

Mexican Train

The rules on one page

Players

2 to 10, each playing alone

You need

A double-12 domino set (91 tiles), a marker for each player, and paper and a pencil. A hub for the center tile is handy but not needed.

Goal

Play all your tiles, or be left holding as few pips as you can

Game ends

After 13 rounds, one for each double from 12 down to blank. The lowest total wins.

Setup

1. Put the double-12 in the middle of the table, in the hub if your set has one. This tile is the engine, and every train starts from it.
2. Turn the other 90 tiles face down and mix them up.
3. Each player draws tiles: 15 each for 2 to 4 players, 12 for 5 or 6, 10 for 7 or 8, and 8 for 9 or 10. Stand them on edge so only you can see them.
4. The leftover tiles stay face down as the boneyard. Give each player a marker.
5. Choose a player to start the first round. Turns go clockwise.

How to play

1. **Know the trains.** Each player builds their own train from the engine toward their seat. One more train, the Mexican train, belongs to nobody. Every train starts with a tile that shows the engine's number, and each new tile must match the open end it joins.
2. **Play one tile.** On your turn, play 1 tile on your own train, on the Mexican train or on any train with a marker on it. If you have a tile that fits, you must play one. Then the turn passes clockwise.
3. **Draw if you cannot play.** If no tile fits anywhere you may play, draw 1 tile from the boneyard. If it fits, play it. If not, put your marker on your train and your turn ends. If the boneyard is empty, you pass and put out your marker.
4. **Take your marker off.** Your marker opens your train to every player. It stays out until you play a tile on your own train, then you take it off.
5. **Play a double, then one more tile.** Lay a double crosswise. After playing one, you must play another tile, on the double or on any train you may use. If you cannot, draw 1 and play it if it fits. If it does not fit, put out your marker.

6. Cover an open double. A double still uncovered when its player's turn ends is open. The next tile anyone plays must go on it. The next player covers it if they can. If not, they draw 1 and cover it if that tile fits. Otherwise they put out their marker, and the next player tries.

7. End the round. The round ends when a player plays their last tile. It also ends when the boneyard is empty and nobody can play. Each player then scores the pips on the tiles left in their hand.

8. Start the next round. Each round's engine is the next double down: the double-11 in round 2, down to the double-blank in round 13. Take that double out, shuffle all the other tiles and draw new hands. The next player clockwise starts.

The engine in each round

Round	Engine
1	Double-12
2	Double-11
3	Double-10
4	Double-9
5	Double-8
6	Double-7
7	Double-6
8	Double-5
9	Double-4
10	Double-3
11	Double-2
12	Double-1
13	Double-blank

Scoring

Your score for one round

Tiles left in your hand	Your score
None, because you played your last tile	0
One or more tiles	The pips on both ends of every tile you hold
The double-blank	0, since it has no pips

After 13 rounds, the player with the lowest total wins.

