



THE ORIGINAL AND OFFICIAL
GOVERNING BODY OF CORNHOLE

THE OFFICIAL RULES OF CORNHOLE

FROM THE AMERICAN CORNHOLE ASSOCIATION

PLAYCORNHOLE.ORG

American Cornhole Association Official Rulebook

As the original and official governing body of cornhole, the American Cornhole Association boasts the mission to promote and popularize the sport of cornhole throughout the United States through making cornhole accessible to all. Our goal is to provide rules and resources for all levels of players to learn the game, grow their skills, and promote friendly play. The purpose of this rulebook is to provide cornhole players with the rules necessary for recreational play, social play, organized leagues, and tournament cornhole play.

1. The Court

1.1. COURT LAYOUT

- 1.1.1. The following dimensions and measurements serve to determine how far apart to place cornhole boards as well as the positioning of players during gameplay.

1.2. COURT DIMENSIONS

- 1.2.1. A cornhole court shall be a level rectangular area 10-12 feet wide and a minimum of 40-45 feet long. The court consists of two cornhole boards, designated pitcher's boxes, and foul lines.

1.3. PITCHER'S BOX

- 1.3.1. The pitcher's box is a rectangle 4 feet by 3 feet at each end of the court, parallel with, and on both sides of the boards. Each player must remain in the pitcher's box while pitching a cornhole bag.

1.4. FOUL LINE

- 1.4.1. The adult foul lines shall be defined as an imaginary line 27 feet between the front of each board.

- 1.4.2. The junior-play foul lines are defined as an imaginary line 12-15 feet between the front of each board.

- 1.4.3. Physically impaired adults or seniors may observe the 12-15 feet foul lines, if agreed by all contestants.

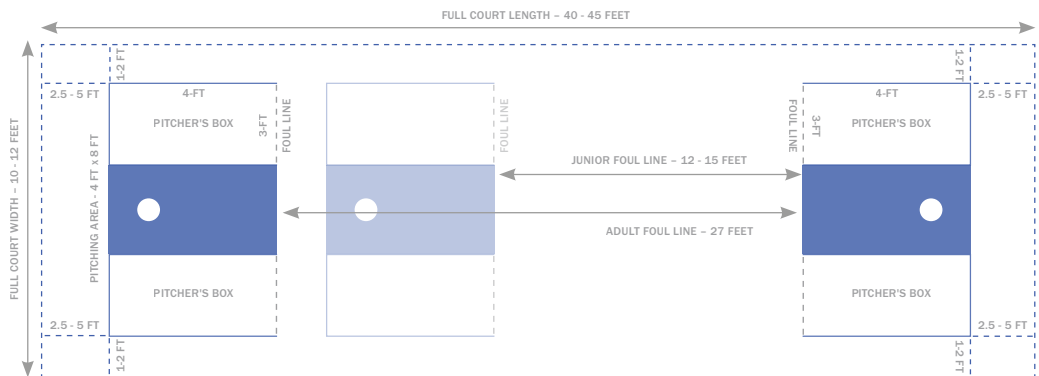
- 1.4.4. The foul line should be parallel to the front of the opposite board to meet ACA guidelines.

1.5. VERTICAL CLEARANCE

- 1.5.1. Indoor or covered cornhole courts shall have a minimum 12-foot vertical clearance to the lowest possible obstruction.

1.6. MULTIPLE COURTS

- 1.6.1. To eliminate distraction and safely separate activity, cornhole courts adjacent to each other shall be a minimum of 10 feet wide. A greater distance of at least 12 feet is preferable.



2. Equipment Standards

2.1. CORNHOLE BOARDS

- 2.1.1. Each cornhole board shall be 47½ to 48 inches long and 23½ to 24 inches wide, made of smooth plywood that measures at least ½-inch in thickness.
- 2.1.2. Cornhole boards should be comprised of a wood surface and a wood frame. There is significant variance in play between wood and plastic or other surfaces.
- 2.1.3. The hole in each cornhole board shall be 6 inches (+¼-in) in diameter. Its center shall be 9 inches (+¼-in) from the top and 12 inches (+¼-in) from each side of the board edges.
- 2.1.4. The front of the cornhole board shall be 3-4 inches from bottom to top.
- 2.1.5. The back of the cornhole board shall be approximately 12 inches (+¼-in) from the ground to the highest point of the deck.
- 2.1.6. The board finish shall be sanded to a very smooth texture, and there shall not be any blemishes on the wood surface that might disrupt or distort play.
- 2.1.7. Application of non-permanent foreign substances onto cornhole boards is strictly prohibited. This includes talc, resin, spray, or powders.

2.2. CORNHOLE BAGS

- 2.2.1. The cornhole bags shall be made from two fabric squares 6¼ x 6¼ inches with a ¼-inch stitched seam on all four sides.
- 2.2.2. Cornhole bags should be made from durable fabric.
- 2.2.3. The thickness of the bag, when lying flat on a hard surface, should be approximately 1 inch (+⅛-in) thick.
- 2.2.4. Each bag shall be filled with plastic pellets or corn feed. Finished bags should be roughly 6 inches square and weigh 14-16.25 ounces.
- 2.2.5. All bags in a set of four shall be identical in color, design, and pattern.
- 2.2.6. A player may not switch bags during gameplay unless a bag is damaged or broken during a game.
 - 2.2.6.1. In the case of a broken bag during a game, a player/team may substitute an identical or equivalent set of 4 bags.

3. Gameplay

3.1. PREGAME COIN TOSS

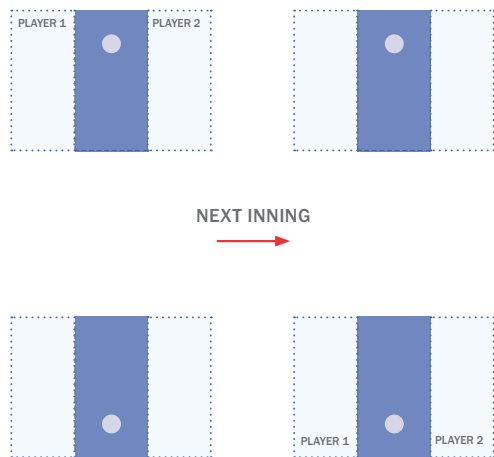
- 3.1.1. Prior to beginning the game, a coin toss will determine playing lanes and sequence of play.
- 3.1.2. The team that wins the coin flip will choose either their throwing lane or the throwing order in the first round of play.
- 3.1.3. The team that did not win the coin flip chooses the remaining option.

3.2. INNINGS

- 3.2.1. An inning is completed when both players, pitching from one board, pitch all eight bags (four each).

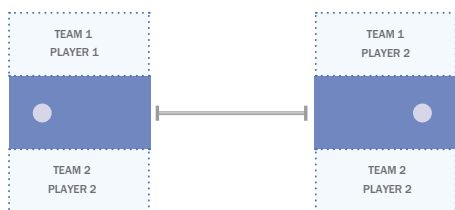
3.3. SINGLES CORNHOLE MATCHES

- 3.3.1. Two single players compete against one another until a single winner is determined.
- 3.3.2. Both players stay in their designated lane for the whole game.
- 3.3.3. Players start the game at the headboard and alternate pitching bags until each player has pitched all four of their bags.
- 3.3.4. Players then walk to the end of their lane to the other court, take score, and resume pitching back to the other board.



3.4. DOUBLES CORNHOLE MATCHES

- 3.4.1. Two teams, consisting of two players, compete against one another until a winning team is determined.
- 3.4.2. Each team will stay in their designated lane for the whole game.
- 3.4.3. Players line up directly across from their playing partner in the same lane.
- 3.4.4. Players at the headboard alternate pitching bags until each player has pitched all four of their bags.
- 3.4.5. Players at the footboard take score and resume pitching back to the other board.



3.5. PITCHING

- 3.5.1. The player or team who scored in the preceding inning has the honor of pitching first in the next inning. If neither player or team scores, the player or team who pitched first in the preceding frame shall retain the first pitch in the next frame.
- 3.5.2. The pitcher must be within their designated pitcher's box or behind the foul line at the time of release.
- 3.5.3. A player must pitch all four bags from their designated pitcher's box.
- 3.5.4. Players must pitch the bag with an underhand release.
- 3.5.5. A player may not step over or contact the foul line while pitching or releasing a cornhole bag. A player must wait until the previous bag has come to a complete stop for at least 2 seconds before pitching the next bag.
- 3.5.6. Players may not jump, blow, kick, or otherwise do anything that may affect the cornhole board and the positioning of bags during an inning.
- 3.5.7. Touching, adjusting, or aligning a cornhole board during an inning is prohibited. Players or officials may only align the cornhole board *between* innings.
- 3.5.8. A contestant must pitch the entire match with the same hand or arm, except in the case of a medical emergency.

3.6. OVERTIME

- 3.6.1. Each game may be given a time limit according to the competition manager's discretion.
- 3.6.2. If neither team has reached 21 points before time expires, the round is over and the team that is winning the round at that point wins the match.
- 3.6.3. In the event the score is tied after time expires, one more inning is played.
- 3.6.4. If no player scores after one tiebreaker inning, a Sudden Death bag is played.
 - 3.6.4.1. In this round, following the natural flow of the game, the last frame winner tosses a single bag.
 - 3.6.4.2. The opponent then tosses one bag, attempting to match or beat the first player's throw.
 - 3.6.4.3. Whichever player scored more points from the Sudden Death Bag is considered the winner of the game.
 - 3.6.4.4. Additional Sudden Death Bags may be played until a winner is declared.
 - 3.6.4.5. All Sudden Death Bags should follow the natural flow of the game.

3.7. COURT OFFICIALS

- 3.7.1. When appropriate, court officials may be appointed to monitor gameplay, assess fouls, and keep the official score.
- 3.7.2. Court officials should be easily identifiable at an event by dressing in a manner separate from the players.

- 3.7.3. When possible, court officials should be positioned near midcourt outside of the throwing lanes. Officials may move along the sideline throughout the game to appropriately conduct their duties.

3.8. TIMEOUTS

- 3.8.1. When appropriate, each team is permitted one (1) 2-minute timeout per match.
- 3.8.2. The team calling the timeout must have possession of play and throw.

3.9. COACHING

- 3.9.1. For serious play, coaches or spectators shall be prohibited from engaging in discussions with any player once the player steps onto the field of play area as designated by the program coordinator, except during a timeout.
- 3.9.2. If a court official determines an outsider is strategically communicating with a player, the official may provide a verbal warning, or citation with unsportsmanlike conduct according to the discretion of the court official.
- 3.9.3. Discussions or disputes related to scoring or rules should be directed toward the court official.



4. Scoring

4.1. CANCELLATION SCORING

- 4.1.1. The approved method of scoring for the sport of cornhole is cancellation scoring. In cancellation scoring, the points of one player cancel out the points of their opponent. Using this method, only one player/team can score in each inning.
- 4.1.2. **Bag In-The-Count (Woody):** Any bag which comes to rest anywhere on top of the board. Each is worth one (1) point.
- 4.1.3. **Bag In-The-Hole (Cornhole):** Any bag which is thrown through the hole or knocked through the hole by another bag. Each is worth three (3) points.
- 4.1.4. **Foul Bags:** Refers to any bag that has not been determined as Bag In-The-Count or Bag In-The Hole or was designated a foul bag as the result of a rules violation. Each is worth zero (0) points.

5. Foul Bag Rule Violations

5.1. NON-IMPACTING BAG VIOLATION

- 5.1.1. If a bag in question does not impact gameplay or any other bag in play, it is a non-impacting bag violation.
- 5.1.2. The bag is considered dead and is removed from play at the time of infraction. This bag scores 0 points for the round. All other bags remain in play. No other movement of bags is permitted at this time.

5.2. IMPACTING BAG VIOLATION

- 5.2.1. If the bag in question impacts the position of one or more bags in play, it is an impacting bag foul.
- 5.2.2. Leave the bag in question and all affected bags in play. Continue the game until the end of the inning without touching or removing any bags.
- 5.2.3. At the end of the inning, the team that threw the offending bag removes the highest-value bag in play from the scoring calculation.
 - 5.2.3.1. **Example:** Team A steps over the line during their 3rd toss of the round. The offending bag knocks a bag from Team B off the board. Bags are not replaced or affected at this time. At the end of the round, subtract the highest-scoring bag from Team A from the scoring calculation.
 - 5.2.3.2. If 0 points were scored for Team A in the inning, no scoring updates are made.

5.3. LIST OF FOULS

- 5.3.1. The following are foul violations that must be spotted and called by an assigned judge. A foul is assessed to the offending team.
- 5.3.2. Any bag pitched when the player has made contact with or crossed over the foul line.
- 5.3.3. Any bag pitched when the player has started or stepped completely outside the pitcher's box before the bag is released.



- 5.3.4. Any bag not delivered within the 20-second time limit.
- 5.3.5. Any bag pitched from a different pitcher's box than the first bag.
- 5.3.6. Any bag that is not pitched with an underhand release.

5.4. INTERRUPTING GAMEPLAY

- 5.4.1. A player shall not touch, alter, move, or affect the board or any bags on the board or in the hole before scoring has been agreed upon for the inning.
- 5.4.2. If this foul occurs during play, please refer to **IMPACTING BAG** section above.
- 5.4.3. If this foul occurs at the conclusion of an inning, and before the score is taken, the non-offending team receives 3 points for each bag removed prior to scoring confirmation.

5.5. DEAD BAGS

- 5.5.1. Any bag that contacted the court or the ground before coming to rest on the board shall be ruled a dead bag.
- 5.5.2. Any bag that struck a previously defined object such as a tree limb, wire, indoor court ceiling, etc. shall be ruled a dead bag.
- 5.5.3. Immediately remove the bag from play and continue the round. The offending team is not assessed any penalty or foul.
- 5.5.4. If the bag impacts another bag, remove the offending bag where it lies and leave the remaining bags as they lie and continue play. The offending team is not assessed any penalty or foul.

5.6. ADDITIONAL FOUL RULES

- 5.6.1. A bag that leaves a player's hand once the final forward swing of the delivery process has started shall count as a pitched bag.
- 5.6.2. A bag that is accidentally dropped by a player before the final forward swing has started shall not be considered foul and may be picked up and pitched.
- 5.6.3. If players believe they have thrown all bags, clear the board for the next round, but then realize they missed one bag, the round ends. Points are scored as if the round ended, and the missed bag is forfeited.
- 5.6.4. Any action or intentional use of a penalty that undermines the integrity of the

game, as determined by the court official, will result in the player's disqualification and forfeiture of the match.

5.7. PROTESTS

- 5.7.1. If a player desires to make a protest, the protest shall be made to the judge or official at the time the problem occurs. The judge shall make the final ruling on all protests.

5.8. DISQUALIFICATION

- 5.8.1. Purposely interfering with an opponent's pitching motion will disqualify a player and result in forfeiture of the game.
- 5.8.2. Any act deemed excessively poor sportsmanship will disqualify a player and result in forfeiture of the game.

6. Winning the Game

6.1. FIRST TO 21

- 6.1.1. The game shall be played to the predetermined number of twenty-one points. The first player/team to reach (or exceed) that amount at the conclusion of an inning is the winner.

Bonus: House Rules

NON CANCELLATION

This game mode is played like normal EXCEPT scoring doesn't cancel, instead every point is counted. The pros of this style moves the game along quicker. These games can be played with the first team to 21 wins or 21 exact

These are the official Cornhole rules and regulations of the American Cornhole Association (ACA). These rules and regulations have been developed and ratified by a majority of ACA members or ACA-sanctioned play. The Cornhole rules are not a mandate, but rather a guideline to promote consistent and standard Cornhole (also called Corn Hole and Bean Bag Toss) play.

FIND MORE WAYS TO PLAY

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