

## **Boules (Pétanque)**

Boule originated in France and has since been a popular garden game enjoyed by many around the world. Before play can commence the first thing to do is select a suitable playing area. Although the game can be played almost any where it is important that the space is free of objects and the area is fairly flat.

### **Equipment**

Boules and Pétanque sets can include different pieces of equipment with different markings allowing players to easily identify which boules they have thrown. Most sets contain eight boules which have 4 different designs on allowing between 2 and 4 players to join in.

### **The aim of the game**

The aim of the game is to throw the boules as close as possible to the jack whilst trying to displace rivals' boules to a further point.

### **How to play**

To start the game, a coin is tossed to decide which team will go first. When selecting teams it is also good to make sure there is a mix of players of all ages and abilities. The first player or team then decide the throwing position. It is recommended that the spot is marked and this was originally done with a baguette - we think this is a waste of good bread so try using a stick, chalk, rope or even a jumper depending on the playing location. The player who has marked the spot then throws the small wooden ball which is often called the jack or cochonnet. If the jack does not land in an appropriate position, it must be thrown again until it does.

The first player then throws one boule, from the same position, towards the jack aiming to get it as close as possible. The opponent then steps into the same place and tried to place a boule closer than the oppositions or knock the other boule out of the way. You must throw within 1 minute of your turn starting. The boule nearest the jack is said to be "holding the point". The player / team that is not "holding" continue throwing until they place a boule closest to the jack, and so on. Players on the same team do not have to take alternate throws, but players must always play their own boules.

When a player or team have no boules left to be played, the player or the other team then needs to throw their remaining boules and try and place as close as possible to the jack. One round is called an end. The winner of an end becomes the first player of the next, starting from the finishing position of the jack in the previous end.

### **Scoring**

In each end, the player or team with the boule closest to the jack wins the game. They score one point for each of their boules that are closer than the closest boule belonging to a rival. This means the score could be one only. The maximum score for a two player game during one end is four points (if all the boules of one team are closer to the jack than any of those belonging to opponents). A whole game is won by scoring 13 points (requiring at least four ends) or whatever total you choose to play to.