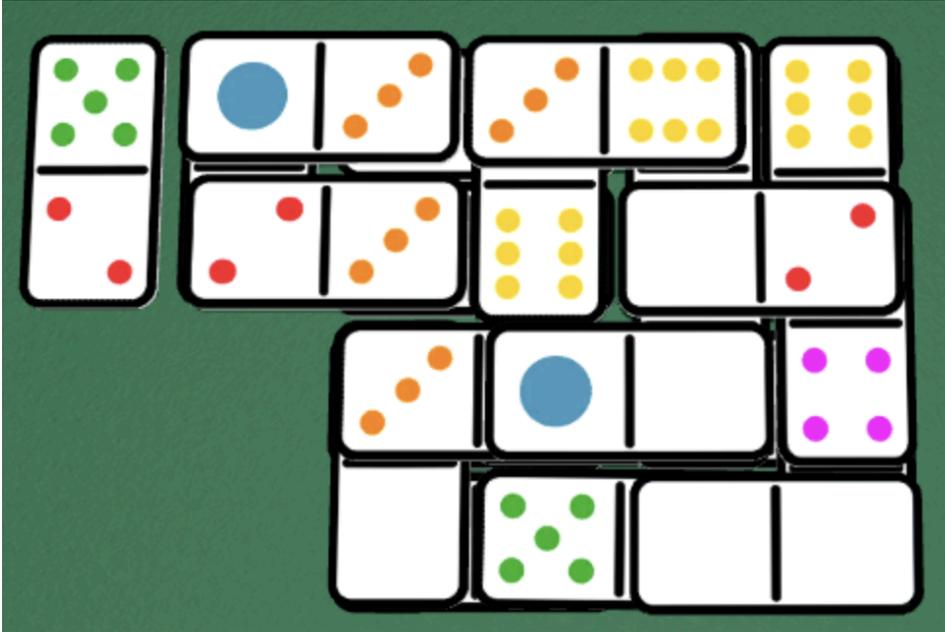


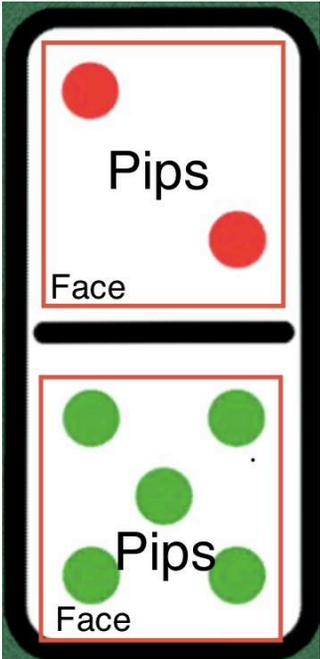
Even at Odds

Overview

Even at Odds is a two-player abstract strategy game using one set of double-six dominos. Each turn, players will play a domino from hand to create the biggest group of even or odd numbers, depending on which **Team** they're on. Of course, those same dominos could be used to block and break the opponent's biggest group.



Domino Anatomy

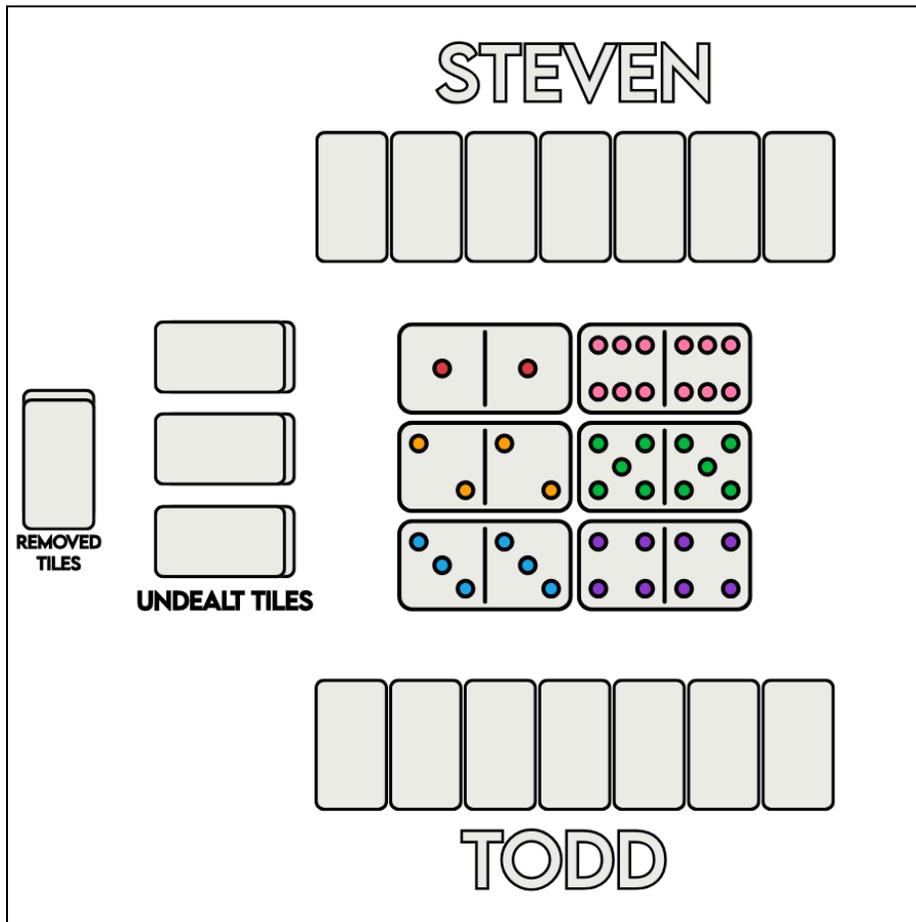


The dots on a domino are referred to as **pips**.
The areas on either side of the midline on a domino are **faces**.
To cut down on wordiness, "tile" and "domino" are used interchangeably.

Teams

The **Evens** Team consists of 2s, 4s, and 6s.
The **Odds** Team consists of 1s, 3s, and 5s.
The Blanks are on no team and serve as neutral pieces.

Setup



A game fully set up between two players: Steven and Todd

Even at Odds requires a 28 piece, double-six set of dominos. If playing over multiple rounds, paper and pencil for keeping score is a good idea.

To start each game, remove the doubles from the set except for the double-blank (1-1 through 6-6) and arrange them as shown, with both players seated opposite each other and the playing area in easy reach. These foundation tiles serve as pieces players immediately can use for playing tiles from hand and for stacking.

The remaining tiles are turned face-down and shuffled about. Both players simultaneously select and flip over 1 tile. Whichever player reveals more pips will start the game. If tied, flip over more tiles until the tie is broken. Once a start player has been decided, return all the tiles face-down once again and shuffle them about. Each player draws 7 tiles to form their hand, which is kept hidden from their opponent. Stack the remaining tiles to the side, face-down, where each player can easily reach them. Finally, remove 2 of the tiles from the stack. They will not be used in the game, and neither player should look at them.

The diagram above shows what the completed setup looks like. Steven chooses to play as **Evens**, and Todd, who flipped a higher number at the start and will start the game, will play as **Odds**.

The non-starting player will now decide which **Team** they wish to play as: **Evens** or **Odds**. After that, the game is ready to begin.

Gameplay

On each turn, players will play one tile from their hand to the board with the objective of creating a larger single connected group of their **Team's** numbers than their opponent. A tile can be **played** or **stacked**. After playing or stacking a tile, players draw one tile from the boneyard to replace it until the boneyard runs out. The game ends after both players have played their entire hands.

For clarity, the rules will refer to the topmost number showing of any tile as the **Active** face. When a tile is covered by another tile, the covering tile's face becomes the new **Active** face. (Tiles with nothing stacked on them have two **Active** faces)

Playing Tiles

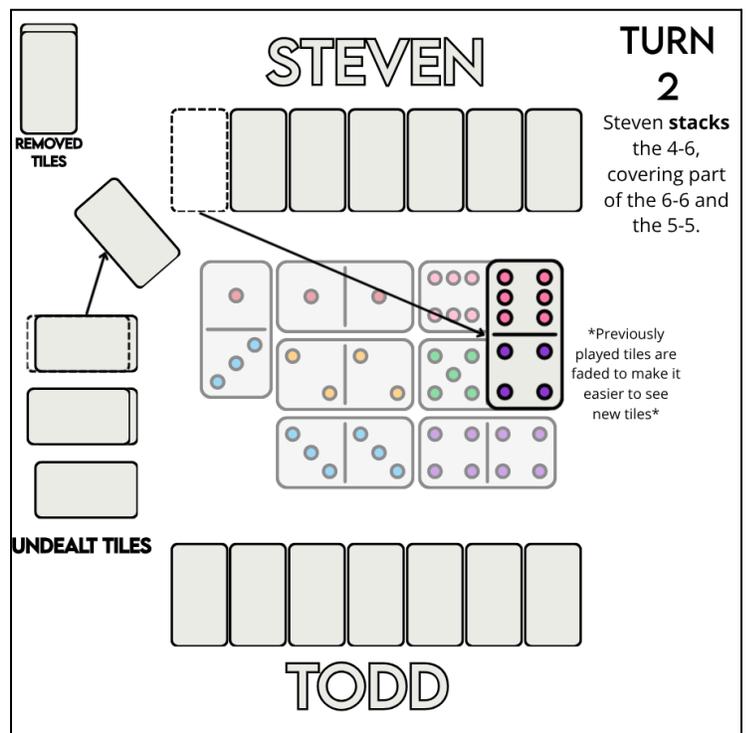
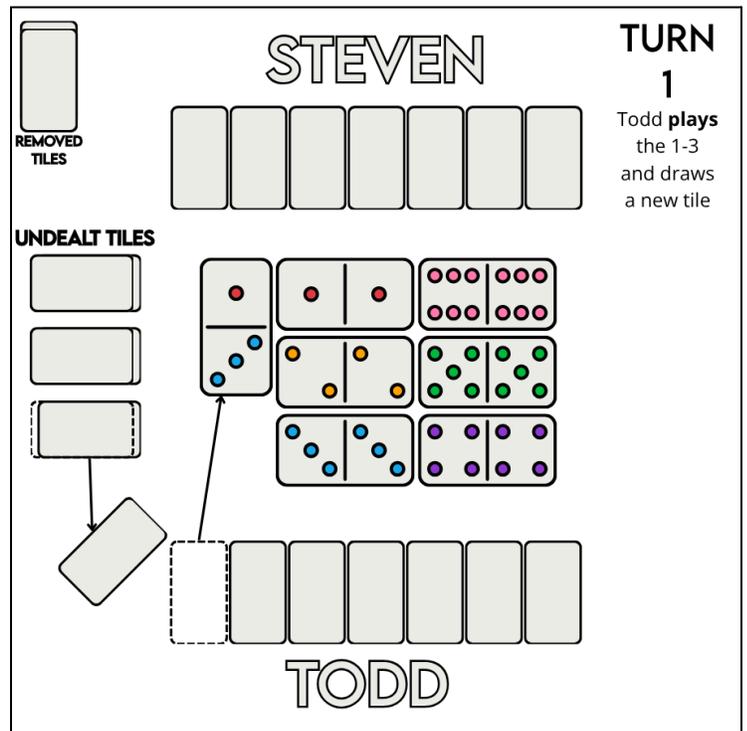
A tile can be played adjacent to any other tile with the same value for its **Active** face, as long as the played tile is put directly on the table and not covering any other tile. The matching faces must be directly adjacent (not diagonally), but non-matching faces may also come in contact.

Stacking Tiles

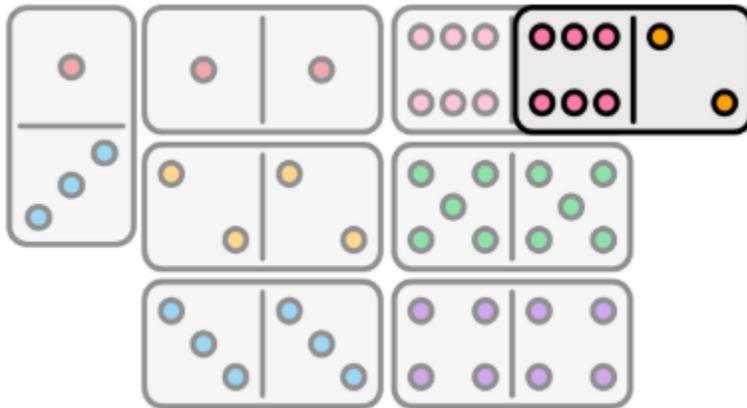
A tile can be played on top of two other tiles where one of the faces being covered up matches the face of the stacking tile. *A stacked tile must cover exactly 2 faces on 2 different tiles.*

The top faces showing after a stack are considered the **Active** face for playing tiles adjacently, as described earlier. In the example, this means that the 4 side of the 4-6 is one of the **Active** faces. A tile with a 4 could be **played** adjacent to it on the table.

Tiles may *never* be stacked in such a way that they are covering tiles of two different heights.



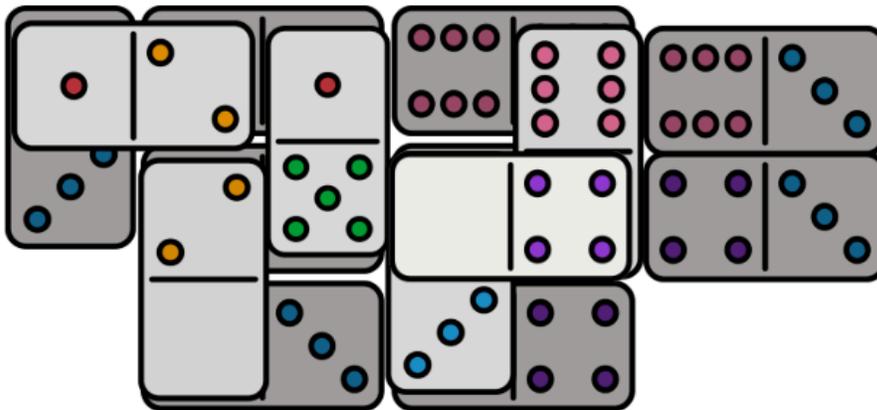
If the tile is not laying flat across two tiles, it cannot be played.



If Steven decided to stack the 2-6 on just the 6-6, the tile would not lay flat. Therefore, this is an illegal play.

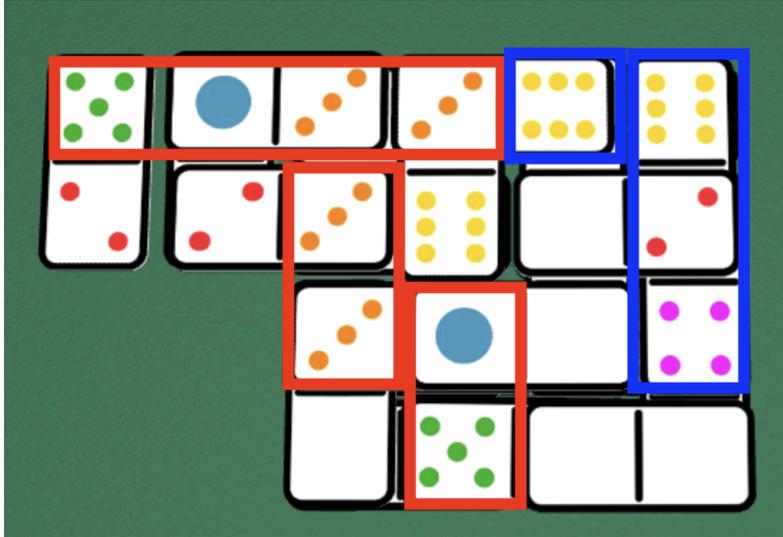
Scoring

Once both players have played all the tiles from their hands, the game is over and scoring can take place. A player's score is the number of adjacent **Active** faces of all their numbers (2/4/6 or 1/3/5) in the biggest group they have. Players will only score **one** group for a game. Each **Active** face is worth 1 point in its group. The biggest group wins.



This is a game in progress, with the bottom-most layer being darkest, the second layer being a bit lighter, and the Blank-4 being normal. If the game were to end now, Steven would score six points for the three 6s and three 4s they've connected to form their biggest group. Todd would score four points for the two 3s, one 5, and one 1 they've connected to form their biggest group.

This shows a final game state where the Odds player scored 8 (Red box) and the Evens player scored 4 (Blue box). *Alt-text present.*



Tie Breakers

If the biggest groups of both players are tied, the player with the most faces at the highest level of the board wins. For example, if the only tile stacked to level three of the game is the 1-3, then **Odds** would win as they have two faces at the highest level.

If the game remains tied after that, both players take one of the removed tiles and take one more turn each.

Match Scoring

There are two ways to do match scoring if players wish to have multiple games in a row. The simpler way is a two out of three match. The more advanced way to give each player a “game score” based on how much more they won a game and sum these game scores together.

For example:

Player:	Steven	Game Score	Todd	Game Score
Game 1:	8	2	6	0
Game 2:	7	0	9	2
Game 3:	5	0	11	6
Final:		2	Todd wins!	8

Solo (WIP)

These are the current work-in-progress rules for playing EAO solo. Unless stated otherwise, the same rules as the normal game apply. The goal is to get as close of a score to **zero** as possible. (In other words: points are bad)

- Starting layout is:

1-0 6-0

2-0 5-0

3-0 4-0

- Double-blank is removed from play

- Shuffle the remaining tiles, face-down

- Turn: Draw 3 each turn face-up. You can play them in any order. You must play all of them before drawing more.

- All 6 numbers must be visible at the end of each turn. (Example: you could cover up the only 2 on board with your first domino from hand as long as there is another 2 showing by the end of the turn.)

- Doubles *cannot* be Played. They must be Stacked.

- Scoring: Count up the biggest connected group of Evens and Odds. You gain 2 points per difference in size. So if your Even group is 10, and Odds group is 8, your score is 4. You also gain 1 point for every isolated group (of which one face can be).

- Double Blank: One time helper. If you've got yourself in a bad spot, you can turn the double-blank face-down and exchange one of your hand tiles with the draw pile.

Credits

Thank you to everyone who playtested and offered advice on this design. This game underwent a huge amount of changes from start to finish, and I'm happy with this final version.

Playtesters:

Summer Landrum, Ashley Landrum, Ryan Campbell, Shreesh Bhat, Justin Bush at Boardgameanimal ([YouTube](#)) for pointing out that the Solomode should have a clearly stated objective

Good ideas and good friends:

Niko Lepka, Carol LaGrow, and Spencer Cappallo

Inspirations:

Floristry, High Tide, Balatro (this game was originally called Steven vs Todd, as in Even Steven and Odd Todd), and Clusterroll

Updates:

- 11/16/25: Clarified the six doubles open the game as a foundation area for playing to. (Thank you to my boy Spencer/dx/UanarchyK!)

- 11/17/25: Updated a handful of graphics, clarified some language, and added the tiebreaker section
- 11/24/25: Added first draft of Solo rules. Fixed an error in the first scoring example. (Thank you Justin 'Sheafify' on BGG for catching that!)
- 12/15/25: Added the *very necessary* clarification to solo rules that you're aiming to have as close to Zero as possible. (Thanks Justin!)