Pin Maw Khang / Spin the Pan

Site of Documentation
Ban Nayang Tai, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR

Description
Spin the Pan is played by young Tai Lue girls living in Ban Nayang Tai, Luang Prabang. A game of strength and balance, players take turns to be spun, suspended in a circle by the other players. The challenge is for players to try to rotate their team mates all the way round and return them to their original starting point before the circle breaks. If they fail, they have to pick up the other players and carry them the rest of the way back.

Who Plays?
This game requires six participants and is usually only played by girls, aged 6 to 10 years old.

Time and Place
Spin the Pan is very quick to play, with each round of the game lasting only 5 minutes. It can be played indoors or outdoors throughout the year, although many girls prefer to play it on grass where the ground is soft and they won’t be hurt when they are being pulled around.
Skills, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

This is a game of physical strength, the players standing up have to be able to hold on to the sitting players and pull them around the circle with enough force that they become suspended in the air. Those sitting must also be able to hold onto the hands of the other players, while keeping their body in the correct position with all their feet touching in the centre. The best players have had plenty of practice and can easily keep spinning for sustained periods of time.

Popularity

*Spin the Pan* is very popular with young girls living in Ban Nayang Tai and is frequently played for fun and exercise. Although the game carries a small punishment for the losers, it’s not considered a competitive team game. Children learned this game from their friends, older siblings and parents.

History of the Game

This game was also played by members of the older generations when they were young. Back then, the game didn’t include any concept of ‘losers’ and ‘winners’ and was simply played for the enjoyment of spinning together, switching positions each time they grew tired.

How is the Game Played?

**Step 1.** First, the players all have to stand in a circle. Every *other* girl has to sit down with their legs stretched out in front and their feet touching at the center of the circle. The remaining players stay standing, holding the hands of those sitting in between them.
**Step 2.** Still firmly holding hands, the standing players start to walk quickly around in a circle, dragging the seated players as they go. If the seated players stretch their arms out far enough and keep their feet together in the middle, they should be able to hang from those standing and spin around suspended, just off the ground. If the players’ feet move from the central point, it will disrupt the flow of movement and all the seated players will fall down. The standing players can spin the seated players around for as long as they like, but when they stop spinning, they must be sure that the seated players are returned to the same spot they started from.

![Image of children playing](image1.png)

**Step 3.** If the standing players can not return the seated players to their starting spots, they lose the game. As a punishment they have to give each of the seated players a piggy back, to their original spaces. The seated players will then swap sides with the standing players during the next round.

![Image of children playing](image2.png)