



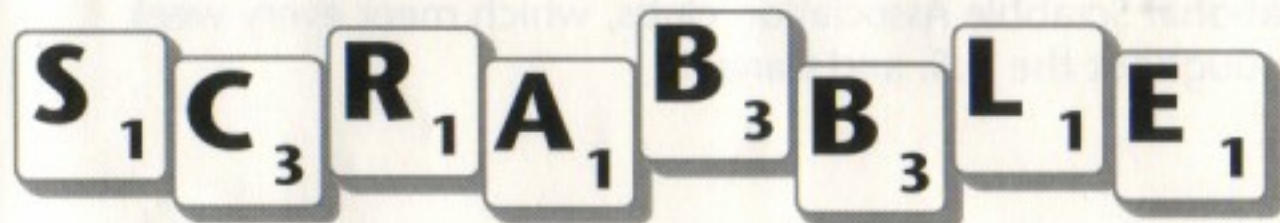
SCRABBLE[®]

CROSSWORD GAME

WALDEN

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HISTORY

For Scrabble® fiends the world over, the name Alfred Mosher Butts scores high. An out-of-work architect during the Depression, Butts was a life-long devotee of anagrams and crossword puzzles. In 1931, Butts invented a word game called "Crisscross Words." This ingenious combination of strategy and luck was renamed Scrabble in 1948.

Although very popular with his family and friends, nothing much really happened with the game until after World War II, when Butts ran into his business-partner-to-be, James Brunot. Brunot worked out the kinks of the game and arranged for a professional to design the board. Production began in a little red school-house and sales slowly increased.

In the 1950's, Scrabble Crossword Game erupted into a national passion. People who had discovered the word game at summer resorts returned home to tell their friends about the new craze. Word spread, and the department stores, taken by surprise, began to deluge Brunot with orders. For the next year, people were lined up at store counters praying for shipments.

This "overnight success" has since sold over 100 million copies world wide. There are an estimated 33 million leisure Scrabble players in the U.S. and Canada alone. Among those 33 million are over 10,000 enthusiasts who belong to the 200 plus licensed National Scrabble Association clubs, which meet every week throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Outside North America and Australia, only Israel, the home of the Dead Sea Open, plays by American rules. The British play a game that is almost cooperative in nature and adamantly refuse to accept the Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary as the final authority in word verification, preferring to use Chambers 20th-Century Dictionary.

Today, there are several thousand people in the English-speaking world who compete in Scrabble tournaments. Each year over 80 sanctioned Scrabble tournaments attract players of all levels from curious novices to experts and usually encompass ten rounds of play over a two-day weekend. Contestants are allowed up to three minutes per turn, with games limited to a total of 60 minutes. A normal game will have 13 to 19 turns per side. Advanced players use chess clocks to time their moves, using less than 25 minutes per player.

Over 400 players are certified Scrabble experts. To achieve this enviable status, players must average 350-400 points a game in club and tournament play. Most tournament standards are compiled by a combination of won/lost record and margin of victory.

Why has the popularity of Scrabble endured? Aficionados adore Scrabble for its endless, unpredictable variety. According to one champion Scrabbler, "In your whole life you will never, ever repeat a game. You will never pick the same tiles and neither will your opponent. So, no matter how often you play, every game unfolds a completely new set of challenges." Enjoy!

THE DELUXE COMPUTER EDITION OF SCRABBLE® BRAND CROSSWORD GAME

This Deluxe Computer version of Scrabble offers you the opportunity to match wits with friends or intelligent computer players, or a combination of both.

The game allows up to four players. If your opponent is the computer, you may assign it a skill level ranging from 1 (novice) to 9 (extremely skillful).

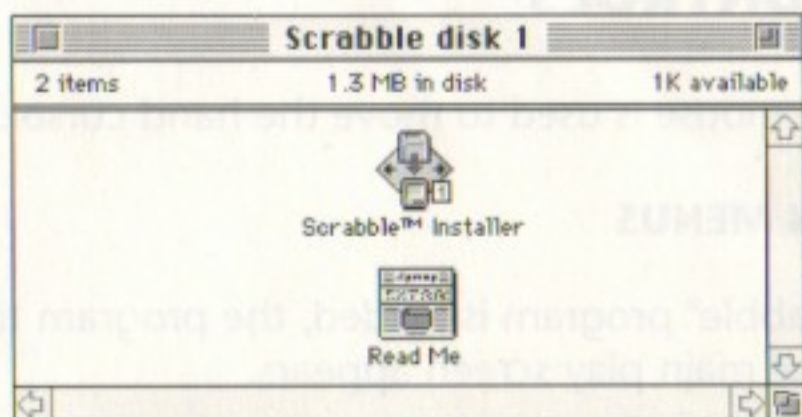
Commands and features available to the user are easily accessed through the pull-down menu system employed by this game.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Before Starting:

To install Scrabble®, insert Disk 1 into your disk drive and double-click the "READ ME" icon to read the latest news about the program. There may be new information that was added after this manual was printed.

Before proceeding, you should switch your monitor to 256 colors or black & white display only. On certain machines, the installer program may have problems if your monitor display is set to "Thousands" or "Millions" of colors.



To install the game, double-click the "Scrabble Installer" icon. Read the on-screen instructions carefully and select the folder where you wish to install the game. The installation program will prompt you to swap disks as necessary. If you don't have enough hard disk space, the installer will alert you before it tries to install the program.

This procedure will create a folder on your hard disk called "Scrabble".

Open this folder and then double-click the "Scrabble" application icon to start gaming!

NOTICE FOR MAC PLUS, SE AND II OWNERS:

If you own a Macintosh plus, Macintosh SE, or Macintosh II computer and you have not installed a high-density (1.4MB) floppy drive, then the enclosed 1.4MB floppy disks will not work with your computer. You can write to MacPlay's Customer Service Department at the address listed in the back of this manual if you'd like to trade your 1.4MB disks for a copy of the program on 800K disks. Please enclose all the disks that came in the box, and enclose a note asking to trade them for the 800K disks.

GAME CONTROLS

Mouse: The mouse is used to move the hand cursor.

PULL-DOWN MENUS

Once the Scrabble® program is loaded, the program titles are displayed and the main play screen appears.

Starting from the upper left corner, you will see the words File, Play, Timer, Arbitrator, Skill and Special. Under each of these headings, you will find option menus. To access these pull-down menus, you will use one of the following CLICK and DRAG methods:

WITH A MOUSE: Use the mouse to move the hand cursor up to the menu heading of your choice and hold the mouse button down as you move the hand cursor down the menu. When the option you wish to use is highlighted, release the mouse button.

TO START THE GAME

Move the hand cursor to the File menu heading. Click and drag until you are highlighting the New Game option. Release the mouse button to activate that option.

CHOOSING PLAYERS

Next, you will see a screen that says Number of Players. Move the hand cursor down to the box which contains the number of players (human, computer or a mixture of both) you wish to have in the game.

Click on the mouse button.

Next, you will be asked to enter the name of Player 1. Once you have typed in the name, move the hand cursor down to the "OK" box and click the mouse button.

Now you must select the skill level of Player 1.

For Computer Players: Choose levels 1-9, 1 being the least difficult and 9 being the most challenging. Move the hand cursor to the skill level of your choice and click the mouse button.

For Human Players: Move the hand cursor to the box marked HUMAN, and click the mouse button.

Use the above method for any additional players.

GAME SETUP

After you have selected the number of players, given names to each of these participants and assigned skill levels to the computer players, the game starts.

The game automatically starts with the Thinking option on and the contents of each player's rack displayed.

If you don't wish to see what tiles the other players have and you don't wish to have your rack displayed either, move the hand cursor up to the Arbitrator menu heading. Click and drag until the Racks Off option is highlighted. Releasing the mouse button will then activate the Racks Off option.

Similarly, if you would prefer not to see a listing of the words that the computer player is thinking of using, move the hand cursor to the Arbitrator menu heading. Click and Drag until the Thinking Off option is highlighted. Releasing the mouse button will activate the Thinking Off option.

Initially turned off, the game has a built-in Timer feature which the players can use to make the game more interesting and to limit the "thinking time" available to all participants.

The time limits allowed for a player's turn range from 10 seconds to 1 hour. With the pull-down menu, the timer can easily and quickly be set, reset or turned off for any player at any point in the game.

A complete explanation of all the Options and Features available in this deluxe computer edition of Scrabble® will appear later in this manual.

STANDARD PLAY

Object: In Scrabble, players form interlocking words, crossword fashion, on the board using letter tiles of different values. Each player competes for high score by taking advantage of the letter tiles, as well as the premium squares on the board. In a 2-player game, a good player scores in the 300-400 point range.

THE PLAY

Each participant is automatically given seven tiles from the bag.

The current player's rack, along with their name and word score, is displayed at the bottom of the screen.

HUMAN PLAYERS

Taking A Turn

The first player combines two or more of their letters to form a word and places them on the board to read either across or down with one letter on the center square (indicated by a pink square with a star in the middle of it). Diagonal words are not permitted.

You must move the hand cursor to the rack of large tiles at the bottom of the screen. Pressing the mouse button will cause the hand to pick up whatever tile it is resting on. Move the hand cursor with the tile onto the Scrabble board. When the tile is placed on the board where you want it, press the mouse button again to release it. To pick the piece up again and move it to another place, or to return it to the rack, just press the mouse button.

If you have placed a few tiles onto the board and wish to start all over again, move the hand cursor to the "CANCEL" icon on the lower left part of the screen and click. All tiles which were placed during this turn will be returned automatically to the rack.

When you have finished placing the tiles on the board, move the hand cursor to the "OK" icon and click. If you select the "ADD" icon, the computer will not only allow you to play the word, but it will add it to the User Dictionary so that all subsequent uses of the word will not be challenged.

If the word played is found to be legal, it will be accepted, and the game will move on to the next player.

As the player is placing the word on the board, an ongoing score is shown in the lower left of the screen so the player can see how many points he will earn at any given time.

Once a word has been played, tiles are automatically drawn from the bag to replace the ones just used. In the lower left corner a representation of the tile bag shows the number of tiles still left after each turn. Once all the tiles have been drawn the game is over.

SUBSEQUENT TURNS

The second player, and then each in turn, adds one or more letters to those already played to form new words. All letters played on 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 player gets full credit for all words formed or modified on his/her turn.

RULES FOR FORMING NEW WORDS

- 1) 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.
- 2) No letter may be shifted after it has been played. (Except when using the diabolical Edit Board option, which will be described fully in the **OPTIONS AND FEATURES** section.)
- 3) The two blank tiles may be used as any letter. When playing a blank, you must indicate which letter it represents by moving the hand cursor to the alphabet screen that comes up when the blank is played. Clicking on the letter of your choice will select that letter. It remains that letter for the rest of the game.
- 4) A player may use a turn to exchange all, some or none of the letters in his or her rack. To do this, move the hand cursor to the Play menu heading and Click and Drag until the **Change** option is highlighted. Release the button to activate this option. Next, you will be shown a small rack on which you must indicate the tiles you wish to exchange. Move the hand to the large rack of tiles at the bottom right of the screen and select which letters you wish to exchange by clicking on them. To de-select any of your letters, move the hand cursor over the small rack and click on that letter. If you select **CANCEL**, the operation stops. If you select **DONE**, the exchange is complete and you must wait until your next turn to make a play.

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- 5) Any words found in The Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary or the User's Dictionary included in the game are permitted except proper names, (usually commencing with a capital letter), those designated as foreign words, abbreviations and words requiring apostrophes or hyphens.
- 6) **Ending the Game:** The game ends when all letters have been drawn and one player uses his or her last letter; or when all possible moves have been made.

COMPUTER PLAYERS

The computer player will consider its best play based on the status of the board and the tiles held in its tray. The computer selects words depending on the "weight" a particular word has and the skill level assigned to that player. Each skill level has a minimum weight that must be met before the word is selected. The computer will use the first word it finds to meet its skill level "weight."

SCORING

- 1) 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.

TILE VALUES

A ₁	B ₃	C ₃	D ₂	E ₁	F ₄	G ₂	H ₄	I ₁	J ₈	K ₅	L ₁	M ₃	
N ₁	O ₁	P ₃	Q ₁₀	R ₁	S ₁	T ₁	U ₁	V ₄	W ₄	X ₈	Y ₄	Z ₁₀	

DISTRIBUTION OF TILES

9 A	2 B	2 C	4 D	12 E	2 F	3 G	2 H	9 I	1 J	1 K	4 L	2 M	
6 N	8 O	2 P	1 Q	6 R	4 S	6 T	4 U	2 V	2 W	1 X	2 Y	1 Z	2 Blank

- 2) **Premium Letter Squares:** A light blue square doubles the score of a letter placed on it; a dark blue square triples the letter scores.
- 3) **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.

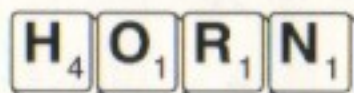
If a word covers two premium word squares, the score is doubled then re-doubled (4 times the letter count), or tripled and then re-tripled (9 times the letter count). *NOTE: the center square is pink, which doubles the score for the first word.*

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- 4) Letter and word premiums count only on the turn in which they are placed. On later turns, letters already played on premium squares count at face value.
 - 5) 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.
 - 6) 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.
 - 7) Any player who plays seven tiles on a turn, scores a premium of 50 points (a "BINGO") after totaling his or her score for the turn.
 - 8) **Unplayed Letters:** When the game ends, each player's score is reduced by the sum of his or her unplayed letters. In addition, if a player used all letters, the sum of the other players' unplayed letters is added to that player's score.

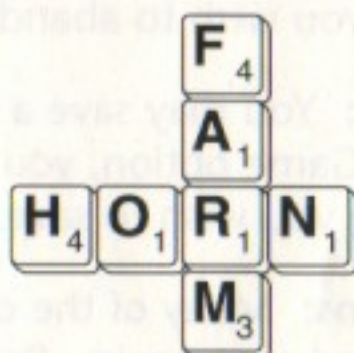
EXAMPLES OF WORD FORMATION AND SCORING

In the following, each word added in successive turn is shown in a box. The scores shown are the correct scores if the letter R is placed on the center square. In turn 1, count HORN; in turn 2, FARM; in turn 3, PASTE and FARMS; in turn 4, MOB, NOT and BE.

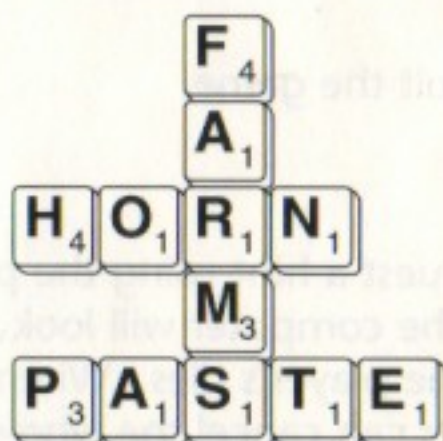
TURN 1: Score 14



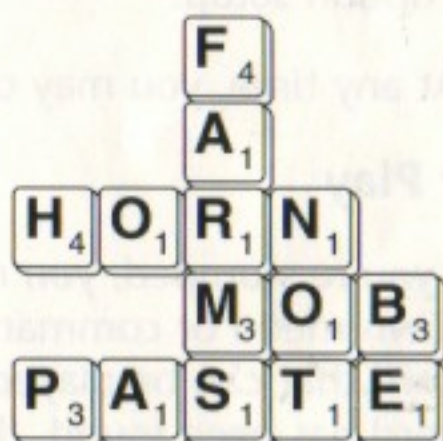
TURN 2: Score 9



TURN 3: Score 25



TURN 4: Score 16



HOW TO WIN

The player with the highest score wins the game. In case of a tie, the player with the highest score before adding or deducting unplayed letters wins.

OPTIONS AND FEATURES

Under File

New Game: At any time, you can start up a new game with the New Game option. If the game is already underway, you will be asked if you wish to abandon the current game.

Load Game: At any time, you can load a saved game and start up where you left off. If a game is already under way, you will be asked if you wish to abandon the current game.

Save Game: You may save a game at any point. After you select Save Game option, you will be asked to type in the name of the game you wish to save.

Save Options: Many of the options mentioned are likely to be used over and over again. Rather than always re-selecting the same options, you can use the Save Options option and save the desired option setup.

Quit: At any time, you may opt to quit the game.

Under Play

Hint: If you're stumped, you may request a hint using the pull down menu or command-H. The computer will look for a word that can be played with the player's tiles. When a word has been found, the player can cancel the whole request, ask it to look for yet another word, or opt to use the hinted word.

Juggle: Using the pull-down menu (or Command-J), the tiles of the human player can instantly be juggled about. This is very useful for making possible words more apparent. There is no limit to how many times your tiles can be juggled.

Change: If you are not happy with the tiles in your rack, you can exchange your tiles using the pull-down menu or Command-C. You will be shown a small rack and you will be told to select the tiles you wish to exchange. Move the hand cursor to the large rack of tiles at the bottom right of the screen and select which letters you wish to exchange by pressing FIRE. To deselect any of your letters, move the hand cursor over to the small rack and click on that letter.

Pass: At any time during your turn, you may opt to "PASS" for any reason.

Tile Values: Through the pull-down menu (or Command-V), the values of all tiles can be displayed at any time.

Distribution: The distribution of tiles in the beginning tile bag can also be seen at any time by using the pull-down menu or Command-D.

Premiums: Use the pull-down menu or CONTROL-M to display the premium tiles.

Force: If you wish, you may use the pull-down menu or Command-F to force the computer player to use the best word it has found up to that point. If the computer player hasn't found anything by that point, it will either pass or change tiles.

Under Timer

Initially turned off, the game has a built-in timer feature which the players can use to make the game more interesting and to limit the thinking time available to all participants. The range of time limits available is from 10 seconds to 1 hour. With the pull-down menu, the timer can be easily and quickly set, reset or turned off at any time for any player.

Under Arbitrator

Under The Menu Options:

The following game options may be turned on or off by clicking in the box next to the option:

Sound: When selected, sound effects and music will play during the game. When deselected, the sound will be off. Click in the box until an X appears to turn the sounds on.

Slow Game: Speeds up the game a bit by removing any delays that occur after messages pertaining to the computer players appear. Messages for human players are unaffected by this option.

Show Thinking: When selected, this option will show the various letter combinations tried on the board by computer players.

Show Tracks: With this option on, the left side of the screen shows the tiles that each player has in their racks. When off, these tiles are not visible. The former is more interesting. The latter results in more difficult, and realistic play.

Centering Tile: When placing tiles on the board, the program will try to intelligently guess which square the tile should go on based on which square the tile is covering the most. If you choose to turn the centering option off, the upper-left corner of the held tile will determine which square is targeted for placement.

No Two-Letter Words: Some players look with disdain upon those players who seek to play a simple two letter word by tacking one letter onto an existing letter. With the "No 2-Letter Word" option, just a single 2-letter word cannot be played. At least one 3 + letter word must be played.

No "S" Words: In certain circles, it is considered unscrupulous to simply tack on an "S " at the end of a word and claim full credit. If the "No S-Word" option is chosen, the players (computer and human) cannot simply add this letter to the end of the word and nothing else.

NOTE: If another word is formed by putting the S at the end of a previous word, then the play is acceptable. For example, a player can play the word "soft" down by putting an S at the end of the across word "wind," thus making two words and a legal play. Just putting the S at the end of the across word WIND would not be considered legal.

Positional Weights: The computer player weighs each word it considers for possible play. It uses the value of the tile and the value of Premium squares that would be used. If the "Positional Weighting" option is picked, additional weights are used based on other factors such as using hard-to-place letters (like Q and Z) and being near, but not using, premium squares.

Change Sides: If you are dissatisfied with your status in the game, you may switch scores and status with any other player. When the "Change Sides" option is selected, move the hand cursor to the left side of the screen in the region of the desired player (i.e., next to his/her name or rack) and click the mouse button. The switch is instantly made.

Edit Board: If you are unhappy with the status of the board and wish to change it, or to preset it in a certain way, you can use the very powerful "EDIT BOARD" feature. If this feature is selected, you will be shown a replica of the game board, each of the player's racks, and all of the unused tiles.

Using the hand cursor, pick up and move any tiles to any valid location on the board or the racks. This includes pulling tiles from the racks and even from the board. This continues until you are satisfied with the racks and the board.

Pressing the mouse button while on the CANCEL icon, will return the game with the old status restored. Pressing the mouse button while on the DONE icon will return to the game with the newly selected status. NOTE: IT IS REQUIRED THAT ALL THE CURRENT RACKS BE FILLED AS LONG AS THERE ARE TILES LEFT.

Edit User Dictionary: In addition to the lengthy The Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary, the game has a User Dictionary. When the human player plays a word that the computer can't find in its dictionary, it tells the player so. The player can "CANCEL" this word and continue playing, click on "OK" to tell the computer to use the word anyway or click on "ADD," which not only uses the word but also adds it to the User Dictionary so that subsequent uses of the word will not be challenged.

Using the "Edit User Dictionary" option, the player can move through the dictionary to examine the words contained therein and to delete any words he/she no longer wants to have included.

To Delete a Word: Move the hand cursor to the word to be deleted and click the mouse button. To deselect the word, click the mouse button again. Selected words are highlighted.

When you have finished, select the "OK" icon, and the newly modified Dictionary is again saved to disk.

Take Back: The "Take Back" feature is one of the most powerful features included in this game. The feature displays a VCR-style button display with which the player can pick the "Rewind," "Play" and "Forward" options.

Rewind moves the player back one move at a time, all the way back to the beginning of the game.

Forward moves the player forward to the present time.

Play causes the game to stop the "Take Back" feature and restart the play at that point.

This feature allows you to review all previous moves and start over from any point. For example, you can use the "rewind" option to return to a previous move and throw out that move and all subsequent moves.

Under Skill

At the beginning of the game, the user selects the players and specifies their skill levels. Using the Skill pull-down menu during gameplay, you can modify these skill settings. You can even change the difficulty level of a computer player from 1 (lowest) up to 9 (highest and most challenging) or even into a human player.

Edit Weights: The weights assigned to each factor as used in the computer player's selection (and the Hint mode) can be modified.

Hint Level: The skill level used in the Hint search can be modified through the "Hint Level" option. The skill level concept is the same as used by the computer players, thus a low skill level will cause the Hint mode to pick just about any word it finds, while a high skill level will make it far more selective.

Under Special

Anagram: The "Anagram" feature lets the user search through The Official Scrabble® Players Dictionary for matches. The player enters in up to 8 letters. The computer will then scramble these letters into every possible combination and then look into the dictionary to see if the combination is a legal word. Once the searching is done, the player can see all these words in the viewing window, scrolling up and down through the list as needed.

Crossword: The "Crossword" feature is similar to the Anagram feature above. The player enters the word desired, using the *** (asterisks) to mark wild card characters. The computer then looks through the dictionary for matches.

For example: If the player entered MI*E, the computer will look for any four letter word which starts with M and I and ends in E. Entering ***L*, will cause the program to search for any five-letter word which has an "L" in the fourth position.

Definition: The "Definition" feature is available only to those who have enough room on their hard drive to hold the 2.5-meg definitions file. To use, the player enters the word he/she wishes to have defined. The computer will then look through the dictionary for that word and, if it is in there, will display the entry exactly as it is found in The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary.

Define Last Word: The "Define Last Word" feature uses the Definition feature on the last word displayed in the game.

STRATEGY

A Scrabble® master is not born; like the alphabet he uses, he is made. An enormous amount of training lies behind his apparent gift. First, all of the Oxford S.P. Dictionary's two-letter words must be memorized. Also learned are which ones can be pluralized and which ones cannot. For instance, *ka* can take an *s* but *xu* can't. Next, all three-letter words, like *kab*, and those that stand alone, like *neb*. After this, all four-letter words that hook to three-letter words are memorized. Short words are not a majority of all words in the language, but they are disproportionately important in Scrabble. In a typical game they account for three quarters of the words put down and for more than half the points scored. Knowing these two-three- and four-letter words makes possible the dumping of unwanted letters and the hoarding of important ones. This is known as rack management.

Learning all the English words of four letters is the most valuable of the memorizing operations. Just knowing which ones are verbs and which ones are adjectives increases the likelihood of making "bingo's" - that is, laying down all seven letters in one's rack, thereby earning fifty bonus points. For instance, if you know that *toit* is a verb, then you can make a bingo with *toiting*. Or if you remember that *logy* is an adjective, then *logiest* can clear your rack.

Mastering Scrabble does not, however, end at the fours. All five-letter words that hook to fours, like *ranid* and *taroc*, must be learned. However, not even champions can memorize all five- and six-letter words, and these play a small role in the game. In fact, the only predictable situation in which knowing a five-letter word list comes in handy is that of wanting to join a triple-letter square to the double-word-score square five places away.

Master players concentrate their efforts on the memorization of useful words only. To begin with, they learn longer hooks. For instance, *chore* can become *chorea*, which can become *choreal*. Also, they concentrate on learning what to do with vowel- or consonant-heavy racks. Four consonants and three vowels are the best combination for a seven-letter word. Think about it: how many five-letter words do you know with four vowels in them? A Scrabble® master knows them all. Putting down *oorie*, *ourie*, *aevia*, *oidia*, or *zoe* cleans out a vowel-heavy rack and gets points. How many words do you know with no vowels whatsoever (other than y)? The Scrabble master knows *nth*, *cwm*, *crwth*, *phpt*, and *tsktsks*, among others, and so can deal with a consonant-heavy rack. He learns bingo words that are overbearingly vowelish. Ask a Scrabble grand master what five 8-letter words contain six vowels and he will answer, as if bored by the obviousness of the inquiry, *eulogiae*, *epopoeia*, *aboideau*, *aboiteau*, and *aureolae*.

Next to be studied is the so-called three-percent list. The three-percent list was pioneered by a psychologist, Michael Baron, of Albuquerque. It was based on the assumption that of the 76,000 bingos listed in the *OSPD*, most can be discarded as unlikely ever to appear on a Scrabble rack; a few thousand, however, will appear over and over again. There are, for example, two Vs in a Scrabble set. Trying to memorize bingos with Vs in them is inefficient, because picking one is relatively unlikely. However, there are twelve Es in the game, eight Os, six Rs, six Ns, and so on. The chance that on your first draw you will pick any of the twelve letters contained in Baron's list of bingos is three percent or better—hence the name. Baron also discovered that certain six-letter combinations occur with uncanny frequency. By learning the six-letter words and all the possible sevens that can be made from them, players can digest an enormous number of new words and immediately find the bingo when a familiar combination is picked.

The letters in *satine* can form sixty other words with the addition of a seventh letter, and the letters in *retina* can form almost as many.

Consider the word *amines*, meaning certain chemical compounds. It has six letters, and by adding a seventh you can make a bingo. Try it. Okay, you've failed. But if you were familiar with the list, you wouldn't have fumbled with the letters, arranging and rearranging them for the solution. You would say *amines* with a d is *sideman* or *maidens*. With a g it's *seaming* or *gamines*; with an l, *seminal*; with an r, *seminar* or *marines*; and so on. The strategy is to assemble a six-letter word known to be fertile territory for seven-letter words and just add the missing letter from memory. Thus, the astute player assembles *satine* or *amines*, recalls his list, and makes *estesian* or *samisen*.

Another tool is the Scrabble® "bonus-word" list, which was assembled by three competitive players, Stuart Goldman, David Schulman, and Edward Andy. Schulman is a contributor to the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the author of *An Annotated Bibliography of Cryptography*. He has written many articles about words for *American Speech* magazine and would be expected to be a Scrabble star. Goldman holds the record for the most official Scrabble games played in a lifetime, but neither he nor Andy has anything in his background extraneous to Scrabble to suggest a mastery of words. The Scrabble bonus-word list is similar to the three-percent list, but it takes into account all letters, even the rare high-scoring ones. It is not as mathematically precise as Baron's list but it's arranged in alphabetical order. For instance, if you have AAABLST on your rack and you're stumped, and after the game you look at the bonus list, you will discover, to your amazement, that you had not one but three bingos: *atabals*, *balatus*, and *albatas*.

Whatever the regimen recommended by the experts, the fact remains that memorization is a highly personal act. One memorizes more easily what one relates to or finds congenially systematic. A common tool for word memory is mnemonics, or association. One example is the ladder trick—building words by adding a letter at a time. Here are three examples:

he, her, herm, therm, therme, thermel, thermels

pa, pal, opal, copal, copalm, copalms

lo, log, logy, ology, oology, zoology

All these words, by the way, can be found in the *OSPD*.

Joel Wapnick is a professor of music at McGill University and Canada's Scrabble champion. He has memorized more than 16,000 bingos and is considered one of Scrabble's top theoreticians. In the *Scrabble Players News* he had some words of wisdom for those who might wish to memorize almost 20,000 mostly ridiculous words:

There are many mnemonic devices that all of us use to simplify the memorization process. Suppose for some strange reason you want to memorize the following nine words: victoria, ophidian, diplopia, fixation, miaowing, hominian, himation, hospitia and pavilion. Those happen to be my list of 8-letter words that have the four vowel aiio plus two high point tiles.

If you simply rehearse them over and over again, it's not likely that they will be remembered over a long period of time.

Instead you might look for some structure in the words. For example words 6, 7 and 8 begin with the letter H. Words 1, 2, 3 and 4 have a pattern in their last letters: a-n-a-n. Or perhaps the number 41243 can be remembered—it stands for the tile value of the first letter of words 1 through 5, and can serve to cue these words in.

Knowing many words is invaluable in two ways. First, it saves time. In tournament play each competitor has only twenty-five minutes to complete a game. If he goes over the time limit, he is penalized ten points per extra minute. Second, it reduces the importance of luck as a factor in the game. Because the letters are chosen randomly, anyone can get bad ones. It is estimated that the outcome of high-level Scrabble® games is determined by luck in one game out of six. The percentage, of course, increases with ineptitude, and with ignorance of useful words. Because of the recent upsurge in word knowledge, owing to the introduction of new word lists and memorization schemes, Scrabble strategy has changed completely during the past decade. It used to be considered smart to block or clog up a board so that no one could put down a bingo. Today the top players hate it when their hard memory work goes for naught, and they tend to play wide-open, aggressive Scrabble in the hope of putting down a three-percent word they have learned.

One strategy that has been the subject of recent debate is the hoarding of certain letter combinations. For instance, if your rack held, E, R and S, you would play the other four tiles and pick again, since many four letter words can take an *ers* suffix or an *re* at the beginning and an *s* at the end. (The idea is eventually to draw letters that in conjunction with ERS will produce a bingo.) The ERS combination is usually still hoarded. But what if you pick ING (or NG and see an open I on the board)? Do you play your other letters and hope that the next draw will provide a verb to which you can add the ING? There is serious controversy in the combination if it means better points and position. I know so many words that I can keep digging for new letters instead of wasting my time hoping for a verb. Some very good players demur, arguing that so many bingos end in *ing* that it's a mistake to break the combination up. To be in favor of breaking it up

shows that you have great confidence in your vocabulary. In the view of some players, it also shows that you have a lack of common sense.

Other questions, too, have yet to be answered definitively—for example, the proper use of the Q in midgame. Without a U, the Q is almost useless. Only a few words accept q without its natural mate. (They are *qaid*, *qoph*, *qindar*, *qintar*, and *faqir*.) Because the Q is commonly exchanged (at the cost of a turn) it often appears in the end game. Any player unable to rid himself of it is not only prevented from making a bingo but also loses twenty points if the letter is still in his rack when his opponent runs out of letters. The Q has been considered more thoroughly than any other consonant except the S. Its frequency of appearance at every position in a seven-letter word has been tallied. Still the arguments rage. When is it wise to dump the Q? When is it wise to hold onto it? How can I stick my opponent with it and avoid having it boomerang into my rack again?

There are aspects of Scrabble that are still dominated by luck. For instance, if two players of good but equal ability pair off, the one who picks the lowest letter and starts first has a substantially better chance of eventually winning. And there is no explaining the existence of streaks and slumps, whereby players surge beyond expectations and play like champions, only to regain typical form and never do so again.

Yet ultimately, the best players have reduced the element of luck considerably. When not making lists, they are inventing new challenges and puzzles to keep their minds flexible and their word knowledge growing.

—From “Master of the Tiles” an article written by Barry Chamish for the June 1987 edition of *THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY*.

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