

DIY Mancala Game!!

Take your empty egg carton

Carefully cut off the top.

Once the top is cut off, cut each end of the top as well as two pieces from the middle to the edge as pictured

To make the end pockets, tape together each cut off end and the middle-to-edge pieces. Make sure the outside of the carton for the middle pieces is facing towards the inside of the end piece

Tape each end pocket to either end of the bottom of the carton, the middle piece facing inward. Make sure they are taped securely on the sides, top and bottom.

Fill each small pocket with four of anything, any color (we used jelly beans because they are fun and colorful and edible, but you can use anything from pebbles to beads to Cheerios...be creative!) Now you are ready to play!



The Rules

Setting Up

Before play begins, the players set up the board. Each player takes 24 stones or seeds and distributes them among the six shallow cups on their side of the board. The two larger cups at the end of each row -- called mancalas -- should remain empty.

Sowing Seeds

The first player now chooses one of the cups on his side of the board and takes all of the stones out of it. Starting with the next cup to the right, the first player drops one stone into each cup, including his own mancala; however, do not place a stone in the opponent's mancala. This action leads to players dropping stones into cups on their opponent's side of the board as well as their own. The second player then takes a turn, picking up the stones from one of the cups on her side of the board and dropping them into cups in a counter-clockwise direction.

Scoring Points

There are two ways to score points in a game of Mancala. Each stone in a player's mancala at the end of the game represents a point. Thus, stones dropped into the mancala during the player's turn are worth points. Additionally, if a player drops his last stone into an empty cup on his side of the board, he gets to collect all the stones from the cup opposite the one they just dropped their last stone into. These stones also go in their mancala. Play ends when one row of cups is completely empty. The player with the most stones in his or her mancala wins.

Variations of the Game

There are many variations on the Mancala concept; in fact, the term refers to an entire genre of games. Common variations include increasing the length or number of rows, or the number of stones. In some games, the turn only ends when a player places her last seed into an empty hole. Otherwise, the players pick up the seeds in the final cup, or the next cup in the sequence, and keep playing.