



Playing Cornhole – The Tactile Way

The Game

Cornhole is also known as bean bag toss. The game pits two teams against each other. A “team” can have one or two people. Our teams will have two people.

The team goal is to earn 11 points by successfully throwing bean bags into the holes of boards positioned on the ground.

In our tournament, when a team loses two games, that losing team is eliminated from the tournament.

Cornhole Equipment

- Two boards. Each board is 4’ long and 2’ wide. There is a 6” open circle hole positioned 9” from the top of the board, and 12” in from each side.
- Two sets of bean bags/4 bags in each set. Each set is a different color. Each bag weighs 1 lb.

Setting Up the Game

In competitive Cornhole play, boards are set up across from each other, 21’ or 27’ from the end of one board to the start

of the other board, with the open circle hole pointing away from the opposite board. We set up 20' apart for the DeafBlind/Blind Division and 25' apart for the Sighted Division.

Rules for Playing

The game is broken into innings. During each inning, each player will throw two bean bags. First one player, then the other player.

One player from each team will be at each board.

Deafblind and blind players will have APs/SSPs to provide tactile cues to inform about where the bean bags land.

Flip a coin to start. Play starts at one board.

The two players at the starting board alternate throwing their bean bags.

- Throws must be from the “pitcher’s box” – an area along both sides of the board, but not in front of the board.
- All throws must be underhand throws.

After the players at the first board have thrown all 4 bean bags, then the players at the opposite board throw their bean bags, also taking turns.

Fouls

A foul removes that bean bag from play for that inning.

Fouls happen for these reasons:

1. Playing out of turn.
2. Stepping out of the pitcher's box when throwing.
3. Bean bag touches the ground before it hits the board.
4. Taking longer than 20 seconds to throw the bean bag.
5. Overhand throws, or Frisbee-like throws.
6. Distractions such as food and drinks in the way, people crossing in front of the play, or making rude or obnoxious sounds or gestures.

Scoring

When each player has thrown their two bean bags, an "inning" has been completed and the score is tallied:

- 3 points for tossing the bean bag into the hole
- 1 point for tossing the bean bag onto the board
- 3 points for a bean bag pushed into the hole by another bean bag

Total points are counted for each team. The smaller number is subtracted from the larger number, and that is the score for the inning. Example: Red team scores 8 points. Blue team scores 6. Score for the inning is 2 points for Red.

The team with the most points in the inning starts the play for the next inning.

Continue playing until a team reaches 11 points.

Tactile Cues

Playing Cornhole is a sport, and sports depend on knowing the layout, understanding the kinesthetics, and knowing what's happening during the game.

Knowing the Layout

The blind or deafblind player should feel the Cornhole boards completely for size and determination of where the hole is and the slant of the board.

Once the boards are set up, the blind and deafblind players should walk the distance between the boards, and feel the tilt angle of the boards, as well as where the hole is.

They may want to stand at the board, and while feeling it, ask their AP/SSP to gently toss the bean bag onto the board, so they can feel how it lands and slides. Practice this a few times to find out how a different kind of throw can make a difference in how the bean bag lands. Example: A high slow lob plops the bean bag in place, whereas a faster, low toss allows it to slide.

Feel how a bag can be pushed by another bag landing on it or sliding into it.

Kinesthetics (How your body moves)

Before the game starts, blind and deafblind players can practice how their body feels when throwing the bean bags: Hold the bean bag flat in your hand, fingers underneath and thumb on top.

Keep your wrist straight.

Follow through with your whole body, keeping knees slightly bent, and leaning in to your throwing arm.

Aim for the front of the board – the part nearest you. Yes, it's only 1 point, but it gets you on the board, and it can create a block for the opposite team. Also, your opponent may toss his bean bag and push yours up and into the hole!

Knowing What's Happening

The blind or deafblind player should discuss with the AP/SSP their preferred way to know what's happening in the game. "What's happening" means who is playing, how the bean bags are thrown and where they land, how observers and players react to the play, and the score for the inning. This communication can take place through any or all of the following:

- 1. Speech, including how loudly to talk, and the rate of speech.**
- 2. Sign Language, including whether ASL, SEE, Pidgin or tactile, also taking into consideration the light, and the speed of signing.**
- 3. Tactile communication, such as Haptics or Pro-Tactile. Some blind and deafblind players may prefer the board layout be drawn on their back or arm, and tossed beanbags "drawn" as they land or slide. All "drawing" takes place from the viewpoint of the blind or deafblind player.**

History of Cornhole

The history of Cornhole has been debated. Here are some theories:

1. Ancient civilizations tossed rocks at holes dug in the ground.
2. The Blackhawk Native American tribe in Illinois filled pig bladders with dried beans, and then threw them.
3. Matthias Kueperman, a German farmer, in 1325 saw boys throwing rocks into a hole. He decided to make a safer game by designing a wooden board with a 6" hole, and because corn was plentiful and cheap, he filled burlap bags with 1 pound of corn each. Soon, however, corn prices rose, and the game nearly died out, until German immigrants in America started playing it in the 1800s. At that time, corn was again plentiful and cheap.
4. Jebediah McGillicuddy, a Kentucky farmer, invented the game in the 1800s as a fun way to pass the time on the farm with friends and family.

Everyone agrees that bags were filled with corn and thrown toward a hole on a board. The game is tons of fun for those of all ages and abilities, and it is played all over the world.