

Boggle Ruleset

February 2026

1 Basic Rules

The aim of Boggle is to find as many unique words as possible in the 4 x 4 Boggle grid. To start, the Boggle grid is thoroughly shaken, a three minute timer is started and the grid is simultaneously revealed. Players write down as many connected words as possible (see Section 3 for the criteria for legal words). Once the timer is complete, players then take turns reading out their words. If another player has found the same word, no score is given. For scoring the remaining words see Section 2.

2 Scoring

Only unique words receive a score and these are laid out in the table below.

Word Length	Score
3	1
4	1
5	2
6	3
7	5
8	11
9	15
10+	20

Note that the Qu tile counts as two letters, and homonyms, words that are spelled the same but with different meanings only count once.

3 Legal Words

For a word to be valid it must:

- Be at least three letters long,
- The letters must be connected horizontally, vertically or diagonally,
- The same letter cannot be used twice in the same word,
- Be found in the Collins dictionary under British English,
- Not be a proper noun,

- Not be marked as an abbreviation (see Section 4).

Any disputes can be settled with a vote. In the event of a tie, no action is taken. Players may decide to play with a challenging rule. If a player believes a word is not valid, they may verify this in the dictionary. The incorrect player loses two points. Players may also choose to only play words that they can define.

4 Abbreviations

Abbreviations can be divided into four categories: initialisms, acronyms, contractions and clippings.

- An initialism is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of a phrase. The letters of an initialism are pronounced individually, for example FBI and faq.
- An acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of a phrase. An acronym is pronounced as one word, for example NATO and UNICEF.
- A contraction is a shortening of a phrase through removal of a sound or letters, for example they'll or y'all.
- A clipping is a shortening of a word through removal of the start, end or middle of the word, for example dr, ad or gym.

In practical terms, we say a word is an abbreviation if it is either marked as an abbreviation in the dictionary, or it is described specifically as an abbreviation in its definition. Contractions, acronyms and initialisms are not legal Boggle words. However some words have been lexicalised and are no longer marked as abbreviations, these are valid words. Examples include scuba, laser and radar which are nouns. Clippings that are not marked as abbreviations are also valid, examples include fridge, gym and exam.

5 Examples

No set of rules would be complete without some examples to clear up any ambiguity.

- Fridge is a noun which is a clipping of refrigerator, this is a legal word. Dr is a clipping for doctor and is marked as an abbreviation so is not allowed.
- Trig is marked as an abbreviation for trigonometry however it also is an archaic adjective meaning neat or spruce, so this is allowed.
- Both rho and cafe are nouns, whilst quo is not.
- Zed, the phonetic spelling of z, is a noun whilst zee is not allowed since it is American English.
- Forty, an object exhibiting fort-like properties is allowed, whilst chower, someone who chows is not allowed.