

Playing Darts

Playing darts is easy to learn and a lot of fun. Though there are certain variations on the game, basic rules and standards apply.

Whether you are an avid darter, a recreational player or a first-timer, playing darts is a great way to relax and socialize. Before you play, there are some important things that you need to know. Like any other sport, playing darts involves its own set of standards and rules.

If you want to play a proper game of darts, follow these guidelines:

Dartboard Layout

To familiarize yourself with the game of darts, you must first understand the layout of the dartboard. Regulation dartboards measure 18 inches in diameter and are divided into 20 numbered sections or "wedges". Each wedge includes single, double and triple sections, and all sections meet at the bullseye at the center of the board. The wedge segments (single, double, triple) differ only in the point values. The bullseye is considered the main target on the board and holds the highest value at 50 points. The wedge marked with a "20" is always centered at the top.

Basic Rules

Playing darts involves just a few rules. First and foremost is the position of the board. Under the basic rules of darts, the board is hung with the bulls eye located exactly 5 feet 8 inches from the floor. According to World Darts Federation guidelines, the throwing line, or "oche", is to be marked on the floor, exactly 7 feet, 9.25 inches from the face of the board. The oche is commonly marked using non-skid tape.

When throwing darts, a player may not step past the oche. He or she may step on the line, but not over it. Each player throws three darts to complete a turn. To decide who throws first, all players shoot one dart. The player shooting closest to the bullseye gets the first turn.

Players are usually allowed to warm up before a game begins. Each person takes turns throwing nine darts. Once the game is in play, each shooter throws three darts. The score is tallied and the darts are removed before the next player takes a shot. Points are counted depending on where the dart lands on the board. Each segment has its own point value, with doubles and triples bringing twice or three times that segment's point value. If a dart misses the board entirely or falls from the board before a count of five, that dart's score is counted as zero. Play alternates in this manner until one player reaches the designated score.

There are a number of variations on the basic game, but they all hold one common element: playing darts is a fun way for players of all skill levels to relax with friends.