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How To Play

The following topics explain how to play Boule:

Playing the Game
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Game Menu Commands

New Game
Begins a new game. You can issue this command at any time. If you choose it before completing a game, the current game is terminated and a new one is started.
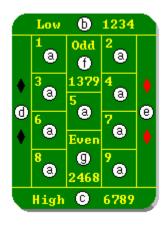
Exit
Terminates the Boule program.

Playing the Game

When you run Boule, the program initializes a new game. At the start of a game, you have $100. As you play, the program displays your current total at the bottom of the form. Boule is played in two stages: placing bets and throwing the ball.

Placing Bets

In Boule, you bet by placing one or more chips on the betting layout. Each of the rectangular areas marked on this layout represents a possible outcome of throwing the ball. The following illustration and table explain each of the areas:

If you place a chip on area...	you are betting on...
a	an individual number
b	a low number: 1, 2, 3, or 4
c	a high number: 6, 7, 8, 9
d	a black number: 2, 4, 7, or 9
e	a red number: 1, 3, 6, or 8
f	an odd number: 1, 3, 7, or 9 (**not** 5)
g	an even number: 2, 4, 6, or 8

To place a bet, simply drag the chip from the chip source (to the right of the betting layout) to the target area on the betting layout. The initial value of the chip at the source is $5. Before dragging it, you can adjust its value by clicking the up arrow or down arrow located to the right of the chip. The minimum value of a chip is $1; the maximum value is $99 or the total amount of money you have available for betting, whichever is smaller.

Note: Chips can be placed only within the marked areas on the betting layout. Unlike roulette, Boule does not allow you to bet on more than one number by placing a chip on a dividing line.

When you drop the chip on a valid position within the betting layout, another chip appears immediately at the chip source. The new chip's initial value is the same as the previous chip's value; however, you can adjust the value. If you want to bet another chip, you can now drag the chip from the chip source to the target area on the layout.

Note: You cannot place another chip within an area on the betting layout that is already occupied by a chip. However, you can change the value of a chip already placed on the layout, as explained shortly.

You can continue placing chips in this manner until no open areas are left on the layout, or until you run out of money.

After you have placed a chip within a particular area on the layout, you can move it to another open area, change its value, or remove it from the layout. To move the chip to another open area, simply drag it to this area from its current location. To change the value of a chip, drag the chip back to the chip source, use the up or down arrow to adjust the value, and then drag the chip back to its original location. To remove a chip from the layout, drag it back to the chip source and leave it there.

Note: If you drop a chip at an invalid position, the program returns it to its original location.

Throwing the Ball

After you have placed one or more chips on the layout, the Throw button is enabled, and you can throw the ball at any time by clicking this button. When you click the Throw button, the ball starts "rolling" around the bowl, eventually coming to rest within one of the 18 indentations near the center. During this time, the program displays the *no more bets* message.

When the ball has stopped rolling, the program displays the results of the throw at the top of the form. The program then removes all chips for losing bets and pays all winning bets according to the guidelines in the following table:

Type of winning bet	Payment
single number	7 to 1
characteristic (high, low, even, odd, red, or black)	1 to 1

For example, if you win a $1 bet on a single number, you win $7.

Winning bets are paid by adding the amount won to the current value of the chip; the chip is left in its present location on the layout (so that you will be tempted to bet the chip again). If, however, the resulting value of the chip would be greater than $99 (which is the maximum chip value), the chip is assigned only $99, but the full amount won is added to your total.

After paying bets and removing chips, the program adds to your total the amount won or subtracts from your total the amount lost and displays the new total at the bottom of the form. If this amount is greater than $0, you can begin placing bets again.

Note: After the ball is thrown, the ball and the results of the throw remain visible until you click within the form.

If your total has reached $0, the game is terminated. You can then start a new game by choosing the New Game command from the Game menu. (If you choose this command before going broke, the program terminates the current game and starts a new one.)

Strategy and Hints

Boule is designed so that the payouts -- or the *expected value*, to use a term from statistics -- are the same for any type of bet; it does not matter whether you bet on a single number or bet on a characteristic such as even or red. The odds are strongly in favor of the house; in fact, the house's advantage is more than twice that for American roulette. For example, the expected value of a bet of $1 in Boule is $-0.111. In other words, on the average, you can expect to lose about $.11 for every $1 bet. For a bet on a single number, the expected value is derived as follows:

expected value = probability of winning * value of winning + probability of losing * value of losing
expected value = (1/9) * (7) + (8/9) * (-1)
expected value = -0.111

The expected value for betting $1 on a characteristic is the same:

expected value = (4/9) * (1) + (5/9) * (-1) = -0.111

In contrast, the expected value for betting $1 on a single number in American roulette is $-0.0526, about half the loss for Boule. (In versions of roulette without the 00, the loss is even less.)

The moral is: Enjoy the computer game, but stay away from Boule if you travel in Europe!