

**Domino Golf**  
**for 2-5 players**  
**by Andrew S. Fischer**

**INTRODUCTION**

Domino Golf is the fun way to play golf with dominoes, at the “professional” level. You’ll find sand traps, trees and water hazards to contend with, and choose when to play it safe or go with the “gods of golf”— a different challenge every time you play!

**REQUIREMENTS**

Double-12 domino set

A small, colored marker of some kind for each player

Scorepad, pen

**GAME SETUP**

Mix all the dominoes. Randomly choose 18 of these and keep them face-down off to the side; these will be the 18 “greens” which you will play. Make three groups of 3 dominoes, one group of 4, and one group of 5. The remaining dominoes form “the gods of golf” pool. Take one of the gods of golf dominoes to use as the “tee” throughout the game; keep it face-down on the table. All players place their markers on or next to the tee to begin each hole.

Flip one of the 18 greens face-up; this will be the “green” (i.e., putting green) of the first hole played. If it is a double, choose another from the gods of golf pool, then mix the double back into the gods of golf dominoes. Repeat as necessary until a non-double is chosen.

If the **lower** number on the domino is 0,1 or 2, then this hole will be a Par 3 hole. If the lower number is a 3,4,5 or 6, then it will be a Par 4. If the lower number is a 7,8,9,10,11 or 12, then it will be a Par 5. Once the type of hole is determined, place the domino near the tee, and perpendicular to it, with the **higher number at the top**, farther from the tee.

If the hole is a Par 3, then each player will play one domino “from the tee” in an attempt to reach the “green” domino. If the hole is a Par 4, then each player will play one domino “from the tee” and one domino from an “approach” domino. If the hole is a Par 5, then each player will play one domino “from the tee,” one domino from a “lay-up” domino, and one domino from an “approach” domino.

Each player randomly chooses five dominoes from the gods of golf pool and arranges them secretly. These five dominoes will comprise the player’s “golf bag” for the first three holes.

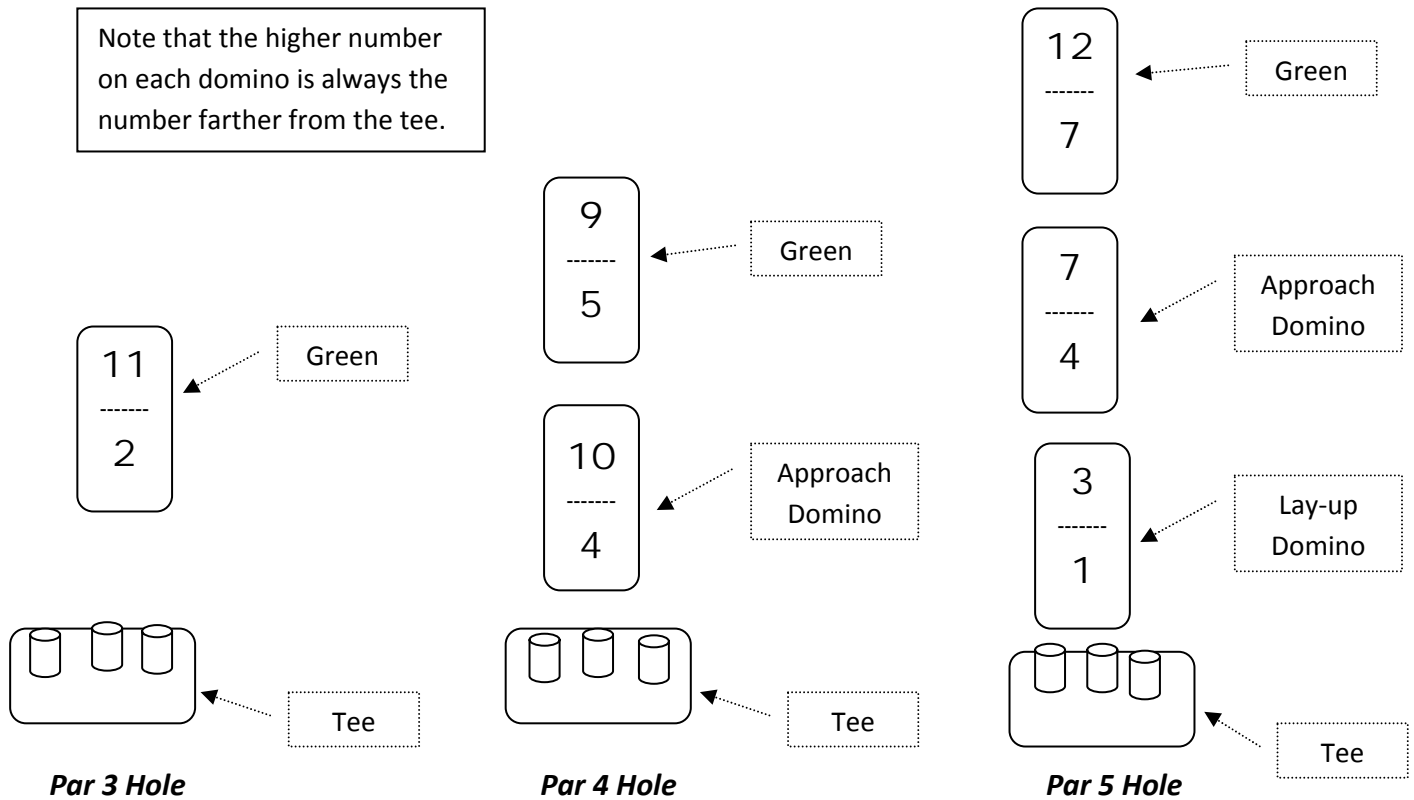
**HOLE SETUP**

**If the hole is a Par 3**, you are ready to tee off. See diagram.

**If the hole is a Par 4**, draw a domino from the pool and place it between the “green” and the tee, higher number farther from the tee. (If it’s a double, see “Water” below.) This new domino is called the “approach” domino, since it represents the landing area from which your approach shot (second stroke) is made. See diagram.

**If the hole is a Par 5**, draw an approach domino as above, then another domino from the gods of golf; place this between the approach domino and the tee, again with the higher number farther from the tee. (If it’s a double, see “Water” below.) This new domino is called the “lay-up”

domino. This is where your tee shot lands, and from which you make your second shot to the approach domino. See diagram.



## **GAMEPLAY**

Choose a start player randomly. To tee off, the player chooses a domino from his golf bag and plays it face-up.

### **Tee shot if the hole is a Par 3:**

**(NOTE: First see if result 1 applies; if not, see if result 2 applies, etc.)**

1. If either number on the played domino matches the higher number of the "green" domino, then the tee shot lands on the "green" and the player one-putts for a birdie. He is "down in two." (Two total strokes for the hole.)
2. If either number on the played domino matches the lower number of the "green" domino, then the tee shot lands on the "green" and the player two-putts for a Par. He is "down in three." (Three total strokes for the hole.)
3. If the total pips on the domino played is equal to or less than the total pips on the hole domino, then the tee shot lands on the "green" and the player three-putts for a Bogey. It's "down in four." (Four total for the hole.) *Example: the "green" domino is 0/9 for a total of 9 pips. The played domino is 4/5 for a total of 9 pips, which is less than or equal to 9.*

4. If none of the above applies, the tee shot lands in a sand trap near the “green” and the player needs four more strokes to finish the hole. “It’s down in five.” (Five total for the hole.) An unfortunate Double-Bogey. *Example: the “green” domino is 0/9 for a total of 9 pips. The played domino is 4/6 for a total of 10 pips, which is not less than or equal to 9.*

### **Going With the “Gods of Golf”:**

**If a player does not have a domino in hand that he wishes to play, a random domino from the gods of golf pool may be chosen instead; once picked, this domino must be played – you cannot change your mind. Note that if you have no dominoes in hand, you are forced to choose this option.**

All other players, going clockwise around the table, play a domino just like the first player. The scores are tallied, all dominoes not in the players’ hands (except the tee) are removed from the game and the second of the three “green” dominoes is turned face-up to begin the next hole.

### **If the hole is a Par 4:**

Each player’s tee shot will land on or near the approach domino. Each player’s **second** stroke – that is, his second played domino (from the approach domino toward the green domino) – works the same from the approach domino as the tee shot for a Par 3 hole above.

**The type of terrain the second stroke is played from (fairway, rough, sand) is important. See below.**

### **Tee shot if the hole is a Par 4 (or Par 5):**

1. Once again, the starting player plays a domino of his choice from his golf bag face-up. Alternatively, he may choose one randomly from the gods of golf as noted above.
2. If either number on the played domino matches the **higher** number of the approach domino, then the tee shot lands in the **fairway**. Place your marker on or next to the approach domino’s **higher** number, **draw a replacement domino** and add it to your hand. Do not draw a replacement if you drew from the gods of golf instead of playing from your hand.
3. If either number on the played domino matches the **lower** number of the approach domino, then the tee shot lands in the **rough** (tall grass, etc.). Place your marker on or next to the approach domino’s lower number. Do not draw a replacement domino.
4. If the total pips on the domino played is **equal to or less** than the total pips on the approach domino, then the tee shot lands in a **sand trap**. Place your marker on the table, just below the approach domino. Do not draw a replacement domino.
5. If **none of the above** applies, the tee shot hits a **tree**. Take a domino from the gods of golf and keep it face-down next to your just-played domino; it represents an additional stroke taken to hit a short chip-shot to get your ball back into play. Then place your marker on or next to the approach domino’s lower number (rough).

### **Effect of Terrain on Approach Shot**

If your second shot is made from the **fairway**, it works the same way from the approach domino as it does for a tee shot of a Par 3 hole.

If your second shot is made from the **rough**, it works the same way from the approach domino as it does for a tee shot of a Par 3 hole. (Note, however, that if you landed in the rough you didn’t get a replacement domino.)

If your second shot is made from the **sand**, you may not play a domino from your hand. Instead, you **must** pick a random domino from the gods of golf, which must then be played.

### **If the hole is a Par 5:**

Each player's tee shot will land on or near the lay-up domino. Each player's **second** stroke – that is, his second played domino (from the lay-up domino toward the approach domino) – works the same from the lay-up domino as the tee shot for a Par 4 hole above. The second stroke will land on or near the approach domino.

Each player's **third** stroke – that is, his third played domino (from the approach domino toward the green domino) – works the same from the approach domino as the approach shot for a Par 4 hole above.

Again, the type of terrain the second stroke is played from (fairway, rough, sand) is important. It works the same way as outlined for a Par 4 hole above.

### **Water Hazards**

When a double is drawn for an approach or lay-up domino, it means there is a water hazard at that location instead of a tree. Place the double domino parallel to the tee domino for clarity. This functions the same as a tree result, except there is a penalty of two strokes (instead of one) to put the ball into play. The only results of your shot can be: fairway, rough (instead of sand) or water. *(Since there is no higher or lower number on the domino, there is no second number to match. If you can match the number, your shot is on the fairway. Failing that, if you play a domino whose total pips are equal to or less than the total pips on the approach domino, then your shot lands in rough. Failing that, your shot lands in the water.)*

### **After the Hole is Over**

After all players have finished the hole, tally their scores on a scoresheet. Remove all the played dominoes from the game – the green, approach and lay-up dominoes, the dominoes played by the players as well as any penalty-stroke dominoes. (Retain the tee domino.)

Flip the next “green” domino face-up. Play then begins on the hole with the player who had the best score on the preceding hole. If there's a tie, the player who last teed off first does so again. (Ties are broken just like in real golf.)

After the third hole is played, any remaining dominoes in players' hands are discarded along with the rest of the dominoes played.

Three new dominoes are chosen from the remaining “holes,” any unplayed dominoes are discarded and five new dominoes are chosen randomly from the gods of golf by each player, and the next three holes are played. After nine holes, add up the scores. Again each player takes five new dominoes, but this time they will be used for the next four holes (instead of three). Draw six dominoes for the last five holes.

After all 18 holes have been played, the lowest score wins.

### **Miscellaneous**

If the “gods of golf” pool runs out of dominoes, mix all the dominoes previously removed from the game to restore it.

When playing from an approach or lay-up domino, players on sand shoot first, then players in rough, then players in the fairway. (Use the real rules of golf for additional tiebreakers.)

In case of a tie after 18 holes, the tied players will play additional holes, one at a time, until the tie is broken. They each discard any unplayed dominoes and get five new ones for four holes; repeat this as necessary.

### **Holes in One, Eagles**

If you play a double domino from the tee domino on a Par 3 hole, and it matches the number on the “green” domino which is farther from the tee, it may go into the hole for a hole-in-one. Choose a random domino from the gods of golf. If either number also matches the number on the “green” domino which is farther from the tee, the hole-in-one is made!

If you play a double domino from the approach domino on a Par 4 or Par 5 hole, and it matches the number on the “green” domino which is farther from the tee, it may go into the hole for an eagle. Choose a random domino from the gods of golf. If either number also matches the number on the “green” domino which is farther from the tee, the eagle is made! The double must be played from the fairway (not rough or sand) for the eagle to be made.

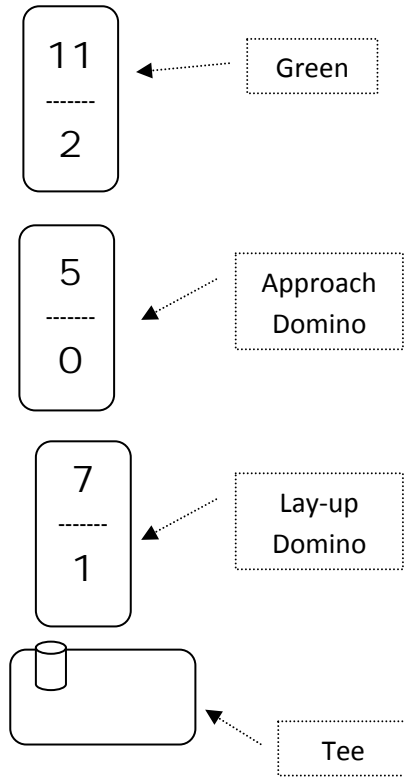
### **Mulligans**

Players may agree before the game to allow each other a “mulligan.” This allows each player to re-do a shot once per game.

### **Optional “Change of Luck” Rule**

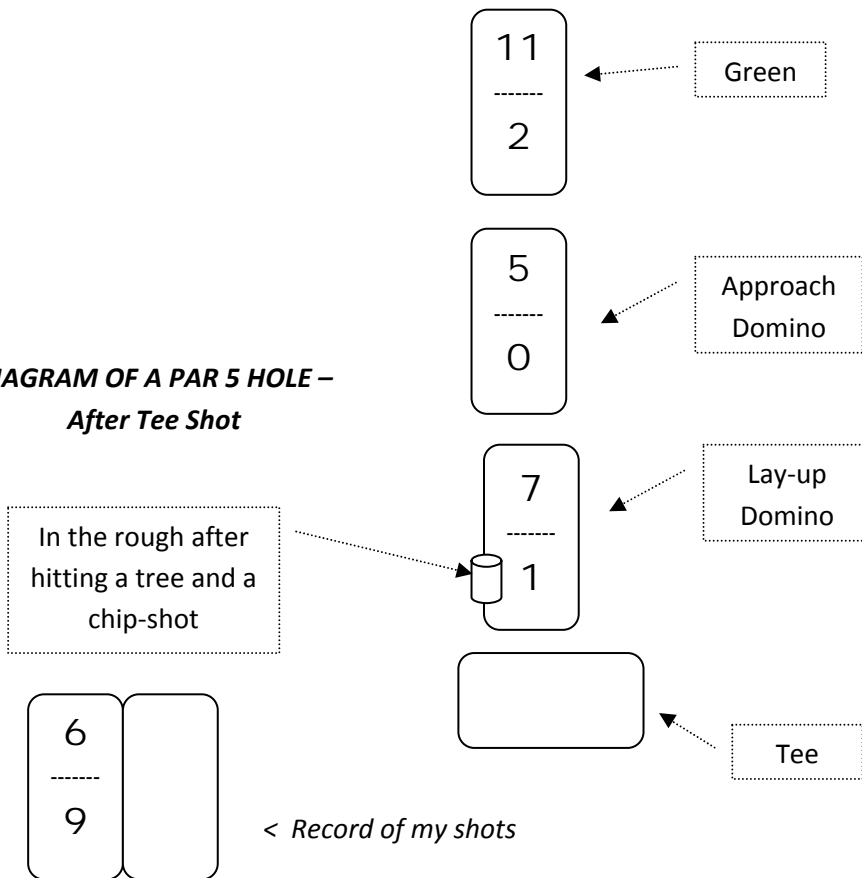
If a player holds any double in his “golf bag,” he may use it on his turn to “change his luck.” To do this, he shows the double to all players and removes it from play, and then points to another player. This player must temporarily turn all the dominoes in his golf bag face-up. Then the player who had the double takes one of the other player’s dominoes of his choice (hopefully a good one) and **must** play it immediately himself. Do not draw a replacement if you land in the fairway.

**DIAGRAM OF A PAR 5 HOLE –  
Before Tee Shot**



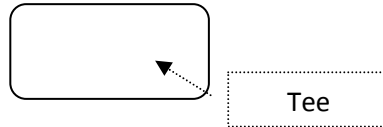
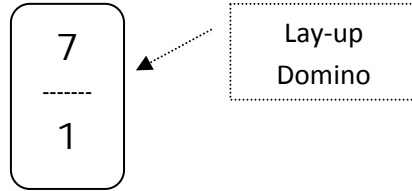
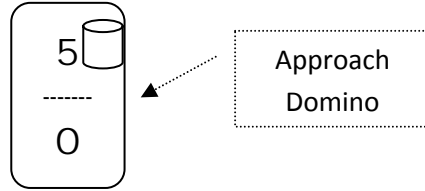
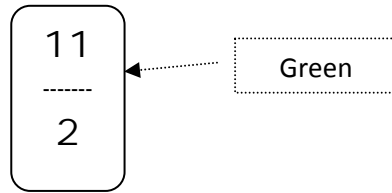
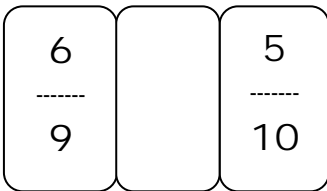
**Example of Play, Par 5 Hole:**  
**Tee Shot:** I don't hold a domino with a 7 or 1. The only domino I have which is less than or equal to 8 pips is the 4/4, but I hope to use it later for a possible eagle or "change of luck." So although the odds are against me, I draw randomly from the gods of golf and get a 6/9 – I hit a tree! So I take a face-down domino from the gods of golf to denote a chip shot into the rough and put my marker on the lay-up domino's 1.

**DIAGRAM OF A PAR 5 HOLE –  
After Tee Shot**



**Example of Play – Par 5 Hole:**  
**Next Shot:** It cost me a shot to get the ball back into play (I'm in the rough), and now I can't match 0 or 5, or play anything less than or equal to 5. Guess I might as well draw from the gods of golf... and luckily I pick the 5/10. I must play it, and my ball lands on the fairway. (If I'd played this domino from my hand, instead of from the gods of golf, I'd have drawn a replacement domino since I landed on the fairway.)

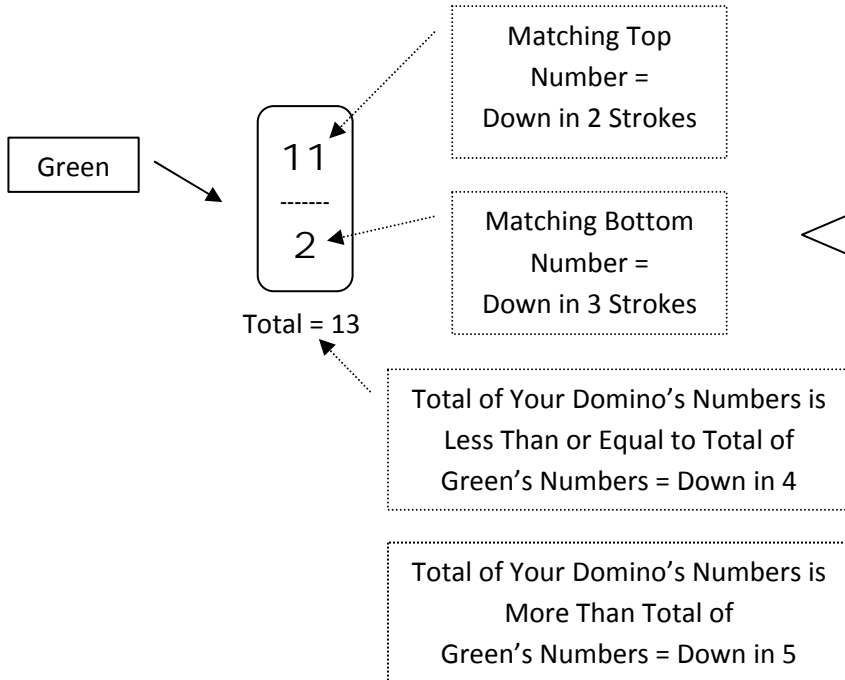
**DIAGRAM OF A PAR 5 HOLE –  
After Third Shot**



< Record of my shots

**Example of Play:**

**Fourth Shot:** I'm in the fairway and play a 2/8 from my hand for my approach shot. The 2 means my fourth shot landed on the "green" and it took two putts to get the ball into the hole for a bogey 6. (In other words, I got "down in three" shots. Three plus my other three strokes equal six for the hole.) Hopefully I'll do better on the next hole.



**Results Summary:**  
**When Shooting to Green from Approach domino (or from Tee on a Par 3 Hole)**

Note that you always check for the best result first, then the second best, and so on.