

# **CORNHOLE RULES, CHAPTER 1 – Cornhole Playing Equipment**

## **1.2 Small Town Saturday (STS) Approved**

### **STS Approved Boards:**

1. Hardwood plywood playing surface measuring 47.5” to 48” x 23.5” to 24”.
2. The playing surface has a minimum thickness of 1/2” with cross-section backing, or 3/4” with or without cross-section backing.
3. Each Board in a set should weigh no less than 25 lbs.
4. Each hole is 6” diameter, centered 9” from the top of the board and centered from each side edge.
5. The front of the board is 3” to 4” from the ground to the top of the playing surface.
6. The back of the board is 12” from the ground to the top of the playing surface.
7. The playing surface should be finished – sanded to a very smooth texture. There should be little to no blemishes in the wood surface that may disrupt or distort play.
8. The playing surface can be painted with a high gloss latex paint or varnish. The surface should allow bags to slide when thrown, but not be so slippery that the bags slide back down the platform.

### **STS Approved Bags**

- Each bag is made from two fabric squares with double-stitched seaming.
- The bags should be made from a durable fabric like canvas, twill, or synthetic suede.
- Each bag measures roughly 6” by 6” and weighs 15 to 16 ounces.

# **CORNHOLE RULES, CHAPTER 2 – Cornhole Court Layout**

## **2.1 Cornhole Court Layout**

Cornhole Court: Every effort will be made to make the court regulation size however if space is limited dimensions may be subject to change. A regulation size cornhole court is 8 feet wide and 40 feet long with a recommended vertical clearance of twelve (12) feet. If a tournament court has a clearance of less than 12 feet, it must be noted in the tourney listing prior to the event.

**This court consists of two (2) player's lanes:**

Lane 1: Designated pitchers boxes, on the left side of the board when your back is to the scoring tower

Lane 2: Designated pitchers boxes, on the right side of the board when your back is to the scoring tower

Cornhole Boards: Boards are positioned 27' from the front edge to front edge of the board.

Cornhole Pitchers Boxes: A designated pitchers box is a 4' x 3' area at each end of the court and on both sides of each board; (4) boxes in all.

Cornhole Foul Lines: The front edge of the cornhole board is the foul line.

Score tower

## **2.2 Cornhole Court Preparation and Maintenance**

Every effort shall be made to keep the cornhole playing surface in good playing condition. Players are responsible for making sure the court is in good playing condition prior to starting the match.

No foreign substance (such as Pledge®, talc powder, baby powder, silicone sprays) may be applied to the playing surface or bags by an individual player before or during cornhole play.

A dry clean cloth may be used to wipe down the boards prior to the start of the game.

# **CORNHOLE RULES, CHAPTER 3 – Cornhole Scoring**

## **3.1 Length of Games**

Traditional 21: The game shall be played to the pre-determined number of twenty-one (21) points. The first player/team to reach (or exceed) that amount at the conclusion of a frame is the winner. In the event the tournament is larger than expected, a time limit will be placed on the games and the winners will be determined by who is ahead at the end of the time limit or reaches 21 first. If a time limit is imposed, you will be notified ahead of the tournament.

## **3.2 Cornhole Scoring – Bag Terms**

Woody – Refers to any cornhole bag that has been pitched and remains on the cornhole board playing surface at the conclusion of the frame.

Cornhole – Refers to any cornhole bag that has been pitched and passes through the cornhole board hole at any time within the frame.

Foul Bags – Refers to any cornhole bag that has not been determined as a “woody” or “cornhole”, or was designated a foul bag as the result of rules violation.

## **3.3 Designated Foul Bags**

Any bag pitched without at least one foot or appendage completely inside the pitcher’s box at the time of release.

Any bag not pitched within the 15 second time limit.

A bag pitched from a different pitcher’s box than their designated pitcher’s box.

Any bag that contacted the court or the ground before coming to rest on the playing surface.

Any bag that comes to rest touching the ground and the board.

Any bag which struck a previously defined object such as a tree limb, wire, indoor court ceiling, etc.

## **3.4 Methods of Scoring**

Cancellation Scoring: The approved method of scoring for the sport of cornhole is “cancellation” scoring. In cancellation scoring, the points of one player cancel out the points of their opponent. Using this method, only one player/team can score in each frame.

Woody: Each woody is worth one (1) point

Cornhole: Each cornhole is worth three (3) points

*Example:*

*Red achieves one (1) woody and two (2) cornholes during the frame (7 total pts)*

*Blue achieves two (2) woodies and zero (0) cornholes during the frame (2 total pts)*

*7 points – 2 points = Red scores 5 points for that frame*

### **3.5 Recording the Score**

No cornhole bags shall be moved before the scoring is determined. If this decision is in doubt, a Certified Official shall be called to determine the scoring for the frame in question.

Recording the Score: Players are encouraged to pay close attention to the score at all times. Players are required to update their score on the score tower at the conclusion of each frame. Players may call upon the Certified Official between frames if any discrepancy occurs regarding the correct score.

Calling the Score: When a third party is being used to manage the score tower, it is the responsibility of the player/ team who scores in each frame to call out the score to the score keeper. It is the responsibility of the players/teams to ensure the score is represented correctly on the score tower at the conclusion of each frame before moving to the next frame.

## **CORNHOLE RULES, CHAPTER 4 – Play of the Cornhole Game**

### **Doubles Play**

Team A competes against Team B – each team is comprised of two (2) people.

Players may not be substituted once the tournament has started.

In the event that a player has been signed up but cannot participate, you are required to notify Small Town Saturday of the new player participating in their stead at least 12 hours prior the start of the tournament. Teams must be comprised of two players. In the event that you cannot find a substitute or you fail to notify STS, your team will be disqualified and your opponent will be advanced to the next round.

Each team will stay in their designated lane for the whole game.

Players at the headboard will alternate pitching bags until each player has pitched all (4) of his/her bags.

Players at the footboard will take score and resume pitching back to the other cornhole board.

## **4.2 Pitching Rotation, Lane Assignments, & Bag Color**

The First Pitch, Lane Assignments, and Bag Color: The format of the tournament will help determine first pitch, lane assignments and bag color.

**The tournament will be randomly seeded. There will be two coin tosses before each match. The higher seeded team gets to call heads or tails on the first toss. The lower seeded team will call heads or tails on the second toss.**

### **Coin toss #1**

The team winning the coin-toss chooses their bag color or chooses who pitches first.

The team losing the coin toss gets to choose the other option.

### **Coin toss #2**

1. Winner chooses the lane assignments OR who they want to pitch against.
2. The team losing the coin toss gets to pick the other option.

Example: If option #1 is selected, the coin toss winner chooses their lane and takes their positions in the Pitcher's boxes, then the opposing team chooses their own Pitcher's boxes to determine head-to-head match-ups(who they want to throw against)

If option #2 is selected, the coin toss loser chooses their lane and takes their positions in the Pitcher's boxes, then the coin toss winner will choose their own Pitcher's boxes to determine head-to-head match-ups.

If playing best 2 out of 3 matches, the First Pitch and Pre-Match option choices go to the coin toss loser in the second game. If a third game is necessary, another coin toss will decide who has the options.

## **4.3 Pitching Cornhole Bags**

### **Pitching**

Players alternate pitching bags (one player at a time) until each player has pitched all (4) of his/her bags.

A player must pitch all (4) cornhole bags from their designated cornhole pitchers box.

Players must deliver the bag with an under-hand release.

One foot or appendage must be completely within the pitchers box at the time of releasing the bag.

When pitching a bag, players must release the bag before any part of the player's body touches the ground on or beyond the foul line

### **Pitching the Next Frame:**

The player/team who scored in the preceding frame shall pitch first in the next frame. If neither player/team scores, the player/team who pitched first in the preceding frame shall retain first pitch in the next frame.

### **Accidental Release**

Any cornhole bag that leaves a players hand once the final step (if taken) and final forward swing of the delivery process has started, shall count as a pitched bag.

A cornhole bag that is accidentally dropped by a player before the final step (if taken) and final forward swing has started, shall not be considered a foul bag and may be picked up and pitched.

### **Pitching Out of Turn:**

If a player pitches out of turn at any time during a frame, their pitch will be considered a Foul Bag and swept from the playing surface.

If the out-of-turn bag affects any bags in play, their opponent has the option of returning all cornhole bags to their original position on the playing surface or leaving all bags as they are.

If the error is not discovered until after two (2) cornhole bags have been pitched, the frame shall continue and be score accordingly.

If no agreement can be reached, a Certified Official shall be called. The Certified Official shall either determine the scoring or void the inning and order it to be repitched.

### **Touching the bags before the Frame is complete:**

If any bags in scoring positions (woodies or cornholes) are touched by a player, whether intentionally or unintentionally, before all bags during the frame are pitched, the frame is over.

The offending team (team who touches the bags) forfeits all remaining bags and tallies the score for the bags they have already thrown during the frame

The non-offending team tallies 12 points as if they had thrown 4 cornholes during the frame.

*IMPORTANT NOTE: 12 pts are NOT automatically added the overall score(scoreboard). The 12 pts are only used within this specific frame before cancellation.*

*EXAMPLE:*

*Red has thrown 3 bags equaling 5 points to this point in the frame*

*Blue has thrown 3 bags equaling 8 points to this point in the frame*

*Blue accidentally reaches down and grabs the bags*

*The frame is over*

*Blue's remaining bag is declared dead and their previous points are tallied*

*Red tallies 12 points for the frame, as if they had thrown 4 cornholes*

*12 Red points – 8 Blue points*

*Red scores 4 points for that frame*

*Time Limits – Pitching and Scoring*

### **Pitching**

A player must pitch each cornhole bag within fifteen (15) seconds of their opponent's bag coming to rest.

*\* Exceptions may be made by the Tournament Official considering any physical disabilities or difficulties*

### **Scoring**

The frame will be scored 5 seconds after the last bag is pitched, comes to rest, and all bags on the playing surface have stopped moving. Any bag that moves in position after 5 seconds will be scored based on its previous position.

If timing cannot be agreed on, the Tournament Official will score or negate the frame.

## **Other General Rules**

### **Moving Cornhole Boards and Bags:**

A player can only straighten cornhole boards in between frames and with the approval of their opponent. A Tournament Official may be called to determine re-placement if a discrepancy is in question.

### **A player may only cross the foul line and approach the opposite board during a frame under three (3) circumstances:**

1. A timeout has been called
2. To Rake bags piled inside the cornhole board hole
3. To Sweep bags (that are considered foul bags) from the playing surface

### **Timeouts**

Each player or team is allowed two 1 minute time outs per game.

A player may only call a time out when it is his/her turn to pitch.

Both players may walk to the other boards to examine bag position during the time out.

Players may not touch the cornhole bags or boards during a timeout.

*Important Note: Official time outs may be granted in the case of a busted cornhole bag, equipment malfunctions, or other circumstances at the discretion of the Tournament Official. A player will not be charged for time out.*

### **Raking Cornhole Bags**

If bags become piled inside the cornhole board hole and may interfere or obstruct with the next pitch or if there is question as to whether a cornhole bag would have naturally fallen through the hole, a player may request to “rake” the cornhole bags that have fallen inside the hole. To request a rake, the player must audibly ask.

One or both players may walk to the other board and rake the bags from under the board (one player raking and one player watching.)

A spectator may be called to rake the bags if both players agree.

A tournament official may be called to rake the bags if a discrepancy is in question.

Anytime 4 cornhole bags have entered the hole or piled bags are visible in the hole a player may request a “rake” and will not be charged a time-out.

*Important note: During raking, all efforts should be made to leave bags on the playing surface undisrupted, in their natural state, and to leave bags that may hang on the rim of the hole from falling inside the hole unnaturally. If a bag is resting on a piled bag, and unavoidably falls into the hole as a result of raking, then it shall be counted as a “cornhole.”*

### **Sweeping Cornhole Bags**

If a foul bag lands on the playing surface or comes to rest touching the ground and the board, it must be removed immediately.

If a player pitches a foul bag which affects any bags in play, their opponent has the option of returning all cornhole bags to their original position on the playing surface or leaving all bags as they are.

## **CHAPTER 5 –Player Conduct**

### **5.1 Player Conduct**

#### **On the Courts**

A cornhole player/team while in competition, shall make no disturbing noises or movements that would distract the opponent or players on surrounding courts. Other inappropriate behavior would include profanity, abusive language, obscene gestures, flipping bags, etc.

**Smoking/chewing tobacco or vaping is not permitted while playing cornhole.**

**Eating/Food will be prohibited during game play.**

**Drinks ARE allowed in proximity to game play but must be placed more than 3 feet behind the board/your own pitcher’s box. If it makes more sense depending on the set up of the tournament, you may have them on the sides as well as long as it’s more than 3 feet away from a pitcher’s box and doesn’t interfere with other players (This may be at official’s discretion)**

**You may not drink (any drink) or eat while you or your opponent are throwing against each other.**

**You may drink when your team mate is throwing but keep the pace of game in mind. 15 seconds per bag.**

**Alcohol may or may not be permitted, while playing cornhole, depending on the rules in place for the beer garden according to the state/city. Check with officials at the time of the tournament.**

**If spilling drinks becomes a problem, it will be banned for the rest of the tournament.**

Participants will be asked to discontinue smoking/vaping/chewing and/or change clothing by the official and will get one warning only. Participants that do not comply with dress code/tobacco policy after the one warning will cause their team to be disqualified from the tournament. In the event that you are asked to change or add clothing, you will be given adequate time to find appropriate clothing. The participant will be allowed to continue but must comply as soon as possible and/or before the next game.

### **Penalties**

A player may call on a Tournament Official to enforce a rule at any time. If the Official deems action is required:

- The first offense shall call for a warning from the Official.
- A second offense shall call for a second and final warning.
- A third offense shall call for forfeiture of the game being played.
- Any further offenses may call for disqualification from the Tournament/Event.

### **Sportsmanship**

Any cornhole player who indulges in heckling or unfair rooting, uses profanity or abusive language, makes obscene gestures, or exhibits any other form of un-sportsmanlike conduct toward other players, Tournament Officials, or others who are in the area of the courts, shall be subject to expulsion from the Tournament/Event and from the event site.

### **Giving/Receiving Player Advice**

It is legal for a teammate or spectator to provide advice on bag position and/or next pitch recommendation.