

# Dominoes

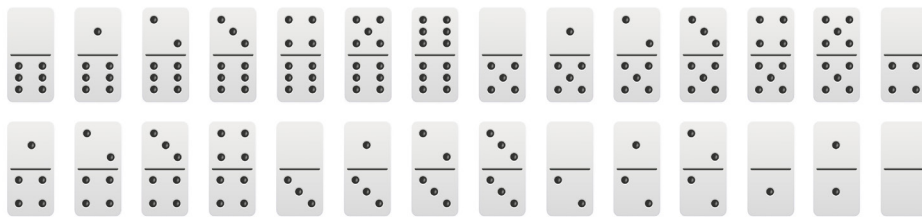
Players 2-4    Ages 4+    5-15 min

## GOAL

Be the first player to play all your dominoes!

## MATERIALS

A set of dominoes, either Double-Six, Double-Nine, or Double-Twelve



## VOCABULARY

Number words 1-6 or 1-12

Same

Different

## QUESTIONS

Why did you pick that domino to play?

What do you think your next move should be? Why?

If you had to teach this game to a friend, what would you say first?

## GAME VOCABULARY

**Double:** a domino that has the same number of pips, or dots, on both ends (e.g., 6|6).

**Draw Pile:** the extra dominoes that are not dealt to players at the start of the game.

**Blocking:** when a player plays a domino that stops their opponent from making a move.

**Chain:** the line of dominoes that grows as players add matching tiles.

## HOW TO PLAY

### Getting familiar with the dominoes

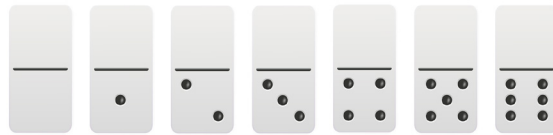
Ask children, “What do you notice about the dominoes on the table?”

Help children notice that dominoes have two sides and that they can count the number of dots on each side, or they can add to find the total number of dots.

Which domino has the biggest number of dots if we total both sides? Which one has the smallest number?

### Line Them Up

Ask children to line the dominoes up in order. Find all the dominoes that have one side blank with zero dots. Look at the side with the dots and order them from 0 to 6.



**Invite your children to play with the dominoes in other ways that interest them.**

**Once children are familiar with the dominoes, you can introduce the game.**

### Shuffle the Dominoes

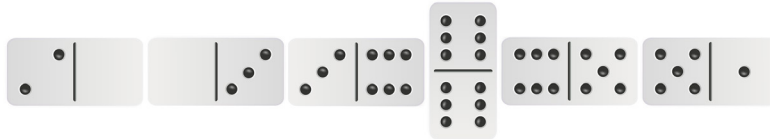
Turn all the dominoes face down and mix them up on the table.

### Draw Your Dominoes

- Each player takes 7 dominoes.
- Leave the rest of the dominoes in a pile. This is the draw pile.

### Starting the Game

- The player with the highest double (a domino with the same number on both ends) goes first.
- They place that domino in the center of the table.



### Taking Turns

- Players take turns adding a domino to the table.
- You can only play a domino if one of its ends matches the open end of a domino already on the table.
- If you play a double domino (same number on both ends), place it sideways across the line of play.

### Drawing a Domino

- If you don't have a matching domino, draw one from the draw pile until you can play.
- If the draw pile is gone, you pass and the next person takes their turn.

### Winning the Round

- The first player to play all their dominoes wins the round!
- If you want, add up the numbers on the other players' leftover dominoes to keep score.

## TIPS FOR PLAYING

- When you're playing with adults, you may limit the talk at the table when you're playing. But when you're using dominoes as a way to teach math skills to children, you may want to encourage conversation. As children are learning how to play the game, you can talk to them about their moves and ask them to explain their reasoning.

Ask, "Why did you choose that domino?" "What would happen if you picked a different domino?"

- Count dots together, compare numbers, and talk about patterns. Challenge the children with questions like, "Which domino has the most/least dots?"
- Invite your children to create their own games using dominoes.

You could line up dominoes in numerical order, stack them, or use them to create designs.

- If you don't have dominoes at home, check out your local library.

## WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

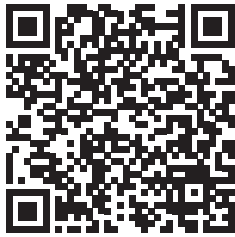
- **Subitizing:** Playing dominoes gives children practice subitizing –quickly seeing how many of something without counting. Research suggests that children who are strong at subitizing tend to do better in math. For higher numbers, like 5, people typically see 2 and 3 and then, with practice, quickly know that that is 5. Giving children lots of practice with subitizing helps them develop a strong sense of numbers.
- **Comparing and Pattern Recognition:** Matching and comparing dominoes encourages children to identify patterns and understand numerical relationships. They learn concepts like more vs. less while making strategic choices.
- **One-to-one correspondence:** When children are able to count objects one-by-one in the correct number order, they are using one-to-one correspondence.
- **Problem-Solving and Strategy:** Playing dominoes encourages children to think ahead, make decisions, and adjust their strategies based on available moves, helping them develop logical reasoning skills.
- **Social Skills and Turn-Taking:** Children learn patience, cooperation, and communication as they wait for their turn, follow rules, and engage in friendly competition with others.

## MATH TOPICS

Number: Counting and Cardinality

Number: Operations

## VIDEO



### Watch Game Video

View the QR code in your smartphone's camera app or QR code reader to watch a video that shows how to play *Dominoes*.