

**HISTORY OF SPORTS  
COMES ALIVE IN  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

## Sports and Games of the American Revolution

### HISTORY STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

HIST 5.2 Compare life in specific historical periods to life today

- How do the games played during the American Revolution compare to the games we play in the 21st century?

HIST 5.7 Generate questions about multiple historical sources and their relationships to particular historical events and developments.

- How did the games they played during the American Revolution evolve or help create the games played today?

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION STANDARDS ADDRESSED (Just a few):

M9.4. Develop increasing competence in more advanced specialized skills

- American Revolution games were very simplistic and as game evolved they became more complicated using more advance skills.

M.10.3. Demonstrate knowledge of rules, safety practices and procedures as they apply to an increasing range of movement situations

- American Revolution games were very simplistic and as game evolved they became more complicated using more advance skills.

M.11.2. Apply an understanding of the connections between the purposes of movements and their effect on fitness

- Understanding the importance of physical activity. Learning why the Generals required their troops and even their prisoners or war to exercise and stay physically fit.

M.14.6. Demonstrate willingness to attempt a variety of new physical activities

M.13.2. Continue to develop skills to participate productively in groups, in both cooperative and competitive activities

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
<b>American Revolution</b>	Battledore and Shuttlecock	<p>Children Families</p> <p>Soldiers might have played between battles if the equipment was available to them</p> <p>Originated in India where it was called "Poona." British Army officers brought game to England and called it battledore and shuttlecock.</p>	<p>Completely wooden Paddle much smaller in size</p> <p>Shuttlecock was made from cork and 16 real goose feathers</p>	<p>Very few rules</p> <p>Hit the shuttlecock back and forth between two people</p> <p>Every successful hit earns a point</p> <p>Once the shuttlecock hits the ground or after a certain amount of time, the person with the most points wins</p>
<b>21st Century</b>	Badminton	<p>Anyone</p> <p>Badminton made its debut as a demonstration sport at the 1972 Olympics. It Became an official Olympic Sport in 1992</p>	<p>Use of a net</p> <p>Long handle racket made from carbon fiber and strings similar to a tennis racket</p> <p>Birdie has a plastic netting and either a foam ball or rubber covered cork</p>	<p><u>Many rules</u> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A serve must be hit underhand</li> <li>- Score point the birdie must land in bounds on opponent's court</li> <li>- If the birdie hits the net or lands out then a point is awarded to your opponent</li> <li>- If a player touches the net with any part of their body or racket their opponent receives the point</li> </ul> <p>Play up until 21 points (Win by 2)</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
<b>American Revolution</b>	Fives	<p>Soldiers Sometimes played for gambling purposes</p> <p>Prisoners of War Even though they were prisoners they wanted them to stay physically fit</p> <p>Men and boys mostly</p>	Small, hard leather or rubber ball	<p>Hit the ball over a line on the back wall with a gloved hand so that your opponent cannot return it before the second bounce</p> <p>Take turns hitting the ball until someone messes up. The person who messes up is out. Play continues until you have one person left who is declared the winner</p>
<b>21st Century</b>	American Handball or Wall Ball	<p>Anyone</p> <p>Can be played recreationally or competitively</p> <p>National championships in handball have been held annually in the United States since 1919. This actually lead up to the game of racquetball created in 1949</p>	<p>Tennis Ball</p> <p>Hi-Bounce Rubber Ball in national competitions</p>	<p>The server hits the ball on the ground so it bounces up to hit the wall. If the serve bounces on the ground more than once or doesn't bounce on the ground before it hits the wall, it is considered out</p> <p>The next player hits the rebound. If the ball bounces more than once they out, but they may hit the ball "On the Fly"</p> <p>Designated lines on a specific sized court. Service area is 5 feet from the wall. Receiver must stand behind the service area during the serve.</p> <p>The server continues to serve until they lose the point. Then they become the receiver. You can only score points if you are serving. First to 21 points wins</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
<b>American Revolution</b>	Shinny	<p>Mostly Men and Boys</p> <p>Women did play but never with the men</p>	<p>Nets were used if available. Otherwise goals were simple objects such as stones or blocks of snow</p> <p>Tree branches or Broom Handles might have made great sticks when handmade sticks were unavailable. Sticks were about 3 feet long with a curved end.</p> <p>The ball was made from two circles of hide, stuffed with hair and stitched together all the way around</p> <p>When no ball was available Frozen Horse Droppings, Tin Canes or piece of wood served as the puck</p>	<p>Played in the field or on the ground but was mostly played on the Ice</p> <p>No Formal Rules.... But typically, two teams of 10-50 players each would attempt to pass a ball through the opponent's goal though they were often allowed to kick it as well. Players were not allowed to handle the ball with their hands</p> <p>Teams were formed by interested players throwing their stick into a pile. One person who quickly split the sticks into two piles and those were the teams</p> <p>No goaltenders and no positions</p> <p>No body checking or lifting the puck off the ice or ground.</p>
<b>21st Century</b>	Hockey	<p>Anyone</p> <p>Ice Hockey: Became an Olympic sport in 1920 during the summer Olympics but moved to the winter Olympics in 1924</p> <p>Field Hockey: Became an Olympic sport in 1908 as a men's competition. The first women's Olympic field hockey competition was held in 1980</p>	<p><u>Ice Hockey</u> – Long stick with a curved end &amp; a rubber disc “puck” Played on the ice with a small goal</p> <p><u>Field Hockey</u> – Shorter stick with a small curved end. One side of the stick is flat and a small hard ball. Played in the field with a large goal</p> <p><u>Street Hockey</u> – Long stick with a curved end and a small ball. Played on the street with a small goal</p> <p><u>Broom Hockey</u> – Small stick with a small plastic head on the bottom and a large ball. Played on the ice</p>	<p>Many different games of hockey means lots of different rules for each game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Checking</li> <li>- Lifting the ball / puck</li> <li>- Boundary lines</li> <li>- Penalties</li> <li>- Off Sides</li> </ul> <p>Played with offense and defensive positions and goalies</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
American Revolution	Stool Ball	<p>Traditionally it was played by milkmaids who used their milking stools as the wickets</p> <p>The game of stool ball was enjoyed by both men and women, the gentry and working classes, and was even played by general Washington and his troops during the American Revolution</p>	1 or 2 Stools Ball	<p><b>** MULTIPLE VERSIONS.... (2 EXAMPLES) **</b></p> <p>1. Someone sits on a 3 legged stool with a sturdy stick. The other players stands approx. 10 feet away and roll a soccer sized ball at the stool trying to knock over or hit the stool. The person holding the stick will bat the ball away. The person who hits the stool will be the next player to sit on the stool</p> <p>2. One batter stands in front of stool with a wooden paddle. A pitcher throws the ball underhand towards the stool. If they hit the stool the batter is out. If the stool is not hit, the batter then runs around another bucket approximately 15-20 feet away. The pitching team retrieves the ball, stands behind a designated line and tries once again to hit the stool. If they hit the stool before the batter returns the batter is out. If the batter gets back to the home bucket before the ball, the batting team gets a point</p>
	Trap Ball	Children	<p>Wooden Paddle and Ball</p> <p>Trap which was a wooden box with a seesaw</p>	<p>Any number of people can play the game. The batter puts the ball over the seesaw and steps on it. As the ball rises, he hits it. Fielders try to become batters by catching a fly or retrieving a grounder and hitting the trap with the ball.</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
American Revolution	Rounders	Very popular amongst school children	<p>Small hard ball, weighing about. 3 oz</p> <p>A round wooden “stick,” measuring not more than 6 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. around the thickest part and no more than 18 inches in length</p> <p>The playing field is marked in the form of an open irregular pentagon</p>	<p>9 players, 9 outs, 2 innings</p> <p>The bowler bowls the ball to the batter, Three consecutive bad bowled balls secure half a rounder for the batsman.</p> <p>The batsman must strike at a good ball and attempt to run a rounder (even if he misses the ball or fails to strike at it) in a counterclockwise direction around the first, second, and third posts and then home to the fourth post, though he may stay at any of the first three.</p> <p>He is out if the ball is caught on the fly; if the base (post) to which he is running is touched with the ball; or if, while running, he is touched with the ball by a fielder.</p>
American Revolution and 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Cricket	<p>Children mostly but it became more and more popular with adults and it gained popularity</p> <p>Written documentation that troops at Valley Forge played often including George Washington</p>	<p>Large playing field</p> <p>2 wickets (3 stumps and 2 bails)</p> <p>1 small hard Ball</p> <p>1 Stick made from Willow Wood</p>	<p>Batting is done in pairs. One at each wicket</p> <p>Bowler throws the ball to the Batter who then hits the ball into the field. The batters run and switch places. They continue to do so until one of them is out or the ball is returned to the wicket keeper or bowler</p> <p>Ball hits fence = 4 runs, Over fence = 6 runs</p> <p>Outs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bowler hits the wicket</li> <li>- Players in the field catch the ball</li> <li>- Batter runs out to hit ball and wicket keeper knocked down wickets before they return</li> <li>- Batter hits own wicket</li> </ul> <p>2 Innings – Teams switch roles</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
21st Century	Baseball	<p>Anyone</p> <p>Baseball became an Olympic Sport in 1992 but was taken out of the Olympics in 2012. It is said it will return to the Olympics in 2020</p>	<p>Baseball Field</p> <p>4 Bases</p> <p>1 bat</p> <p>1 Ball</p> <p>Glove</p>	<p>9 player teams and 9innings</p> <p>The pitcher throws overhand.</p> <p>The batter attempts to hit the ball and run safely to 1<sup>st</sup> base, and then if possible to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or all the way around for a Homerun</p> <p>A batter who misses three pitches, or fails to swing at three judged hittable, is struck out, but if the pitcher first throws four pitches out of the strike zone, the batter obtains a walk to first base.</p> <p>Run is scored when a batter runs all 4 bases</p> <p>A player is out if the ball reaches the base before the runner on a forced play, the runner is tagged out or the ball is caught before it hits the ground.</p> <p>Once 3 players are out, teams switch places.</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
<b>American Revolution</b>	9 Pins	<p>Children and Adults</p> <p>George Washington loved the idea of physical fitness especially amongst his soldiers. However, he did not like the gambling that went along with 9 Pins and banned the game.</p> <p>Around 1930, many other cities followed George Washington's lead and banned 9 pin because of the fear it would lead to fighting and gambling.</p> <p>The colonists got around this rule by adding a 10<sup>th</sup> pin.</p>	<p>9 Wooden Pins 1 wooden ball</p> <p>If during war a wooden ball was not available they would simply use a cannon ball</p>	<p><b>Version 1:</b> Ninepins could be played on a tabletop with small pins or on a lawn with larger ones. These were set up in a diamond shape. Each player rolled the ball ten times to see how many pins he could knock down. The player who knocked down the most pins won the game.</p> <p><b>Version 2:</b> The first player to score exactly 31 points is the winner. To begin, the ninepins are set up at one end of the table in a single row horizontal to the players, or in three rows of three. The players stand at the other end of the table and take turns casting the ball at the pins. After each player takes a turn, a point is scored for each pin knocked down. Once all nine have been knocked down, they are set up again. Players continue to knock down pins until someone wins by scoring exactly 31 points. If a player goes over 31 points, he must knock down all nine pins on his next turn in order to win the game.</p>
<b>21st Century</b>	Bowling	Anyone	<p>10 Pins Long Bowling Alley just over 61 feet long and 3.5 feet wide</p>	<p>A game of bowling is made up of ten frames. Each turn for a bowler counts as one frame, and the player is only allowed to roll the ball twice in each frame. Knocking down all of the pins at once counts as a strike and the player's turn is over. If a strike is not achieved the player gets to roll a second ball. If all of the pins are knocked over during the second roll, it is considered a spare.</p>

GAME		WHO PLAYED IT	EQUIPMENT	RULES
<b>American Revolution</b>	Rolling Hoop	Children	Thin piece of wooden that is flat formed into a circle  Small wooden stick	Use a smaller stick to keep the hoop rolling as long as possible.  Children may have raced their hoops to a designated line.  Some children would roll the hoops in a straight line and other children would try and throw an object through the hoop as the hoops rolled by.
<b>21st Century</b>	Hula Hoops	Children	Plastic tubing to form a circle	No Rules – Tricks only
<b>American Revolution</b>	Game of Graces	Children	Two wooden sticks for each player and wooden circle often decorated in colorful ribbon	Put the sticks in a X shape and place the circle on top. Quickly separate the sticks and watch the circle fly through the air.  Your partner would attempt to catch the circle on their sticks
<b>American Revolution</b>	Bilbo	Children	Long or short piece of wood with a grooved circle on the top. Attached is a rope with a wooden ball at the end	Swing the ball and try and get the ball to land on the end of the wooden stick

# RESOURCES

Colonial Williamsburg – I took a trip with my family and asked lots of questions and visited many toy stores.

Journal of Sport History; Sports and Games of the American Revolution. Written by Bonnie S. Ledbetter.

<http://library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/JSH/JSH1979/JSH0603/jsh0603d.pdf>

Colonial Games and America's National Pastime **by Ed Crews**

<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/spring08/ball.cfm>

# WHERE CAN YOU BUY EQUIPMENT?

Ryders Historic Toys

<http://www.rydershistorictoys.com>

Victorian Children's Toys and Games

[http://www.ushist.com/victorian\\_toys-and-games.shtml](http://www.ushist.com/victorian_toys-and-games.shtml)