



Mass Audubon

April Vacation Virtual Camp

Wednesday: Speak for the Trees

Grades 3 to 5

MAKE YOUR OWN MANCALA

What you Need

Egg Carton (paperboard kind, so you can paint and decorate)

48 small pebbles, buttons, beads, or marbles

Paint (acrylic works best, but you could also use poster paint or markers)

Scissors

Glue

Binder clips (optional)

Staying Safe

Be sure to ask for help from an adult for cutting and gluing if needed.

Jump Start the Exploration

Why should we make a game instead of buying a new one?

How does it help the earth to reuse items?

Can you find Israel, Eritrea, and Ethiopia on a map? These are all places where Mancala may have first been played.

DIRECTIONS

How to make the board:

1. Cut the lid of the egg carton off to leave the bottom part with the cups for the game. Trim off any excess so you have a smooth edge.
 2. Cut the lid in half, the short way. Place the two halves under the bottom part with the cups. To make a tray at each end, extend these pieces out about 2 inches, letting it fit snugly into the grooves of the egg carton. This tray area is called the mancala.
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3. Glue the tray in place by putting glue on the bottom of each of the cups that sit in the tray, and the sides that will be sitting snugly on the top of the tray. Use clips, if you have them, to hold the sides in place until it is dry.
4. Once it is dry, remove the clips if used.
5. Paint and decorate your mancala board. You can paint all the playing pieces, too.



How to play Mancala:

1. The object of the game is to collect the most playing pieces.
2. Set the mancala board horizontally between you and your opponent. The 6 cups in front of you are yours, and the 6 cups in front of your opponents are theirs. Your mancala is to your right.
3. Put 4 playing pieces in each of the cups.
4. On your turn, you will pick up the pebbles in any one of your 6 cups.
5. Move those pebbles forward to the right, in a counterclockwise direction, dropping one pebble in each cup that you pass along the way, including your own mancala.
6. If you have enough pebbles, you will drop them in your opponent's small cups, but **not** your opponent's mancala – just skip over the larger bin when you get to it.
7. Keep alternating turns. If you drop your last pebble in your own mancala, you get another turn.
8. When there are no pebbles left on one player's side, in any of their 6 small cups, the game is over. The winner is the person with the most pebbles in their mancala.

Talk About Your Learning

What did you learn from making your own mancala board?

If you made it again what would you do differently?

Could you invent your own board game?

Additional Resources

The Spruce Crafts: [Basics, History and Origins of Mancala](#)

[One Plastic Bag](#) by Miranda Paul

Bill Nye the Science Guy [S1E13 Garbage](#)