

Alutiiq Piuneq – Alutiiq Tag

Competitions are a common activity at Alutiiq picnics and gatherings, particularly during the long days of summer. Outdoor games include Alutiiq versions of hide and seek, kick the can, baseball, and tag. In the past, both men and women enjoyed participating in everything from swimming, boating, and running races to tests of strength and a variety of team sports. Competitions were a way to demonstrate stamina and dexterity, and they allowed rivals to challenge each other in a friendly arena. For example, the Alutiiq people of Prince William Sound invited neighboring Eyak and Tlingit peoples to compete in games.

Play:

To play Alutiiq tag you need a large area with boundaries for players to run in, such as a basketball court, baseball diamond, or a space between lines drawn in the sand on the beach.

- Spread out. When the game begins everyone tries to tag each other.
- If a player gets tagged, the player must sit down.



- If the player who tagged you gets tagged, you can stand up and you are back in the game.



- If two players tag each other at the same time both must sit down. Some communities have both players play a single round of Rock, Paper, Scissors to determine who is out and who is still in the game.
- If players step out of the boundary they are out of the game and must stay on the sidelines.
- The last person standing wins the game.



The rules and instructions shared here were passed down through generations by numerous Alutiiq community members. Other communities may have different variations of these games.

Alutiiq Piuneq – Alutiiq Tag (Ouzinkie Style)

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Play:

To play Alutiiq tag you need a large area with boundaries for players to run in, such as a basketball court, baseball diamond, or a space between lines drawn in the sand on the beach.

- Spread out. All players keep one hand behind their back. When the game begins everyone tries to tag another players hand that is behind their back .
- If a players hand gets tagged, the player must sit down.



- If the player who tagged you gets tagged, you can stand up and you are back in the game.



- If two players tag each others hands at the same time both players are out or players play a single round of Rock, Paper, Sissors to determine who is out and who is still in the game.
- If players step out of the boundary they are out of the game and must stay on the sidelines.
- The last person standing wins the game.

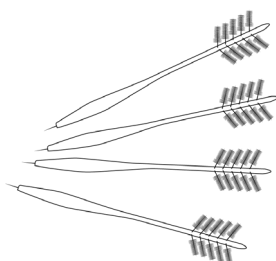


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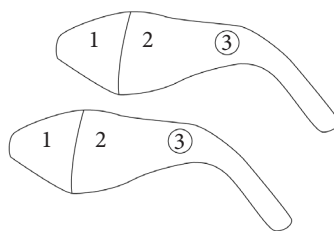
Augca'aq – Dart Game

Gaming is a favorite activity in Alutiiq communities. For centuries, people have gathered in each other's homes to test their skills and make bets. Traditional throwing games, like *augca'aq*, emphasized hand-eye coordination, mimicked the skills needed for hunting, and provided hours of fun. In this dart game based on sea mammal hunting, players take turns throwing darts at a wooden porpoise dangling from a string. Players kneel on the floor as if sitting in a kayak and throw their darts at the swinging model. The object is to score twelve points, which are awarded for the location of each strike. Elders recall that people would bet quantities of food, clothing, and even valuable items like firearms, outboard motors, and houses on the outcome of matches.

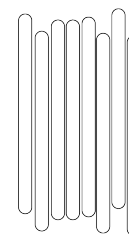
Supplies:



Darts



Targets



Tally Sticks

Play:

- Select teams. Two individual players may compete, or two team of two players each.
- If two people play, each player has two darts.
- If four people play, one player from each team has two darts.
- Players take turns throwing darts, until all darts are thrown.
- If playing in teams, one player from each team plays in each round. Then they alternate.
- Scoring takes place after every turn.

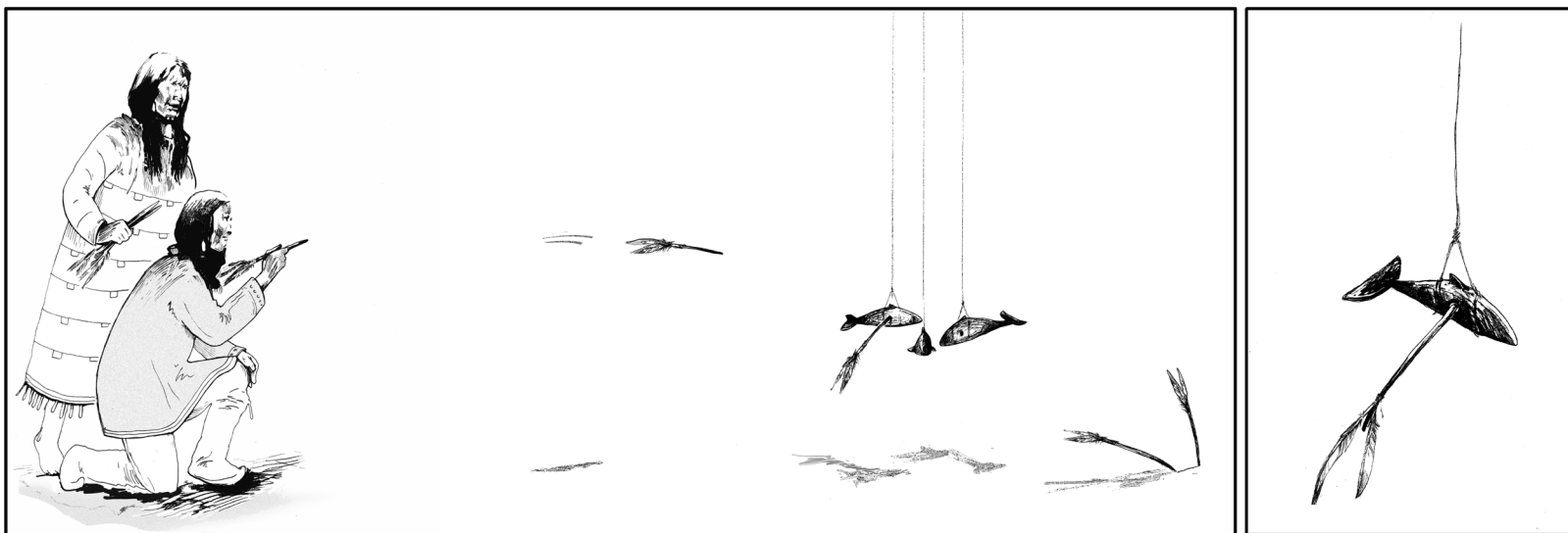
Score:

- At the start, lay 12 tally sticks (counters) between the players/teams (counters may be twigs, pennies, etc.)
- Keep score by noting which section of the target the dart strikes and collect the corresponding number of counters.
- To score, a dart must stick in the target. If a dart bounces off the target, or falls out, no points are scored.
- No points are awarded if a dart sticks into a line drawn on the target.
- Eight points are awarded if a dart sticks into the string suspending the target.
- The player or team that wins all the counters twice consecutively, wins the match.
- If one dart sticks into another, the player who threw the second dart wins the match.

Alternative way to play:

- Play with bean bags and create a target with a hole (ex. corn hole) or area marked with point values.
- If two people play, each has two bean bags.
- If four people play, one member from each team had two bean bags.
- Take turns throwing the bean bags until all bags are thrown.
- Score as outlined above.

Men playing augca'aq. Illustration by Eric Carlson.

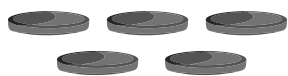


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Kakangaq – Disk Game

Kakangaq is a game hunters play to sharpen their targeting skills. Players compete to score points by throwing disks at a target laid on a seal skin.

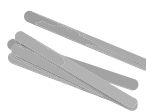
Supplies:



5 throwing disks for each player (1 ½ to 4 inches in diameter each) – use jar lids.



1 target disk (1 to 1 ½ inches in diameter) – use a large button or a small jar lid.



12 tally sticks – use toothpicks, stir sticks, popsicle sticks, or something similar.



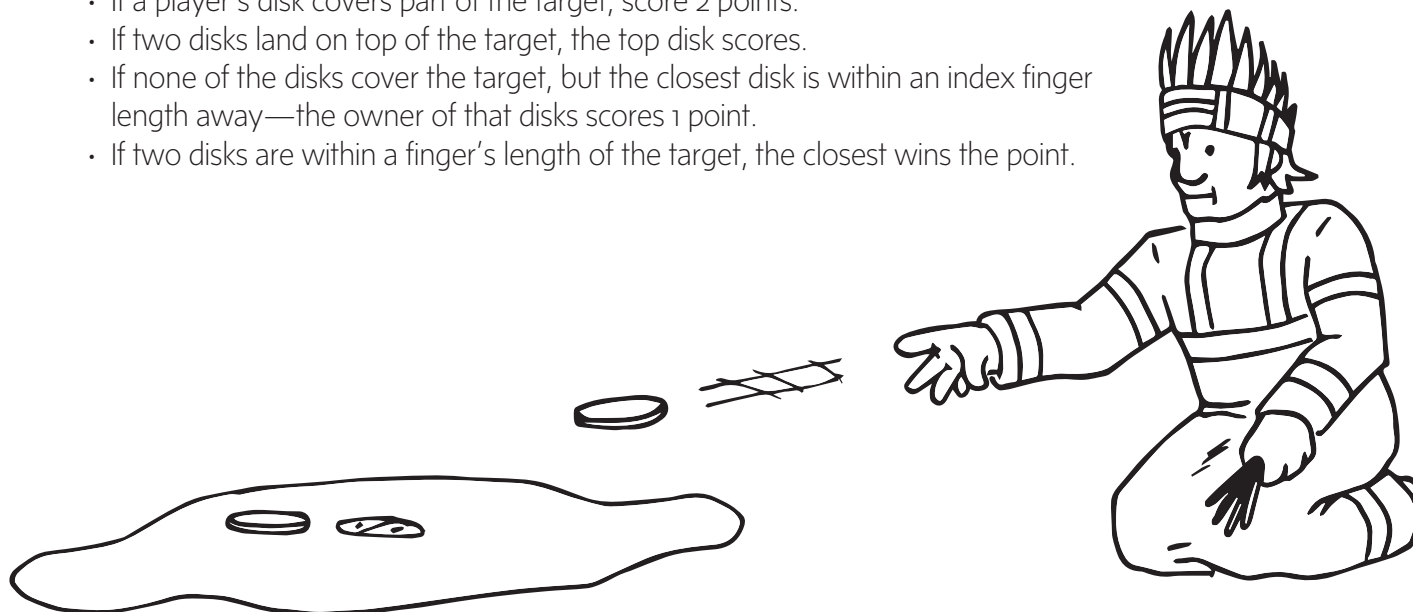
1 piece of paper cut in the shape of a seal skin, about 4 feet long by 2 ½ feet wide.

Play:

- This game is played by two individual players, or four players competing in teams of two.
- Players take turns throwing their disks one at a time until all the disks are thrown.
- Players may knock each other's disks off the target with their throws.
- After all the disks have been thrown, the score is calculated.

Score:

- The game begins with 12 tally sticks piled between the players. Players take their points from this pile. When the pile is depleted, they take points from each other.
- 12 points wins a game, 2 games wins a match.
- If a player's disk covers part of the target, score 2 points.
- If two disks land on top of the target, the top disk scores.
- If none of the disks cover the target, but the closest disk is within an index finger length away—the owner of that disk scores 1 point.
- If two disks are within a finger's length of the target, the closest wins the point.



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Laptuuk – Alutiiq Baseball

Laptuuk is the Alutiiq version of *lapta*—a Russian baseball game. It is like American baseball with some interesting differences. Alutiiq people often play this game on the beach, using a soft rubber ball, two bases, and any number of people. Just divide your group in half and get ready for lots of laughter.

Supplies:

- Soft rubber ball
- Baseball bat
- Two bases spaced about 200 feet apart

○ Batter

■ Home Plate

● Pitcher

Base ■

Fielders ●

Play:

- Form two teams
- One team takes the field, while the other bats.
- The pitcher tosses the ball gently, allowing the batter to hit.
- When the ball is hit, everyone on the batter's team runs to the opposite base, and if they can, back to home plate to score a run.
- Each batter has three chances to hit, before it is a teammate's turn to hit. There are no strike outs.
- A player is out if a fielder catches the ball they hit, or if they are tagged out by a fielder holding the ball. Hit a runner with the ball and they are out!
- Just one out retires the side, and the opposing team is up to bat.

Score:

- Each time a player reaches home plate, their team scores a point.
- With many people running the bases at once, *laptuuk* is full of confusion and excitement. Often people are having too much fun to keep score.



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Laptuuk – Alutiiq Baseball (Ouzinkie Style)

Laptuuk is the Alutiiq version of *lapta*—a Russian baseball game. It is like American baseball with some interesting differences. Alutiiq people often play this game on the beach, using a soft rubber ball, two bases, and any number of people. Just divide your group in half and get ready for lots of laughter.

Supplies:

- Soft rubber ball
- Baseball bat
- Two bases spaced about 200 feet apart

○ Batter

■ Home Plate

● Pitcher

Base ■

Fielders ●

Play:

- Divide into two teams.
- The batter uses the baseball bat and taps the top of the ball.
- Then the pitcher tosses the ball, and the batter swings.
- The batter gets one chance to hit the ball. If they miss, the bat goes to the next person.
- You don't have to run if you hit the ball. If you hit the ball, you can run as well as anyone else who has hit the ball or been up to bat.
- If you run, you have to try to make it behind the marker on the other side.
- If you step over the line you will have to keep running to the other side.
- Once you reach the marker you can run back or stay. You can also inch your way forward without being hit by the ball.
- The last person in line has 3 chances to hit the ball. The second to last person has 2 chances to hit the ball.
- If you don't run and get back. You can't bat again in the inning.
- If no one runs, or the last person misses all three, then the next team is up.
- If the runner is hit or the fly ball is caught the field team is up.
- If the field team hits a runner, the field team must run behind the safety lines.
- The runner that was hit and/or the team can try and throw the ball at the opposite team until the field team is behind the safety line.
- If the field team doesn't hit anyone. The field team is up to bat.
- The pitcher throws the ball in the air and runners must make it to the marker on the other end of the field. If they make it the pitcher throws the ball up again and tries to hit runners coming back.

Score:

- Each time a player reaches home plate, their team scores a point.
- With many people running the bases at once, *laptuuk* is full of confusion and excitement. Often people are having too much fun to keep score.

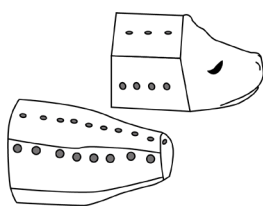
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Maqaq – Dice Game

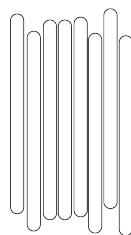
Dice games are very common across North America. Native societies from New England to the Pacific Northwest enjoy tossing small objects in games of chance. Russian traders recorded an Alutiiq dice game where players tossed a small figurine carved of bone and scored points based on how it landed. Archaeological finds illustrate that these dice were about an inch long and roughly bullet-shaped with a flat bottom. Some were also decorated. A die carved from fossilized ivory features rows of drilled holes. A wooden die features the head of a bear.

In maqaq players use a five-sided piece of wood or bone as a die. Each side has a different point value. Points are based on how the piece lands, and the score is kept with small tally sticks. Players toss the game piece, trying to make the die land on the smallest side, which is worth the most points.

Supplies:



Five-sided dice



16 tally sticks – use toothpicks, stir sticks, popsicle sticks, or something similar.

Play:

- Competitors sit in a circle, either two people or two teams.
- 16 tally sticks are placed in the center of the circle.
- Players/teams take turns rolling the maqaq.

Score:

- Each player/team scores the points earned for each roll, placing tally sticks in a pile in front of them.
- Once the tally sticks from the center pile are gone, players take points from their opponents.
- The first player/team to collect all 16 points twice in a row wins.

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Yaamaq – Rock Game

Set Up:

- Dig two shallow holes twenty to thirty feet apart.
- Stand a stake in the center of each hole.
- Bury the bottom of the stake, leaving a shallow depression around it. The depression should be about two hands wide.
- Collect smooth rocks about the size of your hand.
- You can play inside using cones and bean bags.

Play:

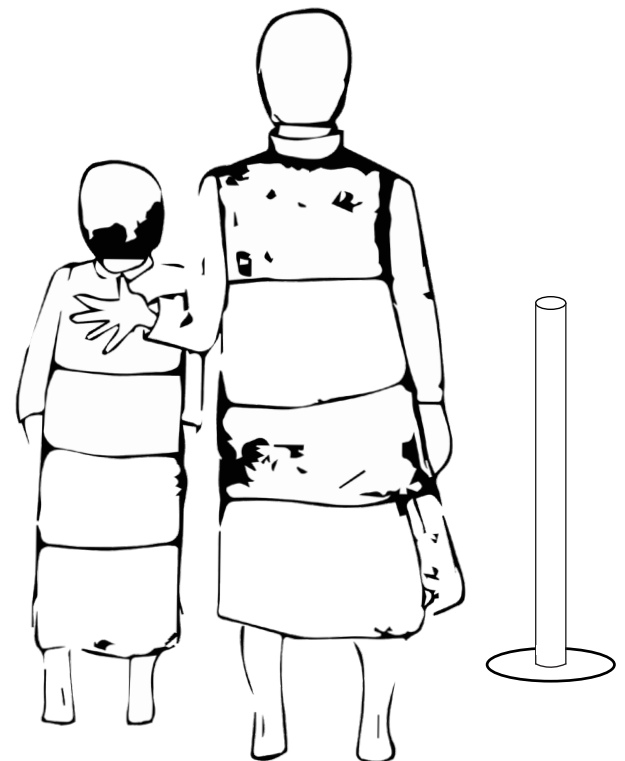
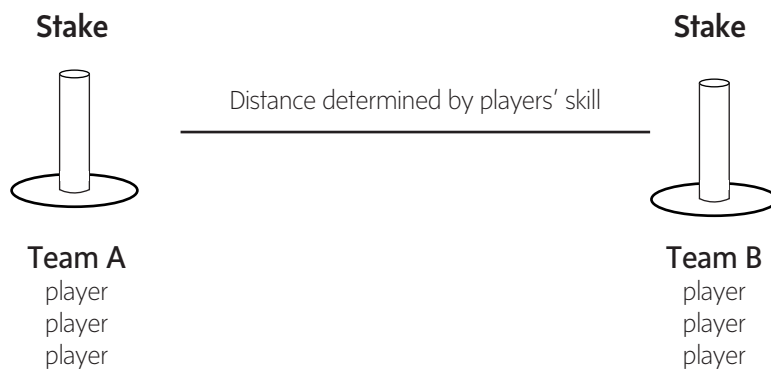
- Line up behind one stake and toss your rock at the other stake.
- Take turns throwing your rocks at the stakes to earn points.

Score:

- Earn two points for hitting the stake. You may not bounce your rock into the stake.
- Earn one point for throwing the rock that lands closest to the stake without hitting it.
- The first player or team to reach 16 points wins the match.
- The first player or team to win two matches wins the game.



Set up for Yaamaq



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Drawing from watercolor by Cheryl Lacy.