

# N42PA Tournament Rules

(For all 42 tournaments sanctioned by the N42PA)

1. The only bids (contracts) allowed are: bidding in a suit (blanks-6's), bidding follow me or bidding doubles are trump. We do not allow nello, sevens, plunge, splash, follow me with doubles as suit of their own, etc.
2. All four players draw for high domino to determine who shakes first. After the first game of a multi-game match, the losing team gets first shake, so only those two players draw. The shaker or last bidder must wait and draw last; the others at the table may draw their dominoes in any order.
3. The bidder has the option to single or double stack on hands of one mark or higher. (This is the rule for N42PA tournaments, but hosts of other tournaments may choose to only allow one or the other.) The opposing team may, if desired, set the direction of the stack after the first trick is played.
4. Any N42PA hosted tournament will NOT be forced bid. This means that the final bidder can pass; the shake rotates to the next player, and no team gets a mark.
5. Any reneges (not following suit) will cost the team who commits the infraction 1 mark (or additional marks if the bid is higher than 42). This includes leading out of turn. You also must play the first domino you touch, even if it costs your team a renege.
6. When a domino is accidentally knocked over, the player must leave that domino face up in front of their hand for everyone at the table to see. They must play that domino at the first possible opportunity without renegeing (which includes being forced to lead that domino if in the lead).
7. On bids of 42 or higher, no player is allowed to pick up and look underneath a played domino. You must use the power of memory to determine which dominos have already been played.
8. Dominos must be placed in a 4-3 or 3-4 format once you draw from the shake. Once the bidding starts, you cannot rearrange your dominos for the rest of the hand. This includes pushing your dominos together as the hand plays out. **The initial placement of dominos must be used for the remainder of the game.**
9. You may ask "who bid" or "what the bid" was during any phase of the game. However, you may not ask "what trump is" ever once the game has commenced. Doing so will result in a mark for the opponents. You also may ask "who shook" during the game without penalty.
10. Once the first domino has been played in a hand, you cannot ask what trump is. Be sure that everyone at the table knows what trump is before the first domino is played. Once a trick has been pulled you also cannot ask who played which domino.

## PROPOSED EDITS (red)

**11.** Bidding out of turn. If someone accidentally bids out of turn, they cannot raise or lower that bid once the bidding restarts. For example, let's say the 2<sup>nd</sup> bidder thinks he is 1<sup>st</sup> to bid and bids 31. The table informs him that he is not the 1<sup>st</sup> bidder, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> bidder. Now, if the 1<sup>st</sup> true bidder goes 31, the 2<sup>nd</sup> bidder cannot bid higher than 31 and must pass; on the other hand, if the 1<sup>st</sup> true bidder passes, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> bidder must still proceed with the accidental bid of 31. This applies to anyone bidding out of turn.

**12.** Pausing during play. If a player intentionally pauses to let their partner know they have more than one of a suit during play - that is considered a "tell" and cheating. For example; If the bidder calls blanks as trump and leads the double blank, and their partner takes a long time to play a small blank and then later in the hand has another blank, then that intentional pause is equivalent to table talk. **See also Rule #14.**

**13.** Bidding with dominos face down. Players are not allowed to bid blind with their dominos face down. All players must turn their dominos up facing them in a 4-3 or 3-4 format before they bid. **See also Rule #8.**

**14.** During the bidding phase, you must only announce your bid without giving more information. You should say "I pass" or "31" for example. Not allowed would be to say "I got nothing over here partner, I pass." Or "I'll go 30, I think I can help you partner." Talking across the table is not allowed during play at any time, including the bidding phase of the hand. **"Talking across the table" is cheating and it includes (but is not limited to) any kind of communication or signaling that is private to the two people doing the communicating. If there is a conversation beforehand to set up certain actions to mean certain things, then it is cheating.**

**15.** Deliberate slow play by the team in the lead will not be allowed in timed games. For example, if a team is leading 5-0 and the tournament director announces the timed round only has 2 minutes left, the leading team cannot deliberately play slowly to prevent the losing team from catching up.

**16.** Declaring a lay down. The bidder can announce to the table that they have the rest of the tricks and will make their hand to save time. However, if the opposing team can demonstrate anyway they can still go set, the bidding team will forfeit the hand and lose the mark. A good example would be if the bidder has 2 big trumps and the double 5. The opponent has 1 small trump. The bidder's partner is in the lead, and the bidder declares they have the rest and lays the hand down. The opponents can say the partner might have lead a 5 off, leading to the bidder's double 5, and the opponent could trump the trick. Be careful to make sure you truly have the rest of the tricks before you declare a laydown.

**17.** Any physical signals or cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. Examples include tapping dominoes on the table before being played, pointing dominoes in certain directions intentionally as a strategy, encouraging your partner to bid or pass during the bidding cycle, etc. Also bids meaning specific information will not be tolerated. An example would be if a team agrees that every time they bid 30, they always have the double 5, or they always have at least 3 doubles, etc. An agreement for a bid to mean non-specific help is permissible (but frowned upon by some players). **If you use sluffs to indicate doubles you hold (or don't hold), then you must divulge to your opponents what system you use if different from playing the double to indicate the next highest domino might be held or whose high end might indicate the double held. Disclosure must be done before the first domino shuffle in each new game.**

## PROPOSED EDITS (red)

**18.** Players not directly involved with a game may not make comments about the game during play (even to call attention to a renege).

**19.** The tournament director/host has the authority to rule on any match and also has the authority to ban a team from competing with just cause. An example would be kicking a team out of a tournament for cheating and/or egregious behavior deemed inappropriate for the tournament. This can include fighting, being rude, disrespectful to others, cussing, threatening others, damaging property, stealing, etc.

**20.** Any questions during a game, please stop play and get the tournament director/host to come to your table. It is best to let the tournament director/host help to rule on a play in question. If you are unsure of a rule or need better clarification, always go to the tourney director.

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Unedited rules linked at [www.N42PA.org/rules.html](http://www.N42PA.org/rules.html)