

How to Play Cornhole

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Cornhole, sometimes called corn toss, bean bag toss, or baggo, is a lawn game popular in America. In this game, two teams throw bean bags into the holes of a goal board positioned on the ground to score points. With a few supplies and tools, you can make a [Cornhole set of your own](#), or you could buy the game pre-made at a store. Either way, once you lay the groundwork for the game, it won't be long before you begin playing, and there are even ways you can improve your technique.

Things You'll Need

- Cornhole goal board (x2)
- Bean bags (x8)

Part
1

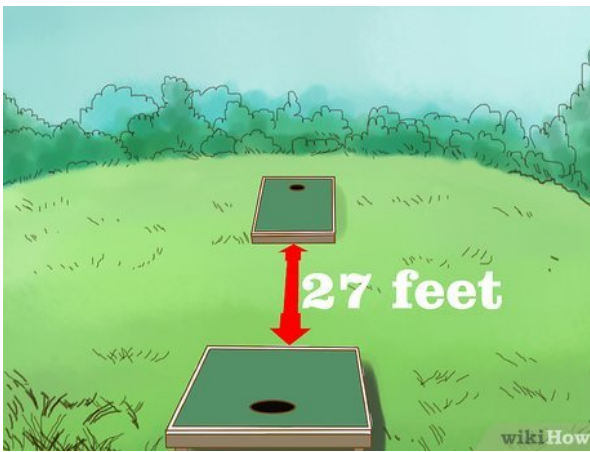
Part 1 of 3:

Laying the Groundwork to Play



1 Collect your Cornhole equipment. You'll need two sets of bean bags, with each set having four bags apiece. It's a good idea to choose two colors for your bean bags, one color for each team. This way, you can easily differentiate teams. Additionally, each team must have one goal board per team.^[1]

- Official Cornhole goal boards are 2 by 4 feet (0.61 by 1.22 m), with a hole 6 inches (15.24 cm) wide centered 9 inches (22.9 cm) from the top of the board. Larger or smaller boards might not work as well.
- Bean bags larger or smaller than 6 inches by 6 inches (15.24 cm by 15.24 cm) may make the game too difficult or too easy.
- You can frequently find and buy pre-made Cornhole games at general retailers, sports stores, and sporting goods stores.



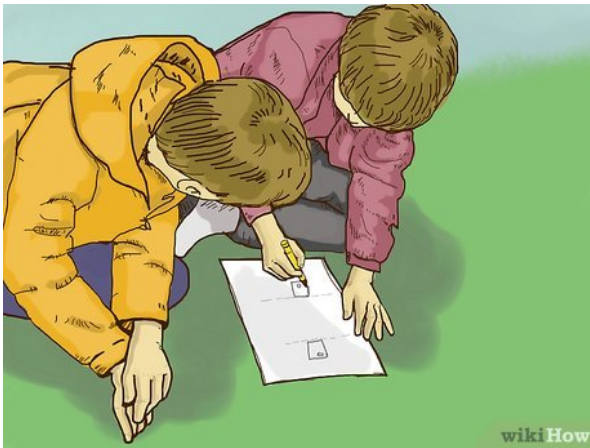
2 Arrange the team goals. Team goals should be set up on level ground opposite from each other. The front of each goal should be 27 feet (8.2 m) apart from the other. The goal hole of each board should be positioned away from the opposing board.

- You may want to orient your playing area to face north and south. This way, the sun will have less of a negative impact on play.[2]



3 Gather players for your Cornhole game. You can play Cornhole with two or four players. Players should be divided evenly into two teams. Two-player teams will have a player at each goal board, and single person teams will always throw from the same board.

- The rules of Cornhole are relatively simple. If you're in need of players for your game, even complete beginners can pick it up quickly and enjoy playing.



4 Explain the rules. Each goal board begins with four bean bags apiece. The players at each goal board should alternate throwing bean bags at the opposite goal board until all four are thrown on one side. Then the opposite board players should do the same. This is repeated until a team reaches 21 points, total.

- All throws should be made from behind the front of the board in an imaginary 3-foot (.91 m) wide pitcher's box that extends the entire length of both sides of the board.
- Bean bags that make it through the hole in the other team's goal board are worth three points. Bags that touch and remain on the board earn a single point. Bags knocked into the hole by another bag are also worth three points.[3]



5 Choose a non-player judge to keep participants honest. When the competition is heated, players may argue about whether or not something was a foul. Because the Cornhole playing field is relatively large, it can be difficult for opposing teams to clearly distinguish fouls. A judge will help prevent this.

- Although a judge is recommended for serious players and tournaments, a judge is *not* required to play this game.



1 Decide which team throws first. Now that you've got your teams assembled and the rules are explained, you're ready to start playing. Flip a coin to determine the team that throws first. After that, players should take their position beside or behind their goal board, alternating throws between teams.^[4]

- If you lack a coin, you can play **Rock, Paper, Scissors** to determine the starting team instead.



2 Throw bean bags to score points. Following the rules carefully so as not to lose points to foul bags, throw your bags at the other team's goal board. Experiment with different underhand throws to find one that works best for you.

- When using tall arc tosses, be sure to account for the wind, as it can have a significant effect on these throws.
- Low arc tosses generally have more horizontal speed, resulting in more forward momentum. This can help your bag slide up the goal board into the hole.
- Avoid throwing a bag higher than 5 - 10 feet (1.5 - 5.8 m). Tosses outside of this range suffer from decreased accuracy.



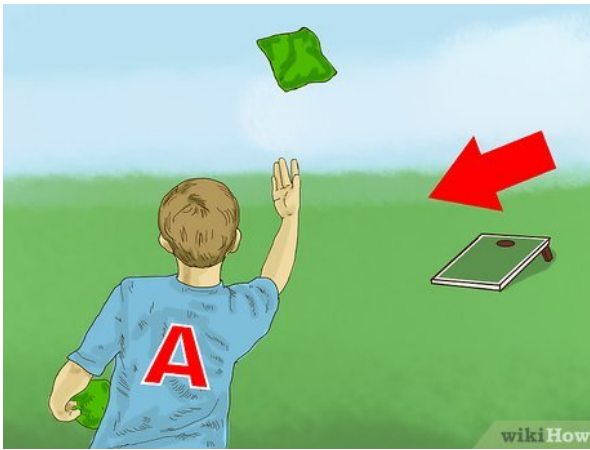
3 Avoid committing fouls. Committing a foul in Cornhole will result in the foul bag being removed from play for that inning. Fouls occur when you play out of turn, step outside the pitcher's box while throwing, or when your bag touches the ground before coming to a stop on the goal board.

- In official games, all players are expected to make each throw in under 20 seconds. Taking longer will also result in a foul.
- You must always throw bean bags underhand. Overhand throws and side throws common in Frisbee are considered fouls.
- As soon as a foul is committed, the foul bag should be removed from the board if necessary. Return any bags affected by the foul bag to their pre-foul positions.[5]

CORNHOLE						
TEAM	SCORE	INNING				
		1	2	3	4	5
A	5	2				
B	3					

4 Calculate the score for the inning. The end score of each inning is determined by cancellation scoring. This where you deduct the score of the lower point team from the point leader of that inning. Don't forget that bags knocked through the hole by another bean bag during play are worth the full three points.[6]

- For example, if in a single inning Team A scored five points and Team B scored three points, the end score of that inning would be two points in Team A's favor.



5 Start the next inning with the point winner. After you've calculated the points, you'll know which team was the point winner for that inning. This is the team that begins throwing the next round. If neither team scored in the inning, the first toss of the next round goes to the final pitcher of the preceding inning.

- Continue playing innings until a team reaches 21 points. When that happens, the game is finished.[7]

Part
3

Part 3 of 3:

Improving Your Technique



1 Aim for the front of the board. Even though the three-point hole is toward the back of the board, throwing at the front of the board improves your chances of sliding a bag into the hole or landing one on the board for a single point. When aiming for the back of the board, it's easy to overthrow and get no points at all.

- Landing bags on the goal board will create obstacles for your opponent. This can be a useful tactic for blocking points.



2 Put a spin on the bags you throw. Hold your bean bag so it is flat in your hand. When you throw, keep your wrist straight and use your fingers to create lateral spin, much like a Frisbee. This will give your bag a better chance of sliding into the hole for three points.

- As you release the bag, allow your index and middle fingers to stay in contact with the bag slightly longer than the others to help generate spin.
- You must use an underhanded release in Cornhole. Even though the side throw common with Frisbees feels natural for putting a spin on the bag, it is illegal.



3 Perfect your grip and stance. Each individual will be different, but generally, you should hold the bag with four fingers under it and your thumb roughly at its top center. Keep your knees slightly bent, and lean your body a little over your throwing arm so it can swing and throw freely.

- For the most consistent throw, try to keep your feet positioned the same every throw. A starting position with both feet close together is strong.



4 Keep calm as you play. Tension or nerves can hurt your performance. Try to enjoy yourself and have a good time. If you notice you start getting worked up over the game, you might want to take a break or recenter yourself with:

- Deep breathing exercises. Take a deep, full breath while counting to five, hold it for a five count, then release the breath on a five count.
- Muscle relaxation exercises. Tighten and release each muscle or muscle group for six seconds, starting from the top of your body and working your way down.[8]



Community Q&A

Question

My teammate is very inconsistent and does not take my suggestions seriously. How can I improve her play?



Community Answer

You may not be able to help her play improve. If leaving her alone doesn't work and you still have issues, perhaps it is time to look for another teammate.

Helpful **20** Not Helpful **9**

Question

Generally how long will it take for a double team to reach 21 points?



Community Answer

Usually it takes somewhere between 15-20 minutes, but it could be a little longer if the score is closer.

Helpful **20** Not Helpful **5**

Question

What if an opponent knocks your bag off the playing surface?



Community Answer

Then those points are gone, unless it's knocked into the hole, at which point you get however many points you've assigned to getting the bag in the hole (generally 2-3).

Helpful **17** Not Helpful **8**

Question

What if the bag hits the ground in front of the board but pops up and stays on the board?



Lemons n' Limes
Community Answer

When the bag hits the ground. It is not considered a point. Even if it lands on the board at the end, it is still not counted.

Helpful 2 Not Helpful 0

Question

What happens if you go over 21 points?



Community Answer

Absolutely nothing! If you are just playing in your backyard with family or friends, nothing will happen and you can just keep playing or, you can declare the winner and restart or play something different!

Helpful 2 Not Helpful 0

Question

Game will be played at a family reunion. We will either be competing against each other as individuals or in teams. What goals should I set for prizes?

ZJ C
Community Answer

It depends on the difficulty. Easy: a candy from a brand mom used to eat in her childhood, Medium: the winner gets to be judge for next game, Hard: the winner gets to be cameraman of the family photo, and so on.

Helpful 0 Not Helpful 0

Question

What if the bag is touching the ground and some of it sitting on the board?



Heather Hoke
Community Answer

If the bag is touching the ground at all ,or a bag is touching another bag that is touching the ground, the throw is zero points.

Helpful 0 Not Helpful 0

Question

The weight of the bag? What filler is the best to use?



Heather Hoke
Community Answer

Corn hole bags should weigh between 14-16 oz. Traditional bags are filled with whole kernel feed corn. Some modern bags today are filled with plastic corn pellets so they don't mold if they get wet.

Helpful 0 Not Helpful 0

Question

Do you have to win by 2 points?



Heather Hoke
Community Answer

No, you do not have to win by 2 points. After each round, the difference in points is calculated, and the difference is added to the round winner's total points. The first team to reach 21 points is the game-winner.

Helpful Not Helpful

Question

If I get one in the hole and the other player has three on the board, do we both get three points?



Anderson Bridges
Community Answer

Getting the beanbag onto the board may earn them some points, but it won't earn them three, because to get the maximum number of points(which is three) you need to land it in the hole.

Helpful Not Helpful

References

1. ↑ <http://www.playcornhole.org/rules.shtml>
2. ↑ <http://www.playcornhole.org/rules.shtml>
3. ↑ <http://www.playcornhole.org/rules.shtml>
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