



Judi, Unjoo, Coreen, and Keli watch as the dice is rolled during a Bunco game

Photo courtesy of Felina Donaldson



Many of these Kelliwood neighbors have been playing bunco together for over ten years

# Katy's Wild BUNCO GROUPS

## Local Ladies Jazz up Girls' Night out with Bunco

Written by Wendy Clark

**F**or generations, women have recognized the need to come together on a regular basis to share laughter and a sense of sisterhood, free of husbands, kids, and pets. Quilting bees, bridge nights, Tupperware parties, book clubs – the activities have changed throughout the years, but one thing that hasn't is the desire to have fun for a few hours with the girls. One particularly exciting game that has begun to gain popularity among Katy women is Bunco. Clubs are popping up all over the Katy area, and giggling girlfriends are grateful for the opportunity to trade in the hustle of a busy life for the roll of the dice.

## Bunco 101

Bunco is a dice game, and all that is needed to play are a pen and paper for each player to keep score, a small bell to mark the beginning and end of play time, and three dice for each table of four players. Most Bunco groups consist of 12 people, though the game can be played with any multiple of four. A Bunco is earned when a player rolls three of the same predetermined target number. Beyond these basic facts, Bunco rules deviate from country to country, region to region, and even club to club. Part of the excitement of the game is that rules aren't set in stone, and if something doesn't work well for your group, you can always move on to another fun variation.

## All Fun and Games

The game itself is a ton of fun and a load of laughter, but the real heart of Bunco night lies in the camaraderie formed among group members. Missy Ramirez is a founding member of Bunco Babes of Katy, a Bunco group based in the Whispering Lakes subdivision of Katy, and says the close-knit group provides a great support system for women from every background. "We have housewives, a preacher's wife, a police officer, and a respiratory therapist in our group," she shares.

Bunco Babes of Katy began meeting almost three years ago, when a few neighborhood women were looking to form a social club. The group now meets on the second Sunday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m., and members take turns hosting game nights at their houses. "The men have poker; we have Bunco," chuckles Ramirez.

Domonique Gleason, a fellow member of Bunco Babes, shares that she enjoys the lasting friendships that the group helps foster. "Game nights are a great way to reconnect with friends and catch up on each others' lives," she says. "Everyone brings a dish to share, so the food is great, too. And if I win, even better!" Gleason and Ramirez both agree one of their club's most memorable nights involved a twist in the rules, where their husbands where also invited to play. "It was a blast!" says Ramirez.

## An Evening of Friendly Competition

Not all Bunco groups are created equal, and the ladies' Bunco group at The Club at Falcon Point is an example of a new group experiencing lots of success. Not every member makes it to every gathering, and that's okay. "We started this past July, and we've always met our goal of at least 12 players [a month]," shares Lisa Bechtold, coordinator of member relations at The Club.

Since the group is new, members are still getting to know each other. "By switching tables [a component of the game], the ladies get to mingle with other members that they don't usually interact with," Bechtold says. "It's fun to see their competitiveness come out. There's not a game night where laughter isn't involved!" In the event a member can't make it to Bunco night, another member might invite an outside friend to "sub," or play in her place. In this way, the necessary minimum number of players is met and the potential always exists to meet someone new!



Olga, Keli, Dawn, Unjoo, Coreen, Beverly, Judi, Fatima, Linda, and Lorena enjoy an evening of Bunco



Caryn Botes rings the bell during a Falcon Point Bunco game



As the roller of the last bunco, Teri Russo (center) wears the crown and sash

Lorilee Leyendecker, Julie Shillings, Teri Russo, Dana Moom and Tensia Hart

Payton, Amber, and Randi keep score during a Bunco game



### Become a Bunco Big Roller

Ready to get in on the wildest game in town? Katy's Bunco fans have some advice on starting a Bunco game night group of your own. "Choose people for your group who can commit and whose company you enjoy," Ramirez says. Then, host a start-up meeting. "This meeting is the best time to discuss rules, teach others, and work out a schedule for the year," she says.

*"Game nights are a great way to reconnect with friends and catch up on each others' lives."*

*-Domonique Gleason*

Bunco is a great way to meet new friends, so keep an open mind and be as outgoing as possible. "Be prepared to move to different tables and have different partners throughout the game," says Bechtold. "Most of all, have fun!" Don't be intimidated or afraid to try something new. "Anyone can play Bunco," Gleason reassures. "It's very easy and a lot of fun!" **KM**

*WENDY CLARK enjoys writing for Katy Magazine. She lives in Katy with her husband and their three Katy cuties.*

# Wild Bunco Rules

Mix up Bunco night with these optional rules

### Prizes for Playing

Award fun prizes to the player with the most wins, most losses, most Buncos, most games, least games, or most aces.

### Scramble

After a player rolls a Bunco, everyone scrambles to grab the three dice, with an additional point awarded for holding each die.

### Traveling

A large, fuzzy die is thrown to a player whenever she rolls a Bunco. Whoever holds the die at the end of the game wins a prize.

### Weighted Scoring

High table scores count as double for both wins and losses. The player with the most winning points and the most losing points wins.

### Wipeout

Bunco sets are played from two to six, and when a player rolls a wipeout – three ones – they lose all their points for the round. In traveling wipeout, a fuzzy die is thrown to the player and whoever holds it at the end wins a prize.

-Source: buncorules.com



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