Dod Nang Wong / Jumping with Rubber-band Rope

Site of Documentation
Tai Yuan in Oui Sorn Larn group, Mae Wang district, Chiang Mai province, Thailand

Description

Dod Nang Wong is a simple yet lively game that has been enjoyed by generations of Tai Yuan children living in the Chiang Mai province of Thailand. The game requires players to complete a sequence of jumps over a long rope made of rubber bands, which is held by their opponents. Each jump in the sequence is more challenging than the last and only the most agile win.

Who Plays?

This game can be played by both boys and girls, aged between 8 and 15 years old. A minimum of four players is required, but it can also be played in larger groups divided into teams of at least two players. If there are an odd number of players, the extra player is allowed to play on both sides during the game.

Accessories/Equipment

This game requires a large number of rubber bands that are tied together to make a long rubber band rope. Children typically buy rubber bands at school stationary stores or from local shops and construct the rope themselves, prior to playing the game. Depending on the players preference they can choose from a rope made with single bands or double bands, threaded or knotted together.
Time and Place

On average, a game of Dod Nang Wong takes around 30 minutes to play, which makes it ideal for playing during school lunch times. When children are out of school and have more free time, each game can last up to an hour, depending on the speed, skill and fitness of players. The environment the game is played in can affect the game’s duration, as children can become exhausted quickly. As a result, children usually play this game where they can find a large space with smooth ground (such as a concrete floor or grass lawn) and shade. Ideally, children need to find a space that is 4 x 10 meters, giving them plenty of room to run and jump.

Skill, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

The most important skill that this game requires is the ability to jump very high in the air. Often taller children with longer legs have an advantage, although each level does require slightly different skills all of which can be perfected through practice.

Popularity

Tai Yuan children in Northern Thailand play this game for fun and enjoy testing their skill at jumping the rope, against that of their friends. As the game can be easily played anywhere, it is played frequently, particularly by girls.

History of the game

Dod Nang Wong has been enjoyed by generations of Tai Yuan children, although over the ages many features of the game have changed. Many years ago, children jumped the rope either individually or in small groups simply for exercise, whereas nowadays, children have created complex rules and action sequences to make the game more exciting. Nowadays the children know that game by its Thai (rather than Lanna) name of Dod Nang Yang.

Preparation

1. First of all, the rubber band rope must be constructed. It is made by linking numerous rubber bands together and is usually prepared well in advance of the game.

2. This game can be played either individually or in teams, depending on the availability of players.

3. For those in a large group, participants must first play Lala to divide into themselves into two equal sized teams. The teams then play Toh-Chub to determine which team plays first. The winners will jump, while the losing team holds the rope.

4. For those playing individually, players must use a game of Toh-Chub to determine the order of the players. Once again, the winner jumps, while the losers take turns to hold the rope.
How is the Game Played?

**Step 1.** In *Dod Nang Wong*, two players will sit or stand far apart from each other, holding the rope at a specific height. As the game progresses the rope will be held higher and higher, making each jump more difficult than the last.

**Step 2.** Taking turns, each player must run and jump over the rope at each height. There are 18 different heights that the Jumper will have to master. They are as follows:

   **Level 1: Mae Spring**

Rope Holders must place the rope at hip height, placing one foot on either end on the rope, to hold it down to the ground.

As the players jump across the rope, the Holders move their feet off the rope, making it spring back up to hip height. They must time the release just as the Jumper begins their jump. The Jumper must jump high enough to clear the rope as it springs up.
Level 2: *Mae Khor* (Ankle Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at ankle height and the Jumpers must step across, without touching it.
Level 3: *Mae Nong* (Calf Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at calf height and the Jumpers must step across, without touching it.
**Level 4: Mae Hua Khao (Knee Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope at knee height and the Jumpers must jump across, without touching it.
Level 5: Mae Kha (Thigh Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at thigh height and the Jumpers must step or jump across, without touching it.
**Level 6: Mae Loom Kon (Upper Thigh Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope at upper thigh height and the Jumpers must step or jump across, without touching it.
Level 7: Mae Aew (Waist Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at waist height and the Jumpers must step or jump across it. From this level through to the final level, Jumpers are allowed to touch the rope while trying to jump it. As long as they make it over to the other side, they can continue to the next level.
**Level 8: Mae Sadue (Navel Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope at navel level and the Jumpers must jump across it.

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

**Level 9: Mae Ok (Chest Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope around their chest and the Jumpers must jump across it. If they are confident, Jumpers are allowed to somersault or dive across the rope.

![Image of children playing](image2.jpg)
Level 10: *Mae Kalae* (Armpit Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at armpit level and the Jumpers must jump across it.

If a Jumper clears the level they earn a special credit called “Mae Kham Lok” (which means “Crossing the World”). For the remainder of the level, this player can hold the rope down low to make it easier for their team mates to get across.

They have to use their foot to lower the rope, but must be careful that it does not touch the ground. All the Jumpers that “Cross the World” have to ensure that no part of their body touches the rope while they take their turn.
**Level 11:** *Mae Lai* (Shoulder Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at shoulder height and the Jumpers must jump across it.

**Level 12:** *Mae Kor* (Neck Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at neck height and the Jumpers must jump across it. If a Jumper cannot clear the level they are allowed a second chance and have to complete a special task called “Swimming”. From this level through to the final level, players are given the option to complete the task, if they fail the jump.
To ‘Swim’ the Jumper must stretch their arms out and place them over the rope, so it runs across the front of their chest and behind their arms. Moving their arms in circles (clockwise), they need to wrap the rope around both arms 4-5 times.

Next, they have to pull the rope from across their chest and stretch it back over their head.
Finally, the Jumper has to move their arms in circles in the opposite direction (anticlockwise). If done correctly, the rope should unwind and the Jumper should be set free. If the Jumper manages to complete this task they can go through to the next level.

**Level 13: Mae Loom Hoo (Lower-Ear Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope just underneath their ears. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.
Level 14: Mae Bon Hoo (Upper-Ear Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope just above their ears. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.

Level 15: Mae Hua (Head Height)

Rope Holders must place the rope at head level. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.
**Level 16: Mae Nung Khueb (Head-Plus-a-Palm Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope at a palm’s height above their heads. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.

![Image of a person jumping over a rope](image1)

**Level 17: Mae Song Khueb (Head-Plus-Two-Palms Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope at a two palm’s height above their heads. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.

![Image of a little girl holding two ropes](image2)
**Level 18: Mae Chai Yo (Hooray Arm Height)**

Rope Holders must place the rope as high as they can above their heads. Each Jumper must jump across it or undertake a special task to pass it.

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**Rules**

1. Special tasks such as “Swimming” allow for shorter players that have a disadvantage to those holding the rope, to pass each level. If the Holders are particularly tall, then “Swimming” can be introduced prior to Level 12.

2. The first Jumper to pass all the levels wins the game and can start the next round.

3. If any of the Jumpers do not follow the rules, their team is disqualified and the players swap sides.

4. If a Jumper can not clear a level they can ask for one of their team mates (who has already taken their turn), to attempt the jump on their behalf. If their team mate cannot clear the level, the whole team is eliminated and the players swap sides. Players have to agree at what level this rule is introduced before they begin the game.

5. If playing in a small group, any Jumper that fails to clear a level must take a turn holding the rope. When they go back into play, they can pick up from the level they didn’t finish.

6. Rope Holders can make the game more challenging by not allowing players to undertake a special task in the place of a jump or choosing their tallest players to hold the rope.