

Black Light Projects Spades 2026 Tournament Rules

The JUDGES & the BLP representative have the final call on all hands and play.

\$30 fee for teams registered by August 30th. \$50 fee for late registrants. All teams must be registered by 12:30 pm on Sept 19th.

With an odd number of teams, a team representative will select a card. The highest card drawn will receive a BYE for the first round of play.

Must use cards provided by Black Light Projects.

Single or Double Elimination

BLP will decide if the tournament will be single or double elimination based on the number of registered teams.

Disqualification:

The JUDGE and the BLP representative determine disqualification. A team is disqualified if caught CHEATING and may not resume tournament play. This does not include renegeing (addressed later in the rules).

PROFANITY or DEROGATORY speech is prohibited. Disqualification is at the discretion of the JUDGE and the BLP representative

A player is DISRESPECTFUL to any player. Disqualification is at the discretion of the JUDGE and the BLP representative

A team is not prepared to play at their play time. Disqualification is at the discretion of the JUDGE and the BLP representative

TALKING ACROSS THE BOARD to your teammate during play is prohibited. Disqualification is at the discretion of the JUDGE and the BLP representative

Goal and Rank of Cards

Round 1: Goal: to be the first team to reach 200 points. Rank of Cards: A (high), K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. No jokers. No wild cards.

Round 2 (or more as needed): Goal: to be the first team to reach 350 points. Rank of Cards: Big Joker, Little Joker, A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. No wild

cards. In the deck the 2 of hearts and the 2 of clubs are removed to maintain a 52 count card deck.

Final Round: **Goal:** to be the first team to reach 500 points. If this game starts after 3:30pm, a time limit may be imposed. **Rank of Cards:** Big Joker, Little Joker, deuce of Diamonds, deuce of Spades, A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. In the deck the 2 of hearts and the 2 of clubs are removed to maintain a 52 count card deck.

The Deal

The JUDGE will spread the cards. Each player picks a card. The first dealer is chosen by a draw for high card, and thereafter the turn to deal proceeds clockwise. After thoroughly shuffling the deck, the entire deck is dealt one at a time, face down, beginning on the dealer's left. The players then pick up their cards.

The Bidding

Each player decides how many tricks (books) they will be able to take. Partners' bids are added; the sum is the number of tricks (books) that team must win to score points. The non-dealing team places their bid first, and then the dealer's team. There is only one round of bidding, and the minimum bid per team is 4 (board), maximum is 13.

No Blind Bids. No Nil bids.

The Play

The player on the dealer's left makes the opening lead, and players must follow suit, if possible. If a player cannot follow suit, they may play a trump or discard.

The trick (book) is won by the player who plays the highest card in the leading suit unless trumped by a spade. If play was broken by a spade, then the player with the highest spade wins the trick (book). The player who wins the trick (book) leads next. Play continues until none of the players have any cards left. Each hand is worth 13 tricks (books). Spades cannot be led unless played previously or the player to lead has nothing but Spades in his hand.

DON'T RENEGE! If you have the suit, you have to play on suit. If you play off suit, and get caught, your team loses 3 books to the other team.

Breaking Spades

Spades are broken when a player cannot follow suit and chooses to play a spade. When a player cannot follow suit, he may choose to play spades, but is not required to.

Spades are also broken if a player has no option and leads with spades.

Continuing Play

After scoring a hand, if neither team has reached 500 points, the player to the dealer's left becomes the new dealer.

Score

The JUDGE will keep score. The team scores 10 points for each trick (book) bid, plus 1 point for each overtrick (bag).

For example, if the player's bid is 7 and they make 7 tricks (books), the score would be 70. If the bid was 5 and the player won 8 tricks (books), the score would be 53 points: 50 points for the bid, and 3 points for the three overtricks (bags). If a team does not meet its bid, it scores 10 negative points for each trick (book) it bid. For example, if a team bids 4 and wins only 3 tricks (books), the team has been set and loses 40 points. When a hand is over, the scores are recorded next to the bids, and a running score is kept.

3 Set Rule

If during normal play a team is set 3 times, the game is over. The team experiencing 3 sets is the losing team.

Sandbagging

Each time a team scores 10 bags (overtricks) (cumulative through a game), that team receives a 100-point penalty (minus 100 points).

Winning the game

The first team to reach 200/350/500 points is the winner. If both teams reach 200/350/500 in the same hand, the team with the highest score is the winner. If there's a tie, then all players participate in one more hand of play. The team who wins the tie breaker hand, wins the game.

Advancing

The winning team advances to the next round of play. The losing team may join the non-winners play (if provided) and advance to the next level until 2 losses occur.

Winning the Tournament

The winning teams (less than 2 losses) advance through successive rounds until the final game. The winning team of the final round of play wins the tournament.