

Dart Rules

The Games

Many different dart games can be played, but by far the most important and popular are “301”, “501” and “Cricket. In both “301 and “501”, the basic principle is subtraction of your score from the initial score of either “301” or 501”, the winner being the first to reduce his score to exactly zero.

Rules governing all dart games are described below, as well as the rules for specific games.

1. Each player has a turn consisting of three darts.
2. To determine who begins, each player throws one dart at the bullseye. The closest begins first. Sometimes a coin toss is used.
3. All thrown darts count, but darts that miss the board, fall from or bounce off the board receive no score. A dart that sticks into another dart counts as a thrown dart but receives no score.
4. The score is determined by the point of entry of the dart, based on the wire divisions, not the colour.

301

1. Before any score is counted, the player must begin by hitting a double. That means any dart between the two wires on the outer rim of the board denoting the doubles area, or double bull. Once a “double” is thrown that dart and all others will count in the score.
2. The score is determined by subtracting from 301 the score of each thrown dart, Remember, the outer ring counts double and inner ring counts triple the indicated score.
3. The winner must reduce his score to exactly zero with the last dart being a double. For example, if the player has 32 left to reach zero, he must hit double 16. If 16 is scored he must then hit double 8 and so on.
4. If the player scores more than the exact score needed, the whole turn of three darts does not count, and the player’s score remains as it was before that turn was taken. For example, if 16 is required and the player scores 17, his score remains at 16. Likewise, since the final score must be a double, if 16 is hit the turn does not count and the score remains at 16. If 15 is hit, the turn does not count since you cannot go out on a single 1.

501

This game is played exactly like “301” with the exception that a double is not required to begin scoring. The score is subtracted from 501 and the requirements for a double to finish are the same as in 301

For team play the score can be increased to 601 or higher depending on the number of players. Generally, tournament and championship matches use the “501” game.

Cricket

The game of Cricket differs from “301” and “501” since there is an element of strategy against the opponent rather than just individual scoring.

1. The idea of the game is to “close” the numbers 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15 and bullseye by scoring 3 hits in each number. These numbers including bullseye may be closed in any order. A score in the triple or double area scores 3 and 2 respectively for that number.
 2. When 3 hits are “scored” in the number, the number is “closed” and additional darts score points only if the other player has not yet scored his three.
 3. Your opponent cannot receive points on a number that you have closed, but can prevent you from scoring additional points when he has scored three hits and closed it.
 4. To win the game, all the numbers 20 through 15 and bullseye must be closed before your opponent does. However, if a point deficit exists, it must be made up by scoring points in his open numbers.
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