

G L O S S A R Y

OF COMMON TERMS

The following terms are frequently used in club and tournament play.

ABBREVIATIONS

DLS: Double Letter Score. **DWS:** Double Word Score.
TLS: Triple Letter Score. **TWS:** Triple Word Score.
?: The blank tile. The letter representing the blank is also often highlighted in diagrams and underlined in text. **OSPD4:** *The Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition.* The number represents the printing edition. **OWL2:** *The Official Tournament and Club Word List, Second Edition.*

ALPHAGRAM

The alphabetic arrangement of a group of letters.
Example: BEGNU is the alphagram of the word BEGUN.

ANAGRAM

A word that is spelled with the exact same letters as another word. *Example:* RIDES is an anagram of SIREN and vice versa.

BACK EXTENSION

See "EXTENSION PLAY."

BACK HOOK

See "HOOK."

BALANCING YOUR RACK

Making a play that allows you to save letters on your rack that will most likely help you score well next turn. This often means leaving an equal or nearly equal number of vowels and consonants.

BINGO

Any word played that uses all seven letters on the rack, earning a bonus of 50 points.

BINGO-PRONE TILES

A group of tiles that are likely to produce a bingo. Often used to describe a player's set of three to six tiles just before drawing his or her replacement tiles. *Example:* ERS?, AL? or AERST.

BLANK BINGO

A bingo that includes a blank tile.

BLOCKING

The act of playing a word on the board that stops the opponent from making a potentially large score or makes it harder for either player to score many points.

BLUFFING

The act of deliberately playing a phoney word. There is nothing unethical about trying a bluff.

BRAILLING

Feeling the surface of a tile while your hand is in the bag in order to draw a blank or other specific letters. This is strictly forbidden.

CHALLENGE

A stoppage of the game to determine whether the previous play is in the dictionary being used.

CHALLENGE SLIP

A slip of paper on which the words being challenged are printed.

CLOSED BOARD

The opposite of an open board: a board on which there are few places to play bingos or other high scoring plays.

COFFEEHOUSING

To make small talk or do any of a number of things meant to distract or mislead your opponent. This is unethical and strictly forbidden. In a tournament setting, it is generally considered impolite to talk during a game unless it is pertinent to the score or the play.

CONTESTANT SCORE CARD

In tournament play, a card on which each player keeps a record of each game.

COUNT TILES

A check of the number of tiles commonly done at two different times: 1) before a game begins to ensure that there are 100 tiles; 2) near the end of the game, when knowing exactly how many tiles remain to be played can be crucial.

COURTESY RULE

If an opponent takes more than a minute to "Hold" (consider challenging) a play, the player may draw new tiles but must keep them separate from the others until the "Hold" is resolved. Often, a third rack can be used to hold these newly-drawn tiles.

DOUBLE-DOUBLE

A play with letters that cover two Double Word Squares (DWS). To score the play, quadruple the sum of the value of the letters of the DOUBLE-DOUBLE word.

DUPLICATION

More than one of a given letter on the rack. In general, there are fewer choices for good plays when duplication exists.

ENDGAME

The portion of a SCRABBLE® game when there are fewer or no tiles left to draw from the bag.

EXCHANGING TILES

Using a turn to exchange any number of tiles on the rack for new tiles. An exchange counts as a play, and scores zero. Exchanging is not allowed when fewer than seven tiles remain in the bag.

EXTENSION PLAY

The extension of one word by adding two or more letters. *Example:* With QUEST on the board, adding CON to the front creates the extension CON-QUEST. Adding DO to the end of HAIR forms the back extension HAIRDO.

FISHING

To play only one or two tiles, usually for few points, keeping five or six really good tiles with the hope of playing a high-scoring word next turn.

FREQUENCY LIST

See “TRACKING SHEET.”

FRONT EXTENSION

See “EXTENSION PLAY.”

FRONT HOOK

See “HOOK.”

HOLD

An opponent calls “Hold” when considering whether to challenge a play. Calling “Hold” signals to the player not to draw new tiles. The hold continues until either the challenge is officially announced or the play is accepted.

HOOK

A letter that will spell a new word when it is played in the front of or at the end of a word already on the board. *Example:* With HARD on the board, the letter Y is a hook letter since HARDY is acceptable. Likewise, the letter C can be “hooked” since CHARD is acceptable. In this case, C would be called a “front hook” and Y a “back hook” to HARD.

HOT SPOTS

Either specific squares or areas on the board that have excellent bonus-scoring opportunities. *Example:* Triple Letter Squares (TLS) or Double Word Squares (DWS) adjacent to vowels; a single letter placed between two Triple Word Squares; words that take a variety of hook letters (for instance, ARE, ON, CARE).

LEAVE

The group of tiles left on a player’s rack after making a play and before drawing new tiles.

LONG LIST

The official word list used by players in rated tournaments for words 10 to 15 letters long. Does not include long words already listed in OSPD4.

NASPA

North American SCRABBLE® Players Association. NASPA oversees rated clubs and tournaments throughout North America and runs the National SCRABBLE® Championship every year.

NATURAL BINGO

A bingo that does not use a blank tile. Also called a “Natural.”

NEUTRALIZE THE CLOCK

To stop the game clock. Neither player’s time runs during challenges, rule disputes or score verifications.

NONGO

A bingo on your rack that won’t fit anywhere on the board.

OPEN BOARD

A board on which there are many places to play bingos or other high-scoring words.

OSPD4

Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, Fourth Edition.

OVERDRAWING TILES

Drawing more tiles from the bag than is appropriate. In tournament play, there is a penalty for this situation.

OWL 2

As of March 2006, *The Official Tournament and Club Word List, 2nd Edition (OWL2)* is the official word source for all sanctioned NASPA clubs and tournaments.

PARALLEL PLAY

A word played parallel to another word. *Example:* With MAR on the board, LATE is a parallel play creating four new words: LATE, MA, AT and RE.

M A R
L A T E

PASSING

Ending a turn without exchanging tiles or making a play on the board. The player says “Pass” and then starts opponent’s timer. It is now opponent’s turn.

PHONEY

Any unacceptable word. An unacceptable word is one that is not found in the word source you are using. If a phoney is not challenged when it's played, however, it stays on the board and is scored like any other play.

POINT SPREAD

See "SPREAD."

PROTILES

Plastic tiles that have a smooth face. Protiles come in several fun colors and are the official tiles used in the National School SCRABBLE® Championship and the National SCRABBLE® Championship.

POWER TILES

The two blanks, the four Ss and the J, Q, X and Z.

RACK BALANCE

See "BALANCING YOUR RACK."

RACK MANAGEMENT

The policy of managing your leave to combine with as many draws as possible to form seven-letter racks that score well. This usually involves avoiding duplication and keeping a mix of consonants and vowels.

RATING

A number representing how well a tournament player is playing in relation to other players. The higher the rating, the more skillful the player. Ratings currently range from about 400 to about 2140.

ROUNDS

In club or tournament play, one game is one round.

SECOND OPINION

If a player believes the Word Judge has made a mistake in adjudicating a challenge, s/he may ask for a second person to research the challenge. If the second opinion contradicts the original one, a third opinion may be called for.

SIMULATION

Use of a computer program to evaluate possible plays in a given situation by playing out each possibility many times.

SOFTWARE/SELF LOOKUPS (SSL)

Players adjudicating their own challenges by inputting challenged words into a computer. See "ZYZZYVA."

SPREAD

The difference between the winning and losing score of a game. *Example:* If the score of a game is 350-280, then the spread is +70 points for the winner and -70 points for the loser.

STEMS

Certain five- and six-letter combinations of letters useful for forming bingos. Some examples of the more useful stems are: STARE, STANE, RETINA, SATINE, SATIRE.

TEAM GAME

A two-team SCRABBLE® game played with at least three people and as many as six or eight. Each team discusses potential plays before making each play on the board. A team game is a good vehicle for teaching or for simply having a lighter, more sociable atmosphere during a game.

TOTAL (CUMULATIVE) SPREAD

Over the course of many games a player's plus (+) and minus (-) spreads for each game are added together. At the end of the tournament each player has a total cumulative spread for the event, which is often used as a tiebreaker for players with even win/loss records.

TOURNAMENT CLOCK

Often called a chess clock, it is actually two clocks housed in one case. Sanctioned tournament games are timed using these clocks. Each player has 25 minutes to play the entire game. After making a play, the player starts his/her opponent's time by pressing one of the two buttons on the top of the clock. The game continues in this fashion until finished. Players are penalized 10 points per minute for every minute or fraction thereof used over the allotted 25.

TRACKING

The process of keeping track of the letters played on the board. This can give the astute player an advantage as the game progresses. Careful trackers can deduce the opponent's rack after there are no letters left to draw. By tracking, the player can often block the opponent's best plays or set up high-scoring plays that an opponent can't block. Players are allowed to play with their own TRACKING SHEET alongside their score sheet.

TRACKING SHEET

Also called FREQUENCY LIST. A sheet of paper containing either the alphabet or a partial or complete list of the 100 lettered tiles used in one SCRABBLE® game. See "TRACKING."

TRADING TILES

See "EXCHANGING TILES."

TRIPLE-TRIPLE

A play that covers two Triple Word Squares (TWS). To score the play, multiply by nine the sum of the value of the letters of the TRIPLE-TRIPLE word.

TURNOVER

Playing as many tiles as possible in order to draw as many new tiles as possible. By playing for turnover (usually using 5 or 6 tiles in one play), a player maximizes his/her chances for drawing the better tiles.

TWO-TO-MAKE-THREE

A two-letter word and a three-letter word formed by adding a hook to it. AN/BAN, AN/ANY and BA/OBA are examples of two-to-make-threes.

WORD JUDGES

People designated to adjudicate challenges.

ZYZZYVA

A free word judge and word study program written by tournament player Michael W. Thelen available for download at www.zyzyzyva.net. It is used to adjudicate challenges at the National School SCRABBLE® Championship.

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**Books, tournament docks and Profiles mentioned in the glossary
are all available online at www.wordgear.com.
For FREE resources such as scorecards, tracking sheets, and challenge slips
visit www.scrabbleassociation.com.**



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SCRABBLE
ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 700 GREENPORT, NY 11944
(631) 477-0033 www.scrabbleassociation.com info@scrabble-assoc.com

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