

Liar's Dice

For 2 or more Players

Based on Milton Bradley's Liars Dice game, published 1987. Modified by J.R. Gracen.

Synopsis

Liar's Dice is a simple bluffing game played with standard 6-sided dice, dice cups, and a gameboard. Players bid (and bluff) on how many dice of a certain value they believe are in play based on what dice they roll (which are known to them) and what dice they think all of their opponents have rolled (which are hidden). A game consists of multiple rounds in which an opening bid is made, players continuously raise the bid, and the bid is challenged and resolved. One or more players lose one or more dice each round. Rounds continue until one player wins by being the only player with dice remaining.

A version of this game was played in the 2006 Disney movie *"Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest."*

Contents

1 gameboard, 1 6-sided Bidding Die, 1 Dice Cup per player, 5 6-sided Player's Dice per player.

Object

After several rounds of play, be the last player remaining with one or more dice. Players drop out of the game as they lose all of their dice.

A Quick Look At The Game

A game of Liar's Dice consists of several rounds of play. Each round begins with an **opening bid**, continues as players **raise the bid**, and ends after a bid is **challenged** and the challenge is **resolved**.

A **Bid** is a claim that a certain amount of Player's Dice in play are showing either the same number, or a Wild. Players bid on what's showing on their **own** dice — and on **all other** dice in play. **ONES ARE CONSIDERED WILD.**

A **Challenge** is a claim that the current bid is too high — that is, the challenger doubts that there are enough Player's Dice in play to match the current bid.

One or more players lose one or more dice on every round of play as the result of a challenge.

Players who have lost **all** of their dice must drop out of the game. Rounds of play continue until one player wins by being the only player remaining with any dice!

Game Setup

1. Each player takes **one** Dice Cup and **five** Player's Dice.
2. Choose a player to make the **opening bid** in the first round of play. In all rounds to follow, the **winner** of the challenge in the **previous** round opens the bidding in the new round.

Gameboard Components

The Liar's Dice board consists of the following components:

- 1. THE BIDDING TRACK:** Made up of Bidding Spaces. These are the numbered squares along the outside edge of the board. As bids are raised, the Bidding Die advances clockwise along the spaces on this track.
- 2. NUMBER BID SPACES:** There are **20 Number Bid** spaces on the Bidding Track. Players place the Bidding Die on a Number Bid space to indicate a Number Bid. See **NUMBER BIDS** in the **A ROUND OF PLAY** section below.
- 3. WILD BID SPACES:** There are **10 Wild Bid** spaces on the Bidding Track. Players place the Bidding Die on a Wild Bid space to indicate a Wild Bid. See **WILD BIDS** in the **A ROUND OF PLAY** section below.
- 4. THE LOST DICE AREA:** Players place the dice they lose into the **Lost Dice Area** in the center of the board, inside the Bidding Track. These dice remain out of play until the end of the game.

A Round of Play

There are **four steps** to every round of play. These steps are completed in the following order:

1. ALL PLAYERS ROLL AND HIDE THEIR PLAYER'S DICE.

To begin any round of play, shake all of your Player's Dice inside your Dice Cup, then place your cup upside-down over your dice to hide them. All players do the same. You may peek at your dice as often as you want during the round.

2. THE OPENING BID IS MADE.

You may declare any amount of numbers (or Wilds) as your opening bid, even if you didn't roll them. Make sure your bid is reasonable, however, as the player on your left will have the option to challenge it!

There are two kinds of bids: **Number Bids** and **Wild Bids**. Both are explained below, with examples.

NUMBER BIDS. There are 20 Number Bid spaces on the Bidding Track (numbered "1" through "20"). A Number Bid is a claim that a certain amount of **ALL** the Player's Dice in play are showing a particular **number value OR a Wild**.

All matching numbers **AND** all Wilds on the Player's Dice in play count toward a Number Bid. For example, if you have three 3's and your opponents have a total of four 3's and two Wilds, there are nine 3's in play: Your three 3's, their four 3's, and their two Wilds ($3+4+2=9$).

To declare a **Number Bid**, place the Bidding Die on a Number Bid space on the Bidding Track. The **accompanying number** on the Number Bid space indicates the **amount** of Player's Dice you are bidding on. The **value** showing on the Bidding Die indicates the **value** you claim is showing on all the Player's Dice in play. For example, if your bid is for nine 3's, you would place the Bidding Die on the **ninth** Number Bid space, and turn the die so the **number three** is on top.

WILD BIDS. There are 10 Wild Bid spaces on the Bidding Track (numbered "1" through "10"). A Wild Bid is a claim that a certain amount of **ALL** the Player's Dice in play are showing **Wilds** (ones). **ONLY WILDS** in play count toward a Wild Bid.

To declare a **Wild Bid**, place the Bidding Die on a Wild Bid space on the Bidding Track. The **accompanying number** on the Wild Bid space indicates the **amount** of Wilds you are bidding on. The

Bidding Die should be turned **Wild side up** to indicate a Wild Bid. For example, for a bid of five Wilds, place the Bidding Die on the **fifth** Wild Bid space, and turn the die so the **number one** is on top.

3. PLAYERS IN TURN RAISE THE BID UNTIL A BID IS CHALLENGED.

After the opening bid is made, play continues to the left. Each player, in turn, has two Options:

- * Either **raise** the current bid;
- * Or **challenge** the current bid.

Choose one option or the other on your turn — **no passing allowed!** Never bid or challenge out of turn! **RAISING THE BID** and **CHALLENGING THE BID** are explained in detail below.

RAISING THE BID.

You can raise the bid in any one of the following three ways:

- * Either keep the Bidding Die on the **same** bidding space, and show a **higher number** on top;
- * Or move the Bidding Die **clockwise** to a **higher** Number Bid space, and show **any number** on top;
- * Or move the Bidding Die **clockwise** to a **higher** Wild Bid space, and show the **Wild** on top.

NOTE: Immediately **before** raising the bid, you may take advantage of the **SHOW AND REROLL RULE** explained below.

Beyond Bidding Space 20: The last space on the bidding track is 20. If the bid goes **higher** than 20, the Number Bid space "1" becomes "21", and so on. The Wild Bid space "1" becomes "11" and so on.

CHALLENGING THE BID.

If you don't believe there are enough Player's Dice in play to support the current bid, you may **challenge** it rather than raise it. Remember — you can only challenge a bid on your turn! To challenge the bid, just say, **"I challenge!"** Then resolve the challenge as explained below.

4. THE CHALLENGE IS RESOLVED AND THE ROUND ENDS.

To **resolve a challenge**, all players lift their cups to reveal their Player's Dice. Count **all** dice in play that match the challenged bid: numbers and Wilds for Number Bids; Wilds **only** for Wild Bids.

After counting the dice, determine who loses the challenge. This is done in the following way:

- * If the actual amount of dice is **more than** the bid amount, the **challenger** loses the challenge.
- * If the actual amount of dice is **less than** the bid amount, the **bidder** loses the challenge.
- * If the actual amount of dice is **exactly equal to** the bid amount, **everyone except the bidder** loses the challenge!

LOSING DICE.

When you lose a challenge, you lose the **difference** between the **bid amount** of bid dice and the **actual amount** of bid dice in play. If the bid amount is **exactly equal to** the actual amount, every player **except the bidder** loses **one** die! However, if you are down to one die remaining and you are not directly involved in the challenge (i.e. you are not the bidder or the challenger), you do not lose your last die when the bid amount equals the actual amount. See **CHALLENGE EXAMPLES** below.

Place the amount of dice you lose into the **Lost Dice Area** in the center of the gameboard. These dice are out of play for the remainder of the game.

LOSING ALL OF YOUR DICE.

Once you lose all of your dice, you are out of the game!

CHALLENGE EXAMPLES.

Example 1: You challenge a bid of **eight 5's**. When all Player's Dice are revealed, **seven 5's** and **four Wilds** are counted. That's **eleven 5's** in all — three more than the bid amount. The bidder was right: there were at least eight 5's in play. **you** lose the challenge, and 3 of your Player's Dice (11 actual dice minus 8 bid dice). Surrender any **three** of your Player's Dice to the **Lost Dice Area** in the center of the gameboard!

Example 2: You challenge a bid of **seven Wilds**. When the dice are revealed, **five Wilds** are counted. **The bidder** loses the challenge, and surrenders **two** dice (7 bid dice minus 5 actual dice) to the **Lost Dice Area**.

Example 3: You challenge a bid of **fourteen 2's**. The dice are revealed, and **EXACTLY fourteen 2's and Wilds** are counted. **You — and all other players except the bidder** — lose the challenge! Everyone except the bidder surrenders **one** die to the **Lost Dice Area**. If another player would lose their **last die** in this manner, they retain it, as they are not directly a part of this challenge (they are neither the bidder nor the challenger).

Starting A New Round

After the challenge is resolved and the round ends, start a new round. The player who **won the challenge** in the previous round makes the opening bid in the new round. Bidding can begin anywhere on the bidding track.

The Show and Reroll Rule

If you decide to **raise** the current bid rather than **challenge** the previous bid, you may use the **Show and Reroll Rule**. Immediately before raising a bid, you may place **one or more** of your Player's Dice **outside** of your dice cup for all players to see, then reroll and hide **all** of your remaining dice. Then you **must** raise the bid. Showing and rerolling could improve your chances of winning a possible challenge.

You may show **any** amount of dice outside of your cup, as long as you have at least **one** die left to reroll. The dice you show **don't** have to match either the current bid or your new bid. They stay in view, outside of your cup, for the rest of the round, and count toward the challenged bid if they match it.

You may **not** Show and Reroll on an **opening bid**.

If you Show and Reroll, you **MUST** then raise the current bid. I.e., you can't Show and Reroll and then challenge the current bid.

A Show and Reroll Example.

The bid is **ten 6's**. You have four dice left: one 6, one Wild, and two 4's. You show your 6 and your Wild, and **reroll** your two 4's. You must then **raise** the bid, say, to **eleven 6's**.

If your bid of eleven 6's is then **challenged**, the 6 and Wild **outside** your cup will count toward your bid — as well as any 6's or Wilds you got by **rerolling** your two 4's!

How To Win

Continue playing rounds until only one player remains with one or more Player's Dice. This surviving player **wins the game!**

Game Variations

Simple variations.

- * Each round the loser of the challenge loses only **one die**. This prevents the situation where a player loses most of their dice early and is at a severe disadvantage for the majority of the game.
- * Play with **more** (or **less**) than **five** Player's Dice per player (use more dice in 2-3 player games).
- * The **loser** of the previous round opens the bidding in the new round. If more than one loser, the one with the least number of Player's Dice opens the bidding in the new round.
- * **Show and Reroll variant**. The original 1987 rules called for you to raise the bid **before** Showing and Rerolling. I prefer the SoCal Gamers variant of raising the bid **after** you reroll and have a chance to see your new dice roll, which is what I have incorporated into the standard rules above.

Playing For Chips.

Chips aren't included in the game, but you may use them (or any other counters) to play this interesting game variation. Each player starts the game with **50 chips**. Two "pots" are used: One **Round-of-Play Pot** and one **Game Pot**. At the beginning of every round, each player places one chip in the Round-of-Play Pot, and one chip in the Game Pot. The winner of the **challenge** wins the Round-of-Play Pot. The winner of the **game** wins the Game Pot!

Liar's Dice: The Drinking Game.

Take a drink for every die that you lose. Or, alternatively, take a drink for every die an opponent loses. Beer for the adults, root beer for the kids...

Acknowledgements

The original Liar's Dice rules can be found at:

http://www.gameroom.com/gamebits/RULES/Liars_Dice_Rules.html.

Some of the Rules Variations incorporated into this text were suggested in the **Revised Liar's Dice rules from SoCal Gamers** file, titled **LIAR.doc**, in the **Files** section at the bottom of the BoardGameGeek's Liar's Dice page (<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/game/45>).

A selection of Liar's Dice gameboards are available for download in the **Files** section of the above-mentioned BoardGameGeek website. I prefer the **PiratesMapBoard.jpg** by ixnay66. redjack11's **pirates_themed_liars_dice_mat-trh_v1-1.pdf** is a close second.

These rules can be downloaded there as well:

- * **Liars_Dice_Rules_By_JR.doc**. This file is the document you are reading now. It is the full set of rules with gameplay examples.
- * **Liars_Dice_Abbreviated_Rules_By_JR.doc**. This is the abbreviated set of rules formatted to fit on a single sheet of paper, front and back. It is a more or less complete set of rules, but with fewer examples. It was designed to get you up and running with the game as quickly as possible.