

National Playday
AND
Recreation Week
Marbles



Games of Marbles were very popular in 1916 and below are explanations; in the children's own words, of the differing marble games. The material is taken from the Schools Manuscript Collection

Firing Marbles

We play a game called 'Firing'. We draw a line on the road. Each player puts a button on the line. The buttons are put one inch apart. Another mark called the 'tip' is made about a yard from the buttons and parallel to them. Then we toss for 1st, 2nd, 3rd shot etc. Each boy has a marble. The boy who gets first shot goes to the tip, bends down, places the back of his hand on the road, catches the marble between the top of his first finger and the knuckle of his thumb and fires it at the buttons with the nail of his thumb. If the marble butts a button he wins the button and gets a second shot. If he misses the second boy fires and so on till each player has fired. The first player then goes to his marble on the road and if it is near another he fires at the other marble. If he hits it he wins a button and he gets another shot at another marble, if he so wishes or else he goes to the tip to fire at the button again. If he does the latter all other players must pick up their marbles and fire from the tip also. But if he chooses to fire at a second marble and misses it, then the second player can make his choice as to whether he will at a marble or go to the tip. When the line is cleared of buttons each player must put down a button again. This is called 'possing'

NFC, Vol 823, Page 78-9 (Laois)

Marbles. Five or six can play this game. Each person puts down a marble. Then who ever has "Sunday" said first throws the "esw" [marble] at the other marbles. He lifts every marble he knocks out. Then who ever says "Monday" first has next throw and so on far all the days of the week. Whoever gets all the marbles in the end ends the games.

NFC, Vol 1026, Page 179 (Donegal)

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Marbles Marbles are played on a table, or flat place. There is one big one, and five small ones. The big one is rolled at the small ones. NFC, Vol 189, Page 388 (Leitrim)

Marbles

This is an outdoor game. It is played with a number of little balls known as marbles. These marbles have different names. The small ones are known as "toys," the larger ones as "china-allaghs," and the larger ones still as "crocks." A large ring of about two feet in diameter is first drawn with chalk on the place which the game is going to be played. Then the players each contribute a few marbles to the ring so as to complete a square. Then one of the member's counts to twenty one pointing to each person at every count. The person on whom twenty one falls is to shoot first. He is then left out of the next round of counting. The same player again counts to twenty one and the next player on whom twenty one falls is to shoot second. The same player keeps counting until all the players have been given shooting positions. Then a line is drawn about six feet from the. The first player to shoot stands behind the line with one knee on the ground. If he knocks any marble or marbles out of the ring he may keep them. The shooting is done by playing the nail of the thumb against the first finger. Then a crock is placed against the nail of the thumb and is propelled along the ground. NFC, Vol 171 pg 299-300 (Sligo)

Marbles

Make a big ring and put two straws in it. Then two or three boys throw the marbles at the two straws. If one of the boys knocks out the two straws, the other boys have to put up two more.

Skittles

NFC, Vol 863 pg 267 Kilkenny

