

# Hand/Stick Game



*The Hand or Stick Game is the most widely distributed game and has been found among 81 tribes. It has been considered that this game was so well distributed because it was a game played entirely by gestures and could be played by anyone as a sign language (Cullen, 1992).*

*Two teams are needed to play the Hand Game. The Blackfeet used 10 counting sticks to keep score of the winning rounds. The guessing team were the pointers and the hiding team hid the bones, one in each hand, with the intent to mislead their opponent about the location of the key bone in interest, usually the plain bone. The team hiding the bones wins a stick from their opponents incorrect answer as to the location of the plain bone. The guessing team eliminates participants from the hiding team with each correct guess. Hand signals are used to indicate which hand the guessing team is suggesting has the plain bone. The person making the hand gestures is called the "shooter" or the "pointer" (Mary Ellen Little Mustache, 2020; Blondin, Kuptana & Daniels, 2020).*

*The hand game was played by most North American tribes and has many variations to the game. The sticks usually measure from 10 to 12 inches long and decorated with cloth rawhide or painted. The bones that were hidden in players hands measured two to four inches long. Each participant will have one bone undecorated and another bone decorated.*



*([International Traditional Games Montana traditionalnativegames.org](http://InternationalTraditionalGamesMontanatraditionalnativegames.org))*

*In Southern Alberta, this game was always accompanied with a song. It would begin to be barely audible and sound like a murmur but would gradually increase in volume until it reached a high pitch then sank to a low bass sound. The high and low pitched sounds would be repeated and slowly died away. Those who were hiding the bones would sway in body, arms and hands in the air rhythmically with the sound for the purpose of confusing the guesser. The stakes were often high; sometimes three or more horses and even personal clothing was lost (Culin, 1992).*

## References

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## **The Hand/Stick Game is a game of chance that requires players to develop strong intuition skills**

**“Games of Intuition and Chance were played by all ages to hone skills. Not only the physical skills, but also skills of ‘knowing’. Those skills connected each person with unseen powers, with animals and with all of nature” .**

**(Brady-Leader, 2012)**

- ◆ *At all times, people communicate information about emotional states, attitudes, and evaluations of what confronts us. We learn to decode these non-verbal cues to draw inferences about others in various dispositions based on sequences of non-verbal cues. Non-verbal decoding skills are an important part of intuition. A strong intuition will have a good sense of understanding the fluidity and timing of social cues that are used to gauge emotional states, personalities, intentions and attitudes, or the skill level of others present (Leiberman, 2000).*
- ◆ *Various areas of the brain are active and synchronous when learning intuitive signals. Visual recognition, emotional and attentional systems are required to fine tune the intuitive process (Kverga, Ghuman & Bar, 2007).*
- ◆ *The areas in the brain that are activated during social cognitive and emotional processing of non-verbal cues while making quick decisions intuitively are common to those that are making morally intuitive decisions, suggesting that practicing intuitive strengthening through social games and events can strengthen moral reasoning capabilities (Woodward & Allman, 2007).*

### *References*

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