

# **MCS HORSESHOES**

Usually horseshoes is played with two stakes/pits, each stake being 40 feet across from each other. Two or four opponents may face off in a game of horseshoes

There are two ways a game of horseshoes can be played: total innings or first to reach a certain score (such as 15). Official play dictates a set of 20 innings, but naturally you can tweak the rules to best fit your particular needs.

Before the first inning begins the two competitors must determine the order of play (who pitches first). This can be done with either a coin flip or a pre-game horseshoe toss whereby whoever tosses his horseshoe closest to the stake gets to pitch first.

The first pitcher should toss two horseshoes at the opposite stake, and while doing so his feet are not permitted to move beyond 3 feet of the nearby stake. While one player is pitching, the opponent as well as any spectators should keep a wide berth behind the pitcher and not make any noise or comments in an attempt to distract the pitcher.

Once the first pitcher has finished tossing his two horseshoes it's time for him to step back and allow his opponent to do the same. Once all four horseshoes have been tossed it's time to approach the stake together to calculate the scores.

In order for a pitch to count, the horseshoe must land within the width of a shoe; any throws that fall outside this distance are ineligible for scoring. Scoring can take place in one of two ways: ringer (encircling the stake with your shoe) or landing your horseshoe closest to the stake.

A ringer is worth 3 points. In order for a horseshoe to be classified as a ringer, you must be able to draw a straight line between the open ends of the horseshoe and not have that line touch the stake.

Tossing your horseshoe closest to the stake is worth one point. The priority goes to any horseshoe that actually touches (or leans) against the stake; if none of the horseshoes are actually touching then the closest is determined by distance. If by chance a competitor scores both of the closest horseshoes then he is awarded 2 points instead of the normal one.

Ringers and closest horseshoes are calculated separately, so it's entirely possible for a player to score 3 points from a ringer on their first toss and an additional point for having the closest horseshoe on their second.

As with many games, there is a twist called cancellations. Anytime both opponents land horseshoes that are equally close to the stake they cancel each other out – no score is given. The same holds true for ringers; if both parties score a ringer then no points are awarded for that particular ringer. Taking this to the next level, let's say Joe tossed two ringers and Mary tossed one. In this situation Mary's canceled one of Joe's ringers out, so only one would remain, earning him three points.

Once the points for the inning have been calculated both players will pick up their shoes and start a fresh inning by pitching their horseshoes at the opposite stake. If you're playing a one-stake game then just return to the original pitching point and go again.

And there you have it! Game play continues until one player has either reached the agreed upon score or all the innings have been finished.