



People have been playing marble games for thousands of years, ever since the time when these little round balls were made from real marble!

That might have changed, but lots of the games are still played in exactly the same way and you can learn how to play a couple of firm favourites right here!

Shooting marbles

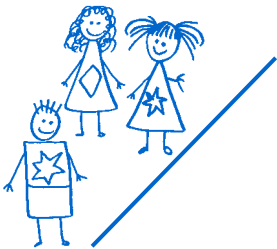
- You can aim your marbles any way you like during a game – just rolling them along the floor, flicking with your finger or even throwing them.
- Really serious players use a method called shooting. To give it a go, bend your index finger – the right one if you're right-handed and the left if you're a leftie – and rest the knuckle that's nearest the tip of your finger on the floor. Balance a marble in the bent section of your finger and then hold your thumb behind it (as if you were a football player waiting with his boot behind the ball). To shoot, hold your finger still and use your thumb to fire the marble towards its target, just like that footie player!

GAME 1 Captured Equipment

- Marbles
- A smooth, flat floor
- Piece of chalk (for outdoor games) or
- A length of string (to play indoors)

Instructions

1 Draw a line on the floor or lie a piece of string out in a straight line. All players must stay behind this line when they take their turn.



2 The first player takes a marble and rolls it as far as he or she likes. This becomes the first target.



3 The next player takes a turn. If there's one target marble, he or she aims at that. If there are two, the player can shoot at either of them.

- If it hits the target rolled by the first person, that marble is captured by player two. He or she picks up both marbles and then rolls out another one as the new target.
- If it misses the target, both marbles stay where they are and both of them are now targets.

4 The next player takes a turn. If there's one target marble, he or she aims at that. If there are two, the player can shoot at either of them.



5 Keep playing, picking up all marbles which are hit and captured. With a bit of practise, it's sometimes possible to shoot a marble with enough force to make it bounce off the first target you hit and knock against another. You can capture as many marbles in one turn as your skill allows!



6 When a player has used up all of their marbles, they're out of the game.

7 Keep playing until all marbles have been captured by one person, and that player is the winner!

TOP TIP:

Can't decide who should go first, second, third and so on? Play alphabetically by your first names. It's quick, easy and saves loads of arguments!

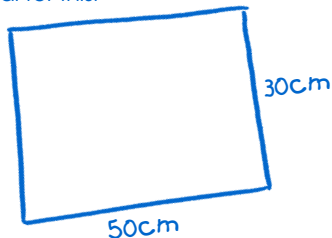
GAME 2 Arch Board

Equipment

- Thick cardboard
- Pencil
- Cup or glass
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Marker pen
- Marbles
- A smooth, flat surface to play on
- Chalk or a length of string
- Notepad

Instructions

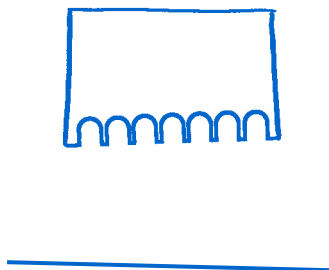
1 Cut a piece of thick cardboard which measures about 50 x 30cm. The side of an old cardboard box is ideal for this.



3 Cut the seven arches out and then above each one, write a number in marker pen. The sequence should read 3 – 2 – 1 – 0 – 1 – 2 – 3.

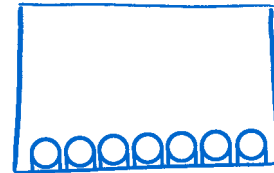


5 Mark a line – in chalk if you're outdoors, or with a piece of string if you're playing inside – roughly 1.5m away from the board.

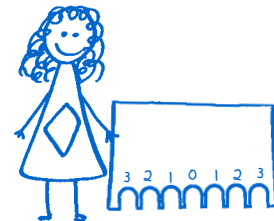


7 Continue taking it in turns to shoot marbles at the board, with the board master holding it still and keeping note of the scores. The first person to reach 30 points is the winner!

2 Along the bottom edge, draw seven small arch shapes. To do this, place a small glass or cup so that one edge rests on the edge of the cardboard. Draw around it, and then use a ruler to add straight edges and turn the circle into an arch.



4 Now you're ready to begin playing. Choose a player to be the board master and ask them to hold the arch board steadily in place on the floor.



6 The first player takes a marble and shoots it towards the board.

- If it goes through one of the arches, the player scores the corresponding number of points. For instance, if the marble goes through an arch with a number 2 above it, score two points.
- If the marble doesn't go through any of the arches, the player misses a turn.
- The board master should write down each player's score on a notepad.

TOP TIP:

It's a good idea to play a few rounds of this game so everyone has a chance both to shoot marbles and be the board master.