**Tress / Pick up Sticks**

**Background**

*Tress* is a very old game that is played by children living in Phnom Pehn, Cambodia. To win the game you need to be able to throw a stone up in the air, pick up sticks and pass them between your hands before catching the stone as it comes back down. This game will test how quickly you can move your hands and how well you can catch!

This game has a long history and was played by both the children’s parents and grand parents, particularly those that lived in the countryside. Back then, families believed that if the game was played too frequently it was a sign that their country would soon go through terrible times - so be careful how often you play!

**How to Play?**

**Step 1.** First, you all need to play *Pao* (Rock, Paper and Scissors) to decide the order of play. Did you win? Well done! You can start the game, followed by your opponents!

**Step 2.** There are three levels in a game of *Tress*. In each level you have to complete a number of steps to make it to the next! If you make a mistake, it’s the next player’s turn. Don’t worry! You can pick back up from where you left off during your next go!

**Level 1**

1. First player! Put all of your sticks on the ground in front of you! During the game you will have to throw the ball up into the air, pick up (or put down) a particular number of sticks, before catching the ball as it comes back down. Do you think you can do it?

   In this first level there are ten steps you have to complete. Remember to throw your ball up before you start each step and catch it again to finish!

   a. You need to pick up each of your ten sticks one by one.
b. This time you need to pick up all of your ten sticks, but this time you need to pick them up two at a time rather than one by one.

c. Now, you need to pick up nine of your sticks! This time pick them up three at a time. One stick must be left on the ground at the end!

d. Now, pick up eight of your sticks! Pick them up four at a time, so two sticks are left on the ground at the end.

e. Now, pick up all of your ten sticks! Pick them up five at a time.

f. Pick up six of your sticks in one go! Four sticks must be left on the ground at the end.

g. Pick up seven of your sticks in one go! Three sticks must be left on the ground at the end.

h. Pick up eight of your sticks in one go! Two sticks must be left on the ground at the end.

i. Pick up nine of your sticks in one go! One stick must be left on the ground at the end.

j. To finish, pick up all ten sticks in one go!
Level 2

1. Did you lose *Pao*? Well then, you have a special job! You need to place a pile of ten sticks in front of each of your opponents! Players! You each need to throw the ball into the air, pick up five sticks from the pile and catch it as it comes back down! If you fail, try again next time! Did you do it? Well done! Now repeat the same process for the five sticks still on the ground!

2. Now, you need to throw the ball up, put all ten sticks onto the ground next to each other. You need to make sure they are really close together with no gaps! Be quick you still need to catch the ball! If you leave a gap you have to wait for your next turn to try again!

Level 3

Loser of *Pao*! This time you need to lay out each player’s sticks into different 3D pictures – each picture looks like a traditional household activity, such as ‘Chopping wood’. Players! You have to throw the ball into the air, removing one stick from the picture (without disturbing the others) and catch the ball as it as it comes back down! Keep going until you have taken apart the stick picture, then move onto the next one! You need to take apart each of the seven pictures to finish the game!

The pictures are:

a. Arranging wood
b. Building a pig cage
c. Walking across a river (sometimes called Threading needles)
d. Building a house
e. Drying clothes in the sun
f. Chopping wood and lighting a fire
Step 3. Are you the first player to complete all the levels? Congratulations! You are the winner! You get to punish the losers! Each of them has to throw the ball into the air and while it’s up you can hit their hands with the sticks! If they catch the ball – their punishment is over! If they miss it, they have to keep throwing (and you have to keep hitting them) until they catch it again!

Rules

1. You can play Pao to determine which order you play in!

2. You need to complete each step in each level! If you make a mistake, it’s the next player’s turn! You can play again on your next turn from where you left off!

3. You need to agree on what your rules are before you start the game! If you want to make the game harder, you can play it with an extra rule that means if you disturb the other sticks while you are taking your turn, if you fail you have to let the next player take their turn.

Alternative version: Ou-Tress

You can also play a version of this game called Ou Tress. It’s played in exactly the same way as Tress, but in Ou Tress, you don’t throw a ball up, instead you have to take a deep breath at the start of your turn and hum “Ouuuuuu” while trying to pick up sticks. The “Ouuuu” sound you make while playing is from where the game finds its name. You need to complete each step in one breath - if you run out of breath before finishing a step, it’s the next player’s turn. Be careful! You are not allowed to disturb the sticks with your hands while making your move. If you do, you have to wait for your next turn to try again.