

How to play Pétanque

What is Pétanque?

Pétanque is played with metal balls (boules in French) and a small wooden jack (cochonnet in French).



The game is played by 2 teams of 1, 2 or 3 players.



Teams of 1 and 2 use 3 boules per players.



Teams of 3 use 2 boules per players.



1. Usually a coin toss decided which team plays first. The first team (blue team) either draws or stands in a plastic circle and throws the jack between 6 and 10 metres on the playing court. The same team then throws their first boule, trying to put it close to the jack.



2. The second team (red team) then tries to throw a boule closer to the jack **than** the opposing team. If the throw **is not** closer they must continue trying until their boule is closer.



3. If the red team throws a boule closer to the jack, then it is again the blue team's turn to try and throw a boule that is closer. Play continues back and forth with teams trying to **stop** closest to the jack until all boules have been played.

A team receives as many points as it has boules closest to the jack compared to those of their opponents (at least 1 point to a maximum of 6 points).

In this illustration, the blue team has 2 boules closest and would score 2 points.



The winning team then stands in the circle where the end just finished and starts again. The first team to score 13 points wins the game!



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It seems simple, right? How is this game so interesting and addictive, then?

The simplicity of the game is what allows players to be creative and tactical.

Each boule thrown and each round of the game can be played differently, using some of these tactics:

- Shoot away your opponent's boule (purposefully knocking opponent's boule out of the way).
- Obstruct the path of the jack.
- Change the position of the jack by moving it with your boule.

