

Beginner's guide and rules to Mexican Train Dominoes

These rules follow the most common gameplay. Practice or play against a computer with our [iOS](#), [Android](#), or [online](#) Mexican Train Dominoes games.

You will need

- A double-12 domino set
- A marker for each player plus the Mexican Train, such as a quarter.

Get started

Turn all of your dominoes facedown and shuffle them on the table. Each player draws 1 tile. Whoever has the highest pip-count (dots) goes first. Return the tiles facedown and shuffle.

Each player should draw dominoes as follows:

- If 2-4 players, draw 15 dominoes
- If 5-6 players, draw 12 dominoes
- If 7-8 players, draw 11 dominoes

Stand your dominoes on edge facing you so they're not visible to your opponents. The remaining dominoes become the "boneyard". Play moves clockwise.

Your objective is to play all your dominoes and earn the lowest score across 3 rounds.

Placing dominoes

Dominoes must play end-to-end and match based on their pips.



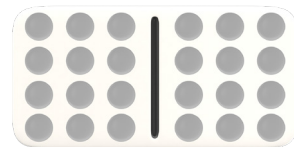
Incorrect; pips do not match



Correct; pips match with 4s

Playing & covering doubles

Playing a double grants you another turn, but must be "closed" by playing another tile on them before you can play anywhere else.



A double-12 domino. A double is any tile with identical pips on both sides.

If you can't close the double, draw 1 tile from the boneyard. If you can close it, do so. If not, play moves to the next player. This process repeats until the double is closed.

Exceptions to doubles:

- It is the last domino of its number or the last domino of the game.
- You played it to remove the marker from your train.

Start by setting the station number

Player 1 starts the public Mexican Train by placing their highest double in the center to set the station number. For instance, playing a double-6 means the station starts at 6.

If Player 1 does not have a double, play moves clockwise to the next player. If no one has a double, go around again drawing 1 tile from the boneyard until someone does.



Using a quarter or penny is a great way to mark an open train or station.

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Each player's first move & opening private trains

Once a player opens the public Mexican Train, each player begins their own private train of dominoes by laying a tile that matches the station number. In our example starting at 6, a player must match the 6.

If a player cannot start their train, draw 1 tile from the boneyard. If you still can't play, place a marker, such as a quarter or other coin, at the end where your tile should be. Play repeats and moves to the next player clockwise.

Starting the Mexican Train

The public Mexican Train begins on an empty line that matches the station number (i.e., 6) in the center or shared between players. It is open to every player and can be started any time after the first round of turns.

Next moves and plays

On each following turn, one domino is played per turn unless a double is played, allowing for two turns.

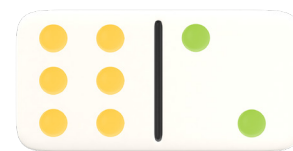
On your next turn you can:

- Play on your own private train. If a marker is on your train, you can remove it once you have played on your own train.
- Play on the public Mexican Train.
- Play on another player's private train only if they have a marker on it.

If you can't make a move, draw 1 tile from the boneyard. Each player must place a tile on each move or else place a marker indicating their train is open. If the train is already marked, leave it marked.

Scoring

The game ends when the first player runs out of dominoes and grants them a score of 0. All other plays add up the number of pips (dots) on their remaining dominoes.



This 6-2 tile has 8 pips total and is 8 points. The lower your score the better!

Reset and play two more rounds. The person with the lowest score after all three rounds wins.



Traditional Mexican Train Dominoes is now available on iOS, Android, and online!

Hone your skills with this free version by playing against three computer opponents. This game will feed your addiction when your friends aren't available to play with. I hope you enjoy the fun and challenge of this playing game as much as I did making it.

Play on [iOS](#), [Android](#), or [online at mexicantrain.com](http://mexicantrain.com)