

Zero-Sum - *An abstract strategy game played with dominoes and chips for 2 players.*

Equipment:

1 set of double-six dominoes, with the 1-1 domino removed
40 chips in each of two different colors (referred within as red and blue)

Object:

Have your chips cover more points by the end of the last turn (turn 13).

Setup:

Both players randomly select a domino and add up its pips. The player with the larger value plays first (this player is referred to as "red"). In case of ties, redraw. Replace the dominoes and turn all of them face up off to the side of the playing area. This is referred to as "the pile." Take the 0-0 domino and place it in the center of the playing surface, face up. Each player takes his pile of chips and places one on opposite sides of the domino.

The play:

The game lasts 13 game turns. During each game turn, the following sequence is undertaken by the players:

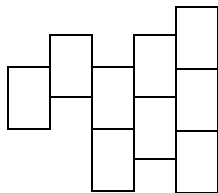
- Red player's actions
 - Lay a domino
 - Free action
- Blue player's actions
 - Lay a domino
 - Free action

During the "Lay a domino" phase, players lay a domino as described in the section "Laying a domino." During the "Free action" phase, players take an action of their choice as outlined in the "Free action" section.

Laying a domino:

The player who is currently performing actions selects any domino from the pile and places it on the playing surface. The new domino must be touching one of the dominoes already in play, and must also conform to the grid shape below. The numbers on the dominoes do not matter during placement in terms of eligibility; any domino may be played no matter what is currently on the playing surface. After laying the domino, the player who laid it places a chip on the larger number, while his opponent places a chip on the lower number. If the domino is a double, the player who laid it decides which half to claim.

The game grid



Each new domino must enter play touching another domino currently in play and must also be placed parallel to existing dominoes, and offset from them by one half-domino. There is no preset shape or outer boundary on the playing surface.

Free action:

The player who is performing actions must perform exactly one of the following actions:

- Claim a surrounded chip
- Turn domino
- Swap dominoes

Claim a surrounded chip: Replace any enemy chip that is adjacent (no diagonals) to two of your chips with one of your chips.

Turn domino: Pick up any domino from the grid along with the chips on top of it, rotate it (carefully so the chips don't fall) so that the ends are opposite from where they began, and place it back into the grid in the same spot, chips and all.

Swap dominoes: Pick up any two dominoes along with the chips on top of them, and swap their positions in the grid, maintaining their directions.

Ending the game:

The game ends after 13 game turns have passed. At this point there should be no dominoes left to play. Both players add up their score as outlined in the "Scoring" section. The player with the highest score wins; there are no tie-breakers.

Scoring:

Players score 1 point for every pip on a domino half they have their chip on. In the case of doubles, if both halves of a double domino is covered by a single player's chips, that player scores points as if they had claimed three of that number instead of just two (i.e. controlling the 4-4 chip is worth 12 points instead of the usual 8.) Blanks (0's) count for nothing, including the 0-0 starting domino.