



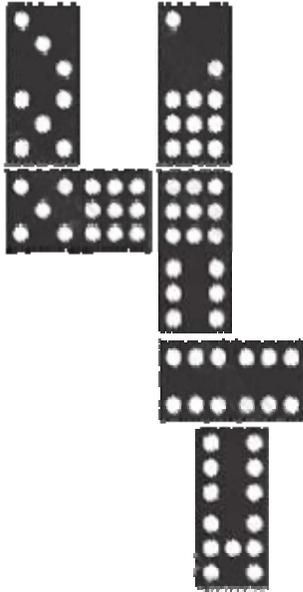
Toys and Games Across the Ages



A Child's Life

Children of 18th and 19th century America did not have much time for play, shouldering many responsibilities and chores not often required of today's youngsters. But when they did play, simple pleasures such as marbles and jacks, spinning tops and jumping rope were popular pastimes. Toys and games accompanied the early immigrants to America – from England, Africa, Germany, France, Sweden, the Netherlands, and many more places. Most rules of play or methods of having fun were passed down from one generation to the next, and often the only limits were those of one's imagination.

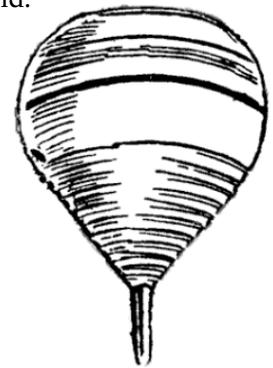
From the beginning of time...



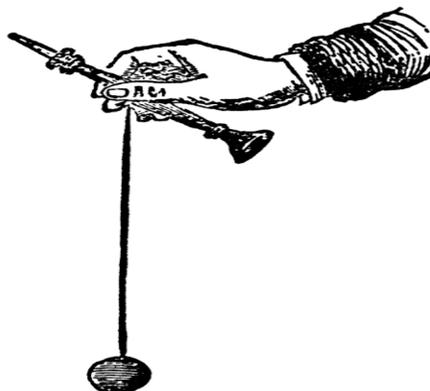
The game of Dominoes has become one of the most popular throughout the world. Recorded history traces this game back to China in 1120 AD, it was most likely brought from the Far East to Europe by traders, and from European immigrants to the New World.

Tops have been a favorite toy for generations in America, as well as the rest of the world. Primitive twirly tops have

been found from as far back as 2000 BC. Many used by early American tops were handcrafted at home, and the 'Peg' top was once the most popular toy in America – set in motion by wrapping a string around the toy, then tossing it away and into the air. As the top traveled through the air, it unwound, and landed, spinning, on the floor or ground.

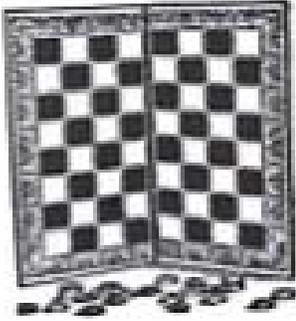


The eye must be as quick as the hand...



The challenge and dexterity of the cup and ball toy was an excellent test of hand-eye coordination. This folk toy originated in ancient Greece and early India. Quite fashionable by the late 16th century, it was one of the earliest games played by American children.

The object was to catch or capture...

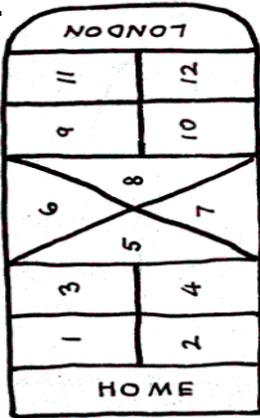


Checkers is an all-time favorite, two-player board game. With simple rules that can be learned in minutes, it has combined the chess board of 64 black and white squares with pieces from medieval backgammon and moves of Alquerque, an Arabic game where an opponent's pieces are jumped and captured. Originating in France around 1000 AD, rules making it compulsory to capture an opponent's piece became popular around 1535. This capturing version made its way to England and called 'draughts,' then to North America, where it became known as 'checkers.'

The game of Jacks is centuries-old, and was once played with seeds, bones, stones or other such materials. In ancient times, a player would toss 5 or more of these objects into the air and try to catch them in one hand. Archeological digs have discovered evidence that primitive forms of Jacks were played in prehistoric caves, as well as in ancient Greece and Rome. Jacks, as we know it today, is played with small, 6-pronged metal or wood objects and a rubber or wooden ball.



A hop, skip, and a jump...



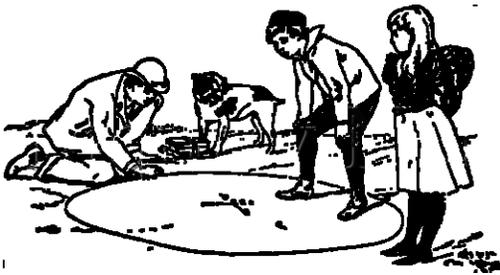
Hopscotch diagrams still cover sidewalks today, but it is one of the oldest and most popular children's games of all times. There is still a hopscotch pattern etched into the floor of the Roman Forum from several centuries ago! Traditional American hopscotch dates back to the 1800s.

For centuries rhymes and skipping rope have gone hand-in-hand. Many rhymes were passed from generation to generation, while others were written down for posterity.

Skipping rope didn't become popular with American girls until the 1830s, and was initially preferred by boys holding contests to see who could make the most jumps. When girls took up the game, the contests were soon replaced with the chanting of rhymes.



Made of rope, leather, wood, glass, or clay...

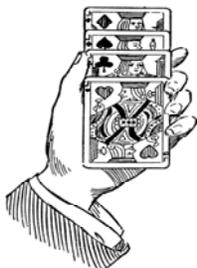


Playing marbles is one of the oldest of all known games. Common in ancient Egypt, and later in Greece and Rome, it is played today much the same as when it first arrived in early America. Made of wood, glass, clay, or similar materials, marbles are placed in a ring drawn in the dirt. Each player then tries to knock the marbles out of this circle with his 'shooter' marble, also called a 'knuckler.'

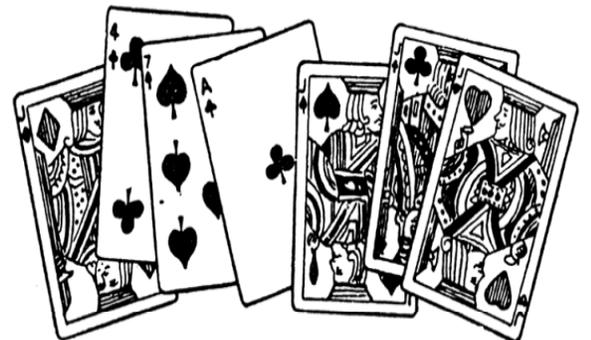
Quoits is a game at least 2000 years old, dating back to ancient Greeks competing in the original Olympic games. English settlers brought the game to the American colonies, and it was played by the children more than any other game. Strips of leather, pieces of rope or cord, or willow branches were fashioned into rings, or 'quoits,' then thrown over a stake. From this game came the present-day 'Horseshoes.'



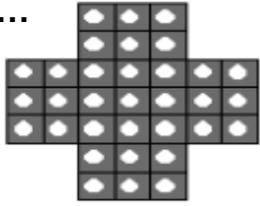
Kings, Queens, and Aces...



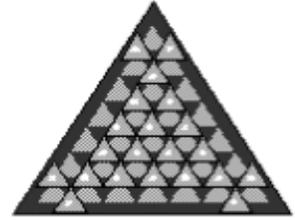
Since the early 19th century, children (and adults) in America have developed a particular fascination for card playing. In fact, many of today's popular children's card games were developed during the 1800s. One of these - 'War' - is still played today, the object being to collect or 'win' all of the cards.



A game for one player...



Board Solitaire originated in France and is said to have been invented by an imprisoned nobleman. The game gained worldwide popularity after arriving in England in the late 1700s and remains a classic game for one player. You might recognize it as the small board game with pegs, often provided on restaurant tables.



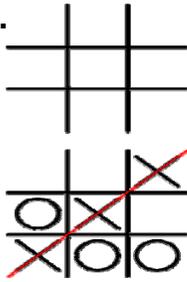
Catscradle and around the horn...



The yo-yo's name was coined in 1932, but the toy's origin dates back to before recorded history. Traced from ancient Greece to England, France, and many other European countries, it became fashionable in the 19th century, and scarcely anyone who was anybody was without the likes of this toy.

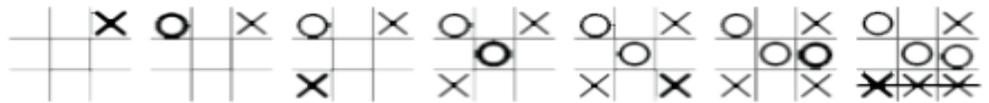
The yo-yo also formed part of early Filipino weaponry history – attackers would hide in tree branches, then skillfully release their yo-yos on the enemy passing below, hitting them in the head. Materials used for this toy included gold, silver, animal horn, wood, and, of course, plastic.

X's and O's...



Tit-Tat-Toe hailed from England, where it was known as 'Naughts and Crosses.' First played on a slate, then with pencil and paper, and even later on a wooden game

board, this became a favorite parlor game in America, and was played in what we now know as the 'Tic-Tac-Toe, Three in a Row,' manner.

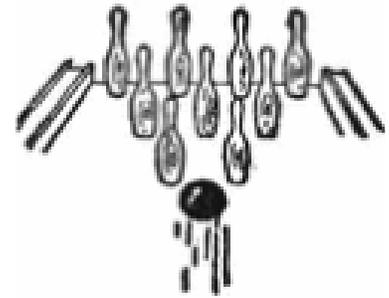


Skittles – the game that was outlawed...

TABLETOP
NINEPINS



Ninepins is the forerunner of tenpin bowling, and was made famous in Washington Irving's tale of the legend of Rip Van Winkle. Also called 'skittles,' this game came with the early colonists from Germany and the Netherlands. Ninepins continued well into the 19th century, until widespread betting on the game caused the sport to be outlawed in Connecticut in 1841. Other states soon followed suit in banning the game. To circumvent these laws, the game of tenpin bowling was then developed.



Ninepins

A silent witness...



The original "Silent Witness" doll was found in the room used for the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at the McLean House in Appomattox. It was so named by an officer of Lieutenant General U.S. Grant's staff because the doll became a witness – a very quiet one – to the somber ceremony between Generals Lee and Grant. The original doll is now on display at Appomattox Court House National Historic Park.

One, two, buckle my shoe...

What child hasn't tried 'Pick-Up-Sticks,' a game of skill played with long, round sticks or 'straws' of wood. Also known as 'Jackstraws' or 'Spilikins,' the sticks were originally made from ivory or bone. The name, 'Pick-Up-Sticks' arises from the children's counting rhyme, "One, two, buckle my shoe; three, four, shut the door; five, six, pick up sticks."



Bugle calls and drum beats...

Probably one of the most profound forms of amusement for children of the 19th century was the Civil War, which, from its start, stimulated the imaginations of youngsters across the land. Patriotic feelings and romantic notions found many children, both boys and girls, becoming child warriors. There was a vast industry in creating children's uniforms, toy firearms, drums, and

other necessities for play-acting. The colorful Zouave regiments created a huge demand for Zouave jackets and dolls, while the steady sale of toy drums was fueled by tales of heroic drummer boys. Even educational publishers joined the fervor, producing patriotic spelling books on virtually indestructible cloth.



Childhood memories...

This is just a sampling of the toys and games played by the children of yesterday which are still enjoyed by people today. Toys and games that still fascinate, stimulate, and develop skills for those who participate. Toys and games that recall the memories of that child still residing in all of us.

