

SPECIAL OLYMPICS SINGLES CORNHOLE RULES

HOW TO PLAY SINGLES CORNHOLE |

Overview

Two athletes compete head-to-head to determine a winner. The first player to reach a score of 21 points wins the cornhole game.

Setup | The Court

Court Dimensions

A cornhole court shall be a level rectangular area 10-12 feet wide and a minimum of 40-45 feet long. The court consists of two cornhole boards, designated pitcher's boxes, and foul lines. A minimum vertical clearance of 12 feet is recommended for indoor or sheltered cornhole courts.

Pitcher's Box

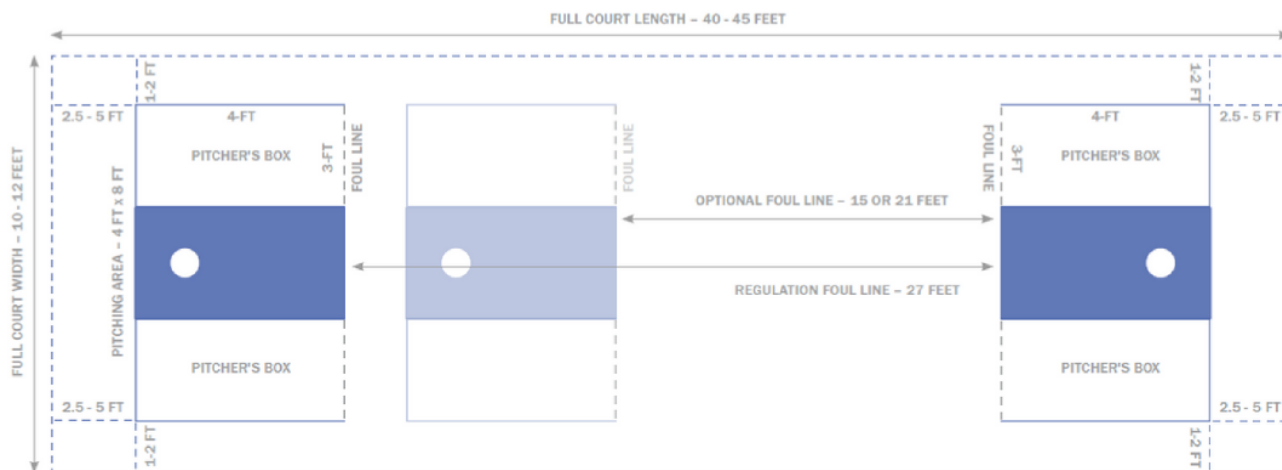
The pitcher's box is a rectangle 4 feet by 3 feet at each end of the court, parallel with and on both sides of the boards. Each player must remain in the pitcher's box while pitching a cornhole bag.

Foul Lines

The foul lines are lines parallel to the front of each cornhole board. The foul line distance for official gameplay is 27 feet. However, local programs may choose to offer a 15-ft. or 21-ft. throwing distance, according to an athlete's skill assessment.

Multiple Courts

To eliminate distraction and safely separate activity, cornhole courts adjacent to each other shall be a minimum of 10 feet apart. A greater distance of at least 12 feet is preferable.



Equipment Standards

For Special Olympics Cornhole competitions, it is strongly encouraged that Programs follow the American Cornhole Association (ACA) guidance related to bags and boards:

- **Cornhole Boards:** Standard cornhole boards are 2-ft. x 4-ft. The hole is positioned 9-in. from the top of the board, with a 6-in diameter.
- **Cornhole Bags:** Each team has four cornhole bags of contrasting colors. Cornhole bags should be 6-in x 6-in. and weigh approximately 1 pound.

The Synergy Touring Professional Bags will be the official bag used during competitions above the Program level (i.e. USA Games), unless stated otherwise. To assist with consistency, Programs are encouraged to utilize Synergy Touring Professional Cornhole bags. It is the Programs' discretion to determine if the opposing sides of the bags are "smooth" or "sticky". The "stickiness" of the bag will change over time, meaning newer bags will be more "sticky" than bags that have been used.

Although bags made from duck cloth canvas filled with plastic pellet resin will most likely not be used during competitions above the Program level, these bags are still acceptable at the local level.

Cornhole boards should have sufficient weight to prevent bounce from thrown bags with a smooth top/throwing surface. Boards can be made from different forms of wood and should have a minimum of ½-inch playing surface.

For competition events overseen by ACA, in which Special Olympics participants are competing, as well as SONA National/Regional events (which will follow Special Olympics and ACA rules), specific guidance will be provided regarding the parameters for both cornhole bags and boards.

Pregame | Coin Toss

Prior to beginning the game, a coin toss determines playing lanes and sequence of play. An official assigns heads and tails to each player. In lieu of a coin flip, an official may use a bag flip to help determine playing lanes and sequence of play.

The player that wins the coin flip will choose ***either*** their throwing lane or the throwing order in the first inning of play.

The player who did not win the coin flip will choose the remaining option.

Singles Cornhole Rules

Two single players compete against one another until a single winner is determined.

Both players stay in their designated lane for the duration of the game.

Players start the game at the Board A and alternate pitching bags until each player has pitched all four of their bags, 8 bags in total. After all 8 bags have been thrown the official will take the score for that inning.

Players then walk to the opposite end their court remaining in their lane to Board B. Players pitch 4 bags each again, this time back towards the Board A at the end of the court from which they initially started.

An inning is completed when both players, pitching from one board, pitch all eight bags (four each).

Scoring

Cancellation Scoring

In cancellation scoring, the points of one player cancel out the points of their opponent. Cancellation scoring will only take place at the end of each inning. Using this method, only one player can score in each inning.

Bag In-The-Count (Woody): Any bag which comes to rest anywhere on top of the board. Each is worth one (1) point.

Bag In-The-Hole (Cornhole): Any bag which is thrown through the hole or knocked through the hole by another bag. Each is worth three (3) points.

Foul Bags: Refers to any bag that was designated a foul bag as the result of a rules violation. Each is worth zero (0) points.

Dead Bags: Refers to any bag that contacted the court or the ground before coming to rest on the board or any bag that struck a previously defined object such as a tree limb, wire, indoor court ceiling, etc. Each is worth zero (0) points.

Winning the Game

The first player to score (or exceed) 21 points or to be leading when the time limit is reached shall be declared the winner.

Pitching

The player who scored in the preceding inning has the honor of pitching first in the next inning. If neither player scores, the player who pitched first in the preceding inning shall retain first pitch in the next inning.

Special Olympics Singles Cornhole Rules

A player must pitch all four bags from their designated pitcher's box.

Players must pitch the bag with an underhand release.

A player may not step over or contact the foul line during their pitching, release, or follow through.

A player must wait until the previous bag has come to a complete stop for at least 2 seconds before pitching the next bag.

Players may not jump, blow, kick, or otherwise do anything that may affect the cornhole board or the position of bags during an inning.

Touching, adjusting, or aligning a cornhole board during an inning is prohibited. Court officials may align the cornhole board between innings at the request of a player.

During any inning, a player can seek a ruling or clarification from an official to determine the status of a bag.

Overtime

Each game may be given a time limit according to the competition management team's discretion. (See "Game Clock" section below).

If neither player has reached 21 points before time expires, the game is over, and the player that is leading at that point wins the game.

In the event the score is tied after time expires, one more inning is played, following the natural flow of the game.

If no player scores after one tiebreaker inning, a Sudden Death bag is played.

- In this inning, following the natural flow of the game, the last-frame winner tosses a single bag.
- The opponent then tosses one bag, attempting to match or beat the first player's throw.
- Whichever player scored more points from the Sudden Death Bag is considered the winner of the game.
- Additional Sudden Death Bags may be played until a winner is declared. For example, if there is no declared winning player after the first Sudden Death Bag is thrown, the players will continue to throw bag vs. bag until a winner is determined or all 8 bags have been thrown (4 each). For all sudden death bags, the competition rests at bag vs bag. Example, 1st bag (Player A) vs. 1st bag (Player B). If no winner from 1st bags, game continues to 2nd bag vs 2nd bags.
- All Sudden Death Bags should follow the natural flow of the game.

Forfeiture

Violations and Penalties

Foul bags and rules violations are divided into impacting fouls and non-impacting fouls. A court official is responsible for spotting and calling penalties. The court official must determine if a foul bag was impacting or non-impacting.

Non-Impacting Bag

If a foul bag does not impact game play or any other bag in play, the bag is considered dead and is removed from play at the time of the infraction. This bag scores 0 points for the inning. All other bags remain in play.

No other movement of bags is permitted at this time.

The only person allowed to remove a bag from play is a court official.

Impacting Bag

If the bag in question impacts the position of one or more bags in play, it is an impacting bag foul.

- Leave the bag in question and all affected bags in play.
- Continue to play until the end of the inning without touching or removing any bags.
- At the end of the inning, the player who threw the offending bag will have their highest valued bag in play removed.
- The only person allowed to move bags is a court official.

Example: Player A steps over the line during their 3rd toss of the inning. The offending bag knocks a bag from Player B off the board. Bags are not replaced or affected at this time. At the end of the inning, subtract *the highest scoring bag* from Player A from the scoring calculation.

- If 0 points were scored for Player A in the inning, no scoring updates are made.

List of Fouls

The following are foul violations that must be spotted and called by an assigned official. A foul is assessed to the offending player.

- Any bag pitched when the player has made contact with or crossed over the foul line.
- Any bag pitched when the player has started or stepped completely outside the pitcher's box before the bag is released.
- Any bag not delivered within the 20-second time limit.
- Any bag pitched from a different pitcher's box than the first bag.
- Any bag that is not pitched with an underhand release.
- A player playing out of turn.

Interrupting Gameplay

A player shall not touch, alter, move, or affect the board or any bags on the board or in the hole before scoring has been agreed upon for the inning.

- If this foul occurs during play, refer to the previous IMPACTING BAG section.
- If this foul occurs at the conclusion of an inning, and before a court official has taken score, the non-offending player receives 3 points for each bag removed prior to scoring confirmation.

Fouling Out

Any player that commits 3 or more fouls in a game automatically loses the game. The game ends immediately.

The non-offending player is awarded up to 21 points and wins the game.

The offending player ends the game with the score they have when the 3rd foul occurs.

Dead Bags

For Special Olympics Cornhole competitions, it is strongly encouraged that Programs remove dead bags during innings to prohibit opportunity of dead bags impacting play. If programs are unable to utilize enough volunteer resources to remove bags, follow the guidelines set below:

Any bag that contacted the court or the ground before coming to rest on the board shall be ruled a dead bag.

Any bag that struck a previously defined object, such as a tree limb, wire, indoor court ceiling, etc., shall be ruled a dead bag.

Dead bags should not be considered in scoring but may assist a legal bag that is considered in scoring.

Example: Team A throws a bag, and it lands on the ground in front of board A. This bag is considered a dead bag. Team B throws a bag, and it lands on top of Team A's bag on the ground. This bag is also considered a dead bag. Team A throws their second bag, and it lands on the board, but is also touching part of Team B's previous thrown bag. This bag is still considered legal, even though it is touching a dead bag.



Additional Foul Rules

A bag that leaves a player's hand once the final forward swing of the delivery process has started shall count as a pitched bag.

A bag that is accidentally dropped by a player before the final forward swing has started (i.e. during the back swing) shall not be considered a foul and may be picked up and pitched.

If players believe they have thrown all bags, clear the board for the next inning, but then realize they missed one bag, the inning ends. Points are scored as if the inning ended, and the missed bag is forfeited.

Any action or intentional use of a penalty that undermines the integrity of the game, as determined by the court official, will result in the player's disqualification and forfeiture of the game.

Game Clock

The competition management team may limit games to a maximum game clock at their discretion.

A 30-minute clock is recommended for play. However, if an event has time limitations, a shorter game clock can be implemented. It is not recommended to use a game clock of less than 15 minutes.

During a timeout, the game clock should continue to run. Any inning that starts should be finished even if time expires.

The official may stop the game clock at their discretion during an extended delay due to weather, injury, or other unforeseen circumstances.

Timeouts

Each player is permitted one (1) 2-minute timeout per game.

The player calling the timeout must have possession of play and throw.

A timeout cannot end the game. If a timeout is called and time expires, the current inning should still be completed.

The official may grant a timeout whenever the circumstances appear to be valid.

Coaching

Coaches or spectators shall be prohibited from engaging in discussions with any athlete and/or partner once the athlete and/or partner steps onto the field-of-play area, except during a timeout.

If a court official determines a coach is strategically communicating with a player, the official may provide a verbal warning or a citation for unsporting conduct according to the discretion of the court official.

Discussions or disputes related to scoring or rules should be directed toward the court official.

Court Officials

Each cornhole court should have at least one assigned court official. Court officials must be easily identifiable at an event.

Court Official/Supervisor: This is the head volunteer for each court. This position will make the final rulings on score, fouls, timing, and overall game discrepancies. Final rule judgments and calls will be made by this position and/or the competition management team.

Court Attendants: These volunteer positions will assist the court official with the running of each individual game on the court. This may consist of bag retrieval, watching the foul lines, assisting with scoring and timing, and watching sequence of play or throws.

Each player has the right to object to a designated volunteer official or court attendant for any reason before the start of a game. The competition management team considers and decides upon this objection.

No member of a team or registered substitute of a team is permitted to assist in officiating a game in which that team is playing.

Delay of Games

If the official believes that the game is intentionally delayed without sufficient or valid reason, the official must issue a warning.

If the delaying player does not immediately resume play, they will forfeit the game.

For delays caused by weather, acts of God, civil disorder, or other unforeseen circumstances, the ruling of the competition management team is decisive and final.

Modifications / Adaptive Devices

Any assisting device being used for adaptive purposes must not give the athlete a competitive advantage and must be approved by the competition management team prior to the start of the competition.

Protests

It is the responsibility of each player or coach to sign the scorecard after a game. The signatures will indicate the indisputability of the final score. Games in which protests will be filed should not be signed by any player or coach who disagrees with the score or its validity.

Any protest to an official's or competition manager's decision must be made by a Special Olympics certified cornhole coach within 30 minutes of the completion of any game or the decision made by the official or competition manager will be considered as accepted.

Protests will be acknowledged and judged on the basis of merit in circumstances not specifically proved for hereunder.

Unsporting Conduct

Players shall display appropriate sporting conduct at all times.

Any behavior deemed unsporting, such as using insulting language, attempting to distract an opponent, or displaying inappropriate gestures, actions, or words, may result in disqualification at the discretion of the court official.

Purposely interfering with an opponent's pitching motion will disqualify a player and result in forfeiture of the game.

Any action or intentional use of a penalty that undermines the integrity of the game, as determined by the court official, will result in the player's disqualification and forfeiture of the game.

Attire

Players will dress in a manner which will bring credit to them and the sport of cornhole.

Special Olympics Singles Cornhole Rules

It is recommended that all players wear closed-toe athletic shoes.