

Mancala

Most popular children's game in Kenya

Mancala is an ancient family of board games, and there are numerous variants. This is a version of the basic game, known as two-rank Mancala and also known as Kalah.

Here's How to Play:

1. The Mancala 'board' is made up of two rows of six holes, or pits, each. If you don't have a Mancala board handy, an empty egg carton is perfect.
2. Three pieces -- marbles or stones -- are placed in each of the 12 holes. The color of the pieces is irrelevant.
3. Each player has a 'store' to the right side of the Mancala board. Cereal bowls work well for this purpose.
4. The game begins with one player picking up all of the pieces in any one of the holes on his side.
5. Moving counter-clockwise, the player deposits one of the stones in each hole until the stones run out.
6. If you run into your own store, deposit one piece in it. If you run into your opponent's store, skip it.
7. If the last piece you drop is in your own store, you get a free turn.

8. If the last piece you drop is in an empty hole on your side, you capture that piece and any pieces in the hole directly opposite.
9. Always place all captured pieces in your store.
10. The game ends when all six spaces on one side of the Mancala board are empty.
11. The player who still has pieces on his side of the board when the game ends captures all of those pieces.
12. Count all the pieces in each store. The winner is the player with the most pieces.

Tips:

1. Planning ahead is essential to victory in board games like Mancala. Try to plan two or three moves into the future.

What You Need:

- Mancala board
- 36 markers

