

mancala



Mancala is a type of game that is believed to have been invented by the Egyptians around 1400 BC. It is still popular today in Africa and Asia. There are many different versions of the game, however the rules are simple and you don't even need a board to play - you can dig holes in the ground and use seeds, beans or stones as counters!

Mancala is a 'sowing' game. The idea is to place your counters in each bin, or hole, until you run out. If your handful runs out opposite your opponent's bin you capture their counters. The aim of the game is to end up with the most counters.

This mancala board is from Thailand where the game is called Main Chakot. It is slightly different to African mancala. The piece of wood has been carved into the shape of a boat and ten holes have been dug out for the counters, which would have been fruit seeds.

The Toys & Games section of the Museum has games from all over the world, some ancient, some modern. How many do you recognise?



you will need

tracing paper

card

glue

string or wool

colouring pencils or crayons

stones or beans for counters

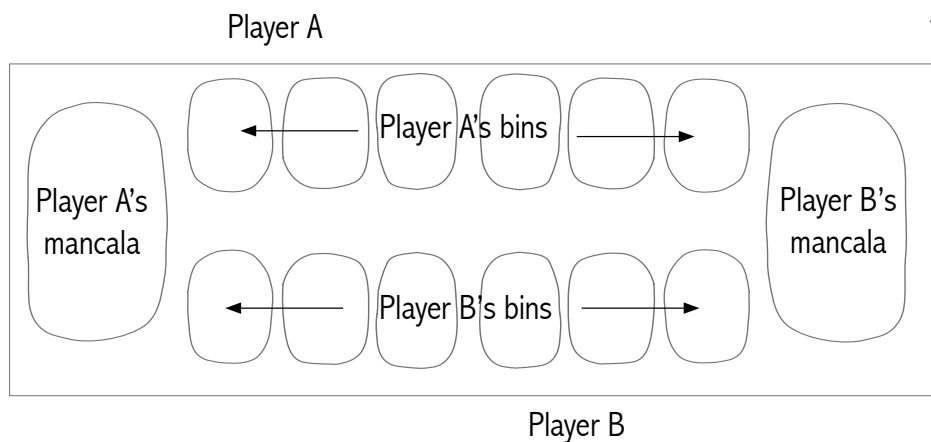
how to make

Photocopy or trace the mancala board on to card. Colour in and decorate the board.

Stick string or wool around each of the bins (this helps to keep your counters from rolling about).

Collect together 36 counters. Pebbles or dried beans make good counters.

how to play



- To play you need: Two players Mancala board 36 counters
- Objective: To be the player with the most counters in your 'mancala'
- Setting up: Place three counters in each of the bins, leaving the mancalas empty

starting the game

The first player scoops up all the counters from any bin on their side of the board.

Moving to the right (anti-clockwise), drop one counter into each bin that you come to.

If you come to your mancala, drop a counter into it. If you come to your opponent's mancala, skip over it.

If your last counter goes into your mancala, have another turn. Otherwise, it's your opponent's turn.

Capturing Counters

If the last counter that you drop goes into an empty bin on your side of the board, you capture any of your opponent's counters that are in the bin directly opposite it.

Put the captured counters in your mancala.

After you make a capture, it's your opponent's turn.

how the game ends

The game ends when all six bins on your side (or your opponent's side) are empty.

The player with counters left in their bins picks them all up and puts them in their mancala.

The winner is the player with the most counters in their mancala.

