

# Indoor/Outdoor Kids' Croquet

A game for 1 to 4 players

## What's included:

- 4 mallets
- 4 balls
- 5 animal hoops with pegs
- 2 trees



## Before you begin:

Set up the course as shown on the diagram. (If the course is outdoors, use a peg to secure each hoop.) Your ball will start by the tree marked “start,” then go through each hoop in order until it hits the tree marked “finish.” Your ball will go through every hoop two times—first from one side, and then from the other side on the way back. (For younger players, you may want to set up a simpler course and start by having a race. As players' skills improve, make the course longer and add the croquet rules.)

## Have a race!

- Have each player choose a mallet and a ball and decide who will go first.
- When it's your turn, place your ball by the “start” tree and use your mallet to hit the ball toward the nearest hoop. (Hit the ball with the end of the mallet, not the side.) If your ball goes through the hoop on the first try, you may take a bonus stroke and try to get your ball through the next hoop.
- Each time you hit your ball through a hoop, you may continue your turn and hit your ball again. If your ball does not go through the hoop, your turn is over.
- If your ball goes outside of the course, you may set it back on the boundary line, close to the point where it went out.
- The first player whose ball goes through all the hoops twice and then hits the tree is the winner.

## How to play a croquet game:

- Croquet is also a race, but you may hit other players' balls with your ball.
- When your ball hits another ball, wait until the balls stop moving. Then, put your ball next to the other ball. Hit your ball with your mallet, which will make both of the balls move. (Do not put your foot on your ball!) Then, you may hit your ball again. Aim for the next hoop, or try to hit a different player's ball.
- Each time you hit another player's ball or go through a hoop you get one bonus stroke.
- Before you can hit the same player's ball a second time, you must go through the next hoop.
- If you hit another ball and go through your next hoop on the same hit, you get two bonus strokes.

## **How to play with partners:**

- Each player chooses a ball and takes turns as before. Hit your own ball through the hoops.
- When you hit the “finish” tree, the game is over for you. Take your ball off the course and wait for your partner to finish playing.
- The first team to get both of their balls all the way through the course and hit the tree wins the game.

Here are ways you can help your partner:

- Try to hit your partner's ball with your ball. Then, hit both balls toward the next hoop your partner needs to go through. If your partner's ball goes through the hoop, it counts! (But you don't get a bonus stroke unless your own ball goes through the hoop.)
- After your ball has gone through all the hoops, don't try to hit the tree right away. Instead, use your turns to slow down the other team. Hit one of their balls with your ball, then hit both balls away from the other team's next hoop. But be careful—if you wait too long, they may catch up with you!