

10 Tips for Winning:

- 1- Don't scratch! Don't aim at the pocket if you can avoid it. Use the sides of the board or the alleys to guide the pieces into the pockets. Beginners usually aim at the pocket. Don't do it.
- 2- Don't set your opponent up. Avoid moving their pieces into the open board where your opponent can easily get to them.
- 3- Put in the easy shots first. Don't waste turns going for hard shots (often the hard-to-get-to pieces will end up moving into an easier place).
- 4- Go for doubles. The rules give you quite an advantage if you get a double (or triple).
- 5- Defense! Block your opponent- recognize which of your pieces are in your opponents' way, and leave them there. Chances are, your opponent will have to move them.
- 6- Avoid hitting your pieces into the back alley. It's the hardest shot in pitchnut. If they end up there, hit 'em hard, and aim right next to them, not right at them.
- 6- Don't give up. Crazy things can happen. You never know when you'll hit 9 in a row!
- 7- Use your other fingers to brace your hand. In the heat of a game, the pressure can cause your hand to shake.
- 8- Practice. Like any game, the more you play, the better you get, with both skills and strategies. Even the pros can get rusty if they haven't played in a while.
- 9- Play against good opponents. You might be intimidated by playing an expert, but the better your opponent is, the better you'll play. The board will be clearer and you'll have an open path to the pockets.
- 10- Play dirty. It's a last resort and might give you a bad reputation, but sometimes placing the poison to block your opponent might give you the couple more turns you need to catch up and be in a position to win.

Caring for Your Board

Keep your pitchnut board dry. Rain and humidity are wood's worst enemy (other than fire). Do not store your board in a damp basement. A hot attic may cause your board to dry out and crack.

If your board gets sticky or rough, use the sanding sponge to gently smooth out the surface of your board. You can increase the speed of your board's action by applying some (not a lot) wax to the playing surface. Use a rag or paper towel (not a tissue) to lightly cover the surface of the board with wax. Be sure the wax absorbs, otherwise the wax will make your board sticky rather than smooth. Questions? Contact Lee Larcheveque at pitchnut@gmail.com.

Pitchnut History

Pitchnut appears to have originated from a game called Carrom. Carrom is common in Asia and was popular in the first half of the twentieth century in the U.S.



when the Carrom Co. combined the game with backgammon, crokinole, checkers and other games on double-sided game boards. Throughout Quebec, the game was known as "pichenotte", which is French for "flicking." Many pichenotte boards were home-made.

Another popular Canadian board game is crokinole, which has a strategy similar to marbles. It is also commonly called pichenotte. At some point in around the turn of the 20th century, "wickets" were added to the flat



pichenotte board, perhaps to make the game more difficult. This game may or may not have been called "archarena".

The "modern" version of pitchnut is popular in the farming villages south of Sherbrooke, Quebec. In St. Edwidge-de-Clifton, just north of the Vermont-Quebec border, Achille Scalabrini built pitchnut boards for decades. As families left the farming villages for the cities and

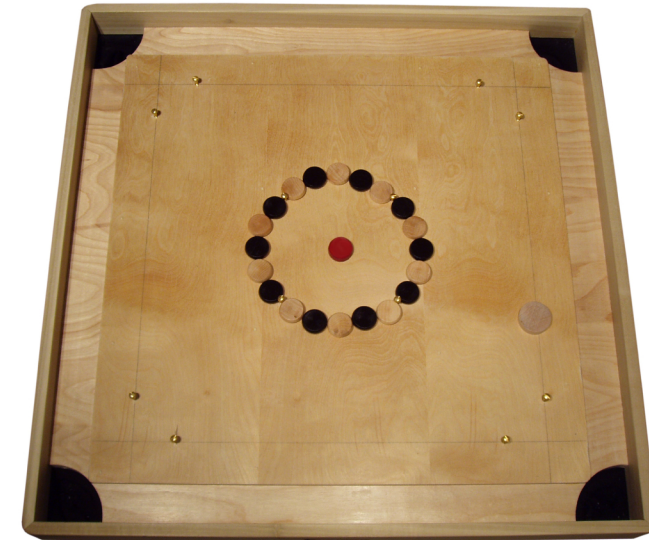


for the U.S., they brought their pitchnut boards with them and handed them down from generation to generation. High School teacher, Lee Larcheveque, began building pitchnut boards for his nieces and nephews and in 2006 and started the Amherst Regional High School Pitchnut Club.

He has built more than 130 boards and continues to research the origins of this fun and addictive game. If you would like to participate in the hunt for the origins of pitchnut, you can contact Lee at pitchnut@gmail.com.



The Fast, Fun, French Canadian Finger-Flicking Game

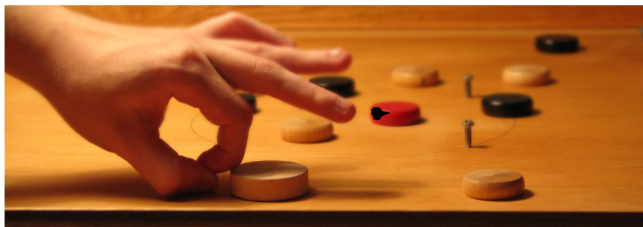
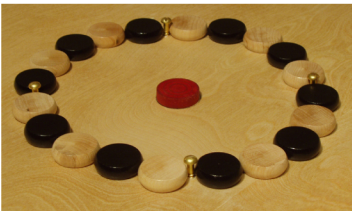


Official (American) Pitchnut Rules

Goal: To sink all of your pieces and the “poison” before your opponent does.

Players: 2-4, sitting across from one another. In doubles, you sit across from your partner. Play moves clockwise.

Game Play: Play begins with alternating black and white pieces (ten of each) in a ring, in the center of the board. Five pieces fit between each screw. The odd colored piece (poison) is placed in the center of the board. Flip the shooter to determine who breaks. The winner of the toss gets to CHOOSE who breaks. If a game has just concluded, the loser breaks.



The shooter is concave on one side (which keeps it from spinning). This side should slide against the board. The shooter must lie flat and cannot be shot from its side and “rolled.” The shooter may not be placed on top of pieces or on the side of the

board or on top of screws. (That’s just a bad idea) The shooter is usually flicked with the index (or middle) finger and thumb in a flicking action (“pichenotte” in French). To reduce pain and suffering, keep your index (or middle) finger as close to the shooter as possible. The shooter may be flicked

without the use of the thumb (Indian style), but your finger cannot make contact with the shooter after it passes the line.

You must shoot the shooter from your own “end zone” (unless you’re playing kids’ rules). The pieces must be struck with the shooter. At the beginning of each turn, at least half the shooter must remain behind each player’s home line. The shooter must

be returned to the home line after each shot. The shooter may be completely behind your line or may be placed in the side alleys.

If the poison is sunk on the break, the breaker wins- as long as the poison goes in alone. If the breaker scratches or sinks an additional piece, they lose.

You may “play off” your opponent’s pieces. You may also play off your opponent’s pieces when shooting the “poison” at the end of the game. You do not need to call your shots.

If the shooter is pocketed or is launched off the board it is considered a scratch- one of the scratcher’s pieces is removed from a pocket and placed in the center of the board, and their turn ends. If your opponent returns a piece to the center of the board and you are unhappy with the placement, you may adjust it before, but not after the subsequent turn. If a piece is already at the center of the board, the scratched piece is placed on top of the one in the center. Several pieces may be stacked in the center of the board. If the stack falls over, it must be left where it falls.

If a player scratches and they have not yet sunk any pieces, they “owe”: the first piece that they sink on a subsequent turn must be placed back in the center and their turn ends. The color of that piece does not “stick” though. If you scratch while sinking your first piece, the color does not “stick”-any piece may be sunk by any player. If at any time there are no pieces in the pockets, any player may choose which color they want to be. If you sink your piece and your opponent’s piece (regardless of the order they are hit) on the same shot, they cancel each other out and you do not receive an extra turn.

After sinking a piece, you receive another turn. If you sink two pieces on the same shot, you receive two extra turns. If get a triple, you receive three extra turns. If you sink four pieces, you are the Pitchnut god. If you get a double and on the next turn get another double, you receive three extra turns (why three? because you took a turn to get the second double.)

Winning the Game:

To win the game, you must sink the poison after pocketing all your pieces. If the poison is sunk before all your pieces are sunk, you lose. The poison must be sunk by itself! If you get another piece in on the same turn (or scratch), you lose. If you scratch while shooting the poison, but the poison is NOT sunk, you do NOT lose- one of your pieces is placed in the center.

What Ifs...

- If you sink your own piece and your opponent’s piece on the same shot and scratch, your piece is placed in the center of the board, but your opponent’s piece stays in the pocket. Your turn ends.
- If you sink a piece of each color on the same turn, your turn ends, even if it is the beginning of the game and the players’ colors are not set.
- If you sink a piece of each color and scratch before the players’ colors have been set, whichever color is sunk next will determine the colors. The “scratchee’s” piece is then placed in the center of the board.
- If you sink two pieces of one color and one of another and scratch before the colors have been set, your color is the color of the two pieces you sunk. You then return one to the center and your turn ends.
- If a piece or shooter flies off the board, the player responsible for sending it off is responsible for chasing it down and returning it.
- If a piece falls in a pocket as a result of turning the board, it must be replaced to where it was. If a player accidentally (or intentionally) moves a piece, they must be returned, as close as they can, to their original positions. If a player repeatedly turns the board quickly, causing pieces to slide around, they may be penalized by taking one of their pieces out of a pocket and returning it to the center of the board.
- If a piece lands on the top of a board’s side it is considered out of play and is returned to the center circle. If the shooter lands on top of a board’s side it is considered still in play.
- If you get a double and one opponent’s piece, you receive ONE extra turn.
- If you get a double and scratch on the same shot (or on the next shot), one of your pieces are placed in the center. You STILL receive an extra turn.
- If a piece of each color flies off the board, both are returned to the center of the board. The player who sent them off the board’s piece is placed on top.

Kid’s Rules (or adults who struggle mightily):

- It is advisable for beginners to learn Pitchnut while playing doubles.
- If the shooter does not make contact with a piece, the player may shoot again.
 - The player may turn the board and play from any end zone they wish.

Canadian Doubles

You may play 1 vs. 2. There are two variations. The single player may play from two opposite sides while their opponents sit on either side of them. If the single player is a Pitchnut Pro, they must play from only one side of the board. Depending on the skill gap, the single player may either play after each opponent or after both opponents have played.