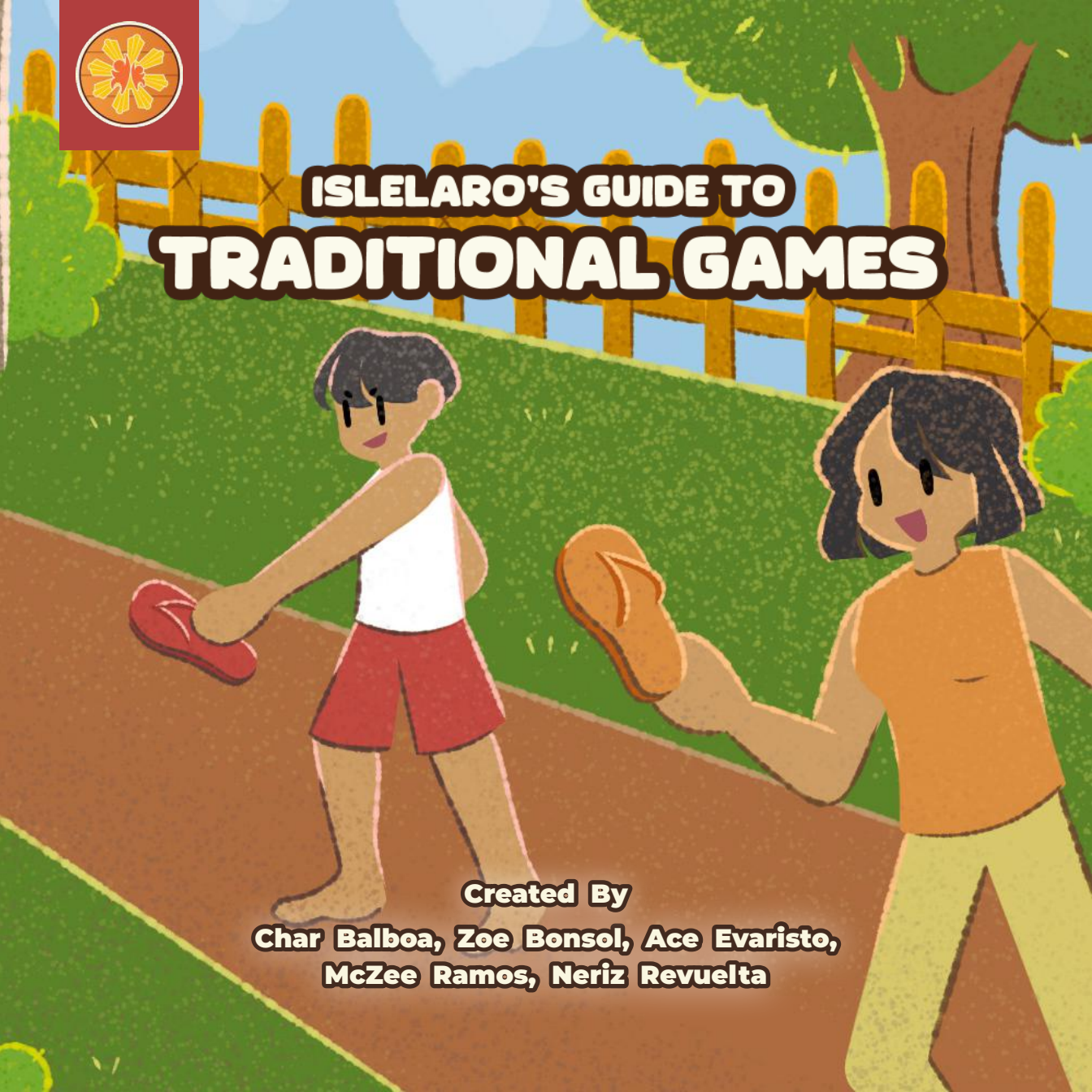
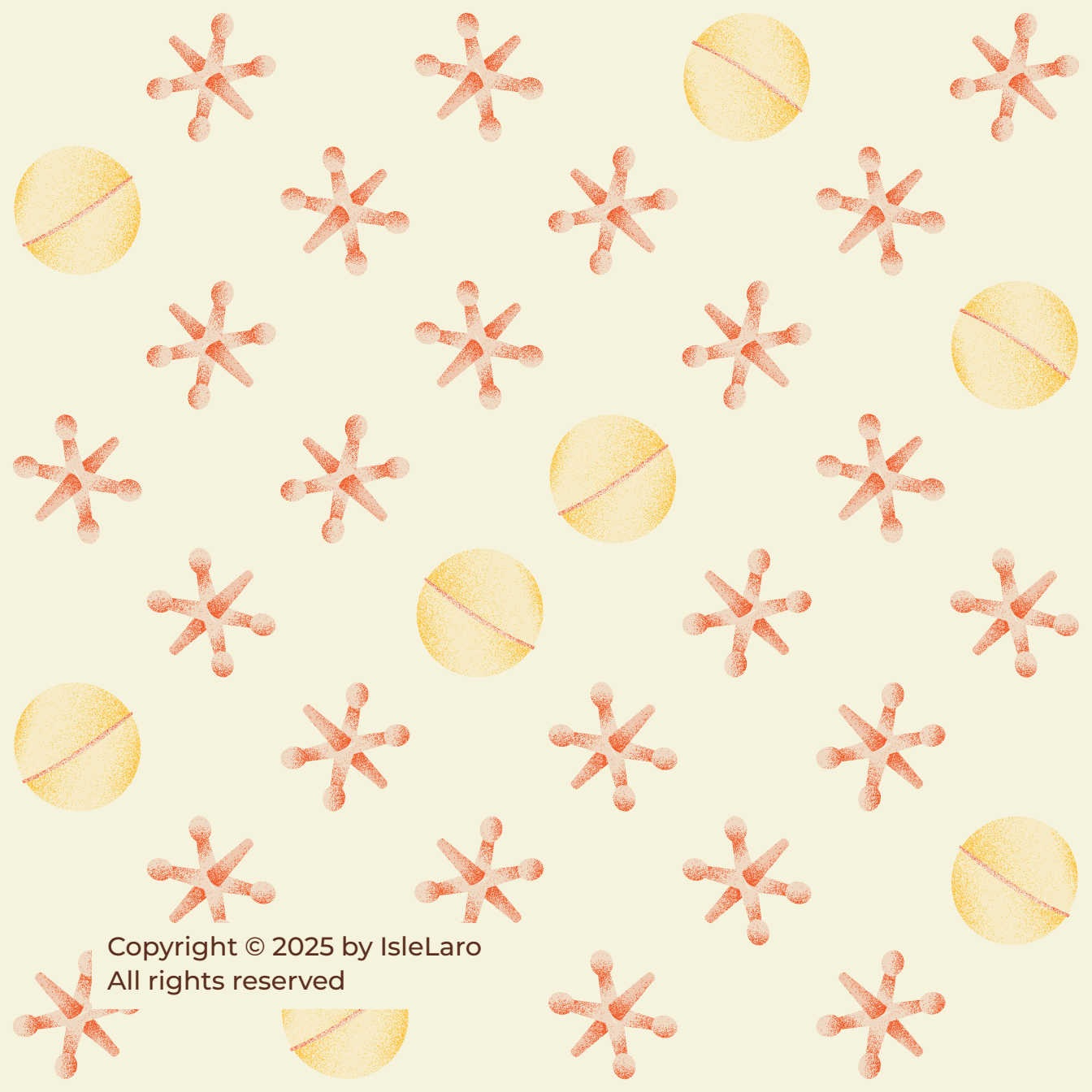

ISLELARO'S GUIDE TO
TRADITIONAL GAMES
Created By
Char Balboa, Zoe Bonsol, Ace Evaristo,
McZee Ramos, Neriz Revuelta



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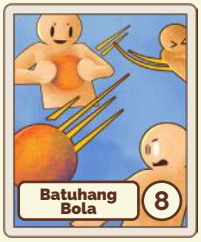
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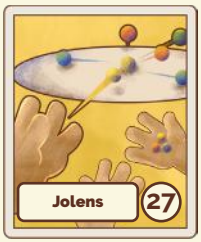

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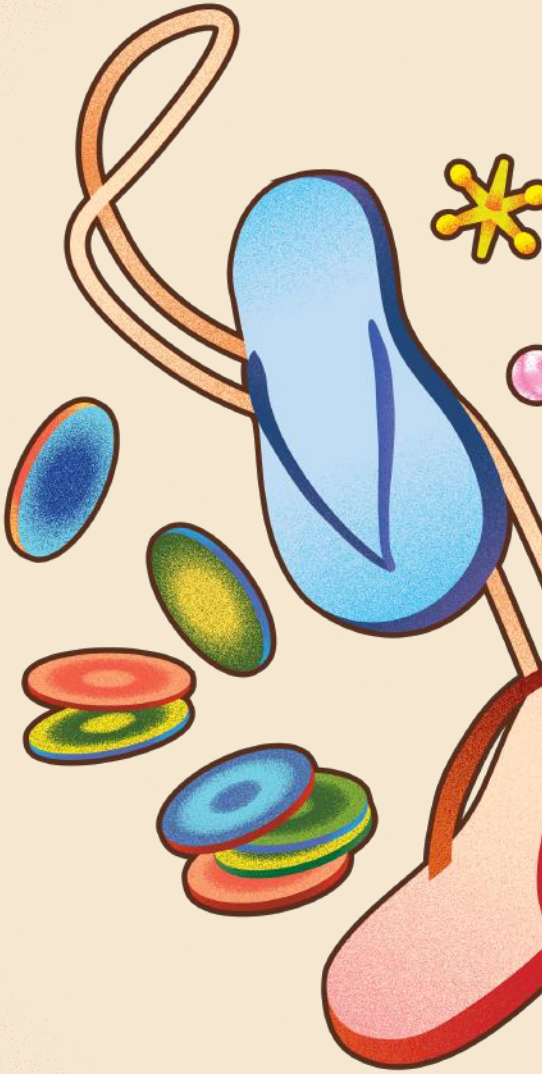

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

IsleLaro is our effort to keep traditional Filipino games alive among today's urban youth. In a world where screens often replace streets, we began with a website archiving these games and a web game that lets players experience them virtually. We later realized that preserving these games means more than just going digital, so we created a video series demonstrating how they're played, and now, this printed guidebook.

Inside, you'll find game descriptions, step-by-step instructions, cultural fun facts, and playful illustrations, everything to spark curiosity and encourage kids to step outside and experience the fun for themselves, just like generations before them.





TAGS

Spot these tags to match the game to your mood!

Outdoors

Games that love fresh air and wide-open spaces!

Indoors

Fun you can have inside, rain or shine.

Solo

Perfect for when it's just you and your skills.

Pair

Twice the players, twice the fun!

Group

The more, the merrier — team up and play together!

As traditional games are passed down, rules may vary. Feel free to play them in your own way; the rules aren't rigid. What matters most is having fun!

AGAWAN BASE

Setting

Players



Also known as Block 123, Agawan Base means "**capturing base.**" It's a team game that needs a lot of players, split into two groups, who compete to steal the opposing team's base.

MECHANICS

Split into two equal teams, each with a base to protect. Tag opponents to capture them, or sneak over to steal the other team's base. Captured players become prisoners and must stay at the other team's base until a teammate tags them free. Your team wins by taking the other team's base or capturing all their players.



Did You Know?

Agawan Base became super popular in the **1980s**! No one knows exactly where it started, but it's believed to be uniquely Filipino. There's even a similar game called "**Mali**," which the **Dumagats of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan,** proudly call their national game.

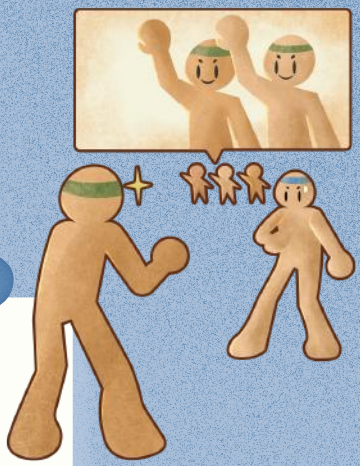


STEP ONE

Form two equal teams. Each team picks a base (use slippers, trees, rocks, etc.). Mark a clear line between bases. Choose someone to guard your base!

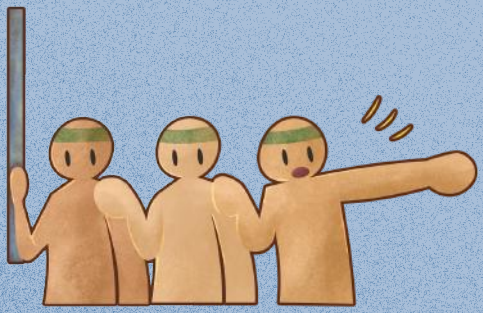
STEP TWO

Try to steal the other team's base. Players take turns trying to reach the other team's base. If tagged while in enemy territory, you become a prisoner.



STEP THREE

Rescue your teammates. Tag any prisoner to free the whole chain, then run back to your base without getting tagged.





STEP FOUR

Win the round. A round ends when a player captures the other team's base without getting tagged. First team to get 5 steals wins!

BAHAY-BAHAYAN



Setting

Players

Bahay-bahayan is a role-playing game, as children will pretend to manage a home as a family: father, mother, and children. As they would do household chores but having roles of the family.

MECHANICS

Gather 4–5 players and choose your roles: parent, sibling, helper, or even a pet! Be resourceful and build your own little home using anything you can find around the house or in your area: mats, blankets, boxes, toy dishes, and more. Once your house is ready, start living your pretend family life! Cook meals, clean the house, go to work to earn pretend money, and help each other with chores. Just like a real family, everyone has something to do!



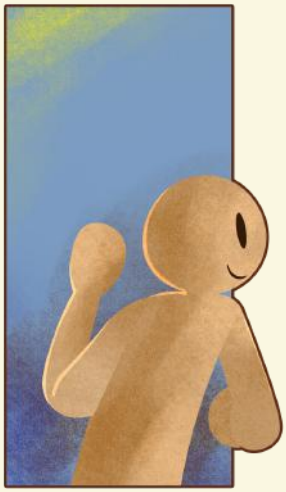
Did You Know?

This play pretend highlights the **Filipino culture in a household**, helping children from generation to generation learn and practice the roles they see in their households on their own.

BANG-SAK

Setting

Players







Did You Know?

Bang-Sak is a unique Filipino variation of the game "**Tagu-taguan**".

Bang-Sak is a fast-paced game similar to tagu-taguan. Players hide while the taya searches for them, but instead of calling out names, the taya shouts "Bang!" to tag someone. The twist? A player can escape by quickly tapping the taya and shouting "Sak!" before getting caught.

MECHANICS

The taya must find and catch the hidden players by saying "Bang" along with their correct name. If the name is wrong, that player stays safe. Players can rescue themselves or others by tagging the taya and saying "Sak." If someone successfully tags the taya, everyone is freed.

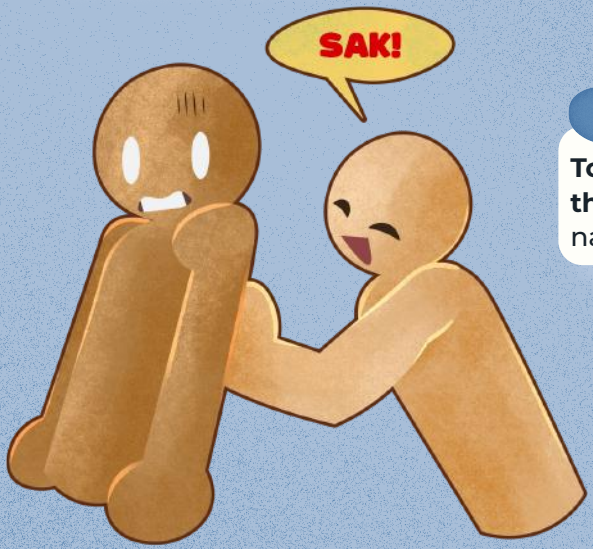
STEP ONE

Choose a Taya. The Taya covers their eyes and counts while everyone hides within a set area. Decide on the hiding time before starting.



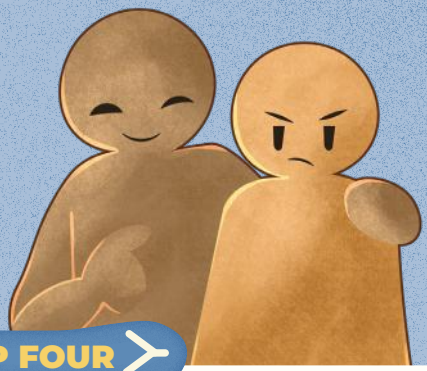
STEP TWO

To catch someone, say “Bang!” and their name. If the Taya says the wrong name, the player is safe.



STEP THREE

To save, touch the Taya and say “Sak.” This saves any captured players from being caught.



STEP FOUR

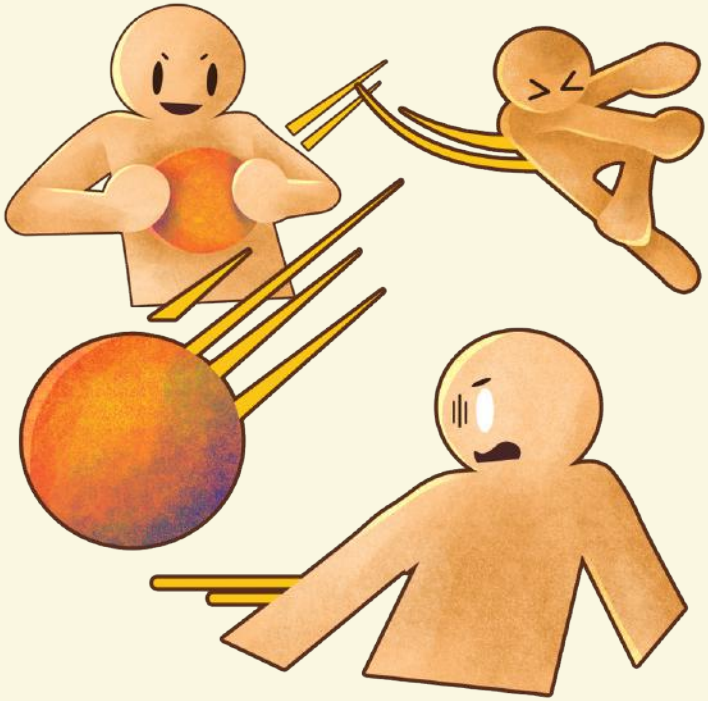
The next Taya depends on the ending. If everyone gets caught, the first player who wasn’t saved becomes the new Taya. But if the last player manages to “Sak” the Taya, the Taya stays the same for the next round.

BATUHANG BOLA

Setting

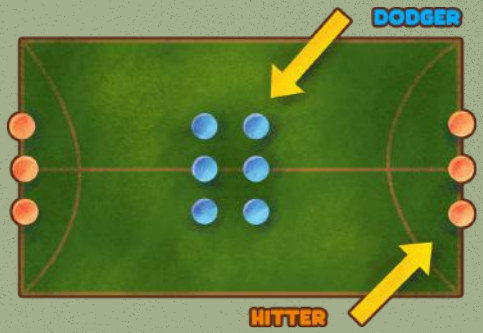
Players

The Filipino version of dodgeball, usually played in open spaces where there's plenty of room to run, dodge, and throw. It's a fun and fast-paced game that builds agility, teamwork, and coordination while keeping everyone active and on their toes.



MECHANICS

Players split into two teams: the hitters and the dodgers. The hitters stand on opposite sides of the court, while the dodgers stay in the middle and try to avoid getting hit. If a dodger is hit, they're out, but catching the ball lets a teammate come back in. The game can be timed, with the winner decided by which team knocks out the other, or played until the last dodger standing survives 10 hits without getting out.



STEP ONE

Split into two teams. One team stays in the middle as dodgers. The other team splits and stands on both ends as hitters. You'll need a soft ball and space to move. Set a timer or play until one team wins.

STEP TWO

Start throwing or dodging! Hitters throw the ball to hit dodgers while behind their lines. Dodgers avoid getting hit to stay in the game.





Did You Know?

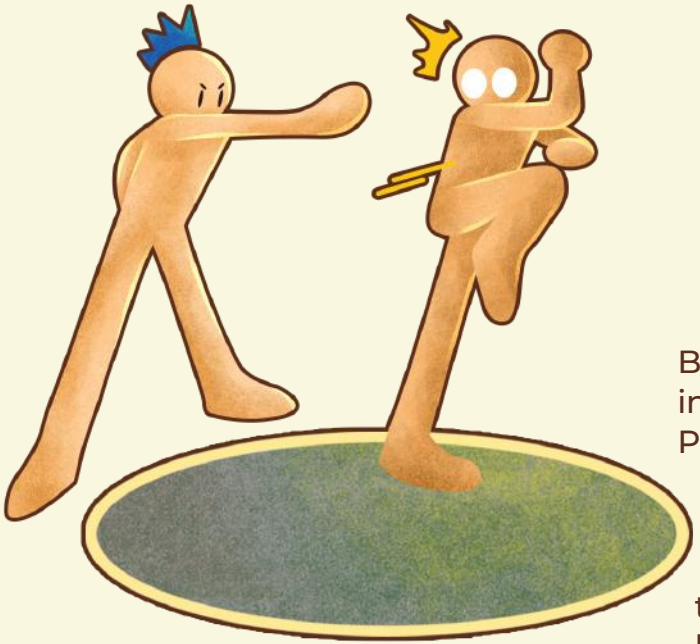
Batuhang Bola is a game the Philippines adapted from **Western cultures**. It originated in **Africa** around 200 years ago, where players used **large rocks** or **hardened matter**. Dr. James H. Carlisle later introduced it to the West using rubber balls.

STEP THREE

Catch to save. If a dodger catches the ball, they can bring back a teammate. If they get hit, they're out.

STEP FOUR

Win the game. The round ends when all dodgers are out or when time runs out. Then, switch roles and play again. The team with the most hits wins!



BUWAN

Setting

Players

Buwan-Buwan is a game inspired by the **lunar eclipse**. Players form a circle and stay inside while the taya tries to tag them. The twist? The taya can't cross the circle to tag anyone inside — they have to tag from outside the circle!



Did You Know?

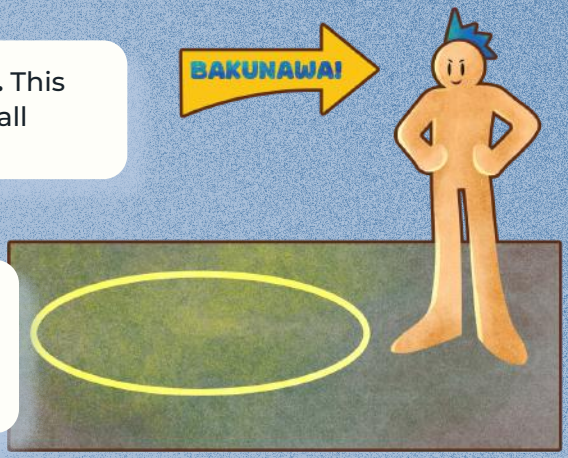
Our ancestors believed in a mythical creature called **Bakunawa**, known to cause events such as the **lunar eclipse.** The reason why the lunar eclipse occurs is due to the **Bakunawa trying to eat the moon whole.** They would do shamantic rituals and make loud noises, even chants to scare away the Bakunawa and spit out the moon.

MECHANICS

Players draw a circle on the ground to represent the moon, and everyone must stay inside it. The taya, called the Bakunawa, cannot enter the circle but can tag players from the outside. If the Bakunawa tags someone, that person becomes the new taya, and the game continues with the rest trying to avoid getting tagged.

STEP ONE

Draw a circle on the ground. This represents the moon, where all players must stay inside.



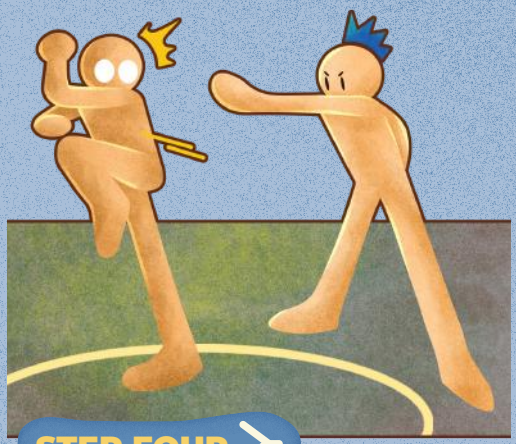
STEP TWO

Choose one player to be the Bukanawa. It represents the mythical sea serpent who tries to eat the moon. The Bukanawa stays outside the circle or on the line drawn.



STEP THREE

The Bukanawa tags players from the outside. Using only their outstretched hands, they tag a player to become the new Bukanawa.



STEP FOUR

Players taking turns as Bukanawa. The game goes on until everyone's been caught or you decide to end the game.

CHINESE GARTER

Setting

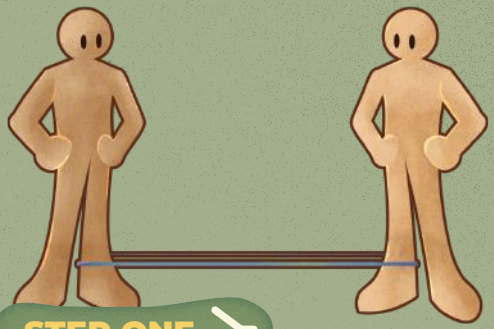
Players



Chinese Garter is similar to **Ten Twenty**, as it requires a garter and two players holding the two ends of the garter. Players must jump over the garter without tripping by hitting the garter.

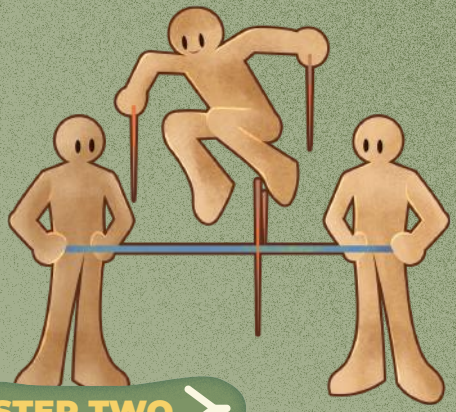
MECHANICS

Players must split into two groups and must assign two players that hold each end of the garter. For each group, they must assign who will be the leader or ‘mother’, as they can take their members’ turn to save them. Once everything is settled, players may now start jumping over the garter, as it gets higher from the ankle to a height of the player can stand on their tiptoes and arms raised. The team that loses will hold the garter.



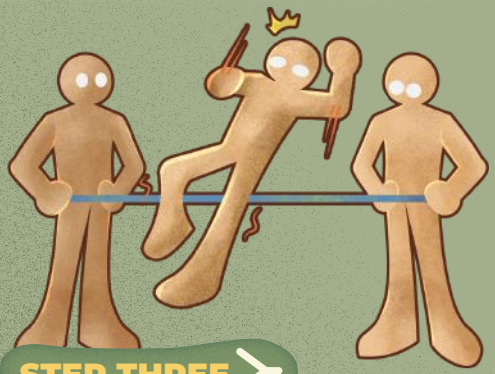
STEP ONE

Make two teams. Pick two players to hold the garter. Each team chooses a “mother” who can take a teammate’s turn if they make a mistake.



STEP TWO

Start jumping. Players take turns jumping over the garter. It starts low (ankles), then goes higher each round: knees, waist, chest, shoulders, head, and finally as high as they can reach on tiptoes with arms up.



STEP THREE

Switch roles if you miss. If someone fails to jump over, their team becomes the garter holders. The first team to finish all the levels without losing becomes the winner!



Did You Know?

Chinese Garter is a game that is also known globally. It is called **French Skipping** in France, **Gummitwist** in German, and the British call it **Elastics**. The game originated in China way back in the 7th century. **Ten-Twenty is a Filipino variation of this game,** just with different mechanics.

CLAPPING GAMES

Setting

Players



Clapping Games are one of the most common types of traditional play in the Philippines. It involves rhythmic patterns of hand clapping patterns and catchy songs, and chants to clap along with your friends to!

Players can form into pairs, different clapping games either require small movement from the players or the movement of their hands quickens with the clapping routine while chanting the songs.

Did You Know?

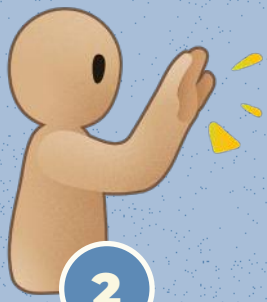
One of the most popular clapping games in the Philippines is called "**Bahay Kubo**". It is a Tagalog folk song that is believed to have originated during the **Spanish Colonization period**. It was first documented academically in 1924 as part of a movement to preserve cultural heritage. Clapping games in general teach Filipino children **culture, values, and language**.

BASIC MOVEMENTS



1

Clap the other person's hand with the left hand facing up and right hand facing down.



2

Clap the other person's hand with both hands facing outwards at chest height.



3

Clap your own hands.

BAHAY KUBO

Follow the basic movements in order until the song ends.

Bahay-kubo, kahit munti
Ang halaman doon ay sari-sari
Singkamas at talong
Sigarilyas at mani
Sitaw, bataw, patani
Kundol, patola, upo't kalabasa
At tsaka mayro'n pang
Labanos, mustasa
Sibuyas, kamatis, bawang at luya
Sa paligid-ligid ay puno ng linga



NANAY TATAY

Follows the basic movements.

The number you shout will be the number of claps you do.

Whoever misses the correct number of claps loses.

Nanay, Tatay, gusto ko tinapay
Ate, Kuya, gusto ko kape
Lahat ng gusto ko ay susundin ninyo
Ang magkamali ay pipingutin ko

SASARA ANG BULAKLAK

Players hold hands in a circle; one child is the “queen” in the middle.

While singing, players walk toward the center (“flower closes”) and away (“flower opens”).

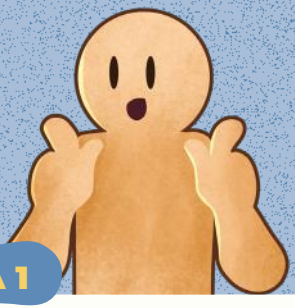
The queen dances cha-cha in the middle.

Players spin during the “boom tiyaya” part. The queen closes their eyes and spins, blindly points towards the players.

At the end, the player that the queen points at will be the new queen, and the game restarts.



Sasara ang bulaklak,
bubuka ang bulaklak,
Papasok ang reyna,
sasayaw ng chacha
Boom tiyaya boom tiyaya
boom yeye
Boom tiyaya boom tiyaya
boom yeye



PAMELA 1

Follow the basic movements.

When the lyrics say “Pamela 1” (or “Pamela 2,” and so on), the chosen player must make up a dance move.

Pamela one pamela-mela one
Pamela two pamela-mela two
Pamela three pamela-mela three
Pamela four pamela-mela four
Pamela one igalaw ang katawan
Pamela two kumembot nang ganito
Pamela three parang kinikiliti
Pamela four gagayahin ng F4
Sumayaw gumalaw na parang natutunaw
Gumiling humiling na parang naduduling
Huwag lang sumakit ang ulo n’yo

DAMA

Setting

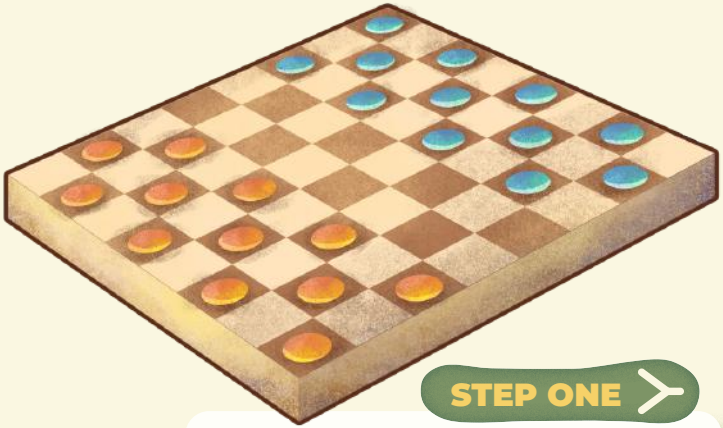
Players



Did You Know?

Dama is the **Filipino version of checkers**, a game that dates back to around 1400 BC in ancient Egypt, as shown by archaeological findings. Our Dama is like a mix of different cultures, combining rules from various checkers variants around the world. One example is how regular checkers uses boxes, while our traditional Dama uses lines, similar to the ancient Chinese game “Xianqi.” This shows how the game reflects our nation’s long history of contact with other cultures.

Filipino checkers or also known as Dama, is a board game with 12 pieces given to both players. Both players must defend their pieces by either capturing the pieces or blocking the attack of their opponent.



STEP ONE

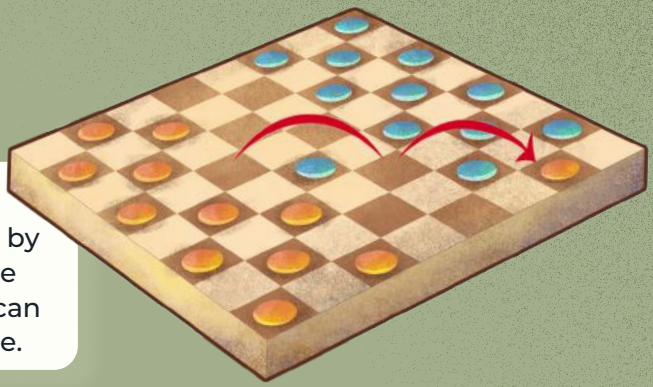
Set up the board. Place 12 pieces on the dark squares of the first three rows of an 8 by 8 chess board.

MECHANICS

Dama is played by two players on an 8×8 board, with 12 pieces each placed on the dark squares of the first three rows. Pieces move diagonally forward, capturing by jumping over an opponent into an empty square. A piece reaching the farthest row becomes a “Dama” and can move diagonally in any direction. The winner is the player who captures all opponent pieces or blocks them from moving.

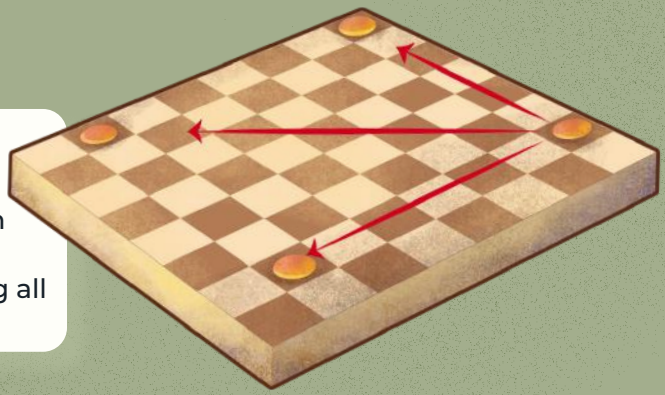
STEP TWO

Take turns. Move one piece at a time diagonally forward. Capture by jumping over an opponent’s piece onto an empty dark square. You can capture multiple pieces if possible.



STEP THREE

Reach the last row. When a piece reaches the last row, it becomes a Queen and can move diagonally in any direction. Win by capturing all your opponent’s pieces or blocking all their moves!



DOKTOR KWAK-KWAK

Setting

Players



Doktor Kwak-Kwak is a fun game usually played with lots of players. Everyone forms a circle by holding hands, and then they tangle their bodies together. The taya, called Doktor Kwak Kwak, has to untangle everyone without letting go of their hands.



Did You Know?

Doctor Kwak-Kwak is rooted in Filipino culture due to the community's humor and playful interaction. Despite **how people would play the role of a doctor**, the Filipino community added the sound "**kwak kwak**", the sound of a duck, to add a twist, showcasing the playfulness of a Filipino.

MECHANICS

Players pick a "Doktor Kwak-Kwak" using Jack en Poy or Maiba-taya. While the doctor faces away, the others hold hands in a circle and twist around to tangle themselves without letting go. The doctor then turns around and tries to untangle them. Once done, the doctor lets go of their hands, and everyone runs—the first player caught becomes the new Doktor Kwak-Kwak.

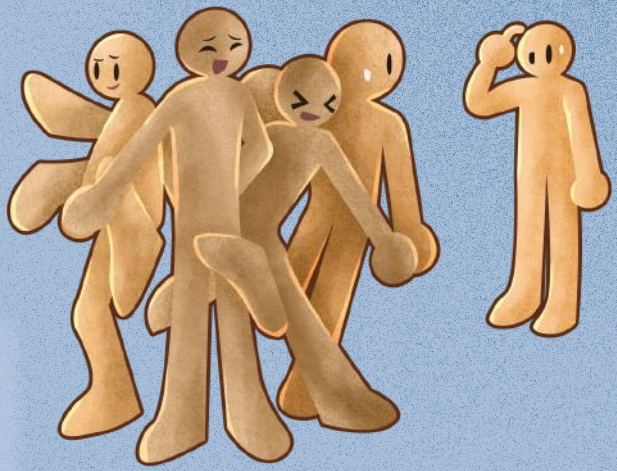
STEP ONE

Choose one player to be the Doktor Kwak-Kwak.



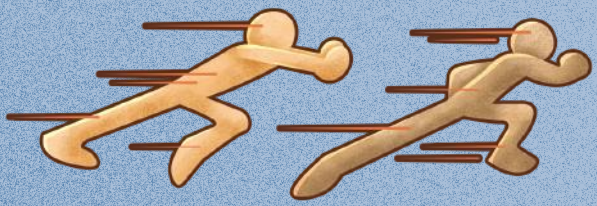
STEP TWO

Everyone else forms a circle. While the Doktor is not looking, interlock hands and twist around, stepping over and under each other to form a tangled “knot” without letting go each other’s hands.



STEP THREE

Call Doktor Kwak-Kwak to untangle the group. The player must be untangled without anyone letting go of hands. Once untangled, the Doktor will unclasp their hands.



STEP FOUR

As soon as the last hands are released, everyone runs. The first person tagged by the Doktor becomes the new doctor. The game continues until everyone’s tired or bored!

HABULAN BABOY

A festive game that is usually played in Batangas. On which they will let a small piglet loose in a confined area, and players must chase and catch the pig.

Setting

Players

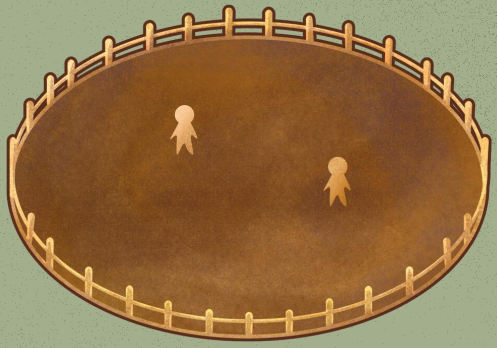


MECHANICS

Whoever catches it first wins, and gets to keep the piglet as the prize.

Did You Know?

Similar to Palo Sebo, Habulan Baboy is a game that's usually played in **fiestas** that comes with a prize for the winner. For this game, the prize for winning is the pig itself. It is not certain where this game originated from, but it is indeed rooted in our culture for such a long time.

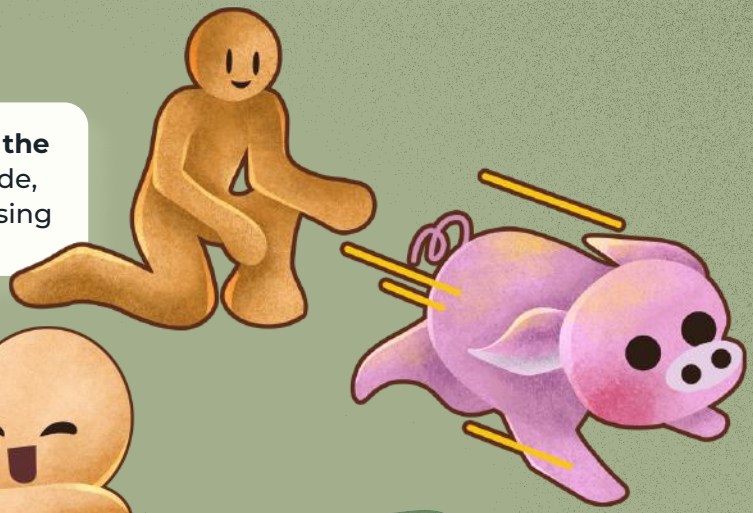


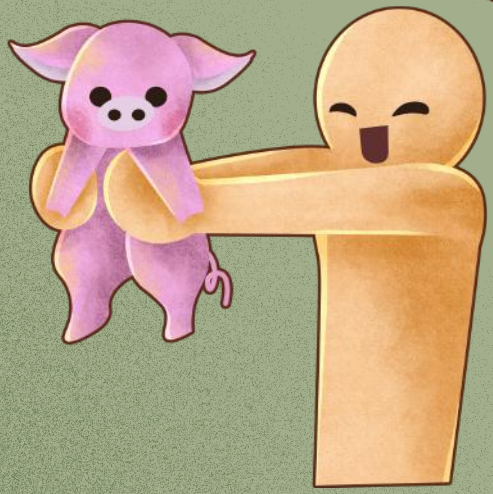
STEP ONE

Prepare an enclosed area. Use sticks, fences, or any safe barriers to create a small space where the piglet can't escape. Traditionally, the ground is wet or muddy to make it challenging!

STEP TWO

Release the piglet and start the chase. Once the piglet is inside, players must try to catch it using only their hands.





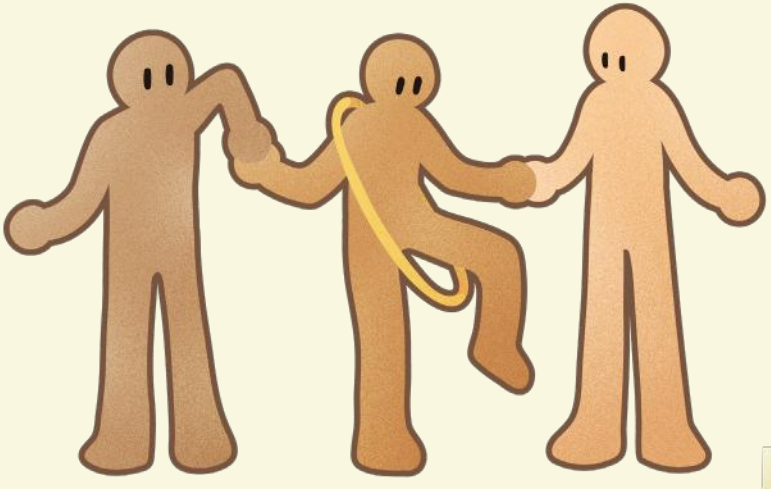
STEP THREE

The first to catch the piglet wins. Whoever grabs hold of the piglet is declared the winner.

HULA-HOOP

Setting

Players



Suot Lusot, or Hula Hoop, is a fun game played with 5 or more players. The goal is to **pass the hula hoop through each player** without letting go of their clasped hands. Everyone has to work together to make sure the hoop keeps moving!

MECHANICS

Players in equal teams form a line holding hands. Starting from the first player, the **hula hoop is passed over each player's body without letting go of hands**. The first team to get the hoop to the last player wins.



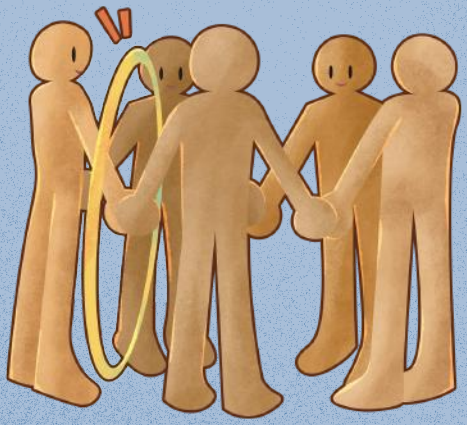
Did You Know?

Hula hoop is known globally on which it is an ancient toy. Hula hoops were made of bamboo, wood, grasses, and vines before. No one knows who invented the toy, but Wham-O brought back hula hoops that are now made out of plastic.

STEP ONE

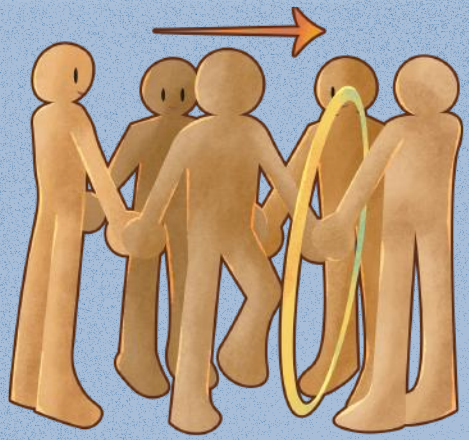
Form teams and hold hands in a line. For a fun challenge, you can also form a circle instead.





STEP TWO

Start with the hula hoop on one end. One player begins by passing the hula hoop over their body and onto the next player without letting go of hands.



STEP THREE

First team to reach the end wins. The team that gets the hula hoop to the last player the fastest wins the round.

JACKSTONE

Setting

Players



Jackstone is a popular Filipino game usually played by two or more players. It uses a **bouncy ball** and **ten small, star-shaped metal or plastic jacks**. The goal is to pick up the jacks in a specific order while bouncing the ball.

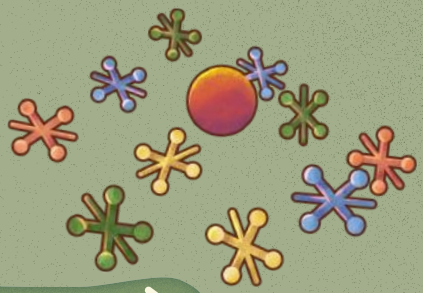


Did You Know?

Jackstone is an ancient game found in many cultures worldwide. In the Philippines, its traditional version is called **Kuru, Sintak, or Balinsay.** Instead of bouncing a ball, players toss a larger stone called “Ina-ina” and pick up smaller stones called “anak.”

MECHANICS

Spread the ten jacks on the floor. Bounce the ball, pick up the required number of jacks before the ball lands, and catch it. Start with one jack, then two, and so on until all are collected. Missing the ball or a jack ends your turn. The first to finish all levels wins.



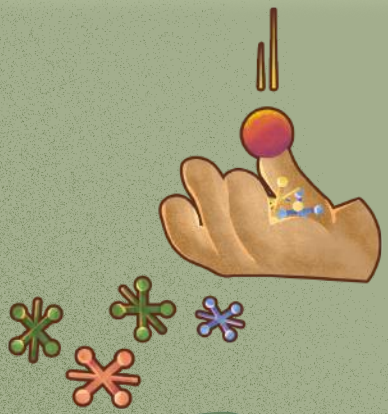
STEP ONE

Scatter the stones or jacks on the floor.

STEP TWO

Throw, pick, and catch. Using one hand, toss the ball upward, let it bounce once, quickly pick up one jack, then catch the ball before it falls again.





STEP THREE

Increase the count. Repeat the process, picking up two jacks, then three, then all at once.



STEP FOUR

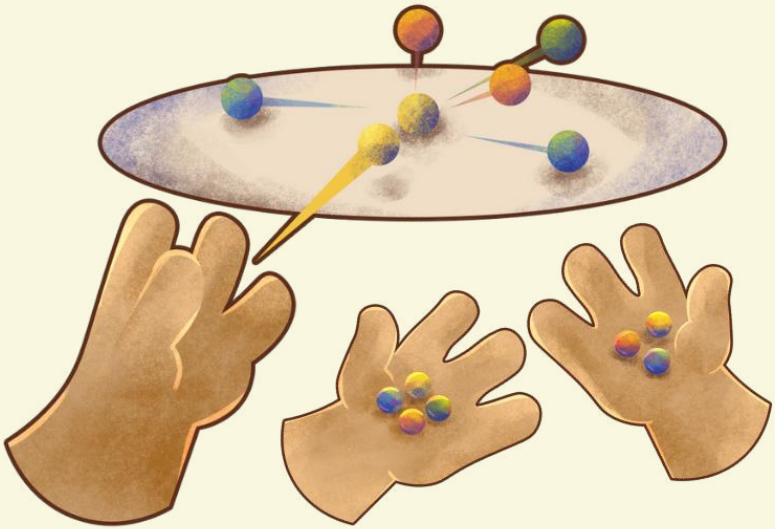
Watch for mistakes. Your turn ends if you fail to catch the ball, grab the wrong number of jacks, or if the ball hits a jack. The player who completes all levels first wins!

JOLENS

Setting

Players

"Hole in" where this game was derived from. Holen is a variation on marbles in the US. It is played with marbles, which should be tucked by the player's middle finger, and the thumb should be under the marble, stabilized by the fourth finger.



Did You Know?

Marbles were played by children centuries ago in **Ancient Rome** using round seeds. It is believed that it was the Chinese people who brought the game to the Philippines a hundred years ago, being a very popular game before World War 2.

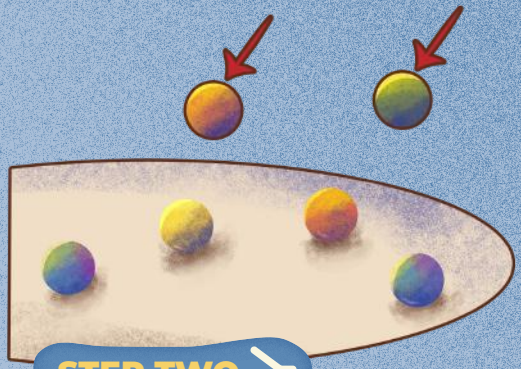
MECHANICS

Draw a circle and arrange marbles in a cross shape at the center. Players shoot from outside the ring to knock marbles out. If both the target marble and your shooter leave the ring, you keep the marble but your turn ends. If only your shooter leaves, you get nothing. Knocking out an opponent's marble lets you take all their collected marbles.



STEP ONE

Draw a ring. Make a circle on the ground and arrange the marbles at the center in a cross shape.



STEP TWO

Take your shot. Players take turns using a "shooter" marble to knock others out of the ring. Your turn continues until your marble leaves the ring or fails to hit any marbles.



STEP THREE

Win marbles. If you knock the opponent's marble out of the ring, you get to win all the marbles they collected.



STEP FOUR

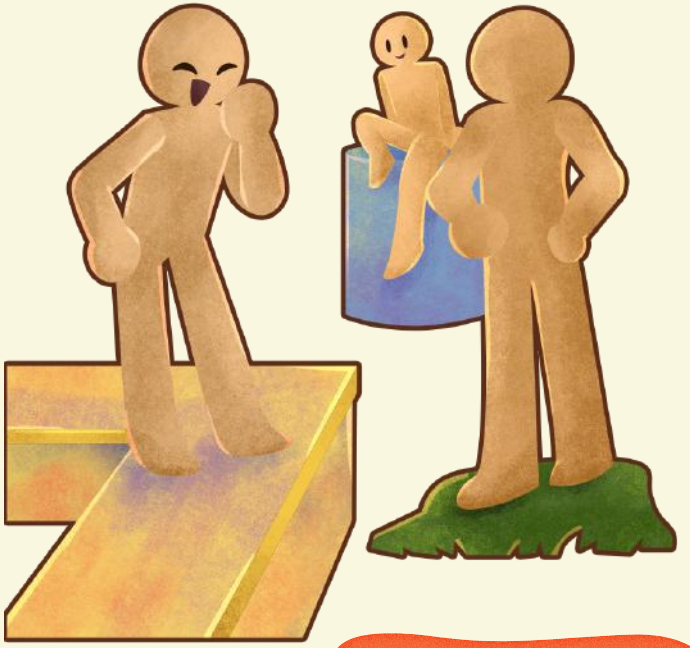
Collect the most. The player with the most marbles at the end wins the game!

LANGIT LUPA

Setting

Players

A fast-paced chasing game where the taya must tag players, but once a player reaches an elevated area (“langit”), they’re safe from being tagged—so run fast and find your safe spot!





Did You Know?

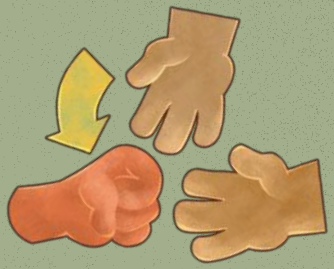
No one knows who invented the iconic chant of Langit Lupa, but for sure it is something passed down by our ancestors up to the recent generations. The game reflects the **Filipino Christian beliefs** and culture from its mechanics to the very chant itself.

MECHANICS

Once the taya is chosen, players run to an elevated spot (langit) while taya chants:

“Langit, lupa, impyerno, im-im-impyerno,
Saksak puso tulo ang dugo
Patay, buhay, umalis ka na diyaan!”

When the chant ends, players must quickly find a new spot, and taya can tag someone to take their place.



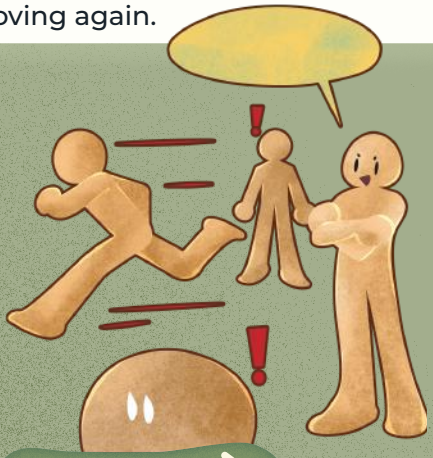
STEP ONE

Choose the Taya. Pick the Taya by chanting while pointing at each player one syllable at a time. The one not pointed at last becomes the Taya.

STEP TWO

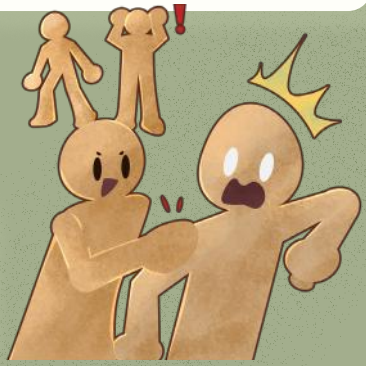
Run to langit. Players rush to an elevated surface (langit) like a tree, bench, or rock to be safe, while the Taya tries to tag them. They can only stay there for a few seconds before moving again.





STEP THREE

Move through lupa. The Taya chants the rhyme again to signal players to run to a new langit. This gives the Taya another chance to tag someone.



STEP FOUR

Tag to pass the role. The Taya tries to tag someone while everyone is moving. If they don't tag anyone, repeat the chant. This game can go on for as long as the players want!

LAWIN AT SISIW

Setting

Players

An invasion game where a player will be taya or the lawin, while the other players will be the mother hen and baby chicks. The players must hold tight at the mother hen's waist as they protect the baby chicks and avoid getting caught by the lawin.

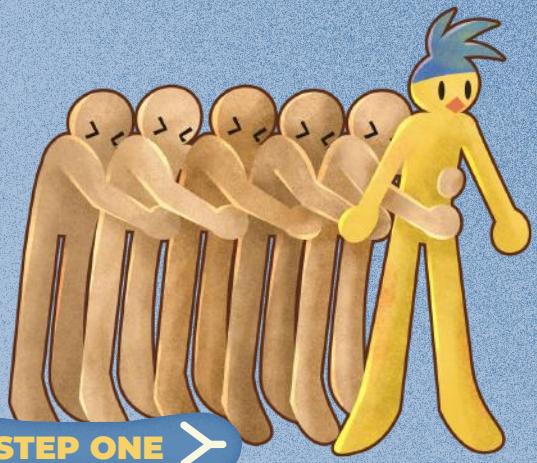


Did You Know?

The game is not actually of indigenous origin, but was introduced from an old TV program called Cyberkada in the 90s!

MECHANICS

At least six players choose a lawin and a mother hen, with the rest as chicks holding each other's waists. The chicks must keep their grip as the mother hen blocks the lawin, who tries to tag them. Tagged chicks either join the lawin or leave the game.



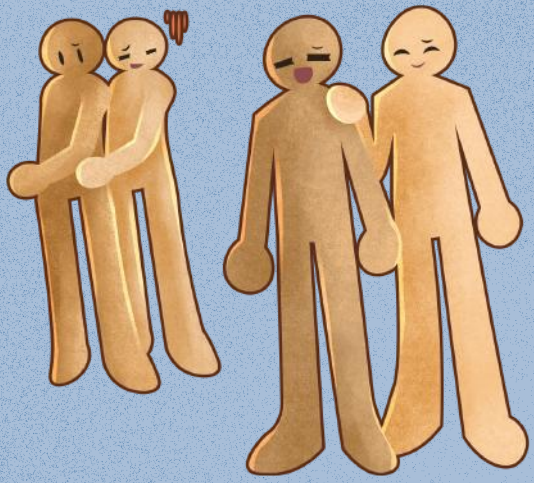
STEP ONE

Assign roles. Choose one Lawin (hawk), one Inahin (mother hen), and several Sisiw (chicks). The chicks line up behind the mother hen, holding onto the waist or shoulders of the person in front.



STEP TWO

The Lawin tries to tag the chicks. The mother hen spreads her arms and runs around to block the Lawin, protecting the chicks. The chicks must follow closely.



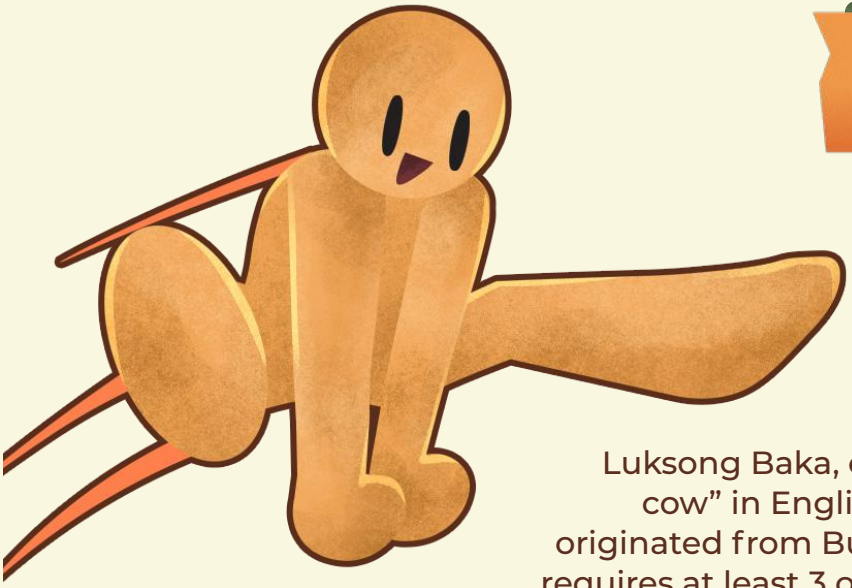
STEP THREE

Tagged chicks are out or join the Lawin. The game ends when all chicks are caught. Players can switch roles and play again!

LUKSONG BAKA

Setting

Players



Luksong Baka, or “Jump over the cow” in English, is a game that originated from Bulacan. This game requires at least 3 or more players, as they will be jumping over the “Baka” without hitting or falling over them.



Did You Know?

Luksong baka is one of the jumping gam**es native to the Philippines.** Many believe that it came from the province of **Bulacan**.

MECHANICS

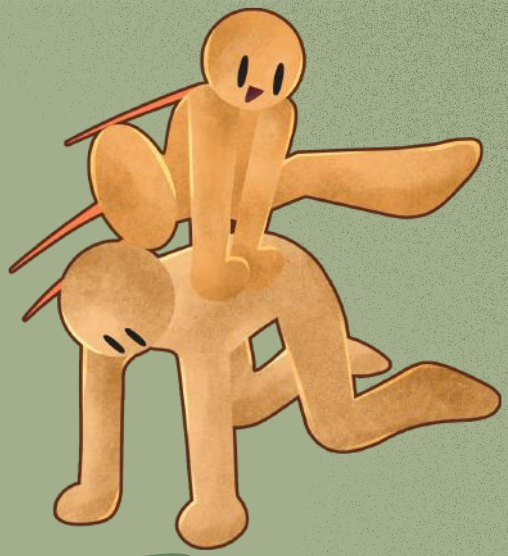
Players take turns jumping over the baka (taya) without touching or falling on them. The height increases each level, making it harder. A player who touches or falls over the baka becomes the new taya.



Level 2 in
Luksong Baka

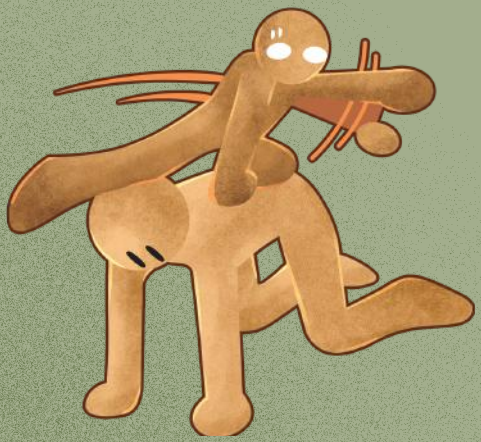
STEP ONE

Choose your baka (cow). The baka kneels down with their head resting on folded arms on the ground—this is their starting position. The other players take turns jumping over them one by one.



STEP TWO

Raise the level after each round. If everyone jumps without falling, the baka slowly raises their body, going from kneeling to standing to make the next jump harder.



STEP THREE

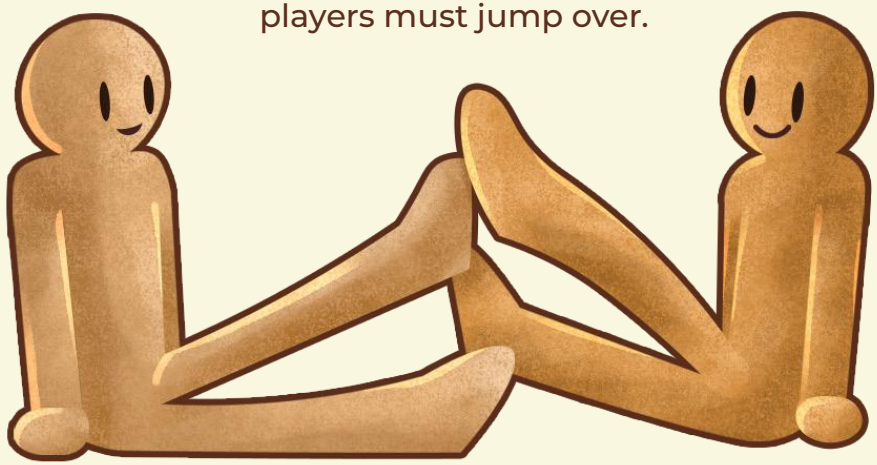
Switch roles if someone falls. If a player trips or bumps the baka too much, they become the new baka and the game resets. Keep playing until everyone's had a turn!

LUKSONG TINIK

Setting

Players

A game where players should jump over the “tinik” without hitting it. The pair acting as the “thorns” will use their hands or feet to create obstacles that the other players must jump over.



Did You Know?

Jumping contests are games that many countries have of their own. For the Philippines, one of our very own is Luksong Tinik. It is said to have originated from **Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija**. Lukong Tinik directly translates as **“Hurdling Thorns”.**

MECHANICS

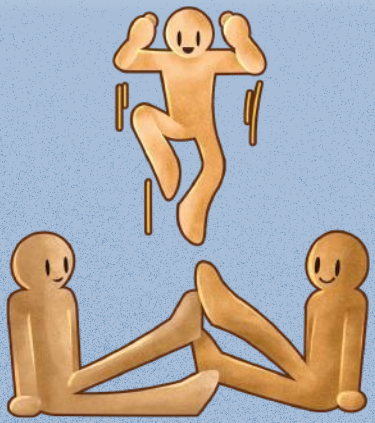
Two players form the tinik by facing each other and creating a barrier. The height increases each level by adding a hand. Anyone who fails to jump over becomes part of the tinik.

Level 2 in Luksong Tinik



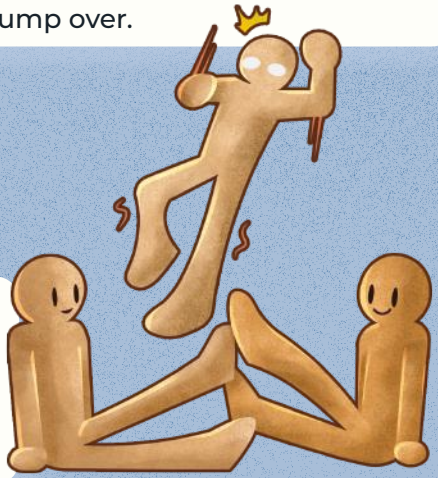
STEP ONE

Pick two players to be the tinik (thorn). They sit facing each other, with their feet touching to form the first level of barrier. The other players must jump over it without touching.



STEP TWO

Raise the level after each round. As players succeed, the tinik adds a hand, then feet, to make the barrier higher and harder to jump over.



STEP THREE

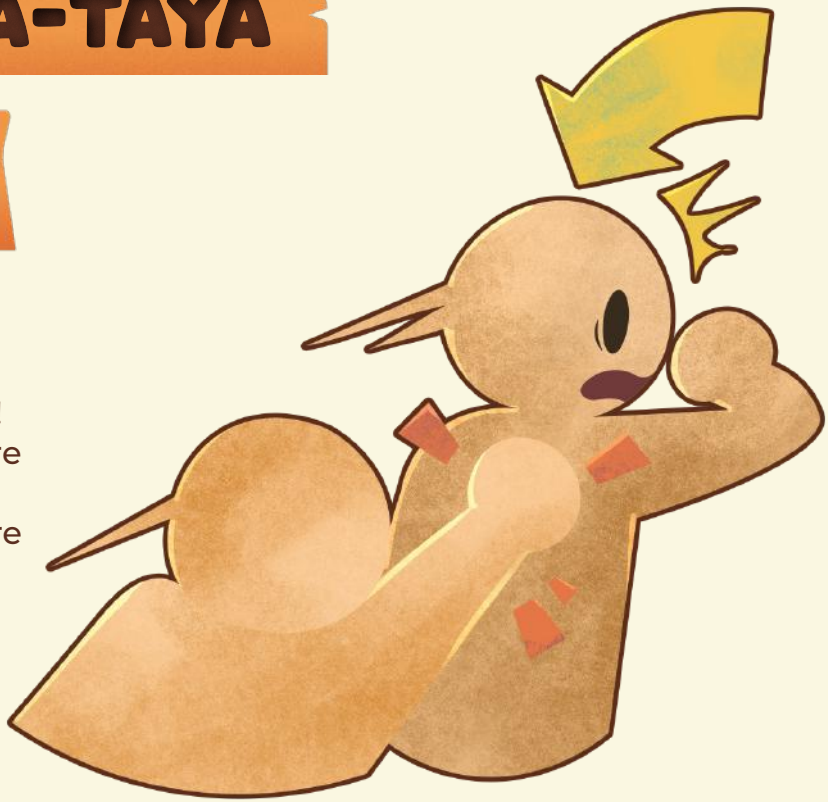
If someone fails, the mother can jump for them. If the mother succeeds, the player stays in the game. If not, their team becomes the next tinik. The game continues until everyone has had a turn!

MATAYA-TAYA

Setting

Players

A run-for-your-life game where the taya is on the hunt! Just like “Tag, You’re It!”, run fast, dodge quickly, and if you’re it, tag them before they escape!





Did You Know?

Filipino version of “Tag”. Tag has been around for millennia! Yes, it’s that old! A similar game was mentioned in a poem, “The Distaff” by an ancient Greek Poet, Erinna, during the 400 BC.

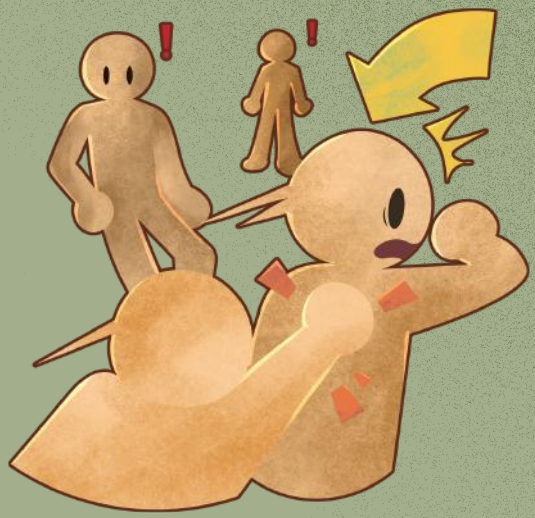
MECHANICS

With at least three players, one is chosen as the taya. The taya chases the others, and whoever they tag becomes the new taya after being tagged and hearing “taya.”



STEP ONE

Choose the Taya. Whoever wins in maiba-taya or jack en poy becomes the chaser.



STEP TWO

Let the chase begin! The Taya should start running to tag someone and shout “Taya!”



STEP THREE

No tag backs! The new Taya can’t tag the person who tagged them. Players keep tagging and switching who the Taya is until everyone gets tired or decides to stop.

PALO SEBO

Setting

Players



Traditionally played by adults during festivals. For safety, please do not attempt this game without adult supervision.

Palo sebo is a game that is always played during fiestas. As players race to climb up a greased bamboo pole to reach the small bag or flag at the top of the pole.



Did You Know?

"Palo Sebo" translates to "**greased pole**", showing where it came from– **Spain**! This is usually played in Europe, a hundred years ago, from the Spanish Colonization, which was introduced to the Philippines. It is usually played during fiestas for more than 400 years.



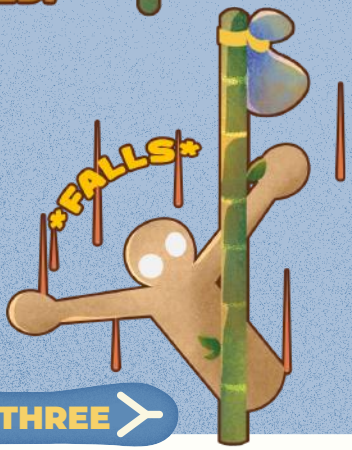
STEP ONE

Set up the pole. Grease a tall bamboo pole from top to bottom then secure it firmly in the ground. Someone may stay at the base to keep it steady.



STEP TWO

Climb up! Players take turns climbing, or if there are many, they can all try at once to reach the prize or flag at the top.



STEP THREE

Win or slip. A player wins if they reach the top and grab the prize. If they slip or fall, they are out of the game.

MECHANICS

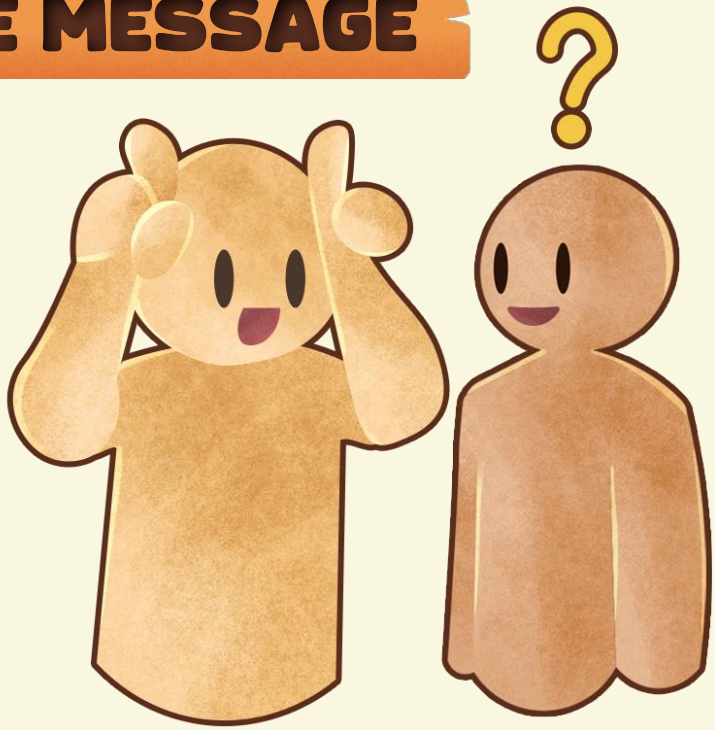
Each player has their own bamboo pole to climb, and they must compete with each other to reach the top of the slippery bamboo. The first one to reach the top wins the game. Sometimes, players take turns climbing a single bamboo pole.

PASS THE MESSAGE

Setting

Players

A group game that requires players to stay quiet and pass the message with the use of action or body movement that is related to the word whispered to them.



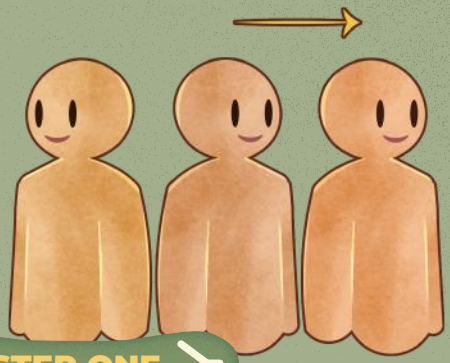


Did You Know?

It is a simple party game also played globally! This game is called the **Telephone Game** in Western countries. It is a representation of oral communication and how the message can be changed due to mishearings and misinterpretations.

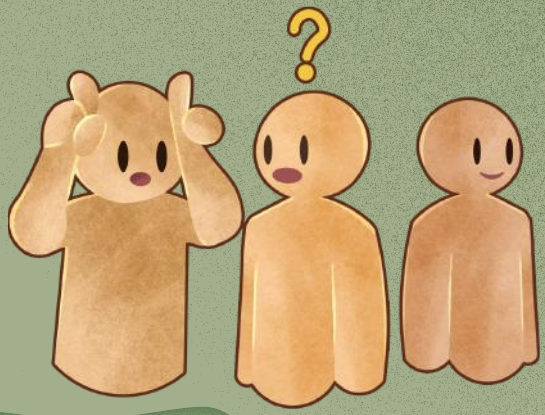
MECHANICS

Players must form a line facing away from the first member. The first member will randomly pick a word from a bowl or have it whispered to them. Without talking, players must pass the message through a movement or action related to the word.



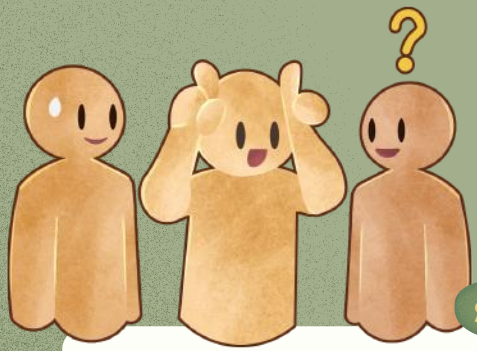
STEP ONE

Make two teams. All members must face backward, except the first member in each line.



STEP TWO

Send the message. The game master gives the message to the first player, who then passes it to the next by acting it out, drawing on their back, or whispering. The message continues down the line this way.



STEP THREE

Guess the message. The last member tells the game master the message. If correct, the team gets a point. If wrong, others get a chance. First team to reach the set points wins!

PATINTERO

Setting

Players

A game of speed, strategy, and teamwork! Players must dodge, sprint, and outsmart the opposing team to cross the court with the least number of tags.



MECHANICS

Players must form two teams: guards and passers. The guards will position themselves along the lines, while the passers stay at the starting line. Passers must try to cross to the other end and return to the starting point without being tagged by the guards, who must stay within their assigned lines.

STEP ONE

Set up the base. Draw a big rectangle on the ground. Divide it by drawing two horizontal lines and one vertical line down the center. This forms a grid for the game.



STEP TWO

Form two teams. Decide who will be the Passers and who will be the Guards. Guards are assigned one line each and must keep both feet on their line.

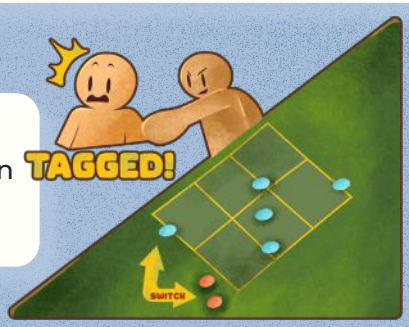


STEP THREE

Try to pass. Passers must run across the rectangle and back without getting tagged to earn a point. If they get tagged, they are out for that turn.

STEP FOUR

Win and switch! Once all the Passers have either scored or been tagged, the round ends and the teams switch roles.





Did You Know?

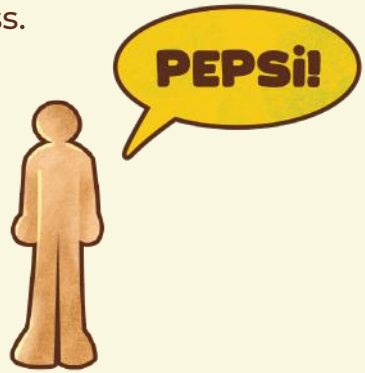
Patintero has different names all over the Philippines. It is also known as harangang-taga or harang-taga (Nueva Ecija), tubigan (Tagalog), tubiganay or tubig-tubig (water game), lumplumpas (Igorot), sabatan (Kapampangan), sinibon or serbab (Ilokano), tadlas (for four players) or birus-birus (for six players) (eastern Visayas). The word patintero itself came from the Spanish word “tinte”, referring to tha act of making the lines for the game. Other regions call it “Tubigan” as they use water to mark the lines for the game.

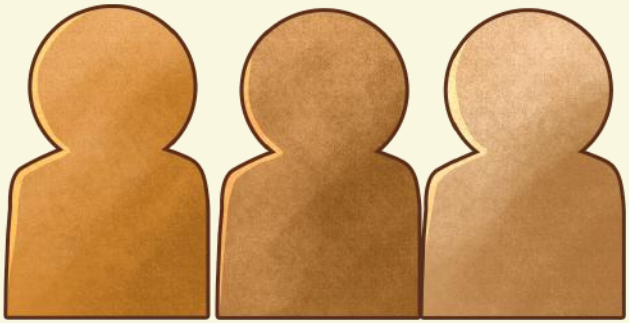
PEPSI 7-UP

Setting

Players

It is a fast-paced game named after soda brands that tests the players' agility and attentiveness. Players must reach the taya as fast as possible every time they are given a chance to move when the taya says "Pepsi!'







Did You Know?

This is a game similar to the Red Light Green Light from Squid Games, but Pepsi 7-Up is the Filipino counterpart! It is brought to the Philippines due to modern globalization! This game came from Ancient Greece, called "Agalmata" which directly translates, "statues"!

MECHANICS

The taya stands facing away from the other players. When they call out "Pepsi!", everyone moves forward, trying to get closer. When "7-Up!" is called, the taya quickly turns around, and all players must freeze. If a player manages to tap the taya's shoulder, they must run back to the starting line before being tagged. If they get tagged, they become the new taya.

STEP ONE

Choose the Taya. One player is picked as the Taya and turns away from the others, who line up at the starting point.

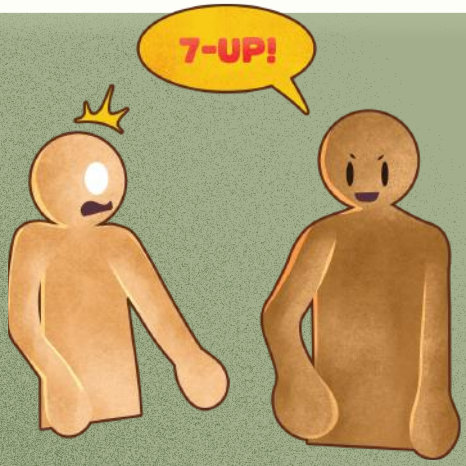


STEP TWO

Call “Pepsi!” then “7-Up!” When the Taya says “Pepsi!”, players move forward. When they say “7-Up!” and turn around, everyone must freeze. Anyone caught moving goes back to the starting line.

STEP THREE

Reach and tap. The goal is to tap the Taya’s shoulder and run back to the starting line without getting tagged.



STEP FOUR

Tag or repeat. If the Taya tags someone before they return, that person becomes the new Taya. If no one is tagged, the same Taya plays again.

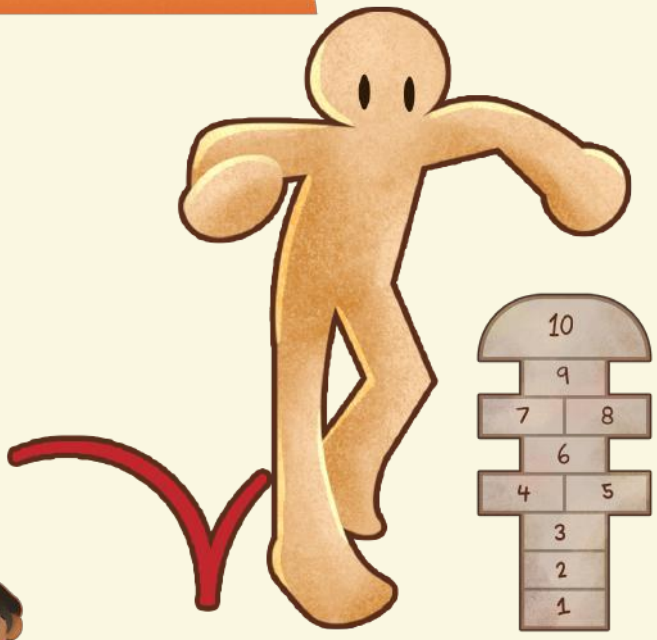


PIKO

Setting

Players

Similar to Western hopscotch, this game can be played solo or with a group. Players take turns hopping across boxes they've drawn, testing their balance and skill!



MECHANICS

Start by drawing the boxes on the ground.

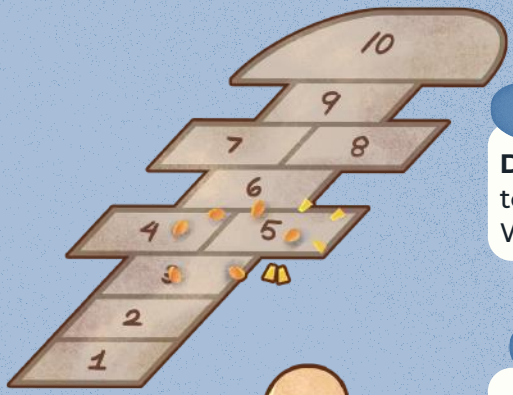
To play, throw a marker (stone) into box 1 and jump through the boxes without stepping on the box with a marker, they must jump on one foot but must jump on two feet when two boxes are together.

On the 10, turn around and jump back, then pick up the marker without stepping on the lines or skipping a box.



Did You Know?

Piko has different names from different regions of the Philippines: Kipkip, Pikuba, Laban, and Segking. This game is shared by the Philippines with many countries, with only a few differences in rules and how it is drawn. In English: Hopscotch; French: Marelles; German: Tempelkufen. Hopscotch lines on the stone floors of buried ruins in Rome can be seen.

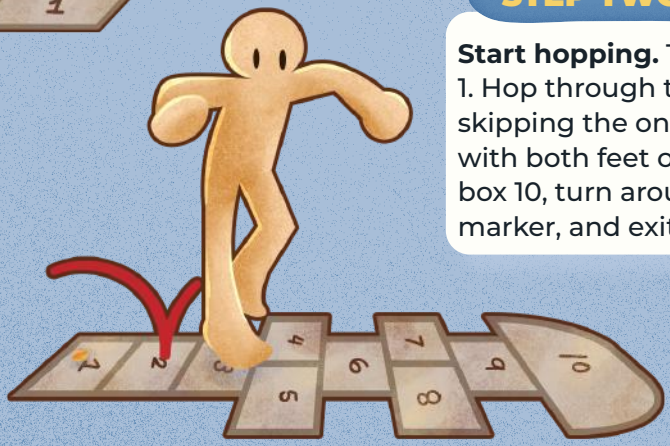


STEP ONE

Decide who goes first. Each player tosses a stone toward a certain box. Whoever lands closest starts the game.

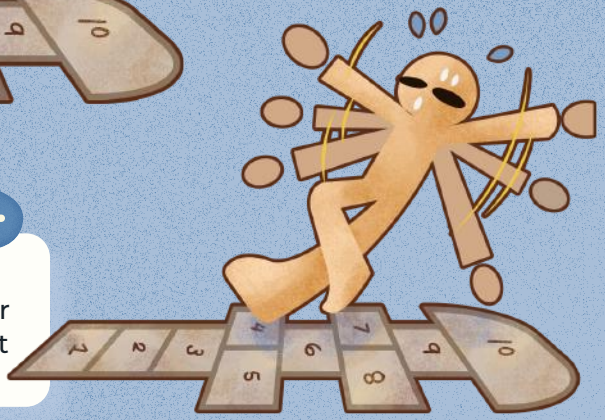
STEP TWO

Start hopping. Toss the marker into box 1. Hop through the boxes on one foot, skipping the one with the marker. Land with both feet on side-by-side boxes. At box 10, turn around, hop back, pick up the marker, and exit.



STEP THREE

Keep going. Repeat by tossing the marker into the next number. Miss or stumble, and you lose your turn. First to finish all boxes wins!

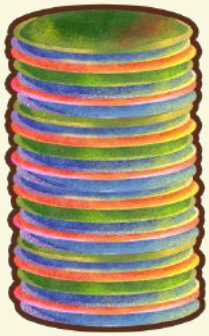


POGS

Setting

Players





A game like “Teks,” but with circular cards! Flick, toss, and slam as you compete to flip and win your opponents’ pogs.

MECHANICS

Players must stack the pogs together, and with their pogs, they must slam the pogs onto the stack. Once they have slammed the pogs, the stack may be scattered, and the ones facing upwards are what the player may keep. The most pogs that a player collected is the winner.

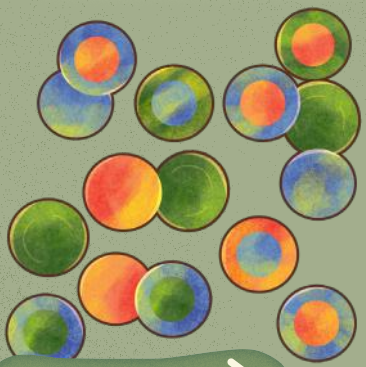
STEP ONE

Stack the pogs. Place all the pogs in a single stack, face down.



STEP TWO

Slam your pog. Players take turns slamming their own pog on the stack to flip the others.



STEP THREE

Collect flipped pogs. Any pogs that land face up after a turn are kept by the player.



STEP FOUR

Count your winnings. The player with the most pogs at the end wins!



Did You Know?

Pogs is a modern-day game attributed to have originated from the Japanese game, “Menko”. When Menko came to Hawaii, kids used milk bottle caps instead of cardboard ones. At the same time, a fruit drink was popular in Hawaii, “POG”. The game then became popular in the Philippines during the 90s probably due to the easier cultural exchange through globalization.

SAGIDI SAGIDI

Setting

Players

A follow-the-leader game where, while chanting the song, the leader will do a movement that the other players will follow throughout the song.

MECHANICS

Players first choose a leader. Everyone then chants “Sagidi sagidi, sapopo” while copying the leader’s movements. The leader can mix and match actions, changing them depending on the chant’s speed to make the game more challenging and fun.





Did You Know?

It is not certain yet as to where Sagidi Sapopo originated from, but it is acknowledged as **one of the folk music games from Manila** in a book by Miriam B. Factora, Phd. It is a popular game among the kids from the 90s, and is yet again gaining recognition in the present day due to it being featured in TV programs such as Showtime.



STEP ONE

Line up and start the chant. Everyone chants together: “Shagidi Shagidi Sha popo!” While chanting, the first player (leader), does one unique move.

STEP TWO

Wait and copy. On the second chant, the next player repeats the leader’s move. Each player must accurately follow the move of the previous player.





STEP THREE

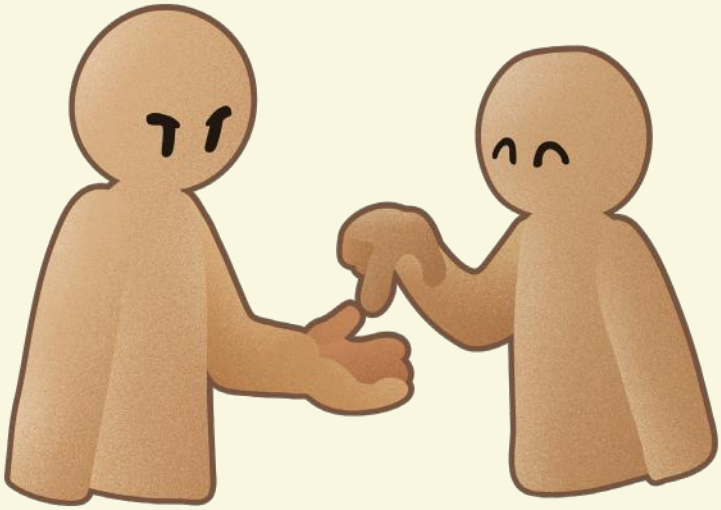
Don’t break the flow! The leader adds a new move with every chant. Mess up, lose the beat, or forget a move—you’re out or the game restarts!

SAWSAW SUKA

Setting

Players

A game that doesn't require rigid body movement. A song is being chanted by the players while dipping their finger on the other player's palm. Once the chant is done, the other player must try to catch the other player's finger.



MECHANICS

This can be played by two players, with one player is the taya. The taya will open their palm for the other player to dip their finger, then chanting, "Saw saw suka, Mahuli taya!". Once the chant is done, the other player must remove their finger from the taya's palm to avoid being caught, but once they catch their finger, they will switch roles.



STEP ONE

Assign roles. One player becomes the Taya and opens their palm, while the other player dips their finger into it while chanting, “Sawsaw suka ka, mahuli taya!”



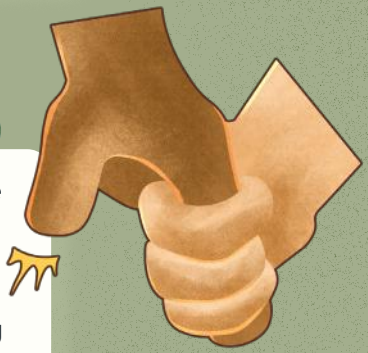
STEP TWO

Time it right. At the end of the chant, the Taya quickly tries to catch the finger by closing their hand, while the other player pulls away.



Did You Know?

This is a game that could be played on its own! This game is similar to “Fishing By Hand” for a game, “Blind Man’s Bluff”. Sawsaw Suka emerged from Tagalog communities, highlighting a staple Filipino food culture of dipping foods in vinegar.



STEP THREE

Switch if caught. If the finger is caught, roles switch and the game starts again. If not, the same taya keeps trying until they succeed.

SIATO

Setting

Players



Pityaw, also known as Syatong/Syato in Tagalog and Ilocano, or Pitiw Chato/ Chatong in Bisaya. A striking game, which can be played individually or by groups. Where player A hits the stick while player B needs to catch it, while throwing the stick, there should be a small hole where the stick must be placed.

MECHANICS

Players are divided into a hitter and a catcher. They make a small hole in the ground and get two sticks: a short one and a long one. The hitter places the short stick in the hole with one end sticking out, then strikes it with the long stick to send it flying. If the short stick is still in the air, the hitter may strike it again. The distance it travels can be measured using the long stick.



Did You Know?

The game closely resembles the East Indian game Guli Danda, suggesting Filipinos may have learned it from India during its period of strong influence. Another evidence is a similar game called “Banda,” which sounds much like its Indian counterpart.

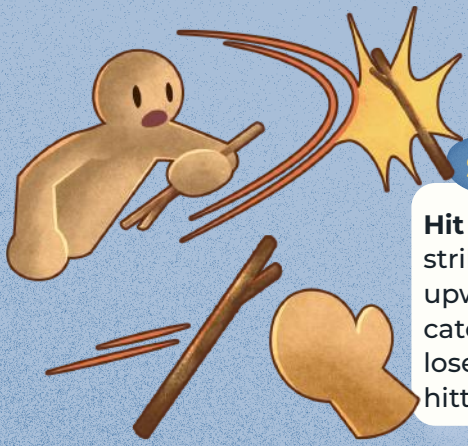
STEP ONE

Form two teams. Choose a hitter from Team A and a defender from Team B.



STEP TWO

Set up the sticks: one small and one long. Place the smaller stick across a hole or two objects so it’s raised above the ground.



STEP THREE

Hit and catch. The hitter strikes the small stick upward. If the defender catches it, the hitter’s team loses their turn. If not, the hitter’s team can earn points.



STEP FOUR

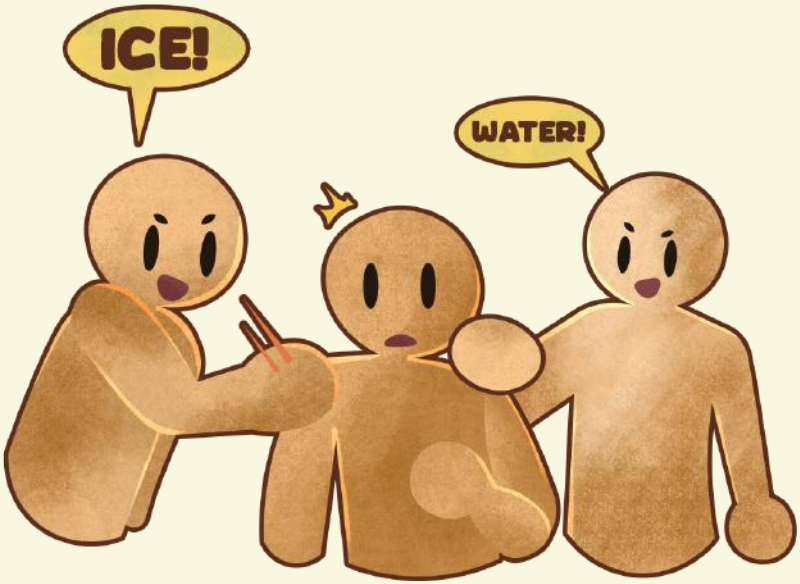
Earn points by distance. Place the smaller stick again with one end sticking out of the hole or object. Hit the exposed end so it pops up, then hit it mid-air. Measure how far it flew using the longer stick. The team with the farthest total distance wins!

SILI-SILI MAANGHANG

Setting

Players

Ice water has many variations, such as Sili-Sili Maanghang, where the taya must chase the other players; once they are tagged, they must shiver or fan their mouth.



MECHANICS

Players pick the taya by chanting “Ice Ice water, change your foot, if your shoe is dirty, please go home and change it!” and pointing at each player’s foot. The taya chases others; once tagged, players can free frozen teammates by shouting “water.” Once all are tagged, the taya yells “Viva Jump/Sit,” and the last to follow becomes the next taya.



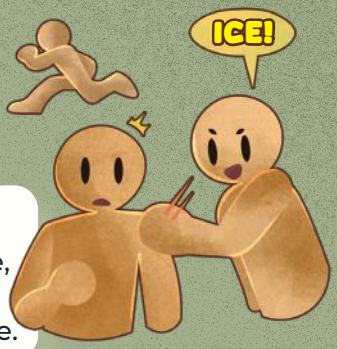
Did You Know?

It is one of the tag variations that came from the Philippines that has the most fun twists and additions to the game! It is not certain as to where this variation originated, but it did undeniably make the game more fun to play, even adding a catchy tune when choosing the taya!



STEP ONE

Choose the taya through the Ice Ice Water chant.

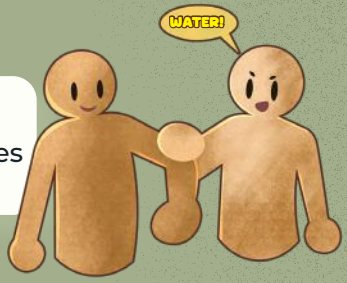


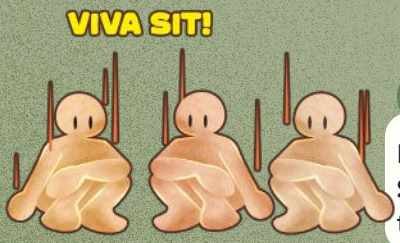
STEP TWO

Run away from the Taya. When the Taya tags someone, they shout “Ice!” or “Sili!” and the tagged player must freeze.

STEP THREE

Save teammates. The tagger aims to freeze everyone, but other players can unfreeze teammates by tagging them and shouting “water.”





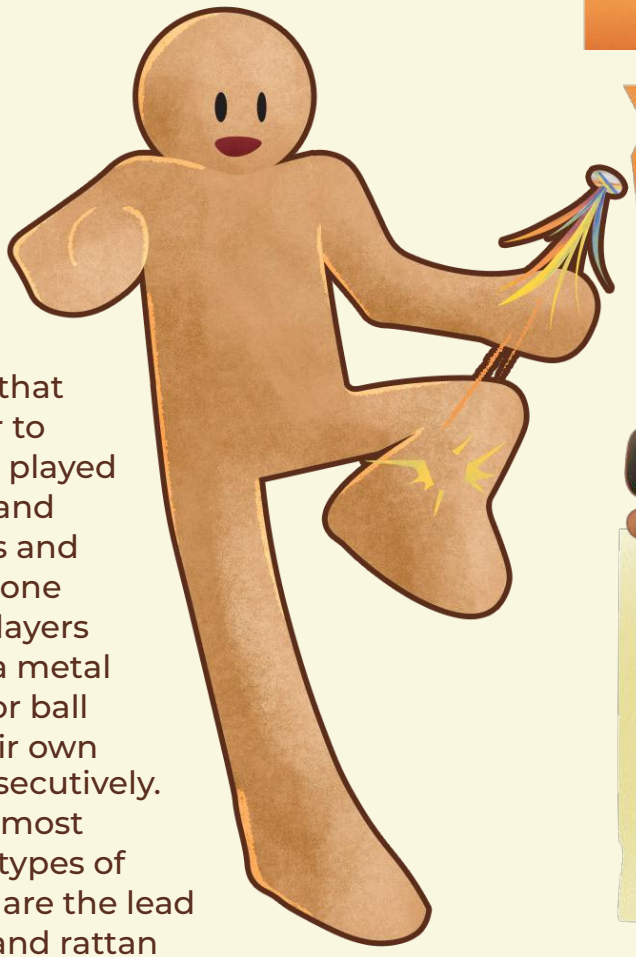
STEP FOUR

If everyone gets frozen, the group shouts “Viva Jump/Sit!” The last player to sit or follow the action becomes the next Taya.

SIPA

Setting

Players



A game that is similar to soccer is played indoors and outdoors and involves one or two players kicking a metal washer or ball with their own feet consecutively. The two most popular types of sipa ball are the lead washer and rattan ball. The lead washer sipa consists of a coin-like object with strips of cloth or plastic straws attached to it.

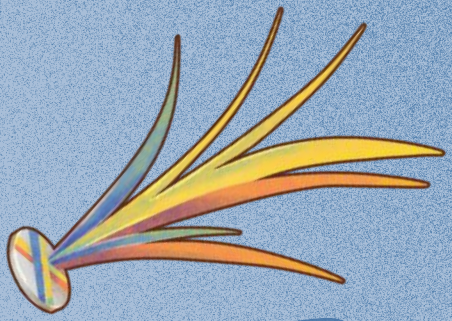


Did You Know?

Many Southeast Asian countries claim that Sipa originated from their country– but ultimately, it is **a game native to Southeast Asia** itself! Each country has its unique twists to its rules, using different kinds of balls or materials.

MECHANICS

Sipa can be played by two or more players. The game starts when a player tosses the sipa into the air and tries to keep it from falling to the ground by kicking it continuously using their elbows or the heel or side of their shoe. Each successful kick earns a point. A player's turn ends when the sipa drops to the ground. The player who keeps the sipa in the air the longest and scores the most points wins the game.



STEP ONE

Prepare your sipa. Use a traditional sipa (a washer with colorful plastic threads) or make your own.



STEP TWO

Start playing! Toss the sipa into the air and keep it from falling by hitting it repeatedly using your foot (side or heel of your shoe) or elbow. Earn a point each time you hit it without letting it touch the ground.

STEP THREE

Win the game. The player who scores the most points by keeping the sipa in the air the longest wins!

SUNGKA

Setting

Players

A strategic two-player game played on a wooden board with two rows of pits (bahay) and larger stores (ulo or inay) at each end. Players take turns scooping and distributing shells, aiming to collect the most in their store. Plan, strategize, and outsmart your opponent!



MECHANICS

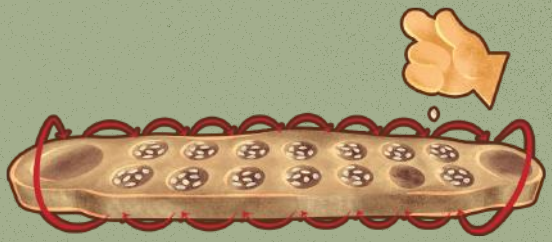
The game requires two players. There should be at least seven shells inside the seven holes on each side, keeping the larger holes or “bahay” on each end of the board empty.

On a player’s turn, they pick up all the shells from one of the holes on their respective row. Players then move clockwise, placing one shell on each hole, including the opponent’s storehouse.



Did You Know?

Sungka was first recorded in Philippine history through missionary Father Jose Sanchez’s writing in 1617, which refers to it as “kunggit”. It is suggested that it’s a game that has been played in the region even before that time of discovery!



STEP ONE

Put seven beads (either shells, small stones, dried tamarind seeds, etc) on each of the seven holes on both sides of the Sungkaan.

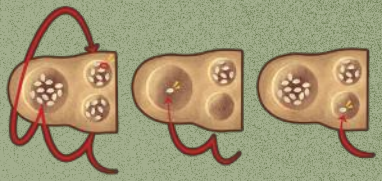
STEP TWO

Player 1 takes a turn by choosing one house to pick up all the shells on the side of their board, distributing each shell in a clockwise direction, one by one, including their storehouse.

STEP THREE

Follow the rules of the game as you play with your opponent.

RULES



When the last piece of Sungka lands on a hole with pieces, the player can pick up everything to be distributed again.

If it lands in the player's own storehouse", they get another turn and choose any hole on their side.

If it lands in an empty hole on their side, the player captures all the shells from the hole on the other side, then places them in their home along with the last shell, ending their turn.

However, if the opposite hole is also empty, the turn ends automatically.



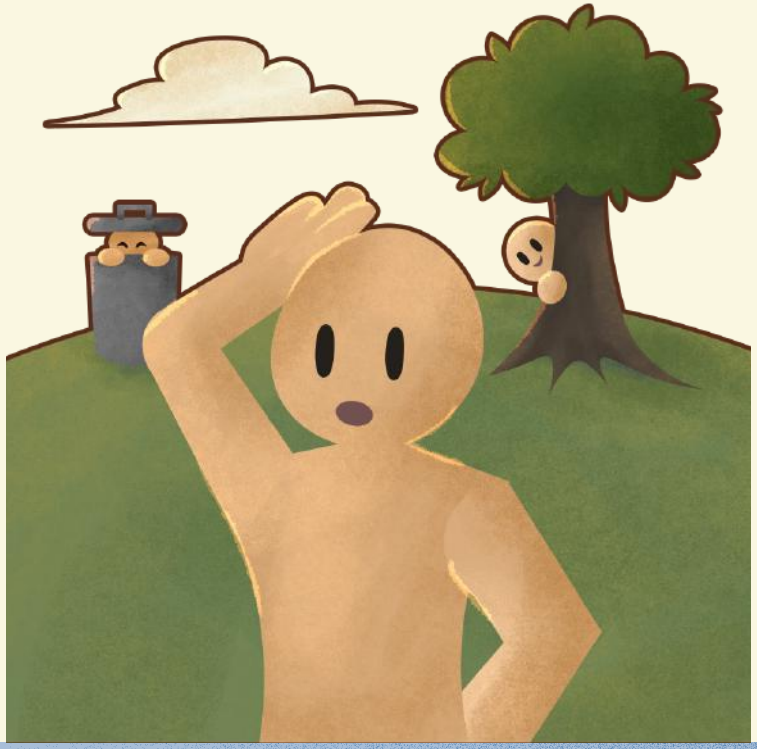
If a player has no shells left during their turn, they lose their turn.

The game ends when there are no shells left in any small holes on both sides. The one with the most shells wins!

TAGU-TAGUAN

Setting

Players



Also known as Hide and Seek, this game can be played indoors or outdoors—anywhere with good hiding spots. The goal is simple: find a place where the taya can't find you!

MECHANICS

Players must decide who the taya is. The taya can choose where their base is, then start counting up to 20 or onward. After the countdown, they must find the other players. Once they find a player, they will shout the player's name, and to save themselves, they can run back to the base.

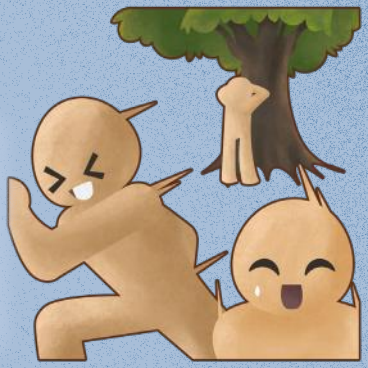


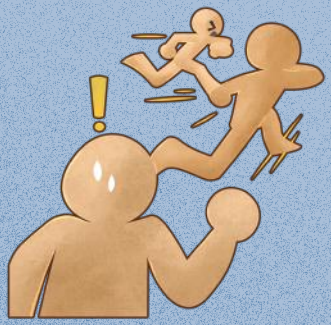
STEP ONE

Choose the Taya. One player is selected to be the taya, who will search for the others.

STEP TWO

Hide and count. The Taya stays at the base, covers their eyes, and counts aloud up to an agreed number while the rest of the players run and hide.





STEP THREE

Search and call out. After counting, the Taya searches for the hidden players. When someone is found, the Taya must shout their name out loud.

STEP FOUR

Run to the base. Once everyone has been found, all players, including the Taya, race back to the base. The last one to reach it becomes the next Taya.



Did You Know?

It is the **Filipino counterpart of Hide and Seek.** It is a game played by children all over the globe, with rules slightly differing from one another. One of the earliest versions of the game originated in France, where the seeker is blindfolded to catch the other players. It was said that it started as a commemoration for a blind soldier named Collinmaillard.

TEKS

Setting

Players

Teks is a card game that children usually collect. The game is played with two methods: the Clapping and Toss method. The players must bet on which side of the card will face on the ground. The card will then go to the player who won the bet.



MECHANICS

Players use small rectangular cards with characters. In the pitik (toss) method, each tosses a card; the one facing up wins the agreed cards. In the salpakan (clapping) method, players clap their cards together; a card facing up wins both, but if both match, it's a draw.

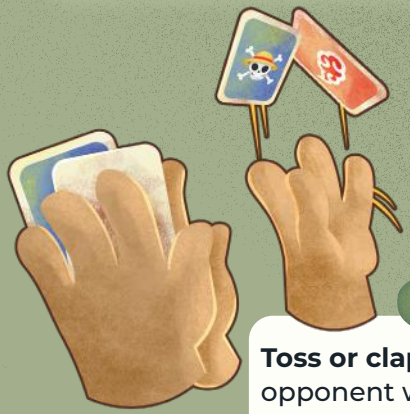


Did You Know?

Back in the 1950s, Teks were used as a marketing tool for promoting Pinoy komiks, which soon evolved to kids' trading card games similar to Pokémon and Yu-Gi-Oh cards. Trading cards go way back to the 1800s as a means of advertising.

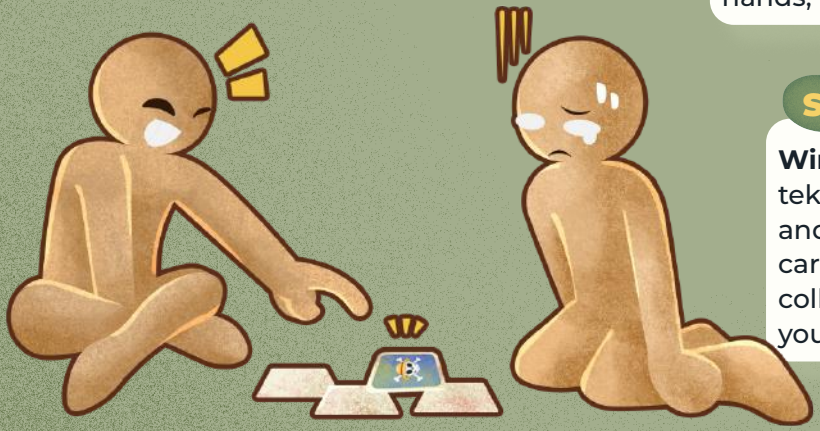
STEP ONE

Choose your teks. Each player selects a teks card to use in the game.



STEP TWO

Toss or clap. Decide with your opponent whether to play by tossing the teks in the air or by clapping them between your hands, then release them.



STEP THREE

Win the round. If your teks lands face up, you win and get your opponent's card. Keep playing and collect as many teks as you can to win the game!

TEN TWENTY

Setting

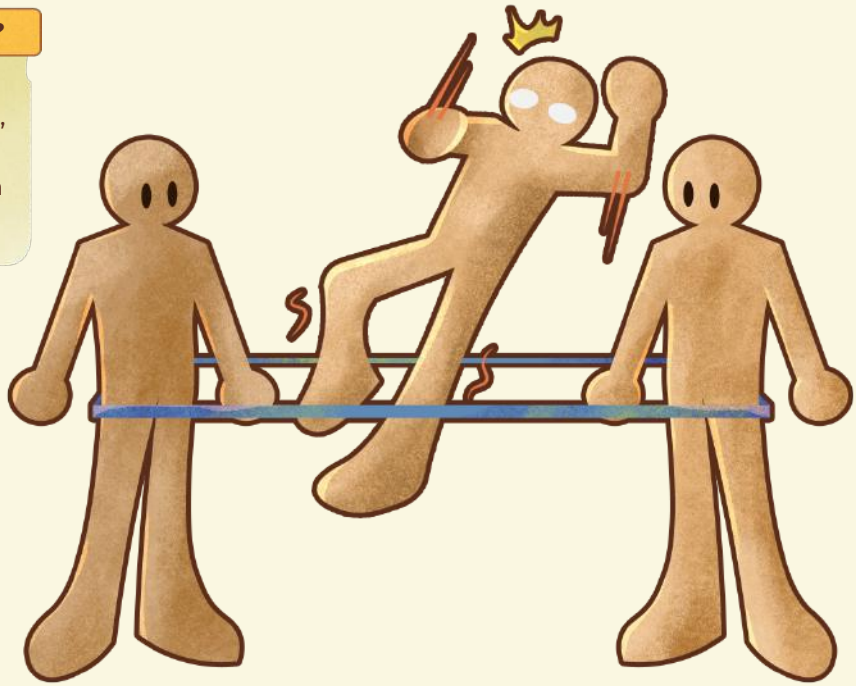
Players

A Chinese garter game that is mostly played by girls, which involves three or more players. The game uses a thin garter that is about two yards long. Different levels or stages of the game can also be played, such as close feet, side view, magic, le-eg, wround the world, tinikling, and apak.



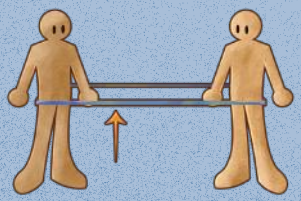
Did You Know?

It is a variation of the game Chinese Garter, one that originated from China in the 7th century.



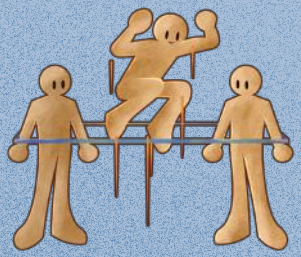
MECHANICS

To play the game, players must be 3 or more, two players facing each other, then have a stretched garter surrounding their legs, while the other players start jumping over the garter while chanting “ten, twenty, thirty...”. The first level should at least be on the ankle. The second level is at the knees. Third is under the butt, and Fourth is in the armpit, making it the highest. The player who successfully completes all the jumping routines will be the winner.



STEP ONE

Form two teams. Pick two players to hold the garter around their legs.

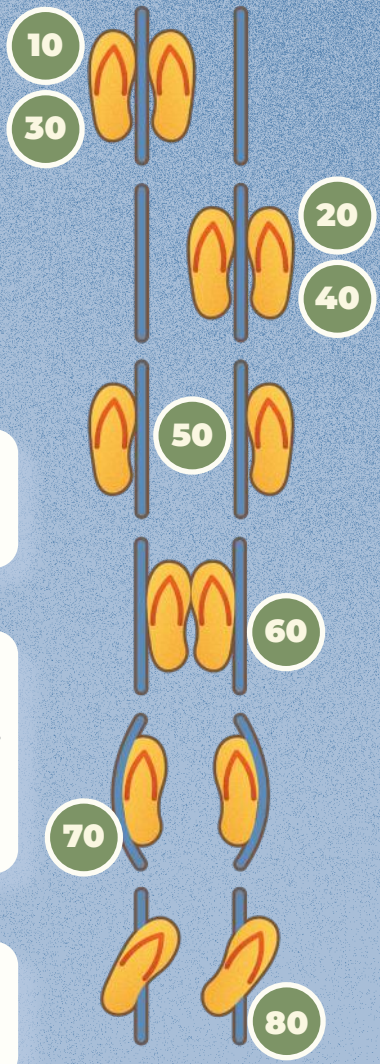


STEP TWO

Do the routine. Players take turns jumping over the garter while chanting “ten-twenty.” The garter rises each level: ankles, knees, waist, chest, shoulders, and then head.

STEP THREE

Reach the top. The team that completes the routine at the highest level wins.



TOM SAWYER

Setting

Players





Did You Know?

The game originated from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer - Episode 06, which aired in the 1980s.

Tom Sawyer is a story about a young rebellious boy who grew up along the Mississippi River, written by Mark Twain. This would later be adapted into an anime that features the exact scene where the game itself originated from. Hence, the objective of forming a human bridge and lifting as much people on one's back is purely comedic, not competitive.

MECHANICS

Players will be divided into 2 groups. The first team must form a bidge by connecting the head and back with one another while the other team rides the bridge or jumps at the back of the first group to destroy the bridge.



STEP ONE

Form two teams. One team becomes the “bridge” by lining up, bending over, and holding the waist or back of the player in front, connecting their heads and backs.



STEP TWO

Try to break the bridge. The other team takes turns jumping or riding onto the bridge, aiming to collapse it with their weight.

STEP THREE

Switch roles. If the bridge falls, teams swap roles and play again. The game continues until everyone has had a turn in both roles.

TUMBANG PRESO

Setting

Players



Also known as Tumba lata or Bato Lata, this outdoor game gets its name from tumba (to fall) and preso (prisoner), meaning "fallen prisoner." Players take turns trying to knock down a can with a well-aimed throw!



Did You Know?

The exact origin of Tumbang Preso is not documented, but it is believed to have been around since the Spanish colonization period. It is a game unique to the Philippines, and like other games, it has been passed down from generation to generation. Culturally, it reflects the Filipino resistance and rebellion against the colonial authority, even symbolizing the country's struggle for freedom and independence.



STEP ONE

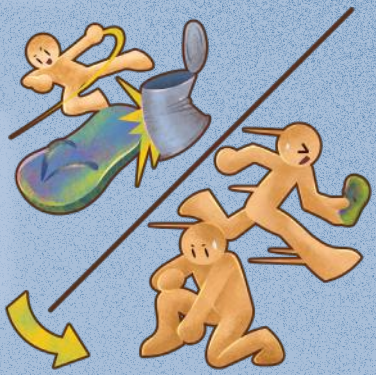
Set up the game. Place one can inside a drawn circle. Each player brings a slipper. Draw a line a few steps away from the can for players to stand behind when throwing. Choose one player as the taya to guard the can.

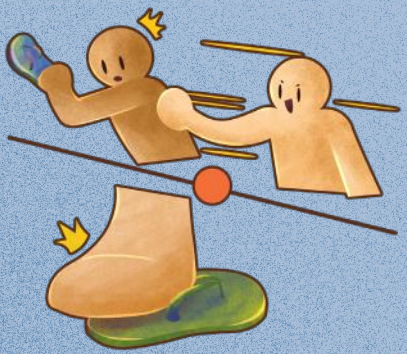
MECHANICS

Players use a can and their slippers. A chosen taya guards the can, while others try to knock it down from behind a line. If the taya tags a player while retrieving their slipper, that player becomes the new taya.

STEP TWO

Knock down the can. Players take turns throwing their slippers to hit the can. If it falls, the taya must return it to the circle while players rush to retrieve their slippers and run back to the base.





STEP THREE

Tag a new taya. Once the can is back in place, the taya can tag a player before they reach the base. Stepping on a player's slipper also makes that player the new taya.

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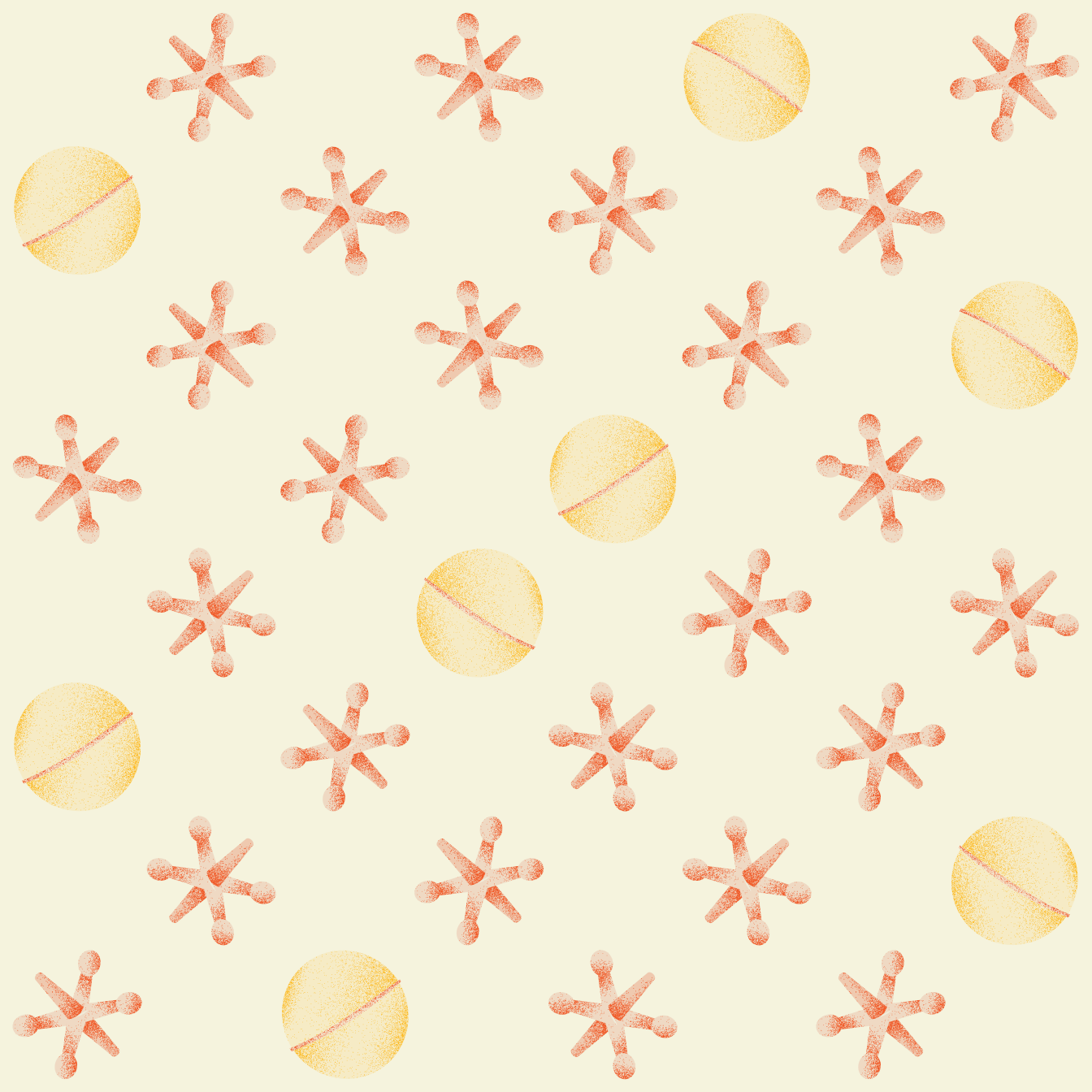
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