

Cornhole

Cornhole or **bean bag toss** (also known regionally as **baggo**, **bags**, **dummy boards**, **dadhole**, **doghouse**, **sack toss**, or **corn hole**) is a lawn game in which players take turns throwing bags of corn (or bean bags) at a raised platform with a hole in the far end. A bag in the hole scores 3 points, while one on the platform scores 1 point. Play continues until a team or player reaches (or exceeds) the score of 21.

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Rules and regulations

Equipment and court layout

Cornhole matches are played with two sets of bags, two platforms and two to four players.^[1]

There are four bags to a set. Each set should be identifiable from the other; different colors work well. The American Cornhole Organization Official Cornhole Rules call for double-seamed fabric bags measuring 6 by 6 inches (150 by 150 mm) and weighing 15 to 16 ounces (430 to 450 g)^[4] Bags should be filled with dried corn kernels. The final weight of the bag may vary due to the material of the bag itself.

Each platform is 2 by 4 feet (0.61 by 1.22 m), with a 6-inch (150 mm) hole centered 9 inches (230 mm) from the top. Each platform should be angled with the top edge of the playing surface 12 inches (300 mm) above the ground, and the bottom edge 3–4 inches (76–102 mm) above the ground. A regular court places the holes 33 feet (10 m) apart, or 27 feet (8.2 m) between the bottoms of the platforms. Shorter distances can be used when younger players are participating or there is not sufficient room.^[1]

Bags are tossed from the pitcher's box, which is the rectangular area directly to the left or right of a platform. The bottom of the platform forms the foul line. Players may not step over the foul line while pitching.^[1]

Gameplay

Cornhole



The Collier Cornhole Tournament held on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Nicknames	Dummy boards, doghouse, Baggo, dadhole, sacks, beans, or cornhole, beanbag
First played	Unknown
Characteristics	
Contact	No
Team members	Either doubles or singles
Type	Outdoor
Presence	
Country or region	United States and Europe

Cornhole matches are broken down into innings or frames of play.^[1] During each frame, every player throws four bags. A player may deliver the bag from either the left or right pitcher's box, but, in any one inning, all bags must be delivered from the same pitcher's box. It is possible that both players can throw from the same pitcher's box. Also, the player gets a three-foot box to throw in. Each player must deliver the bag within twenty seconds. The time starts when the player steps onto the pitcher's box with the intention of pitching. The player who scored in the preceding inning pitches first in the next inning. If neither pitcher scores, the contestant or team who pitched last in the preceding inning pitches first in the next inning. Note: No foot can land past the front of the board until the corn bag leaves the hand, otherwise the point does not count. At the end of the round there is a 10-second window to allow beans to fall within the bag, possibly allowing additional points.



A typical cornhole board, with two colors of bag

Cornhole can be played as either doubles or singles. In doubles play, four players split into two teams. One member from each team pitches from one cornhole platform and the other members pitch from the other. The first side of players alternate pitching bags until both players have thrown all four of their bags, then the players pitching from the opposing cornhole board continue to alternate in the same manner until all four of their bags are delivered and the inning or frame is completed. In singles play, two players play against each other. Delivery is handled in the same manner as doubles play. Both contestants pitch from the same cornhole platform and alternate their pitches until all of their bags have been pitched,

completing the inning or frame.^[2]

Scoring

In order to score, the bags must either be tossed into the hole or land on the board. A bag that falls through the hole is worth a value of three points. The bag can be tossed directly into the hole, slide into the hole, or be knocked into the hole by another bag. A bag that lands on the board and is still on the board at the end of the inning is worth one point. If a bag touches the ground and comes to rest on the board, it is removed from the board prior to continuation of play and not worth any points. Usually, cancellation scoring is used. In one version of cancellation scoring, bags that fall in the hole and bags that land on the board that are pitched by opponents during an inning cancel each other out. For example, if one team lands two bags in the hole and one on the board for seven points, and the other team lands one in the hole and two on the board for five points, the first team's score would be three, and the second team's score would be one. This is because both teams had at least one bag land in the hole, cancelling three points, and one bag on the board, cancelling one point, for a total of four points cancelled from each team. Another example would be if one team gets one in the hole and the other team gets three on the board, no points would be cancelled and both teams would receive three points.^[3] In case of a tie, the team who ties the game, must go first.^[2]

In another common version of cancellation scoring, the total score for each team for the inning is totalled each round, and then the difference of the two scores is awarded to the team with the higher score. It is thus only possible for one team to score points each inning. For example, if one team lands two bags in the hole and one on the board for 7 points, and the other team lands one bag in the hole and two on the board for 5 points, 5 points from the round would cancel out, and the first team would thus score 2 points. Because only one team can score points in each inning, it is impossible for teams to reach or exceed 21 points in the same inning, and therefore ties are impossible. Although, while playing with this method, players who have already reached 21 points can, in any way, discard their bag so they do not exceed their 21 points.

A cornhole match is played until the first player or team reaches twenty-one points at the completion of an inning. The winning team does not need to win by two or more points.^[2]



Cornhole being played during a pre-game tailgate party at Texas A&M University–Commerce

An uncommon version of scoring also includes a 2-point option. A bag is worth 2 points if it is on the board and hanging over the hole, but has not fallen through the hole.

Other scoring variations require one team to earn exactly twenty-one points to win. If a team's score exceeds 21 after any inning, the result differs among various house rules. Options include that the team must return to fifteen points, that the team must return to their prior score, that the team must return to their prior score and deduct one point from that score, and that the team must return to their prior score and deduct from that the number of points they scored in the most recent inning. In some variations, if a team's score goes over 21 three times before their opponents reach or exceed 21, they win the match.

History

The game described in Heyliger de Windt's 1883 patent for "Parlor Quoits" displays most of the features of the modern game of "cornhole", but with a square hole instead of a round one.^[4] Quoits is a game similar to horseshoes, played by throwing steel discs at a metal spike. De Windt's patent followed several earlier "parlor quoits" patents that sought to recreate quoit game-play in an indoor environment.^[5] His was the first to use bean-bags and a slanted board with a hole as the ~~target~~.

He sold the rights to the game to a Massachusetts toy manufacturer that marketed a version of the game under the name "Faba Baga".^[6] Unlike the modern game, which has one hole and one size of bags, a "Faba Baga" board had two different-sized holes, worth different point values, and provided each player with one extra-large bag per round, which scored double points.

The modern game of cornhole, known more commonly as *bean bags* or just *bags* in the Chicago area was likely spread after an article on how to make the boards was published in *Popular Mechanics* magazine in September 1974. The game spread in Chicago, Illinois, and the Northwest region of Indiana in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The west side of Cincinnati, Ohio, including the suburb Harrison has been one of the main areas of modern resurgence and renewed popularity of the game.^[7] It is popular at tailgate events throughout the Midwest and has recently become a nationwide favorite, with national championships covered on ESPN.^[8]

The history and resurgence of the game was documented in the 2011 film *Brotherhood of Bags: Cornholing America*

Variations

Smaller versions, with scaled-down board, bags, and holes are available for indoor and child use from a variety of vendors.

Since 2008, a miniature version of cornhole has been marketed under the trademark Coinhole. It uses miniaturized tabletop boards, and American quarters in lieu of beanbags.^[9] Unlike beanbags, which are tossed directly at a cornhole board, the coins are bounced off of the surface on which the board sits and then onto the board – as in the traditional drinking game called quarters, in which a coin bounced into a drinking glass. The rules of game play for Coinhole are otherwise the same as for traditional cornhole – 3 points are earned for a quarter in the hole and 1 point for a quarter on the board.^[10]

Terminology

The following is a list of terms commonly used in cornhole:

- **Ace** or **cow pie**: A bag lands on the board, which is worth one point.^{[11][12]}
- **Back door** or **Dirty Rollup**: A cornhole that goes over the top of a blocker and into the hole.^{[11][12]}
- **Backstop**: A bag that lands past the cornhole but remains on the board creating a backboard for a slider to knock into without going off the board.^[11]
- **Blocker**: An ace that lands in front of the hole, essentially blocking the hole from sliders.^{[11][12]}
- **Cornfusion**: When players or teams cannot agree on the scoring of a given inning.^[11]
- **Cornhole** or **Drano**: A bag that falls in the hole, which is worth three points.^[11] The alternative name is a reference to a trademark, that of a sink clog clearing product.

- **Cornholio** same as *grand bag* or as just *cornhole*, depending on region; named for the alter-ego of the character Beavis in the animated TV series *Beavis and Butt-Head*
- **Cornucopia**: Achieved when a player throws all four bags into the hole in one inning.
- **Dirty bag**: A bag that is on the ground or is hanging off the board touching the ground.^[12]
- **Flop**: Type of toss that didn't spin the bag horizontally or vertically. Without rotation or spin.^[13]
- **Grasshopper**: A bag that bounces off the grass or ground and lands on the board for a point.^[12]
- **Screaming eagle**, **Eddie the eagle**: A bag that goes beyond the board without hitting the board. Screeching like an eagle is an additionally accepted reaction to making such a mistake.^{[11][12]}
- **Slippery granny**: Scoring three bags in a row on the board only.^[11]
- **Grand bag**, **double deuce**, **catorce four-bagger** or **four-pack**: Four cornholes by a single player in a single round.^[11] There is a tradition in some areas where any casual player who puts all four bags in the hole on a single turn gets to sign the board, often with some type of ceremony and recognition.
- **Trip Dip**: When a single player cornholes 3 out of the 4 bags in a single round.
- **Hanger** or **shook**: An ace on the lip of the hole ready to drop.^{[11][12]}
- **Honors**: The team who tosses first, resulting from the team scoring last.^[12]
- **Hooker**: A bag hitting the board and hooking or curving around a blocker and going in the hole.^[11]
- **Jumper**: A bag that strikes another bag on the board causing it to jump up into the cornhole.^[11]
- **Perrego**: When a player refuses to play Baggo because they're intimidated by their competitors.^[11]
- **Police**: The cornhole referee!^[11]
- **Sally or Alvord**: A toss that is thrown too weakly and lands on the ground before reaching the board.^[11]
- **Shortbag**: When a bag lands on the ground just before the cornhole board.^[13]
- **Shucker**: When a player pitches a bag and it strikes an opposing player's bag knocking it off the board.^[11]
- **Skunk**, **whitewash** or **shutout**: A game that, by some rules, ends in an 11–0 score.^{[11][12]}
- **Slider**: A cornhole that slides into the hole.^{[11][12]}
- **Swish**: A bag that goes directly in the hole without touching the board. More often referred to as 'Airmail'.^[12]
- **Shotgun**: Throwing all your bags at once.^[11]
- **Wash**: When each team has scored exactly the same number of points in an inning, thereby "washing out" all points scored in the inning.

See also

- Horseshoes
- Lawn darts
- Muckers
- Ladder toss
- Washer pitching
- Lawn game
- Mölkky

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