

SBGF Backgammon Tournament Rules



The tournament rules apply in all tournaments approved by The Swedish Backgammon Federation (SBGF), unless otherwise stated in the tournament invitation. All exceptions from these rules have to be approved by the board of SBGF

Stockholm, 3 June 2011

1 The Tournament Director

1. All tournaments shall have a Tournament Director approved by SBGF.
2. The Tournament Director settles disputes between players. It is the responsibility of the Tournament Director that the tournament is played according to the SBGF rules.
3. The Tournament Director may request, without explanation, that one, several or all spectators leave a table.
4. The Tournament Director may issue a warning, award penalty points or exclude a player from the competition. Since it is difficult to foresee every possible rule violation and the circumstances surrounding them, the Tournament Director is entrusted to decide about the consequences. The Tournament Director should, however, consider the gravity of the violation as well as the intention of the erring player.
5. In the event of disputes which cannot be solved by the Tournament Director or if the decision of the Tournament Director is not accepted by the disputing parties, a Tournament Committee is to be appointed. The committee consists of three experienced backgammon players. The Tournament Director cannot be part of the Tournament Committee.
6. The ruling of the Tournament Committee is final.

2 Etiquette

1. Players who do not act according to commonly accepted code of conduct may be disqualified from the competition.
2. Players may not make agreements which alter or disregard the SBGF tournament rules.
3. The Tournament Director decides the official language at a tournament. Other languages will not be permitted between players and/or spectators, or between spectators while a match is in progress.
4. Spectators may not draw attention to misplays or comment on plays.
5. All players may request, without explanation, that one, several or all spectators leave the table.
6. Any form of players and spectators signalling to each other, is not permitted.

3 Commencement of play

1. All matches must start at the appointed time.

2. It is the players' obligation to arrive in good time and keep themselves informed of any possible changes in the match and/or tournament program. Ignorance is therefore no defence against penalty points received due to late arrival.
3. Penalty points are awarded according to the following rules: The first penalty point is awarded 10 minutes after the appointed starting time and accrue thereafter at the rate of 1 point per 5 minute delay.

If a player has been awarded penalty points due to the opponent's late arrival amounting to more than half the number of points required to win the match (i.e. 7 points in a 13 point match; in this example 10 minutes + 30 minutes' late arrival, a total of 40 minutes after the appointed time) he/she is ruled as the winner of the match.

4 The Match

1. All matches are played in the designated Tournament areas, unless the Tournament Director grants exemption from this rule.
2. All matches should be played until the decided score.
3. In the event of dispute which cannot be settled by the players themselves, all checkers and dice, score cards and other objects relating to the dispute, must be left unchanged and the Tournament Director must be summoned.
4. Points must be recorded on a mutual score card/score board.
5. If a player inadvertently loses a match even though the opponent has not reached the required points, the match should be deemed valid if a competition steward has noted the winner's name in the secretariat's schedule.
6. Playing direction, colour and seating place are decided by a roll of the dice before the match and are valid throughout the match.
7. While a match is in progress the players may only takes notes on scoring.
8. Players may not listen to music or other pre-recorded programs during the match. Headphones are strictly prohibited.
9. Both players may request that the opponent removes objects not belonging to the game from the game.
10. Any device that aids the game is prohibited. If the opponent approves, a player may record a position, either in writing or by taking a photograph, in order to make an analysis after the match.
11. Gammon and Backgammon applies in all matches.

12. Automatic doubles are not permitted. The Jacoby rule and the Holland rule are not used.
13. The Crawford Rule applies to all matches. A faulty double should be corrected if spotted but is deemed valid if a competition steward has noted the winner's name in the secretariat's schedule.
14. Breaks: No breaks are permitted during any match up to 7 points. During a match up to 7-9 points players are allowed one break each, lasting a maximum of 5 minutes. During a match to 11-13 points, players are allowed two breaks each, lasting a maximum of 5 minutes. During a match to 15-19 points players are allowed three breaks each, lasting a maximum of 5 minutes etc. No breaks are permitted during a game.

5 The Game

The Board

1. Any player may demand to use a backgammon board measuring a minimum 44 x 55 cm and a maximum of 66 x 88 cm, if available.

The Dice

1. When no backgammon clock is used, the players choose dice by rolling out four dice and then picking every other dice.

When a backgammon clock is used, the players choose four dice but each game is played using one pair of dice only. The reason to choose four dice is to make possible the changing of dice.

Rolling the dice

2. Both dice must be placed in the cup and be shaken properly before each roll.
3. Players must roll both their dice at the same time. If that does not happen, both dice must be rerolled.
4. Players must roll the dice on the right side of the board. If a player rolls his/her dice on the wrong side of the board without permission from the opponent, he/she may be forced to re-roll if the opponent deems it necessary.
5. In the event of "cocked dice", i.e. if one or both dice do not rest flat on the correct side of the board, both dice must be rerolled.
6. In the event of "cocked dice", players must await the opponent's approval.
7. A player may not lift the dice and try to reroll when a dice has come to rest in a valid position and the other dice is still in motion, no matter where it is. In the

event of this happening, the opponent may decide if the player must reroll only the other one in order to complete the roll or if both dice must be rerolled.

8. Players have the right to exchange dice before a game, but not while a game is in progress.
9. Completing a turn
 - a) If a backgammon clock is not used, the turn is regarded as concluded when both dice have been lifted from the board, if only by 0, 5 centimetres.
 - b) If a backgammon clock is used the turn is regarded as concluded when the clock is adjusted. The dice shall not be collected by the player who has completed his turn since the opponent shall use them. If the dice are collected anyway and the opponent's clock has been started, the player not at fault has the right to an additional minute playing time.
10. A player who rolls prematurely must reroll his dice if requested to do so by the opponent.
11. If a backgammon clock is used, the dice must not be collected by the player whose turn it is, until the opponent has started his clock. Violation of this rule is punished by awarding an additional minute to the player not at fault.
12. It is not permitted to shake the dice before the opponent has completed his turn.
13. If possible, both dice must be played. The player may play the numbers in any order he/she chooses. If only one number can be played, the highest number must be played.

Checkers and Moves

14. If an incorrect starting position is detected before both players have completed their first roll, the position may be adjusted.
15. If a checker is found outside the board during a game the player who is not at fault may either place the checker in question on the bar or force the opponent to continue playing using only 14 checkers. The player with 14 checkers may still be gammoned or backgammoned.
16. Players must move the checkers with one hand only.
17. A player who has hit the opponent's checker must place the checker in question on the bar. Merely touching the checker or using gestures to communicate the hitting do not count as valid play.
18. A checker which has been hit must be placed on the bar. A player may not keep holding one or several checkers.

19. Players may not, in an uncontrolled manner, move their checkers back and forth across the board in order to test new positions. Players are recommended to place the checkers at least 2 centimetres above the checker/checkers that are already in the intended tongue or on the edge of the board if the intended tongue is empty.
20. In the event of a misplay, the opponent has the right to comment, after the dice have been lifted by the player at fault, only if he wants the misplay to be corrected. Otherwise, the play is valid.

The Doubling Cube and Doubles

21. It is the responsibility of both players that the doubling cube is positioned in the middle at the beginning of each game. In the event of a dispute during the course of the game relating to the position of the doubling cube or its value, the position at the time is deemed valid, with the exception for obvious mistakes.
22. Any player who doubles or redoubles must in a clear manner say “I double”, and place the doubling cube with the correct number turned upwards on the opponent’s side of the board and await the opponents oral reply.
23. Any player who decides to take a double or redouble must in a clear manner say “I take” and place the doubling cube with the correct number turned upwards in the place reserved for the doubling cube or in the slot for the checkers on his/her side of the board. The doubling cube may not be placed outside the board.
24. If a player has rolled “cocked dice” and before rerolling decides to double, the double will be regarded as invalid.
25. If a player doubles before the opponent has completed his/her turn the double is deemed valid. The opponent may complete his/her turn knowing about the double.
26. A valid double or redouble may take place even if a player has one or several checkers on the bar or if the opponent has a closed board.

The Clock

27. A backgammon clock may be used in a match according to any one of the following criteria: Option, preference, obligation, penalty.
 - a) Option: A clock may be used if both players agree to do so.
 - b) Preference: Either player may request that the match be played using a clock. Unless otherwise is stated in the invitation to a tournament, SBF – tournaments are played with a clock as preference.
 - c) Obligation: Players must use a clock if the invitation to the tournament states that the tournament, or part of the tournament, must be played using a clock.
 - d) Penalty: The Tournament Director may request that the remains of a match be played using a clock.

28. The clock must be placed on the same side as the players' home board.
29. Bronstein rules are used. Each player is given 2 minutes per point in the match. In addition, the players are given 12 seconds per move.
30. Players must hit the clock with the same hand used to move the checkers.
31. Stopping the clock is only permitted in the following situations:
 - a) After a game is over
 - b) During breaks
 - c) If a die falls on the floor
 - d) If the Tournament Director is summoned
 - e) If a violation of the rules demands that the clock is reset
 - f) If one of the players demands that an illegal move is re-played
32. The opponent or the Tournament Director must call attention to any violation of the time limit. If a player's time runs out, that player loses the match.