UT WE* WO XI XU*
YA YE YO* YU ZA ZE* ZO

*=NO "S" HOOK

Website, Facebook, Apps, etc.

- Check out our wonderful website: www.scrabble.org.il
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- www.zyzyva.net: Searching, compiling lists, studying
- Apps
 - Scrabble Expert
 - Scrabble Checker
 - Wali Timer
- Evan: evangarycohen@gmail.com