Yahtzee is a dice game that’s very simple to learn and play. The rules are straightforward, and this game is based mostly on luck. The skill involved has to do with deciding how to score your rolls and the strategies for that are also pretty easy to learn.

As such Yahtzee is popular with people of all ages, including children, and is played all over the world. Most people play for fun, but it can be played for stakes and some people do gamble on it when playing.

You don’t need much equipment to play Yahtzee: just five dice plus a pen and paper to score with. You can also play the game online at various sites.

Below you’ll find more information about this game, including a brief history and the rules on how to play it.

**Brief History**

Yahtzee was invented by a Canadian couple in the middle of the last century. Their names are  unknown. The game was originally known as the Yacht Game, because this couple often played it with friends visiting them on their yacht.

It’s believed their invention took influences from various other dice games,  
but nothing is known for sure.

With the game proving popular among their friends, the couple wanted to produce some gift sets to give away. They used a toy maker, Edwin Lowe, to make these sets. Seeing the potential in the game, Lowe bought the rights to it in exchange for making the couple 1,000 gift sets.

He then changed the name to Yahtzee and began to market it for sale.

Early sales were disappointing, which Lowe realized was because it was difficult for people to understand how much fun the game was, purely from his advertisements.

He came up with the approach of hosting Yahtzee parties where people could learn how to play and experience it for themselves. This greatly increased the popularity of the game, and sales began to increase.

Lowe sold the rights to Yahtzee in 1973, to the [American board game company Milton Bradley](https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgamepublisher/20/milton-bradley). Milton Bradley is currently owned by gaming giant Hasbro, who sell millions of game sets around the world.

**Basic Rules**

The widespread appeal of Yahtzee is largely down to it being very easy to learn and a lot of fun to play. The aim of the game is simple: to score as many points as you can.

Any number of players can take part in a game, and all they have to do is roll the dice  
and decide how to score on each turn.

On each turn a player rolls the five dice. After they have rolled, they can roll again if they want, choosing which dice to keep and which ones to roll again. They can roll a total of three times on each turn, and they can keep as few or as many of the dice as they want on each roll.

Once they have either decided to keep all five dice or used all three rolls, they must then enter their score onto the scorecard.

A Yahtzee scorecard has a total of 13 boxes, and on each turn a player must decide which box to enter their score. Each box is a different category and the score is calculated in different ways for each one.

During a game every participating player gets a total of 13 turns, and they must enter one score into a different box on each turn.

**The Yahtzee Scorecard**

The scorecard is divided into an upper section and a lower section. The upper section is the simplest one, and contains six boxes labelled 1 to 6. When you enter a score in one of these boxes you score the total of the corresponding dice that you have rolled on that turn.

For example, if your roll contained three sixes, then you could enter a score of 18 (3 x 6) into the box labelled 6. If your roll contained two fours, then you could enter a score of 8 (2 x 4) into the box labelled 4.

All the dice other than those of the relevant value are ignored when scoring in any of the boxes in the upper section. At the conclusion of a game you can earn bonus points for this section.

If you have scored more than 63 points in total across the six boxes then you get a bonus of 35 points.

The lower section contains seven score boxes, each one is a different category, and the rules for entering a score in each box are specific for each category. The seven categories are as follows:

* Three of a Kind
* Four of a Kind
* Full House
* Small Straight
* Large Straight
* Yahtzee
* Chance

To enter a score in the three of a kind category you need to have rolled at least three dice of the same value, for example three fives. You can then score the total of all five dice rolled in this box.

The same rule applies for scoring in the four of a kind category; you just need to have rolled at least four dice of the same value.

To score in the full house category you must have rolled three dice of one value and two dice of another value, for example three fours and two sixes. Regardless of what the values of the dice are, you score 25 points in this box.

To enter a score in the small straight category you must have rolled four dice in sequential order, for example 2, 3, 4, 5.You get 30 points for this. To score in the large straight category you must have rolled all five dice in sequential order, for example 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. You get 40 points for this.

If you get five dice of the same value, you can score 50 points in the Yahzee category. The chance category can be used for any combination you roll, and scores the total of all five dice rolled.

You would typically use this if your roll doesn’t fit into any other category or if you have already used the category it would fit into.

On any turn you can enter a zero into one of the boxes if your roll doesn’t fit into any category. You cannot enter more than one score into a box though, and you must use all 13 boxes by the end of the game.