

GAMES FROM MEXICO

Soccer/football is the most popularly played sport in Mexico.

La Pirinola

La Pirinola is a very popular game that originated in Mexico. Many Mexicans play La Pirinola after Dia de los Muertos, which is the "Day of the Dead" festival. The traditional pirinolas were made of wood, but they are now made of plastic. A pirinola is like a small top with six sides. In English, the sides are take one, take two, take all, put one, put two, and all put. This game consists of two or more players five years or older. Each player should begin with 10 chips.

Difficulty: Easy

Instructions

1. Each player must put two chips in the center, which is called "the pot." The first player then spins the pirinola.
2. Once the pirinola has stopped spinning, the player reads the instructions on top. The player must be told to put one or two coins in the pot, take one or two coins from the pot, take all, or "all put." "All put" means that each player must put two coins into the pot at the same time.
3. The next player spins the pirinola and follows the instructions in Step 2, and this continues as each of the players gets a turn.
4. When only one or two chips remain in the pot, each player must also put two coins in the pot all together at the same time.
5. Players who do not have enough coins to play must drop out. The winner is the last person left with coins.

Read more: [How to Play the Mexican Spinning Top Game Pirinola | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_6596204_play-spinning-top-game-pirinola.html#ixzz1AVWLUxX8)
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Mexican Train

Mexican Train is a simple domino game that can be enjoyed by a group of four to 10 players, ages 6 and up. It follows the same basic rules of play as most domino [games](#), with dominoes being placed end to end with matching halves touching each other.

Materials

1. To play Mexican Train, you will need a set of Double 12 dominoes, containing 91 pieces. You also will need a small marker for each player. Traditionally, coins are used, but some sets are available with small train-shaped markers. One larger marker is also needed to identify the Mexican Train.

Setup

2. To set up the game, the dominoes are placed face down and mixed to make the "boneyard." In a four-player game, each player draws 15 dominoes. With five or six players, draw 12 dominoes each; for seven or eight players, take 10 dominoes; for nine or 10 players, take eight dominoes. The first round is the "round of 12," and the player holding the double 12 domino plays it in the center. Subsequent rounds decrease in number, so the second round will be started with the double 11 domino.

First Turn

3. Starting with the player who played the first domino and continuing clockwise, each player has a turn to form a train as long as possible from the center toward himself. Dominoes are played end to end in a single line, with the first domino played matching the number on the center domino. A player must stop when she cannot play another domino on her own train.

Subsequent Turns

4. Each player may play one domino from his hand onto either his own train or the special Mexican Train, which is marked with the one unique marker and follows the same rules of play as the individual trains. If a player cannot play a domino, he draws one from the boneyard and can play that. If it cannot be played, he places his marker on his train, signifying that it is "open" for other players to play on. That marker is removed once he can play a domino on his own train on a later turn.

Doubles

5. Double dominoes are special cases in the Mexican Train game, and they have their own rules. When a player plays a double on a train, she gets to play another domino on that turn, either on the double, or on another available train. If she chooses to not play on the double, or cannot play on it after drawing, the next player must play on the double (or draw a domino and pass, meaning the following player must play on the double).

Scoring

6. When one player has played all of his dominoes, the round is over. All players count the number of dots on the dominoes remaining in their hands and the scorekeeper records these numbers. After all the rounds have been completed, the player with the lowest score wins

Read more: [Rules for Mexican Train Dominoes Game | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/about_5452532_rules-mexican-train-dominoes-game.html#ixzz1AVWdRlkY)
http://www.ehow.com/about_5452532_rules-mexican-train-dominoes-game.html#ixzz1AVWdRlkY

GAMES WITH A MEXICO THEME

Most of these games are classics that have been adapted to fit a Mexican theme. Remember, if you choose to play a game that requires teams, and you have an odd number of children, one person will need to go twice. Ask for a volunteer and if one doesn't surface you might want to leave it up to the team to choose who they think will be the fastest.

Benito Juarez Says

How To Play:

Before playing explain to the children that Benito Juarez, a Zapotec Indian, was born and raised in extreme poverty. With hard work, determination, and strong love for his country, Juarez became the president of Mexico and defeated the French, who had occupied the country for five years.

Played similar to Simon Says. The player up is "Benito Juarez". Player will say "Benito Juarez says hop on one foot". The children will hop on one foot. Player will say "Stop". The children are to keep hopping on one foot until player says "Benito Juarez says stop". Repeat for additional activities such as take one baby step forward, step backwards, turn around, sit down. Sometimes Benito Juarez will say "Benito Juarez says" and sometimes he won't. It's a fun game to play with young children.

Remember, most games can be adapted to all ages of children with a bit of creative thinking. Also, if you choose to play a game that requires teams and you have an odd number of children, one person will need to go twice. Ask for a volunteer and if one doesn't surface you might want to leave it up to the team to choose who they think will be the fastest.

Learn Spanish Activity

Teach children simple words in Spanish. For example: count to ten, colors, days of the week or month, common food items, etc.

Break the Piñata

Supplies:

Piñata filled with inexpensive candies

Large stick

The book: *El piñatero/The Piñata Maker*, by George Ancona

Blindfold

How To Play:

Before playing read *El piñatero/The Piñata Maker*, by George Ancona. Then blindfold one child at a time and place them just in front of the piñata. Turn them three times then let them swing. Make sure other children are out of swing range.

Buenos Amigos (Good Friends)

Supplies:

Paper
Pen
Timer

How To Play:

Set the timer and have the children write as many kind things as they can think of about their classmate (amigo) on their right. The last child writes about the first child. Suggest that they write kind things about how their amigo acts, thinks, plays, works or looks. Give the paper to the amigo to take home.

Five Strings

Supplies:

Cardboard number "5" with five strings or ribbons attached

How To Play:

Show the children the cardboard "5". Have them close their eyes until you tell them to open them. Hide the "5" with the strings or ribbons attached so only the strings show. Have the children open their eyes, stand up and search for the "5" strings. If they find it they should not say a word but return quickly and quietly to their seats. The first person to sit down wins and may take a turn at hiding the "5".

Mexican Hat Dance

Supplies:

Sombrero
Authentic music from Mexico

How To Play:

Have the children make a giant circle while holding hands. Explain that when you begin the music they should all begin to walk sideways. When the name of a child is called that child leaves the circle, walks to the middle of the circle and dances around the hat until another child's name is called. They may then rejoin their classmates and the dance continues.

Cinco de Mayo Bingo

Supplies:

Make your own "C-I-N-C-O" cards or print our [Cinco Bingo Cards](#)

Beans, for markers

Mexican Sombrero to hold call cards

How To Play:

Print our [Cinco Bingo Cards](#) or create your own cards using a Cinco de Mayo/Mexican theme. Cards might include: colors or numbers in Spanish, Mexican food items (peppers, tortilla, etc.), Mexican flag, etc. Another variation to create your own Bingo card: Write the names of all the children on pieces of paper and drop them into a bag. Note: remove the names of any children absent that day.

Create a BINGO card with blank spaces. Across the top it will say "N-A-M-E-S". Have the children go around and have their classmates sign their name to the spaces on the card. When all are done, have them sit down at their tables.

Play NAMES by drawing a name out of the bag. Play regular BINGO or blackout. If the children really like the game, then play "Postage Stamp" any 2x2 square (4 names) on the board, etc.

Pictionary

Supplies:

Chalkboard

Chalk

Eraser

Mexican Hat

Papers with Cinco de Mayo/Mexican objects written on them

Timer

How To Play:

Put papers with Cinco de Mayo/Mexican objects written on them into bag. Divide children into two groups. Flip a coin to see which team goes first. Invite a child from the playing team to approach the chalkboard, draw a slip of paper and read it to themselves. On your mark, the child should then draw the object in hopes that his/her team members will guess the object on their paper. If the team guesses correctly, before time runs out, they score a point. If the playing team does not guess correctly the other team has five seconds to try to come up with the correct answer. If they guess correctly they score a point and it is their turn to play.

This game can be simplified for young players utilizing words such as: sombrero, poncho, donkey, taco. Make more difficult for older players by using short phrases: Mexican War, Mexico, guacamole, etc.

Word Find

Take a Cinco de Mayo/Mexican related word such as: sombrero, guacamole, burritos, festival etc. and find as many little words as possible before the timer runs out.

Example: Festival

Words: vail, fat, fit, fail, file, sail, seal, set, sat, sit, tail...

Example: Guacamole

Words: mole, male, meal, camel, came, come, am, me, mule, cue, game...

Cinco de Mayo Twenty Questions

Teacher starts by choosing a Cinco de Mayo related person, place, or thing. The teacher says, "I'm thinking of something". The children try to guess what it is by asking no more than twenty questions that can be answered "YES", "NO", or "I DON'T KNOW". The student who guesses correctly is next up.

Clue

Teacher thinks of person, place, or thing. Teacher gives a clue. Begin at one end of the room and work your way around allowing each student to take a turn guessing until one student solves the case. The student who solves the case goes next.

Example: Poncho

Clue: Keeps you warm

Clue: Not just for rainy days

Clue: A wearable blanket

Clues should be age appropriate for the children playing.

How Many Beans

Supplies:

Large glass jar filled with beans

Small pieces of paper

Sombrero

Pencil

How To Play:

Have children write their name on a small piece of paper and their guess as to how many beans are in the jar. The child who guesses the right number or comes closest gets a reward.

Find Your Partner

Supplies:

Picture of animals-children must know what sound they make (2 of each animal)
Hat or bowl

How To Play:

Have each child draw a picture out of the hat. They must then find their partner by making the sound that the animal makes and listening to the other children for an animal making the same sFreeze****

Supplies:

Authentic music from Mexico

How To Play:

Begin playing music, everyone moves and dances until the music stops then they must "freeze" in whatever position they happen to be in.

Mexico Bean Toss

Supplies:

Large cardboard with Mexico drawn on one side with a good size hole cut-out in center of Mexico, or a few small holes (for older kids)
Brown square bean bags
Bucket to hold bean bags
Tape to mark distance line

How To Play:

Place cardboard Mexico box a little distance from a wall with a paper box lid on floor to catch chocolate bean bags. Mark your distance line according to age and skill of children. Line children up behind the line and place a bucket of bean bags beside them. Give each child three tries to get their bean bag through the hole. Get all three bean bags in and earn a reward.

Jalapeno Hop

Supplies:

Pillow jalapeno for each team.

How To Play:

Children divide into two teams. Give each team a jalapeno pillow. Pillow size should be larger for younger children and smaller for older children. Have one child from each team place the

jalapeno between their legs and hop to the end of the room and back. They sit down and the next team member goes. This repeats until one team is all sitting.

Musical Chairs

Supplies:

Chairs with laminated horse faces taped to the seats
Authentic music from Mexico

How To Play:

A variation of the original

Pass The Chili Pepper

Supplies:

Pillow chili pepper for each team.

How To Play:

Children divide into two teams. Give each team a chili pepper pillow the size of an orange. On your mark, the first child puts the pillow between their chin and neck and passes it to the next player. Here's the catch, players may only use their heads to pass (no hands or teeth allowed). The process continues to the last person in line and then reverses sending the pillow back to the first player in line. The first team to complete the game wins.

Mirror Relay

Supplies for each team:

Candy
Bowl
Small cup
Mirror

How To Play:

Divide into teams. First child on each team holds cup on head. The child looks into the mirror held by another team member (or it can be mounted on the wall) and tries to fill their cup with candy. When the cup is filled, they dump the candy back in the bowl and pass the cup to the next person. First team that finishes filling their cups wins!