



Erasmus



Traditional Turkish Games Alive

BeşTaş

Five Stones

The game is played with five stones. The players start by casting the stones on the ground and then trying to pick them up one-by-one, and then in groups of two, three and four.

In the second part of the game, called *köprü* (bridge), the players must pass the stones one-by-one first through their thumb and forefinger, then through their forefinger and middle finger, middle finger and ring finger and finally their ring finger and little finger.

In the last part of the game, they throw all the stones in the air and try to catch a stone on the top of the hand. The stones caught are then grabbed by the same hand. The number of stones caught is entered into the player's score. Whoever fails to catch a stone or comes in last in the "bridge" part, is out of the game. Whoever reaches the agreed-upon number first, wins the game.



Ring Games:

The Ring Game, Yüzük Oyunu

The second very popular category of folk games in Turkey is Yüzük Oyunu (The Ring Game), which is a guessing game. On a tray there are usually eleven coffee cups, one of which covers a ring (or sometimes a seal). There are two teams. The first team hides the ring under one of the inverted cups. Their opponents try to guess the cup under which the ring is hidden. If the opposite team is right with their first guess, it is their game, and the functions are reversed. This is the most important moment of the game, and victories are celebrated with cheers.



Birdirbir- Oyunu/-UzunEşşek

“One, it’s one” Game / Long Donkey

This game is played by girls and boys. The children use a counting game to choose who is “it” — the *uzun eşşek* (long donkey). They then jump over the “donkey’s” back, saying words that mean roughly “It’s one, it’s two, three, fly; four, throw the handkerchief; five, take the handkerchief; six, gather the apples...” etc. On the fourth jump, a kerchief is placed on the neck of the “donkey,” and on the fifth jump, it’s taken off. Those who forget to say the necessary words, say the words or fail to jump over, becomes “it.”

Hırsız-Polis

Robber and Policeman

This game requires as many matches as there are players. The end of one of the matches is burnt, and the end of another is broken. The rest are left as they are. One of the players holds the matches, hiding the head ends in his hand. The others each take one of these without showing it to the others. The one who draws the broken match is the “robber,” and the one who draws the burned match is the “policeman.” The other children are “members.” The thief can “kill” another child by winking at him. However if he winks at the policeman, the policeman catches him by saying “nani nani.”



KulaktanKulağa

From Ear to Ear

This game is played by boys and girls on winter nights. The child who is “it” has all the other children sit side by side, and sits on the end. He or she then whispers a sentence or rhyme in the ear of the child next to him. The second player must say the same sentence or rhyme to the one next to him, and so on until it has reached the other end of the line. The last child then says the phrase aloud. It is usually different than the way the first child said it. Then all the children say it, from last to first, and whichever child changed it, becomes the next “it.”



MendilKapmaca

Grab the Kerchief

The children divide into two equal teams. Each player has a number. The “judge,” sitting in the middle of a circle holding a handkerchief, calls the players by numbers. One of the most common bluffs used in the game is to make as if one will grab the handkerchief, and allow the opponent to catch the handkerchief and catch him. Whichever team succeeds in grabbing the handkerchief the most times, wins the game. The losing team is “punished” by being made to carry the other children on their backs, sing a song, or forced to do some ridiculous act. Sometimes the winning team gets a prize put in the center.





Saklambaç (Hamaha)

Hide and Go Seek

The first “it” is chosen with one or another counting rhyme. He then puts his face up to a circle drawn on a wall, covers his eyes with his hands, and counts to fifty. While he is counting, the other children hide. When he finishes counting, he says “arkam, önüm, sağım, solum, saklanmayan ebe, gördüklerim sobe,” (my back, my front, my right, my left, whoever isn’t hiding is “it,” whoever I see is home free, the Turkish version of “ally ally otzen free”) and begins searching for the other children. He must call them by name. Sometimes the children change clothes in order to confuse him; if he calls the wrong name they say “kazan, çömlük patladı” (the kettle, the pot smashed). In this case the old “it” has to hide again. The first one seen is “it” for the next round.



MANGALA

Each player in turns picks up all the stones out of any one hole on his side, and distributes them one by one counter-clockwise in the other holes beginning at the first hole on the right of the one from which he has taken the stones. The game is finished when all fourteen holes are empty. The stones are then replaced five in each hole and the player whose stones exceed the number needed to fill the holes in his line wins.

