

# SOME IMPORTANT ASPECTS of WESPA GAME RULES

*\* NOTE: This summary is not itself a set of rules  
The full rules can be found at <http://wespa.org/rules/>*

**BEFORE STARTING:** Records of previous games should be taped or clipped together.

The non-starting player may choose the position of the timer.

**ABSENT FROM THE TABLE:** If you are absent, the TD may start your clock.

If you arrive with less than 15 minutes remaining, you MAY CHOOSE to play, or forfeit that game – meaning your opponent wins, with 75 points spread.

If you arrive after your time expires, you MUST forfeit the game.

**STARTING GAME TIMER:** Start your opponent's timer when they draw the first tile from the bag.

**THE BAG:** When tiles are drawn, the bag must be at eye level - look away from the bag. Your opponent must always be able to see the bag. Show an open hand before entering the bag.

**Counting Tiles:** You may put your hand into the bag to count the tiles remaining, unless your opponent is having their move and needs the bag. Announce your intention first. Keep the bag at eye level, and look away. Show an open hand both before and after placing your hand in the bag.

**ORDER OF PLAY:** To complete a turn by playing a word, a player must, in this order:

- (a) place the tiles on the board
- (b) announce the score for the turn
- (c) press the timer
- (d) record the score for the turn and the cumulative score in the normal space on their score sheet
- (e) draw replacement tiles;
- (f) tile track (if desired)

**When Bag is Empty:** It is not compulsory to record move scores or cumulative scores (until game finishes).

**Tile tracking out of order:** If your opponent tile-tracks before drawing replacement tiles, you may ask the TD to allocate you additional time.

**END OF TURN:** You may change a move, as long as the timer has not been pressed. After you press the timer, you cannot change the move - including the number of tiles to be exchanged, or the designation of the blank.

Your turn finishes when you press the timer. If you forget to press the timer, and place your hand in the bag to get new tiles, your move is also over

**ACCEPTING A TURN:** The opponent accepts the turn if he or she neither calls 'hold' nor issues a challenge before the player removes a replacement tile from the bag.

Writing by the opponent does not affect acceptance of a turn.

**Drawing Replacement Tiles:** If the opponent has neither called 'hold' nor issued a challenge, the player may draw replacement tiles. The opponent's right to call 'hold' or issue a challenge survives only until the player has removed the first replacement tile from the bag.

Tiles may not be drawn until the player has recorded the score.

**FLASH-DRAWING** is unethical! (where the player fails to record scores before drawing a replacement tile, and the opponent has thus not had the chance to say "hold" or "challenge")

The opponent should call the Tournament Director if they consider the player has drawn replacement tiles too quickly for the opponent reasonably to assess whether to call 'hold' or issue a challenge. The TD may then still allow a challenge even after a replacement tile is drawn.

**HOLD:** Once a player has pressed the clock, the opponent must either accept or challenge the turn, or say 'hold' (leaving the timer running).

If you think you may want to challenge your opponent's play, say "HOLD", to stop them from drawing tiles. If you then decide to challenge, you now stop the timer.

If you have your opponent on "hold" for over a minute, they may draw and view replacement tiles - but these remain facedown on the table until you have accepted the move, or a challenge has been resolved. If you decide not to challenge, say "Accept" or "Okay".

**CHALLENGE:** Wait until your opponent presses the timer before challenging.

Once you stop your opponent's timer, you cannot withdraw a challenge.

If your opponent starts to take new tiles without pressing the timer, you may then challenge, if you want.

You should clearly say the word "Challenge". Stop the timer, and say which words are being challenged. Hide tiles on racks. Both players walk to the challenge computer. The challenger types in all words to be challenged. The player checks these words are correctly typed, then hits the TAB key (if using Zyzyva).

Words to be challenged MAY be written on a sheet of paper before leaving the table, if required. After a challenge, the timer may not be restarted until both players are seated, incorrectly-played tiles returned to racks OR the move score re-announced.

**CHANGING:** Before exchanging tiles, check there are at least seven tiles in the bag. Announce "Change", plus the number of tiles to be changed. Place these tiles on the table, then start your opponent's timer. Draw replacement tiles, and place on your rack. Then return discarded tiles to bag.

**BLANKS:** State which letter the blank represents, and write it down, preferably on the result slip. Do not pronounce the whole word.

**OVERDRAWN TILES:**

Declare the overdraw, and neutralise the timer. If no new tile has touched your rack, place the new tiles face down on the table, and your opponent selects excess tiles plus two (up to the maximum number drawn), turns them face up and chooses the excess tile/s to return to the bag. If any new tile has touched your rack, all tiles on the rack plus all new tiles are placed face down on the table. Your opponent selects excess tiles plus two, turns them face up and chooses excess tiles to return to the bag.

**UNDERDRAWS:** Call the TD if this happens at the end of the game, such that one player does not have enough tiles.

**Drawing out of order:** No penalty applies, but it could be considered unethical if deliberate. (This usually happens because a player has tile-tracked out of order, ie broken the rules!)

**TIMERS:** The timer may only be stopped during the game, when:

- (a) a player says "Challenge"
- (b) either player wishes to resolve a score discrepancy
- (c) enforcing the overdraw rule
- (d) calling the TD to resolve a problem

**IN YOUR TURN ONLY:** These actions may only be done during YOUR turn: rotating the board, adjusting tiles on the board, or verifying the score. (Do not touch the board once you have pressed the timer)

**ENDING THE GAME:** When you play your final move, stop the timer (do not press it so that you opponent's timer is still running).

Your opponent must either accept the move by writing down the score, or challenge the play. If neither of these happens after five seconds, restart your opponent's timer.

**SIX ZEROS:** The game is also ended when there are six successive scores of zero resulting from passes, exchanges, or challenges.

**OVERTIME:** You have gone overtime if your electronic count-down timer display shows -00:01. Subtract 10 points for each minute or part thereof by which the time limit was exceeded.

If you run 10 minutes overtime, your game is forfeited. Call the TD.

**SCORES:** Both players must record the score for each turn and the cumulative (total) score.

Check cumulative scores every three or four moves, NOT EVERY MOVE (this disrupts opponent's play).

**Scoring errors** (for one move, or the cumulative score) may be corrected at any time prior to signing the final result sheet, if both players agree.

Check the final scores before signing the results sheet. After signing, no changes can be made without permission of the TD.

**RECOUNTS:** (rescoring each individual move) If the final margin is 20 points or less, either player may request a recount at the end of the game, before the result slip is signed. The entire game must be recounted. Timers remain off.

**LEAVING THE ROOM:** If you need to leave the room during a game, call the Tournament Director first - unless it is an emergency. If it is an emergency (and you do not have time to call the TD first) your opponent must immediately tell the TD that you have left the room.

**#1 RULE – If you are unsure of ANYTHING,  
stop the timer, and  
CALL THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR IMMEDIATELY!**