



## Dominoes

### Introduction

There are two main types of domino game played in Jamaica: Partner (most favoured and played in world tournaments) and Cut Throat (in which each player plays for himself). A variation known as French is also described on this page.

### Partner Dominoes

Only four persons can play. Sitting around a square table, your partner is the person directly in front of you. Each person plays to help his partner and himself while trying to pass the opponent.

### Equipment

The game uses a double six domino set.

### The Deal

Each player receives 7 tiles.

### The Play

The first hand begins with the individual who has in his hand the double six tile. In tournament play, this player must begin by playing the [6-6]. In informal games the holder of the [6-6] is allowed to announce that he is "sporting" and begin with a different tile.

In the second and subsequent hands, the team that won the previous hand plays first. Having seen their tiles the players of this team may discuss which of them will start (but are not allowed to tell each other what tiles they hold), and the player who starts may begin with any tile.

Play continues anti-clockwise. As usual, a turn consists of playing one tile to extend one of the two ends of the layout, and the touching ends of adjacent dominoes must match. Doubles are traditionally played at right angles across the line. If a player cannot play then he passes his turn.

The hand ends when an individual first finishes playing all tiles from his hand, or when the game becomes blocked, so that no one is able to play a tile.

- If a player manages to play all his tiles, that player's team wins the hand.
- If the game is blocked, the hand is won by the team of the player whose remaining tiles have the least spots. It does not matter what tiles the winner's partner has. Example: the game is blocked and North has [5-5], South [1-1], East [2-2], West [5-1], North-South win because of South's [1-1], even though North-South have more spots in total than East-West.
- If the game is blocked and two opponents tie for least spots, then the hand is a tie, no matter what the other two players have.

## Scoring

At the end of the hand, the winning team scores one point. The aim is to win six times in succession - to "give your opponent six love (6 - 0)". So long as one side keeps winning, they add points to their total. If the other side wins a hand, the score returns to 0 - 0, and the next hand is begun by the holder of the double six.

**Exception:** Many play the variation in which, when the game reaches 1 - 1, instead of starting over, there is a play-off hand. The team that wins the play-off hand then has a score of 2 - 0 and starts the next hand. In the case of a tie, the hand is replayed. If the score was 0 - 0, the holder of the [6-6] starts the replay, but the replay is worth 2 points, taking the winning team to a 2 - 0 score. If one team already has a score, that team starts, and if they win the replay they add two points. If the leading team loses the replay, the score is reset to 0 - 0.

If the first replay is also a tie, there will be a second replay for 3 points, and if that is also a tie, the third replay is for 4 points, and so on. That is to say, if the score was 0 - 0 or the leading team wins, the winners add the appropriate number of points (one for the current deal and one for each tied deal that preceded it), but if the leading team loses the score is simply reset to 0 - 0.

## Cut Throat Dominoes

### The Deal

When playing "cut throat" the size of the hand varies with the number of players:

- 2 players get 14 tiles each (It may be stipulated before the start of the game that 7 tiles are used and the rest stay in the boneyard to be drawn when needed)
- 3 players get 9 tiles each (double blank is taken out)
- 4 players get 7 tiles each

### The Play and Scoring

The play is the same as in the partner game. Each player keeps a score of games won and the first player to achieve 6 wins is the overall winner, provided that another player has zero. If everyone wins a hand before anyone reaches 6, the score returns to zero points each.

