

# Activity Idea

## Egg Carton Congkak

Traditional Malaysian Game For 2 Players

*Recommended age level: 7 - 12*



Congkak is a traditional Malaysian game played with seeds and a wooden congkak board with fourteen small holes and two large ones on either side. The name congkak is believed to have come from the old Malay word *congkak*, meaning mental calculation. It is a variation of mancala, a game that originated in ancient Egypt and likely made its way over to Southeast Asia. Congkak is played in countries including Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.

You can make your very own Congkak board using items you have around the house.

### What you need:

- Empty 12 Egg Carton
- Scissors or pocket-knife
- 84 small items (marbles, seeds, etc.)



### What to do:

1. Use scissors or a pocket-knife and cut the cover off the egg carton.
2. Use scissors or a pocket-knife to cut the cover in half.
3. Place one half of the cover on each side of the egg carton.



### Terminology:

- House: Each hole of the egg carton.
- Storehouse: The egg carton cover half on either side.
- Burnt houses: Houses where pieces cannot be dropped. Pieces dropped here will be confiscated by the opponent.

### How to play:

Follow the instructions below or use this YouTube tutorial <https://tinyurl.com/nk4w2fq>

1. Each player will sit on either side of the board. Each player owns all the houses on their side and the storehouse on their left.
2. Put seven marbles (or whatever small items you are using as game pieces) in each house. Leave the storehouses empty.
3. The opening moves are played at the same time. Each player will simultaneously scoop up all the game pieces from one of their houses and, moving clockwise, put one piece into each house they pass, including their opponent's houses, until their hand is empty. They will also put a piece into their storehouse if they pass it but not into their opponent's storehouse.
4. Each player moves depending on where their last game piece was put:
  - **Last game piece was put in player's own storehouse:** The player can once again scoop up all the game pieces from one of their houses and repeat their actions in step 3.
  - **Last game piece was put in any house with game pieces already in it:** The player can scoop up all the pieces in that house and continue going clockwise and putting a piece in each house until their hand is empty. Repeat as necessary.
  - **Last game piece was put in empty house on player's side:** The player can collect all the pieces from their house as well as the opponent's house directly opposite and put them in their storehouse. If the opponent's house is empty, the player only puts their last piece into their storehouse. The player's turn then ends.
  - **Last game piece was put in empty house on opponent's side:** The player's turn ends.
5. The players will take turns after their opening moves. The player who finishes their opening move first will go again after their opponent finishes their opening move. The players will continue repeating steps 3 and 4 until someone's houses are completely empty. The other player's remaining pieces will automatically go into their storehouse. The person with the most game pieces in their storehouse wins. This ends the first round.



6. To set up the second round, each player takes all the game pieces from their respective storehouses and will once again put seven game pieces in each house. Leftover pieces are put in their respective storehouse. If a player does not have enough pieces to fill their houses, the empty houses are considered 'burnt.'
7. The loser goes first in round two as there is no simultaneous opening move. The gameplay is largely the same except pieces cannot be dropped in burnt houses. If any player puts pieces in burnt houses, their opponent will confiscate those pieces and put them in their storehouse. The players will continue playing until someone's houses are completely empty. The person with the most game pieces in their storehouse wins.

Here are some more resources if you would like to further explore Malaysian culture:

- *Malaysia* by Kevin Blake on Hoopla <https://bit.ly/2XjBRlx>
- *Meet Our New Student from Malaysia* on Hoopla <https://bit.ly/36lhY83>
- *Malaysia* by Lisa Owings on Hoopla <https://bit.ly/2WUq8RH>