

Game Atlas is a social initiative that researches, archives, and redesigns ancient and traditional games on-site, transforming them into cultural products. It connects with humanity, culture, and nature through the medium of play.

At the heart of the Istanbul Mini Collection lie the themes of "diversity" and "balance," reflecting the cosmopolitan essence of the city. The designs blend modern geometric forms with traditional motifs, while stained glass and mosaic patterns bring Istanbul's cultural richness to the game surface.

The chosen color palette symbolizes the diverse regions and textures of Istanbul. These colors represent the city's surrounding waters, natural beauty, historic gardens, and its cosmic and spiritual dimensions, adding depth to the designs.

Istanbul, a city that has hosted countless civilizations, conveys this diversity through cyclical motifs. The symmetrical details in the designs reflect the balanced and harmonious relationship between Istanbul's Asian and European sides. Just as the Bosphorus unites the two continents, the patterns on the game surface bring together different elements.

These designs, evoking the unique atmosphere of Istanbul, offer game enthusiasts an artistic and immersive experience.

A portion of the proceeds from our products will be allocated to providing free museum passes for young people and including them in our gamified cultural routes. Game Atlas contributes to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development by working towards Goal 4: "Quality Education" and Goal 11: "Sustainable Cities and Communities."

Under Quality Education, we aim to facilitate young people's access to cultural heritage and engage them in a learning process rooted in cultural and historical knowledge. This not only promotes lifelong learning but also enhances their cultural awareness and appreciation of values.

In line with Sustainable Cities and Communities, we strive to raise awareness about the importance of protecting cultural heritage, encouraging young people to recognize its value and become active participants in its preservation. Through gamified routes, we increase interest in cultural sites and support their sustainable conservation.

Through these activities, we align our goals of "protecting cultural heritage" and "increasing the active participation of young people" with the sustainable development goals.

In Anatolia, Mancala has traditionally been played with stones or seeds. To keep this tradition alive sustainably, we use dried cherry pits as game pieces. If you lose pieces, you can replace them with dry legumes or small stones collected from nature.

MANCALA

Mancala is one of the oldest games in the world, requiring strategy and intelligence. With roots dating back thousands of years, it has been played across various cultures in Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Anatolia. Over time, it has evolved with regional rules, yet remains a treasured cultural heritage.

Ancient Origins

The origins of Mancala-like games trace back to Africa. Archaeological evidence shows these games were played as far back as 5000 BCE.

Africa (Egypt and Sudan)

The earliest evidence of games similar to Mancala can be found in archaeological findings displayed at the Cairo Museum. Stone game boards have been unearthed in ancient Egyptian tombs. In African societies, these games were often named after "seed sowing," highlighting their connection to agricultural life. Mancala symbolized sowing and harvesting themes in farming communities.

Middle East and South Asia

Mancala spread from Africa to the Middle East, becoming highly popular among Persians and Arabs, where it is known as "Mancala." It was widely played in the Islamic world, requiring both competition and strategic thinking.

Central Asia and Turkish Culture

Mancala has been played by Turks since the Göktürk era. Spanning from the Central Asian steppes to the Ottoman palaces, it has become an integral part of Turkish culture. Among Turks, it is commonly referred to as the "Well Game," symbolizing cultural heritage.

The Golden Age of Mancala: The Ottoman Period

In the Ottoman Empire, Mancala was a popular game in both the palace and among the general population, valued for its strategic nature.

In the Palace

Mancala was played alongside chess and backgammon by the Ottoman elite. Sultans viewed these games as tools for developing strategic thinking.

Among the People

Mancala was equally popular among the common folk. In Anatolia, it was played with stones or walnuts in coffeehouses, village squares, and homes, on boards or surfaces drawn on the ground.

Modern Era and Global Spread

In the 19th century, Europe and the Americas were introduced to Mancala-like games, often referred to as "Mancala." The British and Americans adapted different versions of this game and designed new board games. Adaptations led to the creation of new board games, further spreading its global reach.

Cultural and Philosophical Significance

Mancala is more than a game; it is a lesson in strategy and balance. The stones represent agricultural production, and each move requires careful planning and foresight. The gameplay fosters patience and quick thinking while strengthening social bonds and encouraging friendly competition.



WARNING: RISK OF CHOKING
• Contains small parts. Not suitable for children aged 3 and under.
• Suitable for 4-6 age group to play under adult supervision.



CAUTION!
• The products are colored with natural dyes; slight fading is normal. Please wash according to the instructions.
• The stones included in the pouches are not food. They are intended for use as game stones.

How to Play? Rules of "Mancala"

Mancala is played on a board with 12 small wells and 2 larger "treasury wells" (one for each player). Each player has 6 small wells in front of them and a treasury well for collecting stones.

Placing the Pieces:

- The game starts with 48 stones, with 4 stones placed in each small well.
- Players agree on who begins the game.

Gameplay:

- A player picks up all stones from one of their small wells and distributes them clockwise, placing one stone in each well.
- If the player passes their treasury well, they place a stone in it. However, stones cannot be placed in the opponent's treasury well.

Special Rules:

- **Own Empty Well:**
If the last stone lands in an empty well on the player's own side, they capture all stones in the opposite well and add them to their treasury.
- **Opponent's Well:**
If the last stone lands in the opponent's well, no special action occurs.
- **Treasury Well:**
If the last stone lands in the player's treasury well, they earn an additional turn.

Ending the Game

- The game ends when all wells on one side are empty. Any remaining stones on the opponent's side are added to their treasury.
- The winner is the player with the most stones in their treasury.

Strategies and Tips

Right of Replay

- Using the right to replay by landing in the treasure well provides a significant advantage. This is crucial for blocking the opponent's moves.

Emptying the Opponent's Well

- Prevent the opponent from emptying wells where they are strong. Allowing stones to fall into the opponent's wells can increase their advantage.

Dropping the Last Stone into Your Own Well

- By counting the stones carefully, you can drop the last stone into an empty well on your side and capture the stones in the opposite well.

Keep Your Wells Balanced

- Instead of gathering all your stones in one well, try to distribute them evenly to maintain control.