

Kup Sey / Shuttlecock Throwing



Site of Documentation

Phnom Pehn, Cambodia

Description

Sup Sey is a very popular team game played by children living in urban and rural communities surrounding Phnom Pehn, Cambodia. In the game players have to avoid being hit by a shuttlecock that is thrown by their opponents.

Who Plays?

This game is played by both boys and girls aged 8 years or older. It requires a minimum of three players, although groups can be 10 players or more in size.

Accessories/Equipment

This game requires one shuttlecock. They can be found at school, purchased at a local store or brought in from home.

Time and Place

Sup Sey can be played either indoors or outdoors at any time of day, throughout the year (weather permitting). As each game only takes between 10 to 20 minutes, it is ideal for playing during school break times. It is best played in large, open spaces that have a smooth, flat ground so that children have plenty of room to run about and dodge the shuttlecock. For a group of 10 to 12 players, a game area that measures approximately 4 x 10 metres is ideal.

Skills, Strategies and Qualities of a Good Player

This game is very physical and requires players to be able to run and dodge the incoming shuttlecock. For the shuttlecock throwers, good hand eye coordination and an excellent aim are essential. As with 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. One of the best strategies to beat opponents is to run to the opposite end of the game area as soon as the shuttlecock is thrown. By doing this, players are not only less likely to get hit, but they also give themselves a greater chance of catching it as it comes towards them.

Popularity

This game is very popular with boys and girls aged 8 years or older. The game is played frequently during break times at school and often so many children want to play, that multiple games are played by different groups, simultaneously.

History of the game

This game was traditionally played by members of older generations when they were young, to warm up their muscles on cold, winter mornings. Back then, the shuttlecock was made by hand using chicken feathers and a plastic bottle. The children played two slightly different versions of the game depending on how many players they had. In *Kup Sey* one player would throw the shuttlecock while the other player tried to catch it. In *Sey Vong* a group of players formed a circle and they hit and kicked the shuttlecock towards each other using their feet, shoulders or head, ensuring to not let it fall on the ground. Over the years the game has evolved from a mixture of both of these versions, to become what is played today.

How is the Game Played?

Step 1. First, the players need to divide themselves into two teams of three players. They can either choose their own teams or play *Oulampe*.



Step 2. Next, each team must elect a player to represent them (this is often the tallest member of the group). Both representatives compete against each other in a game of *Rock, Paper and Scissors* to determine which team starts first. The losing team will throw the shuttlecock while the winners become the 'Runners'.



Step 3. Once the roles have been identified the game starts. Two of the 'Throwers' stand at opposite ends of the game area, at a distance of about 10 meters. They can swap with their team mates as often as they like throughout the game, so each player gets to take a turn throwing the shuttlecock. All the 'Runners' stand in between the two 'Throwers'.



Step 4. The Throwers have to throw the shuttlecock towards each other, with the aim of hitting one of the Runners. The Runners have to dodge the shuttlecock by moving around the game area. If a Runner is hit by the shuttlecock, they are eliminated from the game.



Step 5. However, if a Runner catches the shuttlecock they gain 'Ghost lives'. A two handed catch wins a player one Ghost life, while a one handed catch is rewarded with five Ghost lives. Each Ghost life can be used to bring back an eliminated player.



Step 6. The Throwers must try to eliminate all the players. Once they have done so, they have won the game and the teams swap sides



Rules

1. The losers of *Rock, Paper and Scissors* become Throwers, while the winners take the role of Runners.
2. If a Runner is hit by the shuttlecock they are eliminated from the game. They can rejoin if saved by team mate winning a Ghost life.
3. Runners can gain Ghost lives by catching the shuttlecock. Ghost lives can be used to bring eliminated players back into the game.
4. If players want to play in a group of three, called *Leng Reay*, they select losers by playing *Rock, Paper and Scissors*. The two losers play the roles of Throwers while the winner becomes the Runner.
5. Players have to agree rules pertaining to Ghost lives e.g. How many lives are won from catching the shuttlecock, before the game begins.