

# NO RETURN

THERE'S NO TURNING BACK!



*A nerve-racking quest for points for 2 to 4 players aged 8 and over*

**NO RETURN** involves two phases. In the first phase, you collect counters and place them face-up in front of you, arranged by color. Each player can decide for themselves when they wish to start the second phase and begin removing the placed counters again. The aim is to convert them into points.

Careful though: if you collect counters for too long, you may end up missing out. Because any counters left in front of you at the end of the game count as big fat minus points.

Can you get the timing just right?

## WHAT'S INSIDE

1 bag

132 counters  
(2x numbers 1-11  
in 6 different colors)



  
**moses.**

## HOW TO SET UP THE GAME:

Place all of the counters in the bag and give it a good shake. Turn the box lid upside down and place it in the middle of the table. Each of you should draw **eight counters** from the bag, one after the other. Place your counters in front of you so that only you can see the number side. These are your **eight hand counters**. Always draw counters from the bag **at random**—so without looking inside!

Not happy with the counters in your hand? You now have the **one-off opportunity** to exchange your hand counters. The youngest player exchanges theirs first, then each of the other players in turn, going round in a clockwise direction.

**Want to exchange counters in your hand?** Then lay any number of **hand counters** face down to one side. You can even exchange all eight if you like. Then draw the same number of counters from the bag and arrange your new counters in front of you.

**Are you satisfied with your hand counters?** Then there's no need to exchange them.

Has everyone now had the chance to exchange their counters? Then return all of the counters that you've set aside into the bag and give it another good shake.

**Note:** *If you want to exchange or return counters **later on** in the game, these counters must **always** be placed in the box lid. These counters are then out of the game. Counters can only be returned to the bag during the setup phase!*

## GETTING STARTED

The youngest player starts; play then continues in a clockwise direction.

### **PHASE 1: CONSTRUCTION**

All players start with Phase 1. Begin by attempting to lay out your hand counters in front of you as skillfully as possible. You will clear the counters arranged in front of you later on, during Phase 2. These counters will then earn you points!

You have two options when it's your turn:  
you can either **exchange** or **arrange** your **hand counters**.

#### **EXCHANGE**

Not happy with your **hand counters**? Then you can exchange up to four of them. First choose **a maximum of four** of your hand counters. The colors and numbers on these counters are irrelevant. Place them face down in the **box lid**. These counters are out of the game!

Now draw the same number of counters from the bag. Place the new counters in front of you. It is now your left neighbour's turn.

#### **ARRANGE**

The following rules apply for **arranging your hand counters**:

##### **1. One color only**

You can always place **one color only** during your turn. However, you may play as many hand

counters of this color as you like.

## 2. **One color per column**

Create a separate column for each color. Each color may only appear in one column. You can therefore have up to six columns in front of you.

## 3. **Each column has an order**

The counters must be arranged in each column in descending order. Always place a number as high as possible at the top of the column. Only the same or lower numbers can be arranged below this.

**Note:** The counters in your columns do not have to be directly consecutive. You cannot “fill” the gaps later though.

## 4. **Later only lower numbers**

Want to add hand counters to an existing column? Then they must always be arranged **below** the counters you’ve already laid out. You can also “omit” numbers now. It is only important that the numbers are the same or lower.

**Note:** Think carefully and play lower numbers as late as possible. You otherwise run the risk of having problems laying counters in this color later on!

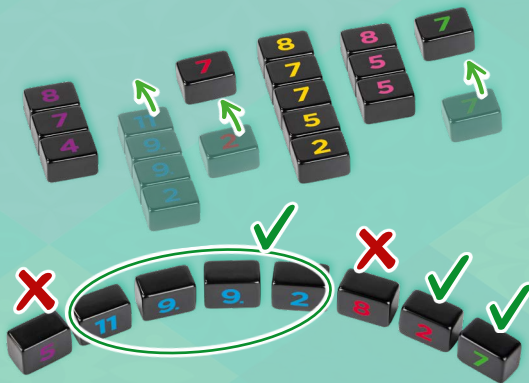
Finished laying your counters? Then draw as many counters from the bag as you just played. It is now your left neighbor’s turn.

### **Sample arrangement**

A few rounds have already been played and Christian has laid out five columns so far. He has a few different options now: He could lay all of his four hand counters **11-9-9-2** at once and draw four new counters. This of course means that the chances are good that he’ll draw something that will be useful for his next turn.

He could also just play the **11-9-9** and hold onto the **2** for now. He would then only be able to draw three new counters, but can add more counters with higher numbers to the column later on. If he decides to play the **2** now, he will only be able to play a **2** or **1** in future turns! He could also play either just the **2** or the **7**. But then he could only draw one counter.

He can’t place the **5** and **8** anywhere unfortunately, as they are higher than the lowest numbers in the columns of these colors in front of him!



## **PHASE 2: THE POINTS QUEST**

You’re approaching the climax of the game! During Phase 2, you must try to earn as many points as possible. Because sometimes the end of the game comes unexpectedly quickly.

Decide for yourself **when you wish to begin Phase 2**. During this second phase, you will remove

the counters you arranged during Phase 1 again. This is the only way to score valuable points. You must use your hand counters to “pay” to clear the counters you have placed though.

Ready to begin Phase 2? Then simply announce it to your fellow players at the start of your turn. You will now remain in Phase 2 for the rest of the game.

**! Careful:** Once you’ve moved on to Phase 2, there’s no going back!

You have two choices when it’s your turn during Phase 2: you can either **exchange hand counters** or **clear** counters laid out in front of you.

### EXCHANGE

Not happy with your **hand counters**? Then you can exchange **up to four** of them in the same way that you did during Phase 1. Your turn is then over and it is your left neighbour’s turn.

### CLEAR

Want to turn the counters you’ve laid out into points? The following rules apply:

**1. One color only**

During your turn, you can clear as many counters of **one color** as you like and turn them into points.

**2. From small to large**

Choose one of your columns and decide which counters you want to clear. You must always **start with the lowest number** and work your way up. You cannot “skip” counters.

**Note:** You do **not** need to clear a column all at once, but rather can do this in several steps. You must always start with the lowest number in the column though!

**3. Points do not come for free**

Add up the **numerical values of the counters** that you want to clear. You must cover at least this **sum** with your **hand counters**. You must also calculate the **numerical values** for these.

**Careful:** It’s **not** a question of **how many** counters you clear but rather the **sum** of the numerical values. You can use just one high hand counter to clear several counters with low numbers, for example. Or use several low hand counters to clear one or more higher counters.

**4. Again, one color only**

The **hand counters** that you use to clear counters must all be the same color. The hand counters and the column you wish to clear **can** be two different colors though. So you can use red hand counters to clear your green column, for example.

**5. Stack up points**

Place your cleared counters **face down** in a pile next to you. All of these counters count as **points** at the end.

**6. Throw your payments in the box lid**

Place all of the hand counters that you use to clear **face up** back in the box lid. These counters are then out of the game.

Finished your turn? Then draw as many counters from the bag as you need to have eight in front of you again. It is now the next player’s turn.

**Note:** You are allowed to use more counters than you need for clearing. Did you “overpay”? You won’t receive any counters from the bag for this. Sometimes it can be advantageous to discard additional counters with low numbers even if you can achieve the required sum without these. You can then draw more counters from the bag.

### Example of clearing:

Anna has several options to convert the counters she has laid out into points:

She could return her 11 to the box lid and thus simply clear the 11. Alternatively, she could select a different column and use the 11 in her hand to clear several counters:

$5+5=10$  → Only the 8 is left

$1+1+2+5=9$  → Only the 10 is left

$2+7=9$  → The column is completely cleared

$3+7=10$  → Only the 8 is left

Remember though: Anna cannot clear the yellow 10 because she has to start clearing at the bottom of the column.



## WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I'VE CLEARED ALL OF MY COLUMNS?

Is it your turn and you do not have any more counters to clear? Then all you can do now is exchange counters. Did you maybe move on to Phase 2 too soon this time?

**Tip:** Want to turn up the heat on your fellow players? Then exchange always four counters so that you can draw four new ones from the bag at once!

## END OF THE GAME

The game ends when one of you draws the **final counter** from the bag. Finish playing the current round. Each of you will have then had the same number of turns.

If the player to the right of the starting player drew the last counter, then the game ends immediately.

**Note:** Have you all completely cleared your counters? Then you can of course move straight on to the scoring.

## SCORING

Return all of your **hand counters** to the box lid. They cannot influence the scoring.

Do you still have counters laid out in front of you? Then these count as **minus points according to their numerical value**. All of the counters in your points pile count as **plus points according to their numerical value**.

Subtract the minus points from your plus points. The player with the most points wins. In the event of a tie, the player who has to deduct the fewest minus points wins. If this is also the same, then you share the victory.

### The rules in overview:

Each player has 8 hand counters. They can exchange 0–8 of these and return them to the bag.

<b>Phase 1</b>	Exchange 1–4 hand counters (these are then out of the game).
<b>Play in turn</b>	Lay out hand counters of one color (same or lower number).

Each player can announce the switch to Phase 2 at the start of their turn.

<b>Phase 2</b>	Exchange 1–4 hand counters (these are then out of the game).
<b>Play in turn</b>	Clear counters of one color that are laid out in front of you, pay with hand counters of one color (hand counters can be a different color).

The game ends when the last counter is drawn from the bag. Finish the current round.

<b>Scoring</b>	All counters left on the table → Minus points according to their numerical value
	All cleared counters → Plus points according to their numerical value

## TIPS AND TRICKS:

### *When should I exchange counters?*

Do you only have counters with low numbers in one color? Or just one single counter for several colors? Then you should probably exchange them. Have a think which hand counters you might not be able to lay out. Have you already laid out a lower number in one color, for example? Then it can sometimes even make sense to exchange counters with high numbers in this color. However, don't forget that you can also use counters with high numbers during Phase 2!

### *When should I begin Phase 2?*

The right time to switch is different each time you play. The fewer players you are, the longer you can delay the switch. You should also pay close attention to when your teammates switch to Phase 2! The longer you lay out counters, the more counters you may be able to convert to points. But you run the risk of being left with counters in front of you—and these will count as minus points. Getting the timing right is crucial in **NO RETURN**.

### *I was the first to switch to Phase 2 and the other players laid out more counters than I did.*

Now you've really got to step up your game. Always try to play as many counters as possible. Because then you'll draw lots of counters from the bag. And the faster the bag is empty, the better.

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