



Let's Play 1

Traditional Guernsey Games



Pre-1940's children's games depended on “doing” rather than “having”, as toys during this time were relatively rare.

These games can be played using stones picked up along the path (although chalk does make Hop-Scotch easier). The games were taken from the Marie De Garis book 'Folklore of Guernsey', published in 1975. Mr Walter C. Brehaut described his childhood games to her, at a time when the traditional games were already a distant memory. We hope you have as much fun playing them as we did! The Guernsey Language commission provide many resources that can help with pronunciation and further learning, and can be accessed through their YouTube channel or website.

Pebble = Galot

Go onto the beach and pick a stone - please put them back once you have finished playing.

Your stone is important - pick a nice one! It should be fairly round and smooth, and you should be able to tell the difference between your stone and the stones of the others that you are playing with - perhaps it is an

unusual colour or shape. It should be not too small or too big - the size of a small plum or matchbox is about right.

In years gone by, children would often carry their stones with them in their pockets - if a stone had been found to work well for these games, it was called *lé mait* (the master stone) and was a great treasure.

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Hop-Scotch = Pllatte-hache

Hopping on one leg and either bending down or kicking a stone was a useful skill, worth practicing, for people who would plough the land by hand.

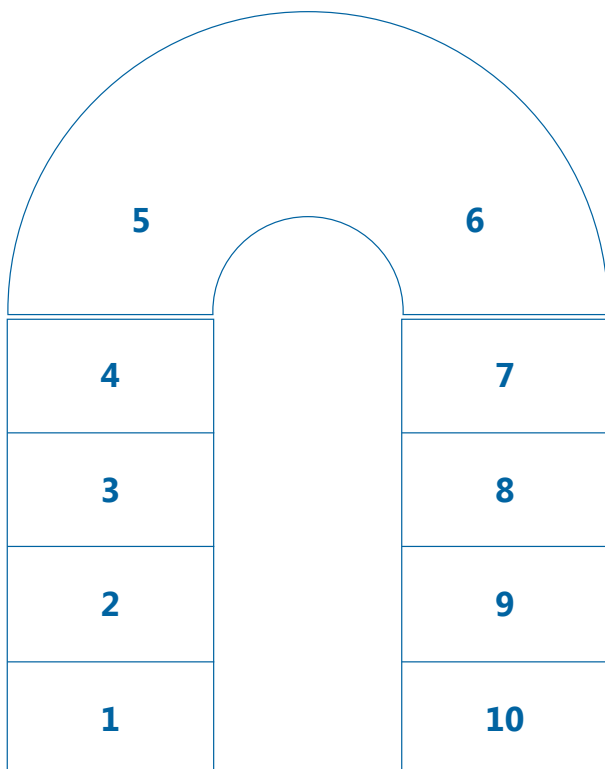
Two variations of this game are - *Lé Beibi* (the baby) and *Lé Colimâchaon* (the snail).

Lé Beibi

The court might represent a baby, tightly swaddled. Draw your court - either by scratching the ground with a stick or marking using chalk.

Then everyone needs to choose a stone (ideally make sure they all look a little different, and don't pick one that is larger than a small plum, as they are difficult to kick!)

Standing just outside the fist box, throw your stone into box one. Hop into box one, and kick (or pick up and move if you find this easier) the stone into box two (without placing your second foot down). If you manage to get your stone into box two, you can continue on, hopping into the next box, kicking your stone on to box 3, and so on.

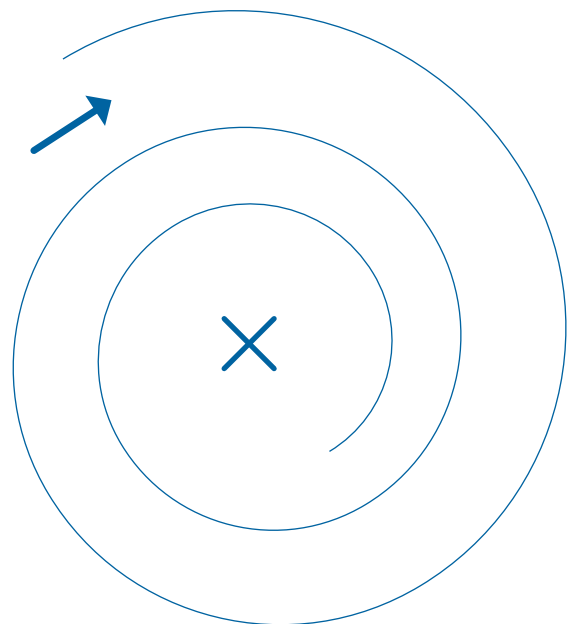


Continue until you either get to box 5 (La leune, the moon), where you can put both feet down for a rest before restarting, or until you make a mistake.

Mistakes can be stumbling whilst hopping, the kicking foot touching the ground, touching another pebble, or kicking your stone into the wrong place. When someone has made a mistake, they forfeit their turn, and it becomes the next persons go. If a stone goes out of the court, it gets put back at the last correct space. The first player to get their stone right around the course is the winner!

Lé Colimâchaon

Draw a spiral. It should be wide enough all the way round for a foot to fit in between one line and the next.



The player starts at the beginning of the spiral, and kicks their stone between the lines of the spiral until getting to the centre. Two versions of the game can be played with either the player who reaches the centre of the spiral first winning (avoiding all the mistakes as listed above. Your stone touching the line is fine, but if it goes beyond that, you have to go back to the start) or players have to reach the centre of the spiral, and then return to the beginning before the game is won.