



Word Game Players' Organization Conduct Policy

Version 1.0 – August 1, 2025

Mission Statement

The Word Game Players' Organization (WGPO) is run democratically, by and for the players, in accordance with its bylaws. WGPO promotes a respectful and supportive environment that encourages every member—regardless of rating or prior tournament experience—to play often, play fair, and have fun.

A. Applicability of Conduct Policy

This policy applies to all WGPO members, directors, organizers, workers, and volunteers during:

- In-person and virtual WGPO tournaments
- WGPO-affiliated clubs
- WGPO social media platforms

Violations may result in **suspension** or **permanent bans** from WGPO events.

B. Prohibited Conduct

1. Abusive Behaviors

Harassment, abuse, intimidation, and discrimination are strictly prohibited. Examples of abusive behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Insulting, demeaning, or disrespectful verbal/written communication or gestures
- Physical abuse, including pushing, shoving, or any unwanted touching or hugging
- Intimidation, threats, bullying, or harassment
- Discriminatory behavior based on race, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, national origin, or immigration status

- Sexual or gender-based harassment
- Deliberate destruction of equipment or personal property

2. Cheating

Intentionally violating WGPO Tournament Rules to gain a competitive edge is strictly forbidden. Examples include:

- Secretly hiding good or bad tiles at any stage of the game
- Deliberately overdrawing tiles and not informing opponent
- Looking at tiles while drawing and putting back unwanted tiles
- Using a word list or software tool to look up words during play
- Deliberately undercounting or overcounting points, or accepting incorrect scores
- Deliberately tanking a game (not playing to the best of your ability)

3. Collusion

Conspiring with an opponent to achieve a specific result that would benefit yourself or another player constitutes collusion and is considered cheating. Examples of collusion include:

- Agreeing to lose the game so that another player will place or win a prize
- Agreeing not to challenge a future play to enable the opponent to win a special prize
- Agreeing to let your opponent run up the spread or their cumulative score to help them achieve a higher placement in the tournament or a high game prize

C. Suspicious Behavior

All tournament players should avoid any behavior that constitutes a violation of the Official WGPO Tournament Rules or would constitute cheating if intentionally done to gain a competitive advantage. Examples of suspicious behavior include:

- Not following correct tile-drawing procedures
- "Coffee housing" (talking about your tiles or plays mid-game)
- Leaving the game area without valid reason

Note: New or casual players may unintentionally engage in such behavior. Initially, they should be guided, not penalized. However, repeated actions after warnings may be treated as cheating.

D. Resignation & Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Good sportsmanship is key to the WGPO mission to “have fun” because it contributes to the goal of fostering a congenial atmosphere. Learn to lose graciously and allow your opponents to enjoy their good fortunes. Win even more graciously and avoid gloating. Play the whole game to the best of your ability.

Examples of bad sportsmanship:

- Not cooperating with the Tournament Director or Official
 - Resigning a game or leaving a tournament in progress without a valid reason
 - Excessive audible obscenities in the playing room
 - Taunting opponents after a win or loss
 - Excessive celebration when winning a game or challenge
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E. Recommended Conduct

As new players join the Scrabble community, it is important to welcome them and mentor them on tournament rules and expectations. When a newcomer makes a minor violation of the conduct policy, directors and opponents should gently guide the player as to the correct procedure. New players are the future of competitive Scrabble and should be made to feel welcome by all.

F. Players with Disabilities

WGPO is an organization that welcomes players with disabilities, including mobility issues, auditory, visual, speech, and emotional challenges, among others. WGPO is pleased to assist and accommodate individuals with these challenges so that they can participate and enjoy Scrabble in our tournaments and clubs.

G. Reporting Concerns

1. During the Event

Players are encouraged to bring all behavioral concerns and suspected violations to the tournament director's attention when the incident occurs so that corrective action, if appropriate, can be taken.

2. After the Event

All serious concerns—whether or not addressed at the event—should be submitted using [the WGPO Incident Report Form](#), which includes:

- Description of the issue
- Date, time, and location
- Names of those involved and witnesses
- Actions taken, if any

3. Investigation Process

The Conduct Committee reviews all reports. If further inquiry is needed, they will collect statements from parties involved. After review, possible outcomes include:

- No action
- Warning
- Suspension
- Permanent ban

4. Appeal Process

Sanctioned individuals may appeal to the WGPO Board of Directors, stating the reason for appeal. The Board will make a decision within two regular meetings. Possible outcomes include:

- Upholding the sanction
 - Reversing the sanction
 - Modifying it or imposing a different sanction
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H. Database Maintenance

WGPO maintains a secure database of:

- Incident reports and decisions – accessible to Conduct Committee and Board members
- Current suspensions and bans – accessible to Conduct Committee, Board, Tournament Directors, and Organizers