

# Tres Santos Official Rules of Play<sup>©</sup>

## Overview:

Tres Santos is a golf putting game for two to four players that combines strategy, skill, and high-stakes decision-making. The game is played in two rounds per hole using three white balls (Los Santos) and one red ball (El Diablo). The objective is to win points by sinking or positioning the Santos around the cup to score or block El Diablo on each round.

## Equipment (Two Player Game):

- **Three White Balls (Los Santos):** Each player putts three Santos per hole.
- **One Colored Ball (El Diablo):** Each player putts one Diablo per hole.
- **Putting Green:** A starting point is marked with a tee, and a target is agreed upon for each hole played.

---

## Scoring:

- **In the Hole:** 2 points per Santo, 3 points for El Diablo.
- **Past the Hole:** 1 point for any Santo closer to the hole than El Diablo.
- **Short of the Hole (front lip of cup):** 0 points.

---

## Winning a Round:

- A round is won outright if El Diablo is sunk, nullifying all the opponent's Santos and scoring 3 points for the player putting El Diablo.
- If El Diablo misses, it scores zero, regardless of its position. Points are tallied for the Santos based on their positions relative to the hole and to El Diablo.

---

## Winning a Hole:

- Net scores for the first and second rounds are added and compared for each player, with the higher total score winning the hole.
- **Ties – Two Options:**
  1. Ties are carried over to the next hole.
  2. Alternatively, a single putt is taken by each tied player from the original tee mark, with the better qualifying putt winning the hole. Don't leave it short.

---

## Winning the Game:

- The game is played over multiple holes, with the player winning the majority winning the match. (Best of 1, 3, 5, etc.)

---

## Example: First Round Play

### 1. Player 1's Turn:

- Player 1 takes three consecutive putts with the Santos.
- The objective is to sink the Santos or place them just past the hole to accumulate points.
- Player 1 may attempt to block the hole by intentionally leaving a putt short, but the ball must travel at least halfway to the hole from its starting position, or it is removed from play.

### 2. Player 2's Turn:

- Player 2 takes a single putt with El Diablo.
- **Outcomes:**
  - **In the Hole:** Player 2 scores 3 points, and the round is over. Player 1's Santos score zero.
  - **Misses the Hole:**
    - **Short:** All of Player 1's qualifying Santos score, i.e., any Santos in or past the hole.
    - **Long:** Player 1's qualifying Santos resting closer to the hole than El Diablo score 1 point each.

---

### Example: Second Round Play

1. Players switch putting order, and Player 2 takes three consecutive putts with the Santos.
2. Player 1 makes a single putt with El Diablo to attempt to win the round by holing out.
  - **Outcomes:**
    - **In the Hole:** Player 1 scores 3 points, and the round is over. Player 2's Santos score zero.
    - **Misses the Hole:**
      - **Short (front lip of cup):** All of Player 2's qualifying Santos score.
      - **Long:** Player 2's qualifying Santos closer to the hole than El Diablo score 1 point each.

---

### Multi-Player:

1. Up to four players can play, with the number of rounds per hole matching the number of players.
2. In multi-player games, more Santos accumulate around the hole, with greater opportunity to make blocking or clearing putts on each round.
3. For that reason, the number of Diablos increases by one for each player over two; i.e., two Diablos for three-player games, three Diablos for four-player games.
4. As in head-to-head play, the Santos putt first, and players rotate so each has a chance to putt the Diablos on each hole.
5. The player putting the Diablos can use the extra ball(s) to clear a blocked hole, but any Diablo in the hole immediately ends the round, nullifies all Santos, and scores 3 points.
6. If none of the Diablos go in, scoring proceeds normally using the best Diablo putt as a reference for scoring the Santos.

---

### Special Rules:

1. **Minimum Distance:** All Santos must travel at least halfway from their starting position to the hole or are removed from play before putting El Diablo.
2. **Qualifying Putts:** All putts, including Diablo(s), must pass the front lip of the cup to qualify. This is particularly important when playing on an uphill or sidehill slope. On a slope, missed putts must curve behind the hole to qualify. If the ball rolls below the cup on the other side, it qualifies. However, if the ball passes the cup but rolls back without going in or curving behind the hole, it does not qualify.
3. **Ricochet:** Balls will hit other balls, and that is perfectly legal. Balls that touch or bounce off other balls are scored or disqualified based on their resting positions after contact.

4. **Off the Post:** Any putt that hits the flagstick but does not go in the hole is scored from its resting position on the green, i.e., it didn't go in.
- 

### Scoring Examples:



**Score: 3 White**



**Score: 2 White**



**Score: 1 White**



**Score: Zero White**



**Score: 3 Red**