

# The Pole Game

The **Pole Game** is a simple amateur game which consists of kicking a soccer ball against an electric pole. When you hit the pole, you score a certain amount of points.

Only **two** objects are required to play this game:

- A pole, or a tree, in short, something which is thick and tall. It is not recommended to use a tree as a pole though, because the repeating act of throwing a ball against its trunk, in the long run, it might ruin its bark.
- Any kind of ball which does not break when kicked with the feet

The winner is the player who first gains at least **10** points. If the pole is hit from a distance greater than 3 meters, then you get **3** points, otherwise **1** point. The distance which allows to get **3** points **can** be modified by players at the beginning of a match.

You can approximately calculate the distance from the pole using as reference points some objects present in the place where you are playing.

The Pole Game is subdivided in rounds and every round is composed of turns: one for each player. The number of rounds is not defined and that depends only on the time needed for one of the players to gain at least 10 points.

To assign a turn to each player, thus decreeing a playing order, the rule is simple: starting from a random order, whoever kicks the pole first, starts first. This initial round has been called the **choice round**.

After the *choice round* has been finished, the real game starts by following the established order. In a turn, a player can **only** kick the ball **once** and it **must** be kicked exactly from the **same** position wherein the previous player has thrown it. As soon as the ball hits or misses the pole, the turn of the next player starts.

When the new position makes the ball impossible to kick, you can shift the ball a little with your feet. If the other players consider your shift too advantageous, you need to move the ball back to the original position and shift it again until an overall agreement is reached.

A little advice, be smart and kick the ball really hard! In this way, when it bounces back after having kicked the pole, it takes unpredictable directions, putting the following player in difficulty!

As other amateur games, even this one has been subjected to variants during the time. Each of the ones shown below can be combined together without any particular problem.

- The match ends when **all** players have gained at least 10 points. This rule has the objective of creating a ranking among players, so a player has finished playing only when 10 or more points have been scored.
- If the ball stops too close to the pole, it will be easier for a player scoring points. To avoid this kind of case, a minimum distance can be set. When the ball goes beyond this allowed minimum distance, it **must** be positioned **exactly** at the minimum distance. This variant has been created with the purpose of having a more balanced match in terms of difficulty. To make the minimum distance always visible, one solution could be to draw a circle around the pole.
- The ball **must not** be kicked **exactly** from the **same** position wherein the previous player has thrown it. A player can immediately kick the ball as soon as it misses or hits the pole, making the entire game more rapid and fluid.
- If the pole is hit **above** a certain height, the points scored in that turn are doubled. For example, if the pole is 6 meters high, the height threshold might be set to 3 meters. This decision can be taken at the beginning of a match or during its progress.
- If the pole presents some anomalies on its surface, for example the presence of moss patches, a player can decide to aim at those anomalies to double the possible points scored in that turn. Before kicking the ball, the player **must** decree out loud the intent of hitting an anomaly, otherwise the points will not be doubled!

And that is all! Have fun playing this exciting game!