Toey / Passing the Zones

Site of Documentation
Tai Yuan in Oui Sorn Larn Group, Mae Wang district, Chiangmai Province, Thailand

Description
Toey is a fast paced, team game played by Tai Yuan children living in the Chiang Mai province of Thailand. In the game, players have to cross a series of lines guarded by their opponents and return safely back to their original starting point without being caught.

Who Plays
This game requires a minimum of four players, but groups can be unlimited in size as long as the game area is drawn up accordingly. Both boys and girls can play aged 8 to 12 years old.
Accessories/Equipment

To play the game you only need an object to mark out the game area on the ground. This could be chalk, a stick or sharp stone, depending where the game is being played.

Time and Place

Toey can be played throughout the year at any time of day, as long as it is cool and dry. As the game requires a lot of running, it is best to avoid playing in wet weather when the ground is slippery and potentially dangerous. Each round of the game usually lasts around 3 to 10 minutes, depending on the skill and fitness of the players. It is usually played during a lunch break at school when there is plenty of space and willing participants.

Skill, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

Players have to be quick and agile if they are to make it to the other side of the game area and back without being caught. Fast runners or those who are skilled at dodging opponents often make the best players. Like many games, team work can be the key to a successful win. Teams that can work together to form strategies, will always have the advantage over those that do not.

Popularity

This game is popular with both boys and girls and is played in many districts surrounding Chiang Mai. The game areas defined in the "How the Game is Played" section are the most commonly used, although in one area, children use the grid with the highest number of lines, regardless of how many players there are.

History of the Game

The game was also played by members of the older generations when they were young. Back then, the game was played much more often than it is nowadays.

Preparation

1. To prepare, lines for the game area need to be drawn on the ground. Each game area will differ depending on how many players are participating in the game.
2. Players can draw on the ground with chalk or use a stick or stone to drag a line in the sand.

Game Area for 4 Players

Game Area for 6 Players

Game Area for More Than 6 Players
3. The players must compete in a round of *Toh-Chub* or *O-Wa Noi Ook* to determine two teams. Once the players have their teams, a representative from each should compete again to determine which role the teams play.
How is the Game Played?

**Step 1.** The losing team will play the role of *Toey* and have to guard the lines in the game area. *Toey*, (the ‘Defenders’), have to try to catch the ‘Attackers’ in order to win the game. The ‘Attackers’ have to try to cross the game area, running to and from the spaces between the lines, without being caught. Once a player has crossed a line, they are safe from the defending team and can wait for an opportunity to run across the next one.

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

**Step 2.** First, the Defenders have to take their positions on the game area. How the game area is constructed and where they stand differs depending on how many players are in their team. Once the Defense team is in position, the Attackers have to line up at one end of the game area and when ready, run across each guarded line. If they do this without being caught by the *Toey*, they must repeat the process, running back to where they started.

![Image of children playing a game](image2.jpg)
Step 3. If all of the Attackers manage to pass each of the guarded lines and return safely to the original start, they win the game. If one of the Attackers is caught, the whole team loses and has to swap sides with the Toey.

Rules

1. Toey, or the Defenders, can only run within their assigned spaces. They can cross over, but not into their team mate’s lines.
   a. Game of 4 players: There are 2 ‘Defenders’ and 2 ‘Attackers’. In this game, the Defense lines are split in half, with each half patrolled by one Defender. A Defender can run along both the horizontal (furthest from the start point) and the upper half of the central vertical line. The other Defender is allowed to run along both the horizontal (nearest to the start point) and the lower half of the central vertical line.
   b. Game of 6 players: There are 3 ‘Defenders’ and 3 ‘Attackers’. In this game, each of the three defenders must pick one of the three lines to guard. They are only allowed to cross an intersecting line, but must not run into one of their team mate’s territories to catch an Attacker.
   c. Game of more than 6 players: In games with numerous players, each Defender must pick one of the lines of the game area and guard it. They are only allowed to cross an intersecting line and must not run into one of their team mate’s territories to catch an Attacker. The more the players, the more lines that are needed to be drawn into the game area.

2. Defenders are only allowed to move about within their designated game area. The Attackers are allowed to step on all parts of the game area, but are only safe when positioned between lines. They are also not allowed to run outside the game area when escaping from Defenders.

3. All of the Attackers have to make it back to the start without being caught to win the game. Even if only one team mate is captured, the team still loses and has to swap sides with the Toey.