



Southern Oregon Scrabble Tournament Rules

Introduction

During a SCRABBLE® game teams form interlocking words crossword fashion on the board, using letter tiles of different values. Each team competes for high score by taking advantage of the letter values, as well as the premium squares on the board. In a game, a good team scores in the 250-350 point range.

Setup

All letters are poured into the bag or another container, and shuffled. Draw for first play. The team drawing the letter nearest the beginning of the alphabet plays first. A blank tile supersedes all other tiles. Return the exposed letters to the pool and reshuffle. Each team then draws seven new letters and places them in their rack. A team consists of two players who share one rack.

Game Play

- Students will have approximately 3 minutes for each play using a sand timer. (A play includes placing letters on the game board, exchanging letters or passing). Students automatically pass when they exceed the time limit.
- The first team combines two or more of their letters to form a word and places it on the board to read either across or down with one letter on the center (star) square. Diagonal words are not permitted.
- A team completes a turn by counting and announcing the score. The team then draws as many new letters as played, thus always keeping seven letters in their rack.
- Play alternates between teams. Each team, in turn, adds one or more letters to those already played to form new words. All letters played in a turn must be placed in one row across or down the board, to form one complete word. If, at the same time, they touch other letters in adjacent rows, they must form complete words, crossword fashion, with all such letters. The team gets full credit for all words formed or modified during their turn
- New words may be formed by:
 - a. Adding one or more letters to a word or letters already on the board.
 - b. Placing a word at right angles to a word already on the board. The new word must use one of the letters already on the board or must add a letter to it.
 - c. Placing a complete word parallel to a word already played so that adjacent letters also form complete words.
- No letters may be shifted after a score is announced.
- The two blank tiles may be used as any letters. When playing a blank, the team must state which letter it represents. It remains that letter for the rest of the game.

- A team may use a turn to exchange all, some, or none of the letters in their rack. To do this, first announce how many letters your team will exchange then place the discarded letter(s) facedown. Draw the same number of letters from the pool; then mix your discarded letters with those in the pool. This ends your team's turn.

Challenging Words

- Word challenges are instituted by the challenger raising his or her hand to signal a challenge.

(Sample word challenge form)
WORD(S) CHALLENGED
Table No._____

acceptable **not acceptable**
request 2nd opinion

- The National SCRABBLE® Association uses the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition to adjudicate school championships. Words with more than 8 letters must appear in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Any word may be challenged before the next team starts a turn. If the word challenged is unacceptable, the challenged team takes back their tiles and loses that turn. If the word challenged is acceptable, the challenger loses their next turn. Consult the dictionary for challenges only. It is strongly advised that BOTH team players agree to challenge. This will help minimize careless or unnecessary challenges.
- **ENDING THE GAME:** The game ends when all letters have been drawn, and one team uses their last letter; or when all possible plays have been made; or when a prearranged time limit ends.

Scoring

- Keep a tally of each team's score, entering it after each turn. The score value of each letter is indicated by a number at the bottom of the tile. The score value of the blank is always zero.
- The score for each turn is the sum of the letter values in each word formed or modified on that turn, plus the additional points obtained from placing letters on premium squares.
- **Premium Letter Squares:** A light blue square doubles the score of a letter placed on it; a dark blue square triples the letter score.
- **Premium Word Squares:** The score for an entire word is doubled when one of its letters is placed on a pink square; it is tripled when one of its letters is placed on a red square. Include premiums for double or triple letter values, if any, before doubling or tripling the word score.
- Letter and word premiums count only on the turn in which they are played. On later turns, letters already played on premium squares count at face value.
- When a blank tile is played on a pink or red square, the value of the word is doubled or tripled, even though the blank itself has no score value.
- When two or more words are formed in the same play, each is scored. The common letter is counted (with full premium value, if any) for each word.
- Any team that plays all of their seven tiles on a turn scores a premium of 50 points after totaling the score for the turn.
- Both teams should record each team's score, entering it after each turn is announced and before drawing new tiles. Always record your opponent's cumulative score before making your own play. Check the score announced by your opponents for accuracy when they make their play. Games generally are not recounted later—though either team may correct a score

or their addition before the game ends. If there is ever a question, call the teacher or coach for a 2nd opinion. (Sample score card).



- **UNPLAYED LETTERS:** When the game ends, each team's score is reduced by the sum of their unplayed letters. In addition, if a team used all letters, the sum of the other team's unplayed letters is added to that team's score.
- Any team that is not present at the start of a round will automatically lose 10pt. for each three minute interval they are absent. The game will be forfeited if they fail to arrive 15 minutes after the round begins, with the opposing team earning a win and 50 points added to their cumulative spread.
- The scores that are recorded on the tournament score sheet are only the amount a team won (+) or lost (-) by. The individual total team's scores are neither tallied nor accumulated and do not enter into determining tournament winners.
- **Brackets:**
The opponents for the first two rounds will be randomly predetermined. The opponents in the two afternoon rounds will be selected based upon cumulative scores from the morning rounds. Winners will be competing against winners, etc.
- A round ends when either all tiles have been drawn and one team uses their last letter, when all possible plays have been made, or at the end of the time limit for the round. Most rounds will be 45 minutes unless stated at the start of the round due to scheduling limitations. When the round ends, each team's score is reduced by the sum of their unplayed tiles on their rack. In addition, if a team used all their tiles, and the bag is empty, the sum of the other team's unplayed tiles is added to that team's score.
- The match will be four rounds. The team winning the most games wins the tournament. If there are multiple teams with the same number of wins, the winner is the team with the highest point spread. A team's spread is calculated by adding together the number of points by which each of their games was won or lost by.
- **Goal is to have fun:**
The primary goal of the event for the students is to have fun. Scrabble is a game. Good sportsmanship is expected by all participants. It is important that all coaches, parents, spectators, volunteers, and judges create a supportive and positive atmosphere for the students to enjoy their experience, promote friendships as well as have opportunities for learning experiences.