

# RETRO recess

This is a collection of games that were often played during recess in one room schoolhouses during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Though some of these games may seem familiar to many of us have you ever thought about the origins of these classic games? The origins and uses of these games can tell us a lot about what growing up during this period was like.

You will notice going through these games the simplicity of many of the activities. This is because there was not a lot of materials available to people so children's games relied on finding creative ways to have fun!

We hope you can also get creative while encouraging activity and movement!

- Frontenac County Schools Museum



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# Game of Graces

Type: crafted game

Players: 2 players

This game was originally aimed at young girls and was thought of as a game for “proper young ladies”. Supposedly by playing this game girls would become more graceful. This was common in games during the nineteenth century; it was expected that through playing these games children would pick up useful skills.



## Make your own:

### Supplies:

- Two 9 inch wooden embroidery hoops
- ¼ inch satin ribbon in various colours
- Four wooden dowels



### Instructions:

Take out the inner hoop and tie the ribbon on one side of the hoop leaving some ribbon hanging. You may also wrap the ribbon around the hoop.

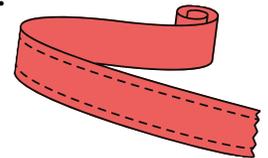


### How to play:

Each person gets two rods. One player then takes the wooden hoop and by pushing apart the two rods makes the hoop fly in the air. The other player then must try and catch the hoop with their rods.

To throw the hoop the player must place the rods inside hoop in a X shape. Then pull apart the rods this will then shoot the hoop towards the other player.

The winner is whoever catches the hoop ten times first.



# Hoop Rolling

Type: crafted game

Players: 1+

Hoop Rolling is a lasting ancient game. It did originate as a recreational game, but it still had an important function. In ancient Greece it was seen as a healthy sport and the hoop and stick were used for tumbling and dance. When introduced to the Romans, the sport served as amusement, relaxation, and military development. Various Indigenous Groups played a version of hoop rolling as a target game. In the British Empire during the 1800s there was a panic about the danger of the game. Worries over the endangerment of horsemen and entangling in women's dresses lead for its call to be banished to the suburbs.

## Supplies:

- Hula Hoop
- Wooden Stick (optional)



## How to play:

The aim of the game is to keep the hoop rolling as long as possible. If you use a stick simply guide the hoop forward by tapping on the back of the hoop. If not using a stick roll or push the hoop from the back with your hand. Play where you have a lot of space to run about chasing your hoop.

This game can be played individually or with a group. In a group try racing or seeing who can keep their hoop moving the longest!

# Cat's Cradle

Type: crafted game

Players: 1+

Cat's Cradle has no clear specific origin but rather has seemingly been developed independently by many cultures around the same time. The Indigenous populations in East Asia, Australia, Africa, the Arctic, the Americas, and the Pacific Islands were all familiar with string figures. Independently they all developed similar string figure practices. Later string figures pop up in places like France and Russia under various names. Different cultures often rely on similar figures but the names given to these figures often differ. The difference in names can tell us a lot about a culture and what is of importance to them.

## Supplies:

- String

## Instructions:

- Cut a 40 inch piece of string and tie the string together at the ends creating a loop.

## How to play:

Cat's Cradle can be played in a group or individually.

It involves creating figures using string. Here are some videos so you can learn how to play yourself.

Solo: <https://youtu.be/ZM53k3pKCqg>

Group: <https://youtu.be/VpHTPnrYLzQ>

