



Bunco Rules

What Is Bunco?

Bunco is a social dice game, traditionally played with 12 players who are divided into three tables with four players at each table. But really, almost any number can play.

These are the Bunco basics:

- A game of Bunco is played in two to four sets, with six rounds in each set.
- A player at the head table rings a bell to signal the beginning and end of each round.
- During the game, players at each table take turns rolling three dice to try and earn points. All tables play simultaneously.
- During each round, players attempt to roll the same number as the number of the round (for example, rolling three 3's die3.gif die3.gif die3.gif in Round 3 would earn the player points).
- For every number rolled that matches the round number, one point is awarded to that player.
- A player keeps rolling until they score no points. The scorekeeper then records the score they earned onto the table tally as the temporary team score. Then the dice are passed to the player on the left.
- When the head table has earned 21 points, the round is over. The head table rings a bell to signal that the round has ended.
- At the end of every round, players change partners and/or tables.
- At the end of a game, there are typically multiple "winners." The player(s) with the most Buncos, wins, losses, etc, may earn prizes for their successes.

Bunco Supplies and Equipment

Bunco requires the following components:

- Three dice for every table
- One Bunco score sheet for every player
- One Bunco table tally for every table
- A bell for the head table
- One pencil for every player

Optional components include:

- Table direction signs to indicate to which tables the winners and losers of each round should move.
- A plush dice or other soft object that can be used as a Traveler.

Preparing for a Bunco Game

Number the tables as #1, #2, #3, etc. Players switch tables and seats between each round, and this will help indicate to which table they will be moving.

Place the following items on each table:

- three dice
- a Bunco table tally
- a Bunco score sheet for each player
- a pencil for each player

Place a bell on the head table (also known as the High Table, or table #1).

Four players should sit at each table. The players who sit opposite of each other are partners for the first round.

Designate one player as scorekeeper at each table. The scorekeeper uses the table tally to track each team's points.

Rolling and Scoring in Bunco

Players score points when any of the dice they roll match the number of the round. Each matching number rolled scores 1 point. For example, if a player rolls two 2's in round 2, the player receives two points and rolls again.

The numbers on the dice are not added together, nor does the number on the dice indicate point value. A 1 rolled in round 1 is worth 1 point, a 3 rolled in round 3 is worth 1 point, and a 6 rolled in round 6 is also worth 1 point.

However, **if a player's dice all show the same number, they will earn more points.**

If the three dice match the number of the round being played, it's called a Bunco and the player earns 21 points. The player must call out "Bunco!" in order to receive the points. (For example, if a player rolls three 4's in round 4, they would call out "Bunco!" and earn 21 points.)

If a player rolls three of another number that doesn't match the number of the current round (for example, rolling three 6's in round 4), the player earns 5 points instead. This is known as a "mini Bunco".

Beginning the Game

Each round is begun by the head table ringing the bell. When that happens, the scorekeeper at each table picks up the three dice and begins rolling them.

Each time the dice are rolled, each die is read separately (they aren't added together).

- In round 1, each 1 rolled is worth 1 point.
- In round 2, each 2 rolled is worth 1 point.
- In round 3, each 3 rolled is worth 1 point.
- In round 4, each 4 rolled is worth 1 point.
- In round 5, each 5 rolled is worth 1 point.
- In round 6, each 6 rolled is worth 1 point.
- **Rolling three-of-a-kind of the same number of the round you're on is a Bunco.** The player must call out "Bunco!" to receive 21 points, and then must keep rolling (unless the player is sitting at the head table in which case she rings the bell to signal the end of that round).
- **Rolling three-of-a-kind of any number other than the round you're on is worth five points** for the temporary team score on the table tally.

For example, rolling three 5's in Round 3 is a mini Bunco and is worth five points.

Each player continues rolling until they score no points. The scorekeeper then records the points the player earned onto the table tally as the temporary team score. Then the dice are passed to the player on the left.

The round ends when the head table accumulates at least 21 points. The player at the head table who earned the 21 or more points rings the bell to signal the end of the round.

However all players who are taking their turn when the round ends, including the player who rang the bell, continue rolling until one of their rolls earns them no points, **even though the round is officially over**. This means that a player may possibly earn several points or even roll one or more Buncos after the bell has been rung!

It's possible for a team to win a round without rolling any Buncos.

Individual Player Scoring

Each player should have their own individual score card and keep track of their rounds on it.

- When a player wins a round, they should write a "W" on the line for that round.
- When a player loses a round, they should write an "L" on the line for that round.
- When a player rolls a Bunco, they should place a tally mark for each occurrence in the space marked "Buncos_____"

(NOTE: Only the player who rolled the Bunco will write down that they rolled a Bunco in that round. The player's partner will not!)

Some score cards have a space for tracking mini Buncos as well.

Additional Rounds

At the beginning of each new round, all players should change seats and/or partners.

- The winning team at the head table (table #1) stays at the head table, but one of the players should move over a chair so they will have a different partner for the next round.
- The losing team from the head table should move to the middle table (table #2).
- The winning team from table #2 moves to the head table.
- The winning team from table #3 (sometimes humorously called the "Losing" table) moves to table #2.
- The losing team from table #2 goes to table #3.
- The losing team at table #3 stays at the table but one player should move over a chair so they will have a different partner for the next round.

At the beginning of each round, someone at each table must volunteer to keep score.

Rounds 2 through 6 are played exactly as round 1 except that in each round points are awarded for the number of the dice that are the same as the number of that particular round. So for example, in round 2 the object is to roll 2s, and a Bunco will be 2-2-2.

Continue with each round until all the rounds are completed (or you decide to wrap things up).

Finalizing Your Score

When all the rounds are completed, each player should count up all the occurrences of Wins ("W"), and Losses ("L") on their score sheet and then write the totals in the lines marked Wins_____ and Losses_____.

Tiebreakers During a Round

If both teams at a table have a tied score at the end of a round, they participate in a roll-off. Each player is allowed to roll the dice again for one session to accumulate additional points. The scorekeeper begins rolling first. This player will continue to roll and accumulate points as long as they are successfully rolling the number of that round. Each player is given a session to roll and accumulate points for their team to end the tie.

Example: at the end of round 2, a table's teams are tied. Player 1 rolls 2-1-1 and accumulates 1 point. Player 1 rolls again but does not roll any 2s dice. The dice are then passed to players 2, then 3, and then 4, all who receive chances to accumulate points.

If at the end of this session one team is now in the lead, the roll-off ends. The team with the highest score is deemed the winner.

If at the end of this first session the teams are still tied, additional roll-off sessions are repeated until the tie is broken.

Optional Rule: Traveling

If you choose to add Traveling to your game, a soft fuzzy dice or small beanbag or other tossable object is used.

Traveling occurs whenever a specific set of numbers are rolled. The exact numbers that must be rolled are determined by the hostess or players and announced at the beginning of the game or round. For example, rolling 2-2-2 in any round, or three-of-a-kind of any non-Bunco trio 5-5-5 in any round (except round 5).

Then, when the specified trio of numbers is rolled, the player shouts out "TRAVELING!" and the bag or object is tossed to the lucky player. The player holds it until another player rolls Traveling.

The player holding the bag or object at the end of the game wins a prize!

Optional Rule: Prize Categories

The hostess may choose to create award categories and offer prizes to the players. Here are some suggestions:

- Most Buncos
- Most mini Buncos
- Most Wins
- Half Wins and Half Losses (Player with an even split of wins and losses)
- Last Bunco
- Most Losses
- Traveling (Last person holding the traveling item)

Find more rules details and examples at DiceGameDepot.com/bunco-rules

Or get answers to frequently asked Bunco questions at DiceGameDepot.com/bunco-faqs



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