

## History & Rules of Shuffleboard

Called SHOVELBOARD, original name SHOVEBOARD, game in which discs are shoved by hand or with an implement so that they come to a stop on or within a scoring area marked on the board or court (on a floor, or outdoor hard surface such as concrete). It was popular in England as early as the 15th century, especially with the aristocracy, under the names shovegroat, slide-groat, and shovel-penny. Some of the great country houses had boards of exquisite workmanship: that at Chartley Hall, in Staffordshire, was over 30ft. (9m) long.

It is said that Henry VIII banned the sport among his archers because they would spend too much time playing the game, and not enough time on archery. Wars could not be won with a Shoveboard Cue!

In later times, a modified form of the old game became popular among travellers on ocean liners and cruise ships as a deck game. For the shipboard version, called Shuffleboard, courts of various designs were marked on the deck, with lined sections at either end, numbered one to ten; the section nearest the player, called 10 off, reduced the score by 10.

Shuffleboard was introduced about 1913 at Daytona Beach, Florida, as a game on land. So popular was the game that it spread rapidly through the United States, particularly in retirement communities, with each community devising its own rules of play. The modern form of Shuffleboard was defined at St. Petersburg, Florida in 1924.

### Rules of the Game

The rules adopted then, and later by the National Shuffleboard Association (founded 1931 at St. Petersburg), defined the size and shape of courts (concrete or terrazzo, 6 x 52 ft.); the maximum length of the cues (6 ft, 3 in.); the discs (either wood or composition, 1 by 6 in. [2 1/2 x 15 m]; four red, four black); and methods of play and scoring.

Shuffleboard may be played by two persons (singles) or four (doubles), shooting alternately with red and black discs. In singles, when eight shots have been made, players move to the opposite end of the court. In doubles, team players remain at the ends they occupy at the beginning of the game, though the play alternates as in singles. Games may be played to 50, 75 or 100 points, as players desire. To count, discs must be entirely within scoring sections, clearing all lines. In match play (best two out of three games), the second game is started with a black disc.

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#### Last Updated

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