

## **Pitching Pennies**

As is evident throughout history, as technology has advanced, so have the systems and tools that humans have applied to games. After the invention of counting, we had board games and turn-based games that were built around random number generators; following the invention of paper, we created cards and different variations on how to trade and pair them. Even with the invention of currency and coins, people have found a way to use such a thing for their amusement, outside of the traditional use. So, what should one do with coins if not buy something with them? Well, why not throw them, of course!

The game “Pitching Pennies” is thought to have come from the Ancient Greeks, who used the bronze coins of their culture. It has since been passed down through the years with little variation. Pitching Pennies is typically played by a number of participants, who we can assume are either bored adults or children wishing to compete for amusement or a prize. There is no age restriction for the game, as long as the proper motor skills to throw a penny are present. At least two players must compete, but any reasonable number of people, when taking account of facilities and time, can play or form teams.

As arrangements for the game are made, the participants must decide on the distance all players must be from a target. This target can be anything from a line to a wall or curb or any form of marking. After the distance has been set, no player can be within that distance to the target within their turn. Participants and teams trade off turns

to ensure fair play and equal chance. Players will also need coins to toss, which, despite the name of the game, can be varied to include quarters, nickels, or other foreign coins, and not just pennies. The object of the game is to throw a coin at the target and have the coin land as close to the target as possible, while remaining mindful of the one rule: don't go within the set distance to the target!

Once play has commenced, many other factors outside of the rules come into play. For instance, the chosen target can affect the players' strategies immensely; like if the target is a wall, then there is the possibility that the coin will bounce off of the target. Also, the type and weight of the coins can affect the trajectory, distance, or bounce of the coins. If the type of coin is not restricted, then players can use one type of coin strategically to their advantage. In another variation, players can choose not to toss, but rather roll or bounce their coins toward the target. One could also consider what other kinds of spaces and environments Pitching Pennies could be played in, which would alter the strategies of play in infinite ways as the game transitioned from an open field to a narrow alley.

As simple as Pitching Pennies may be, it's hard for me to find a flaw in its design. Sure, the original rules may become boring after a short time, but this game has great adaptability. In order to make the game harder, you need only to change the distance at which you're playing, the environment you're playing in, or one could add any number of restrictions or rules such as "if hit that spot, then you lose your coin" or "whoever is the farthest from the target has to take a shot of whiskey" (only for players over the age of twenty-one, of course). Then, one encounters even more variety in play as players feel more pressure to be accurate or lose coordination as they play more rounds. It's a great

social game with exponential outcomes and a lot of possibility for amusement. However, I'd make sure to play with other lively people with creative rules because the game could go dull if you're playing by conventional rules at home with Gram-ma.

Source:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitching\\_pennies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitching_pennies)