



game.

The game of croquet migrated from Europe to America in the late 19th century and rose in popularity. Associations soon formed that encouraged playing and the rules were rewritten into an American variation of the

**T**he tradition of taking part in the Hudson Valley tradition of croquet by participating in our annual tournament at Downing Park. The tournament's sponsoring organizations are promoting history and preservation through friendly competition.

**OBJECT OF THE GAME**

The object of the game is to advance the balls through the course by hitting them with a mallet, scoring a point for each wicket and stake made in the correct order and direction. The winner is the first side to score the 14 wicket points and 2 stake points for each of its balls.

The players take turns, and only one plays at a time. At the beginning of a turn the player (called the "striker") has one shot. After that shot the turn ends, unless a bonus shot is earned by scoring a wicket or stake or by hitting another ball. The turn ends when the player has no more bonus shots to play or has finished the course by scoring the finishing stake. The striker may directly hit with the mallet only the ball he or she is playing in that turn (the "striker ball").



NEWBURGH, NY

**BASIC RULES**



**BACKYARD CROQUET**

- ⇒ Individual teams compete with "Backyard Croquet Rules."
- ⇒ 8 to 10 Courses. Up to three teams of two per court.
- ⇒ Winners of 1st round plays each other in 2nd.
- ⇒ Winners of second round play each other for team tournament championship.



<https://www.facebook.com/friendsshshh>

<http://www.cityofnewburgh-ny.gov/downing-park>

<http://www.preservenewburgh.org/>

Learn more about the supporting organizations



The tradition of backyard croquet took hold and is well documented through print and photography. The tournament is organized by the Newburgh Historical Society, the Newburgh Preservation Association and the Downing Park Planning Committee. We also extend our gratitude to the Friends of the State Historic Sites of the Hudson Highlands and other generous volunteers for contributing croquet sets.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY**

**THE COURT.** A backyard croquet court doesn't have to be a perfectly manicured lawn, but short grass provides the best playing surface. If you have room, a full-size court is a rectangle, 100 feet long by 50 feet wide. You can adjust the size and shape of the court to fit the available space. Diagram 1 shows a typical 2/3 size court suitable for a standard backyard lawn. Boundaries are an option. Use string or chalk to mark definite boundaries, or just mark the corners with flags or stakes.

**THE WICKETS AND STAKES.** The nine wickets and two stakes are arranged in a double-diamond pattern as shown in the diagram. If you are playing on a smaller court, the distances shown should be scaled down in proportion to the length and width of the court. Try to keep the distance between the stake and wicket 1 and wicket 2 three feet at a minimum. Same goes for wickets 6-7 and the stake. The wickets should be firmly planted in the ground, and the width of the wickets should be uniform throughout the court.

**THE BALLS.** For a two- or four-player, two-sided game, you need four balls. The colors usually used are blue, red, black, and yellow. One side (with one or two players) plays with blue and black, and the other with red and yellow. For a six-player team game, you need six balls. In "one-half" games, you need one ball per player. See below for more details.

**THE MALLETS.** Each player uses a mallet. Only the striking (end) face may be used to strike a ball, unless the players have agreed to allow the use of "side" shots or other shot-making variations.

## ORDER OF PLAY & STARTING THE GAME

**STARTING POINT.** All balls are played into the game from a spot halfway between the finishing stake and wicket #1.

The order of play is determined by each team member taking a single shot at the starting stake. The closest ball plays first. All other players follow in sequence of the colors on the stake.

**ORDER OF PLAY.** After all balls have started the game, play continues in the same order until a ball is staked out. When a ball is out of the game, the remaining balls continue in the same order, skipping the ball that has finished the course.



## SHOTS

**TURNS.** If a player plays out of turn, there is no penalty. Any ball moved during the out-of-turn play is replaced to its position prior to the error and play recommences properly. If an out of turn is initially condoned (not discovered) but then later discovered after other balls have been played, only the last ball played out of turn is replaced and the correct ball then proceeds. Example: if red plays, then blue plays, then yellow plays, yellow is replaced, and then red plays correctly.

If the striker takes a swing at his/her ball and misses entirely, the miss counts as a shot and the turn ends, unless the striker had a second "bonus" shot.

If the striker's mallet accidentally hits another ball other than the striker ball, the shot must be replayed, but with no loss of turn.

**SCORING WICKET AND STAKE POINTS.** Each ball can score wicket and stake points for its side only by going through a wicket or hitting a stake in the proper order and direction. Going through a wicket out of order or in the wrong direction is not counted as a point gained or lost. A ball caused to score its wicket or stake during another ball's turn earns the point for its side, but no bonus shot is earned as a result.

A ball scores a wicket point only if it comes to rest more than 50% of the way through the wicket.

**BONUS SHOTS.** The striker earns one bonus shot if the striker ball scores a wicket or hits the turning stake. The striker earns two bonus shots if the striker ball hits another ball (a "roquet"). However, the maximum number of bonus shots earned by a striker is two; there is never a time when a striker is allowed three shots. (See the "Exceptions" section below for examples.)

If two bonus shots are scored by striking another ball, the first of these two shots may be taken in any of four ways:

From a mallet-head distance or less away from the ball that was hit ("taking a mallet-head").

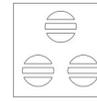
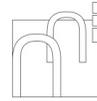
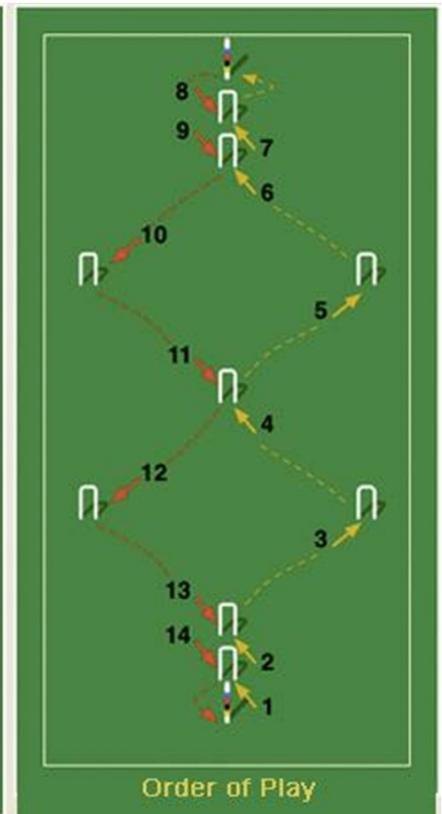
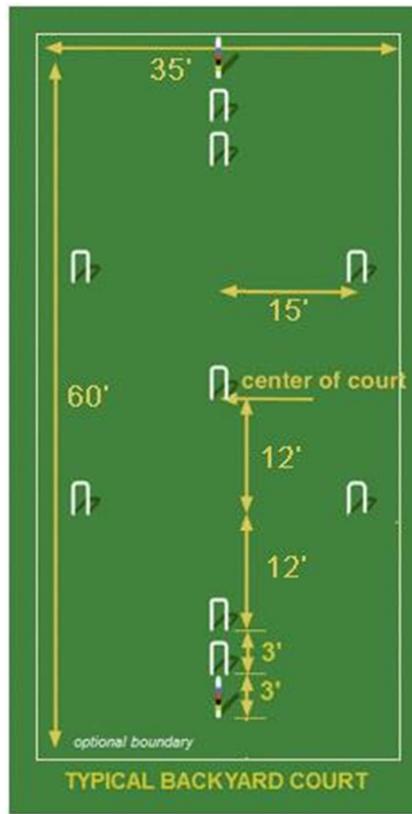
From a position in contact with the ball that was hit, with the striker ball held steady by the striker's foot or hand (a "foot shot" or "hand shot").

From a position in contact with the ball that was hit, with the striker ball not held by foot or hand (a "croquet shot").

From where the striker ball stopped after the roquet.

The second bonus shot after a roquet is an ordinary shot played from where the striker ball came to rest, called a "continuation shot."

Bonus shots may not be accumulated. Upon earning a bonus shot by scoring a wicket, hitting the turning stake, or roqueting another ball, any bonus shot previously earned is forfeited. For example, if a ball roquets a ball and in that same stroke the striker ball hits another ball, the second ball hit is not a roquet and remains where it comes to rest (with no deadness incurred on that ball).



## THE BOUNDARIES

**PLAY WITH NO BOUNDARIES.** Whenever a ball is impaired from play by a natural obstruction, it is placed up to one mallet length- three feet away from the obstruction.

**ROVER BALLS.** After a ball scores all of the wickets in the course but before it hits the finishing stake, its player may choose to keep it in the game as a "rover" to help advance that side's remaining ball(s) and to prevent the opposing side from advancing. During this ball's turn, it may hit any other ball only once per turn, gaining extra shots accordingly, but it does not earn any extra shots or wicket points for running a wicket.

Any player may put a rover out of the game by causing it to hit the finishing stake with a roquet shot or a croquet or foot shot. The rover's side earns the point for the stake, and the order of play continues without the staked-out ball.

**EXCEPTIONS:** Two extra shots are earned when the striker ball scores two wickets in one shot. If the ball also hits the turning stake after scoring two wickets, two strokes are earned, not three. Conversely, if the striker ball scores the seventh wicket and hits the turning stake in the same shot, it earns two shots. After the striker ball roquets another ball, it does not earn any extra shots for hitting it again in the same turn before scoring the next wicket in order. However, there is no penalty for hitting the ball.

**WICKET AND ROQUET.** When the striker ball scores a wicket and then in the same shot hits another ball, only the wicket counts and the striker has earned only the one extra shot for scoring the wicket. The striker may then roquet any ball to earn two extra shots. When the striker ball roquets another ball and then goes through a wicket, the wicket has not been scored but the striker earns two extra shots for the roquet.

