



Play.Smart

THE GO-TO SOURCE FOR FACTS, TOOLS AND ADVICE ABOUT GAMBLING FOR ALL PLAYERS.



# HOW TO PLAY BINGO

## WHEN'S THE RIGHT TIME TO YELL BINGO?

READ TO FIND THAT OUT + MORE!

To learn more about your favourite game, take a break from playing or get support should you need it, visit our on-site PlaySmart centres, PlaySmart.ca or call the Virtual PlaySmart Centre at 1-833-888-2306.

PlaySmart Centres are managed by the Responsible Gambling Council - an independent non-profit organization dedicated to problem gambling prevention.

Scan the QR code to learn more about how Bingo games work and what keeps it fun.



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# BREAKING DOWN BINGO

## THE OBJECT OF THE GAME

Bingo! A game of pure chance, Bingo is a universal favourite that's fun and easy to play. It may not require strategy, but it does call for quick thinking and fast action.

The object of the game is to match combinations of letters and numbers on a gridded card to the combinations drawn – and to be the first to fill in a specific pattern on the card.

## PARTS OF THE GAME

Before you play, it's good to know the elements of the game and what they're called:



### BALL BLOWER

The Bingo ball blower is an air-blowing machine that mixes 75 numbered balls, which are removed and called out one at a time.



### BINGO CARDS

Each Bingo card has 24 numbered squares, plus one free space. It's divided into a grid with the letters B, I, N, G, and O as separate columns. Under each letter are numbers that correspond with a series of numbers from 1 to 75. The FREE space in the centre of the grid is considered automatically filled.



### STRIP

Bingo cards come in "strips". A strip is a vertical column of 3 bingo cards.



### BOOK

Whenever you play Bingo, you buy a book containing strips of Bingo cards. Books range from 1 to 6 strips, with 3 to 18 cards per page that can only be played for that day's session. Strip/book must be played on the session program for which it was purchased.



### SESSION PROGRAM

This is the agenda, shown on a paper handed out at the Centre. It's designed to present the order of the games, the prize for each game, and the line or pattern required to win.



### CALLER

The person who calls out the numbers to the players, and stops the action when BINGO! is called.



### MARKER OR DAUBER

This is a special ink marker used to mark or "dab" the numbers on your cards as they are called.



### FLASHBOARD

A flashboard displays each number as it's called.

## STEPS TO PLAY

1

Plan your play: Choose your Centre, arrive early, and pick up a Session Program to see when specific games are played. Payment methods may vary, with some centres accepting credit or debit cards and others cash-only.

2

Set a budget: Bingo is fun to play, but it's smart to treat it as part of your entertainment budget. Plan a budget and stick to it.

3

Buy your cards: Get everything you need to play Bingo at your local centre, from books of cards to special games.

4

Dab and Play Bingo: Get ready, get set, go! Watch and listen to the caller for every number-letter combination; dab and play to win.

5

Yell Bingo! Score the right pattern? It's your turn to yell BINGO as soon as the combination is called.

## BINGO PATTERNS

To win the game, get all of the number-letter combinations needed to form the game's required pattern. Possible patterns are:



HORIZONTAL



DIAGONAL



LETTER X



FOUR CORNERS



LARGE SQUARE



CENTRE CROSS



FULL CARD

## WINNING BINGO

Got the winning pattern? It's time to yell out BINGO! Whether you yell it out or simply let the caller know, here are some dos and don'ts:

### DO:

- Yell BINGO! as soon as the winning number is called.
- Yell BINGO! before the announcer moves on to the next number – otherwise it won't count.

### DON'T:

- Yell BINGO! before the announcer calls your last number, even if it's up on the flashboard.
- Worry if you yell BINGO! by mistake – it's not a problem!

## JACKPOTS

There are two types of Bingo jackpot prizes:

### FIXED JACKPOTS

These prizes are completely fixed – unaffected by the number of players or any other factors. A winner is guaranteed for each game.

### PROGRESSIVE JACKPOTS

Progressive jackpots start with a base prize and increase over time. Not every progressive game will have a winner, so the prize pot will continue to increase until a player wins.

Some progressive jackpot games feature an ordinal number. That means to win the jackpot, Bingo must be called before a maximum number of balls are drawn.

# GAME VARIATIONS

Bingo is so popular, it's evolved into many variations of the game:



### eBINGO

eBingo is an electronic version of Bingo. Played on a touchscreen, the computer follows the same session as paper bingo and automatically "dabs" the numbers for you as they're called. All you have to do is follow along and yell BINGO! if you win.

### PLAYSMART TIP

Remember to take frequent breaks to stay refreshed. Consider grabbing a bite to eat!

# ODDS

The odds of winning Bingo are based on two factors:

1. The number of cards in play
2. The number of balls drawn

For Bingo games with fixed jackpots, the odds are calculated by taking the number of cards you're playing divided by the total number of cards in play. So, if 100 cards are in play and you have 1 card, your chances of winning are 1 in 100.

Buying more cards will improve your odds, but at an additional cost with no guarantee of winning.

### PLAYSMART TIP

All cards in any given game offer the same odds. Whether you win or lose is unpredictable fun!



### BINGO EVENT TICKETS

Bingo Event Tickets are a variation of Break Open Tickets that offer the chance to win instant prizes during Bingo sessions. These tickets feature perforated covers that players tear open to reveal different series of numbers. The first player to match all their numbers to those called during the Bingo session, wins! Winning tickets can then be turned in for cash prizes.



### TURBO CHALLENGE BINGO

Time to take it up a notch! Played on eBingo terminals in between sessions, Turbo Challenge Bingo calls numbers every few seconds. Players are challenged to quickly follow along in an effort to match the winning pattern.

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**LEARN MORE ABOUT ALL BINGO VARIATIONS AT [PLAYSMART.CA](http://PLAYSMART.CA)**  
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# STRATEGIES

Bingo is a game of pure chance. But here are some frequently asked questions about Bingo strategies:

### DOES IT HELP TO PLAY MULTIPLE CARDS?

Playing multiple cards increases your odds to win, but also increases the cost to play and the risk of missing a number. Whether playing multiple cards is worth it is up to you, and depends on your budget.

### DOES AVOIDING CROWDS HELP MY CHANCES?

Yes, but there's a catch. Playing during peak hours (from Thursday to Sunday evenings) has lower odds of winning, but higher prizes to be won. The opposite is true of playing during off-peak hours: higher odds of winning but lower prizes to be won.

### DO CERTAIN PATTERNS HELP MY CHANCES?

Different patterns are simply designed to create fun and variety. No matter what patterns you play for, the odds that your card has the winning numbers are always the same.



FOR MORE  
**FACTS, TOOLS & ADVICE  
 ON BINGO**

GO TO [PLAYSMART.CA](http://PLAYSMART.CA)

# ETIQUETTE

Ready to play? Although they don't increase your odds of winning, good manners make for a good game:

- Remember to be respectful to the caller and your fellow players.
- Many Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres feature two rooms: one that's more lively and another reserved for quieter play. If you're in the quieter room, remember to keep your voice down – unless you're yelling BINGO!
- Sharing cards is not allowed.
- If there is an issue, such as calls that are too fast or not loud enough to hear, you can politely talk to the caller or another attendant.