THE CARTOON BOOK OF

GAELIC HANDBALL



SPORT ON EARTH

Sport on Earth Books · The Traditional & regional Family

Original illustrations · No characters were copied in the making of this book

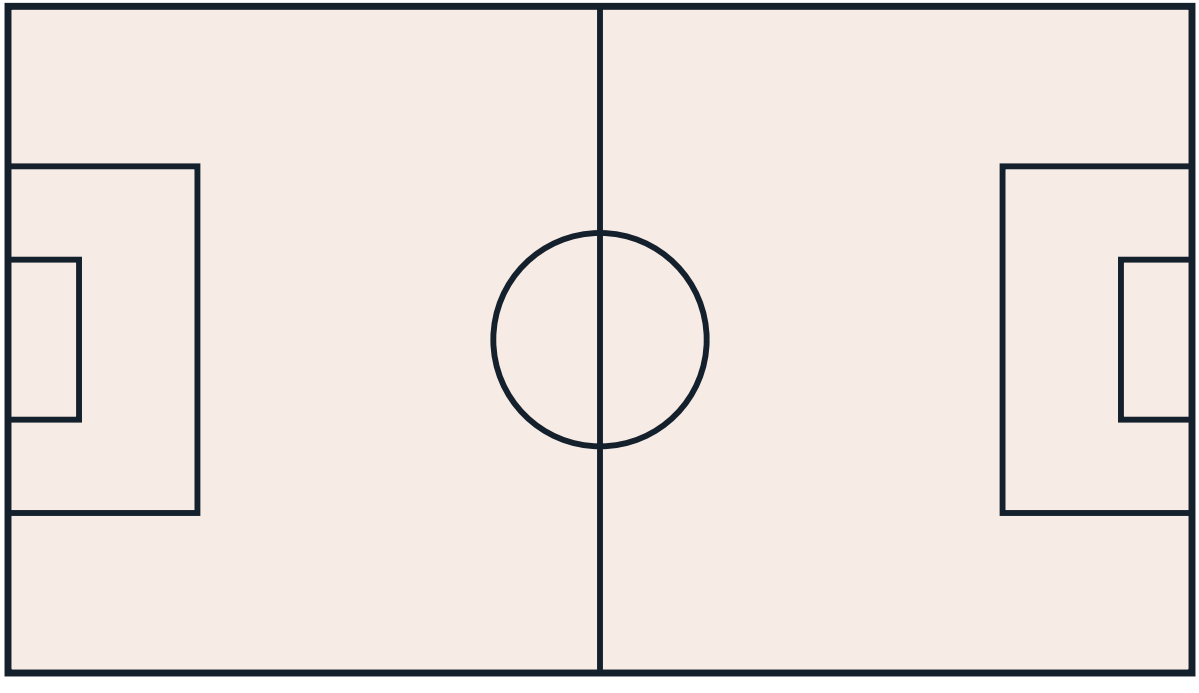
Meet Gaelic Handball!

Irish wall handball played with gloved hands.



Where It Is Played

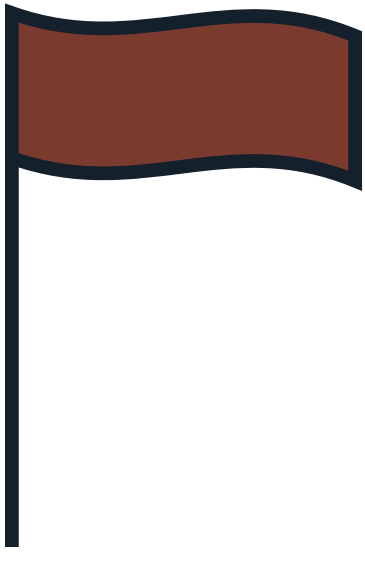
The International 4-Wall court (40x20) has a front wall 20 ft wide and 20 ft high and a floor 20 ft wide by 40 ft long; the Irish 60x30 court has a front wall 30 ft wide and 27 ft high and a floor 30 ft wide by 60 ft long, each with a short line, a service line 5 ft in front of it and service boxes.



The Gear

A handball appropriate to the code (4-Wall, Wallball, Softball or Hardball), gloves, eye-guards and court shoes as set out in the rules' equipment section.





How It Starts

Find a 4-wall or one-wall court, serve from the service zone so the ball hits the front wall and rebounds past the short line, and rally by returning the ball to the front wall before its second bounce.



How to Play

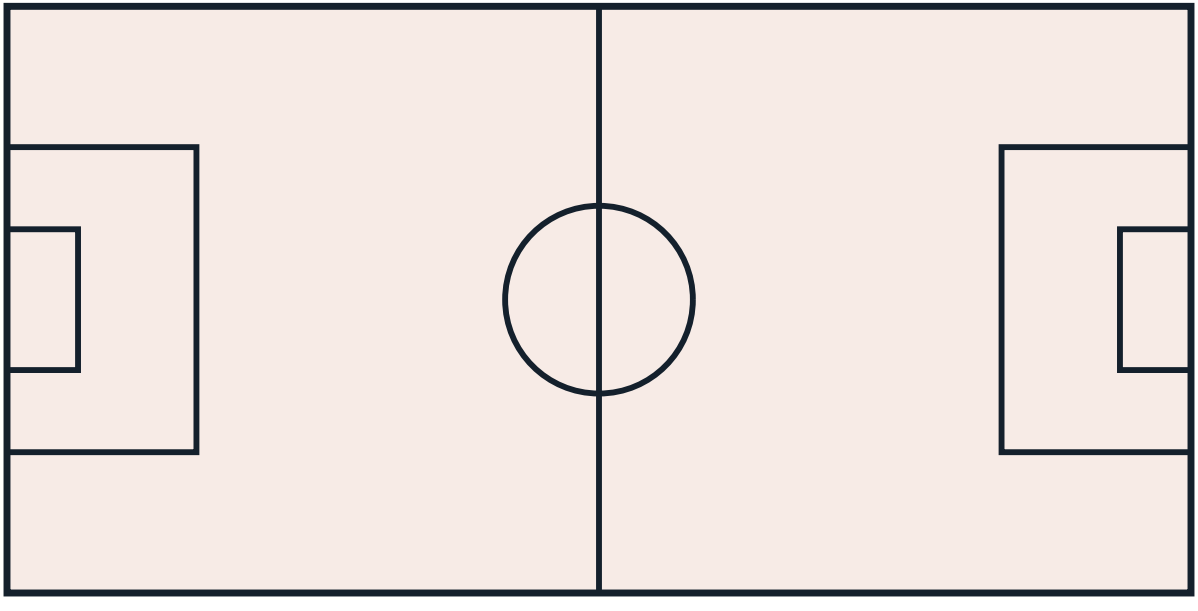
- Four codes of handball are played in Ireland: 4-Wall, Wallball, and 60x30 Softball and Hardball; the 4-Wall and Wallball codes are played internationally while Softball and Hardball are played only in Ireland, and every code can be played as singles (two players) or doubles (four players).
- The ball is struck against the front wall with any part of the hand from the wrist line down, and the objective is to return the ball to the front wall before the ball bounces twice.
- To earn a point, a player must serve the ball and win the ensuing rally (unless rally scoring is in use); a rally is won when the opponent cannot return the shot to the front wall before it touches the floor twice, or returns it so that it hits the floor before striking the front wall.
- A point scored directly from the serve, when the receiver cannot return the served ball legally, is called an Ace.

More of the Game

- When the serving side loses one rally in singles, or two consecutive rallies in doubles, it loses the serve; losing the serve is called a Hand-Out, and two consecutive Hand-Outs in doubles is a Side-Out.
- In Irish Championships matches are the best of three sets: adults and minors play sets to 21 points, juveniles U16 and U17 play sets to 21 with a tiebreak to 11, and juveniles U15 and younger play sets to 15; under international rules all tiebreakers are played to 11 points.
- The server may serve from any place in the service zone and must remain in the service zone until the served ball passes the short line; stepping beyond the service zone lines is a foot fault, and a serve that hits the front wall and rebounds onto or in front of the short line is a short serve, a defective serve.
- The receiver must stand behind the receiver's restraining lines until the ball is struck by the server and must not cross the plane of the short line when making the return of serve.

The Shape of a Match

Singles or doubles wall-ball: serve and rally a small ball against the front wall by hand, with only the serving side scoring, in best-of-three sets to 21 points.



More of the Traditional & regional Family

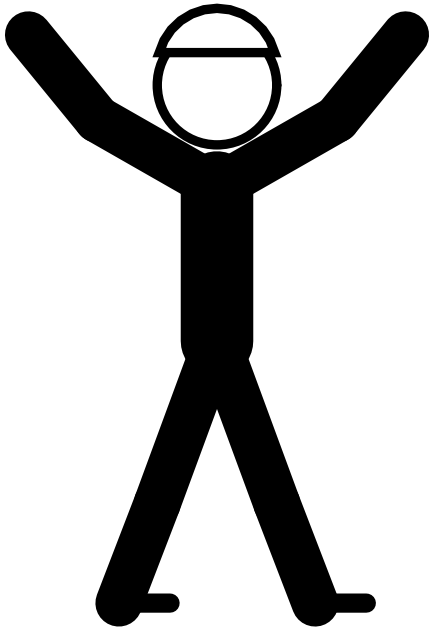
- Kabaddi — A raider tries to tag defenders and return to their own half while holding one breath, chanting.
- Sepak Takraw — Southeast Asian kick volleyball with a rattan ball.
- Pelota and Jai Alai — Basque ball games played off a wall.
- Calcio Storico — Florentine mix of rugby, wrestling and boxing in a sand pit.
- Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling — English race chasing a cheese wheel down a hill.
- Eton Wall Game — Eton College's slow wall-side football variant.

A Note on the Rules

Gaelic handball is governed by GAA Handball (and the World Wall Ball Association internationally) under alley codes (60x30, 40x20 and one-wall traditions) that are stable heritage forms within the Gaelic games family. No major documented rule change is carried for Gaelic handball.

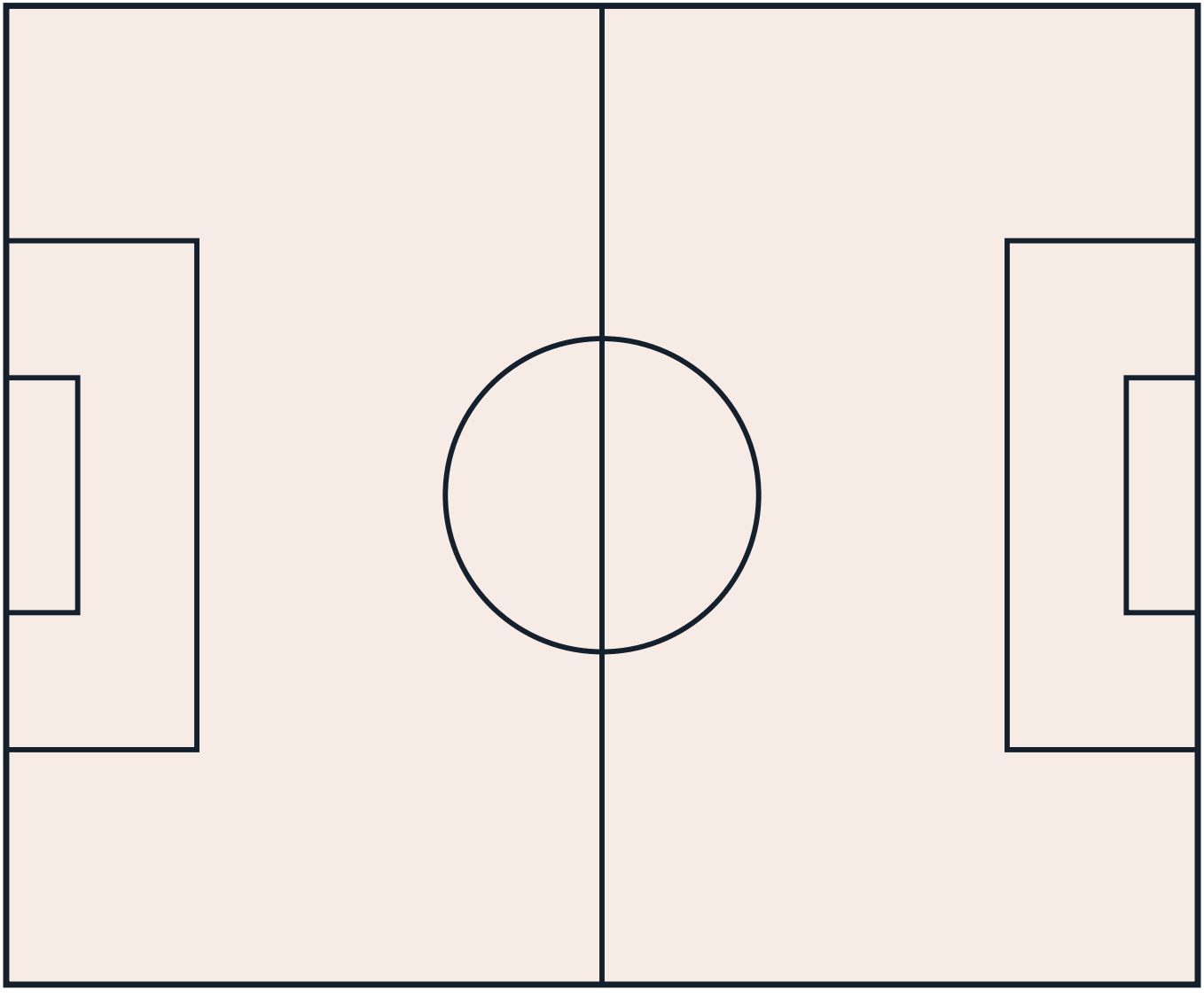


Colour the Action



Psst — this page is a colouring page!

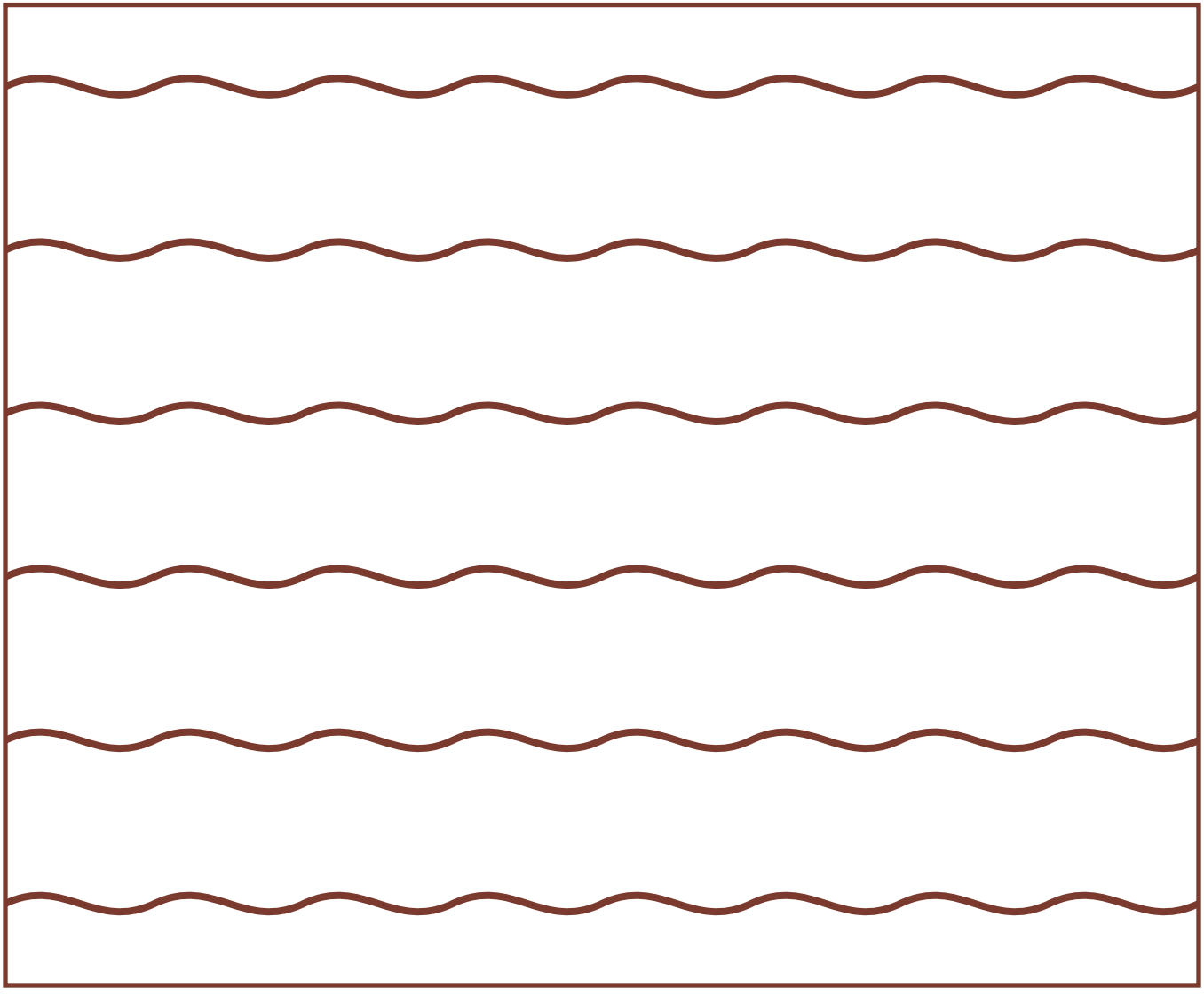
The Sport Today



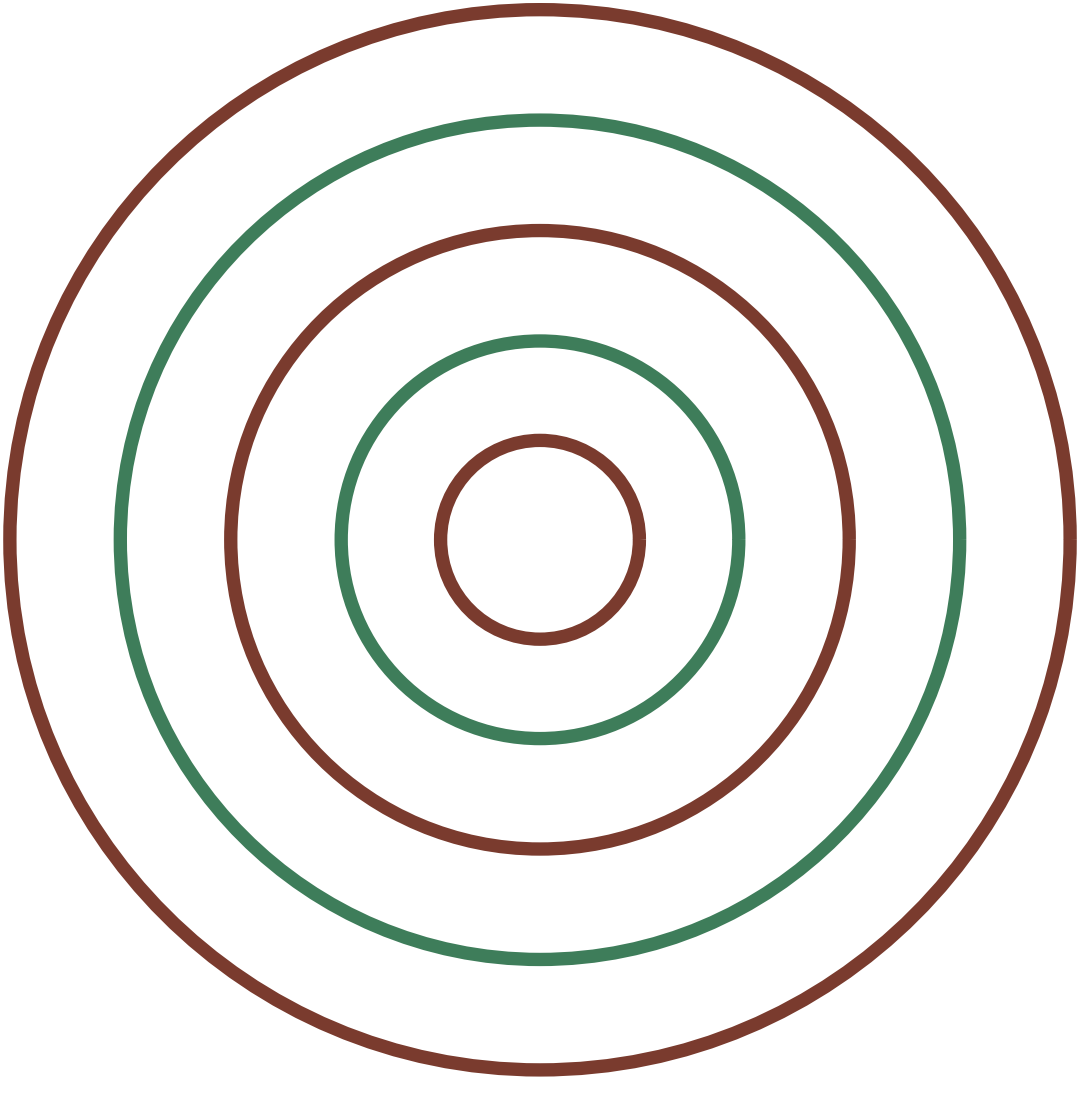
At School and College



Play It Near You



Through the Year

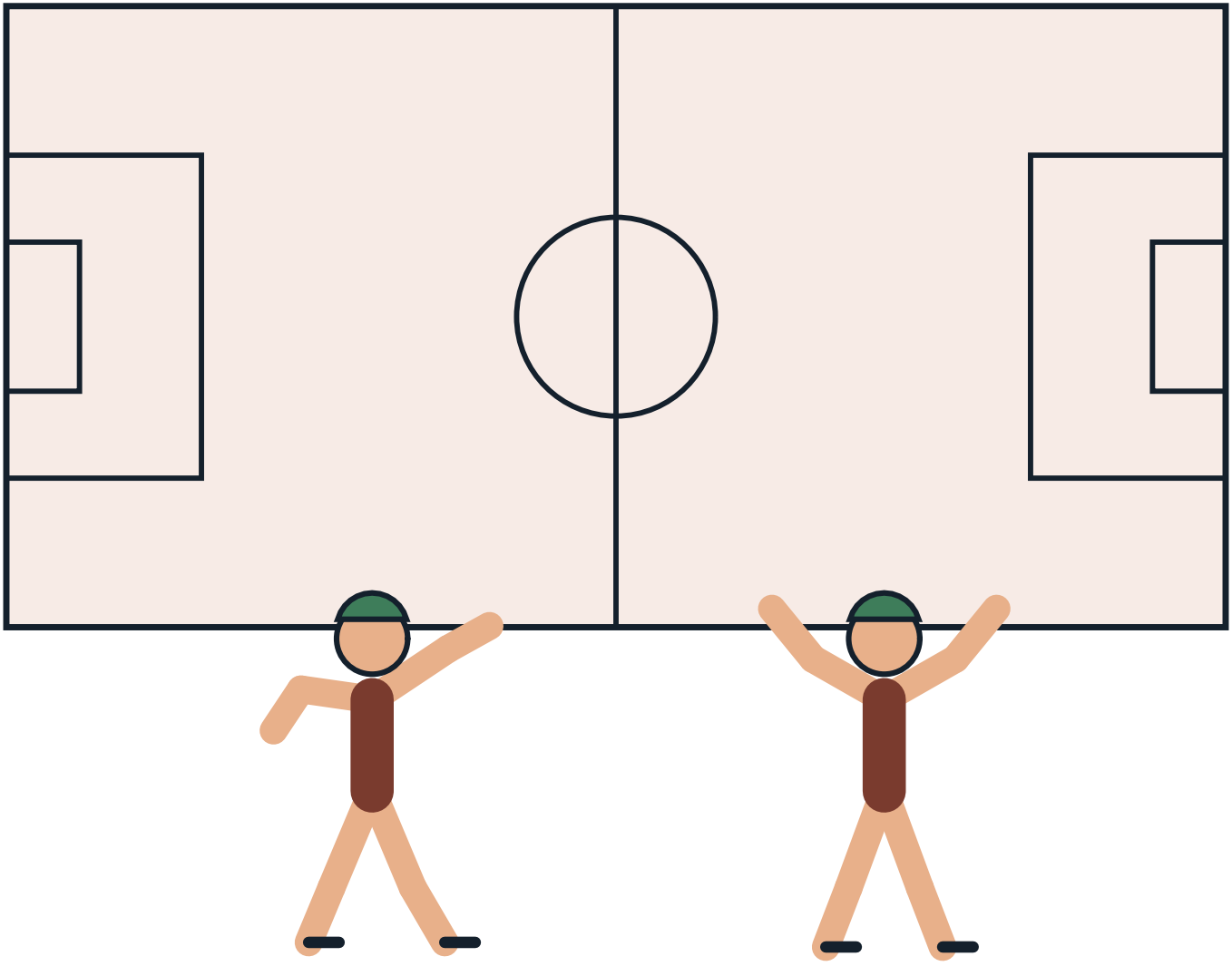


The Traditional & regional Family

Every sport belongs to a family of games that share its shapes and skills. Here are some of this book's closest relatives — each with a cartoon book and a colouring book of its own.

- Kabaddi — A raider tries to tag defenders and return to their own half while holding one breath, chanting.
- Sepak Takraw — Southeast Asian kick volleyball with a rattan ball.
- Pelota and Jai Alai — Basque ball games played off a wall.
- Calcio Storico — Florentine mix of rugby, wrestling and boxing in a sand pit.
- Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling — English race chasing a cheese wheel down a hill.

Game Day!

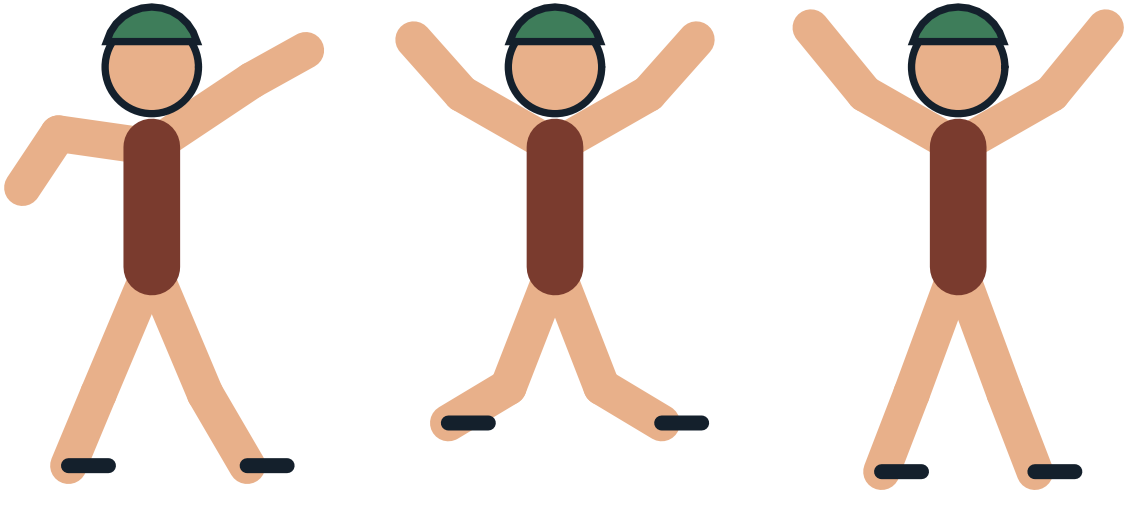


The Sport on Earth Mark

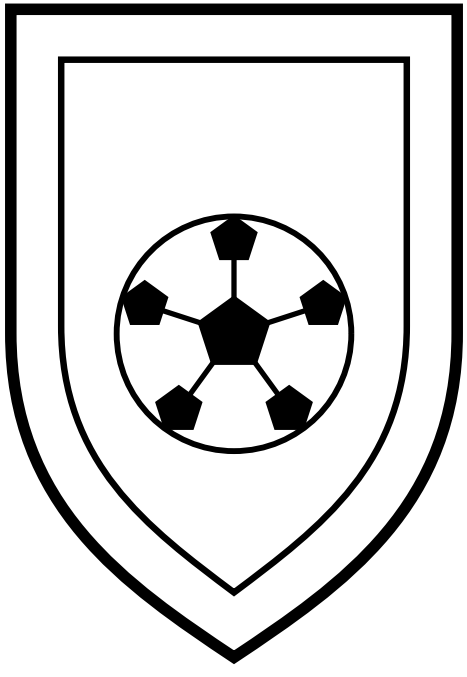
Every sport on Sport on Earth carries its own original mark, drawn for the site. Here is this sport's.



Moves of the Game



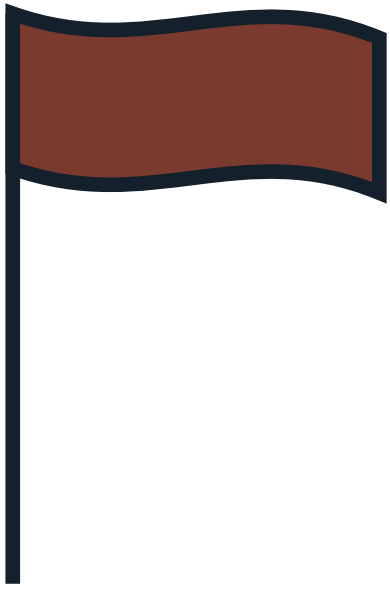
Design a Badge



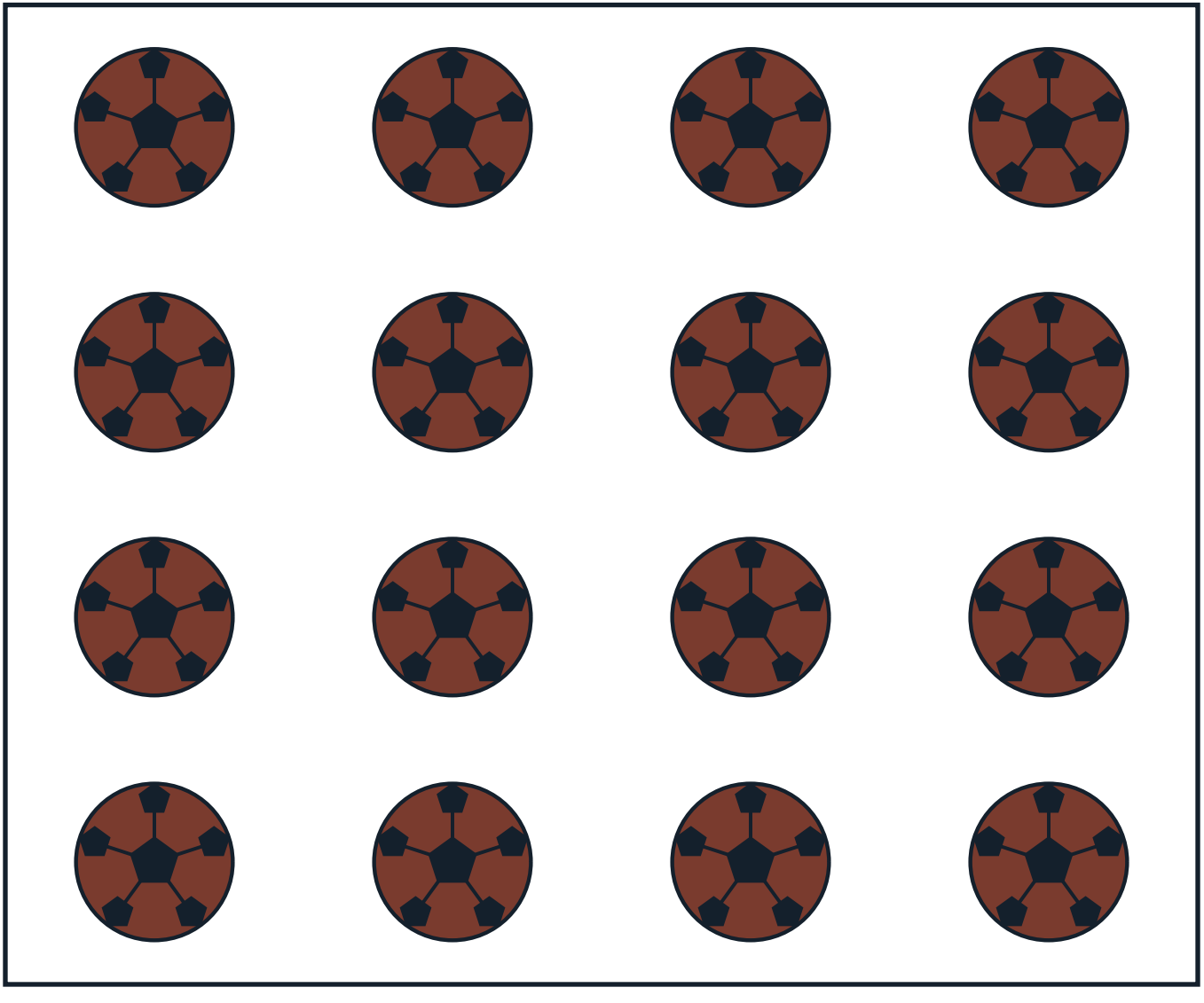
Draw and colour a badge for your own team.

The Gear Parade

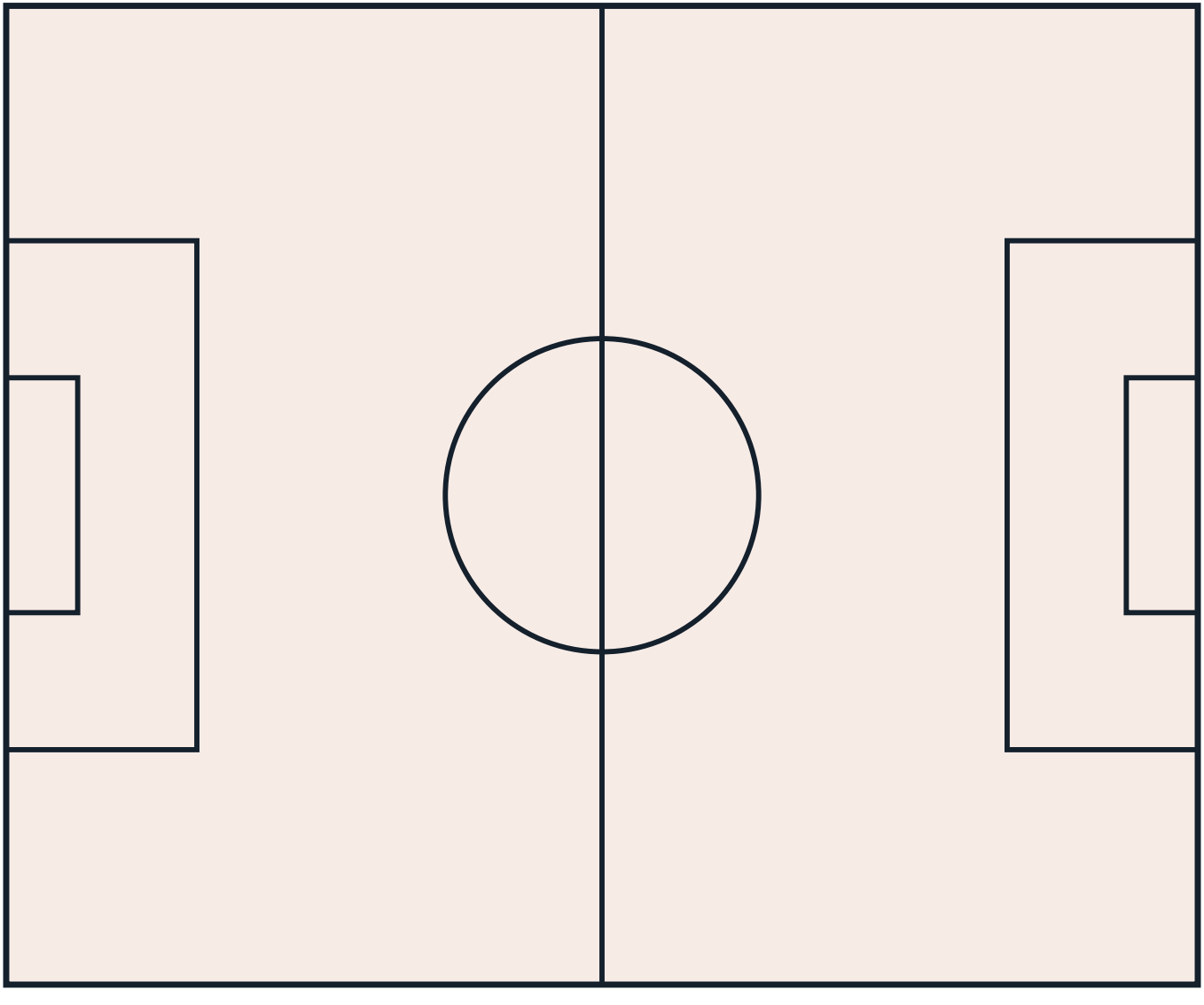




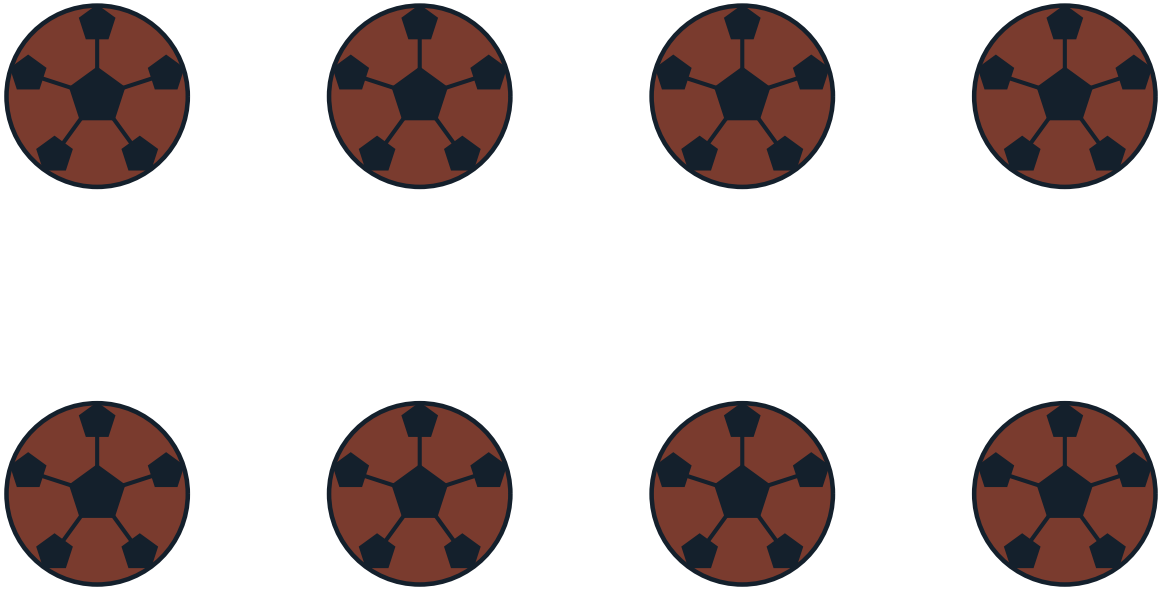
Pattern Play



The Arena From Above



Count the Balls!



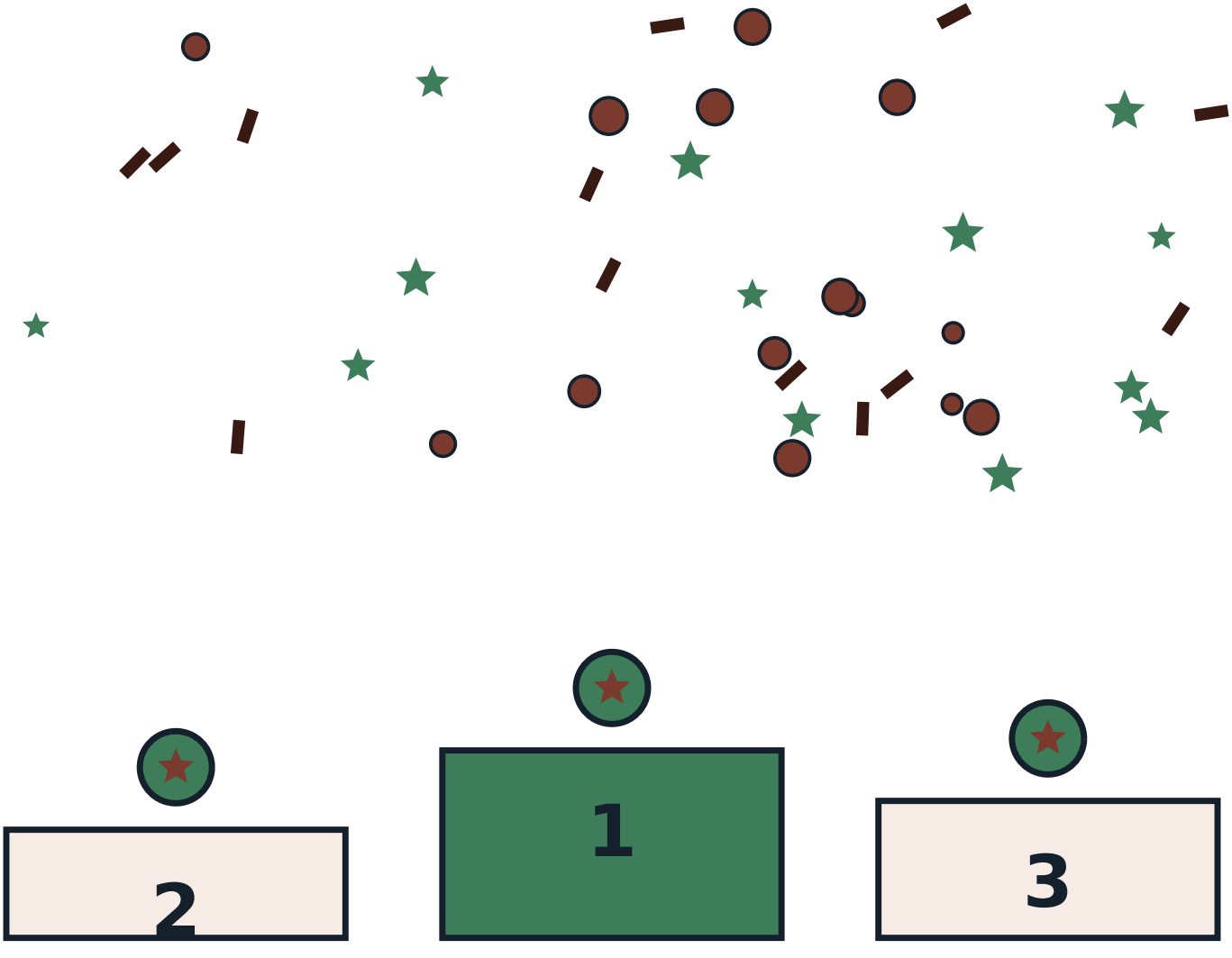
How many can you count? Write the number here: _____

My Favourite Part of Gaelic Handball

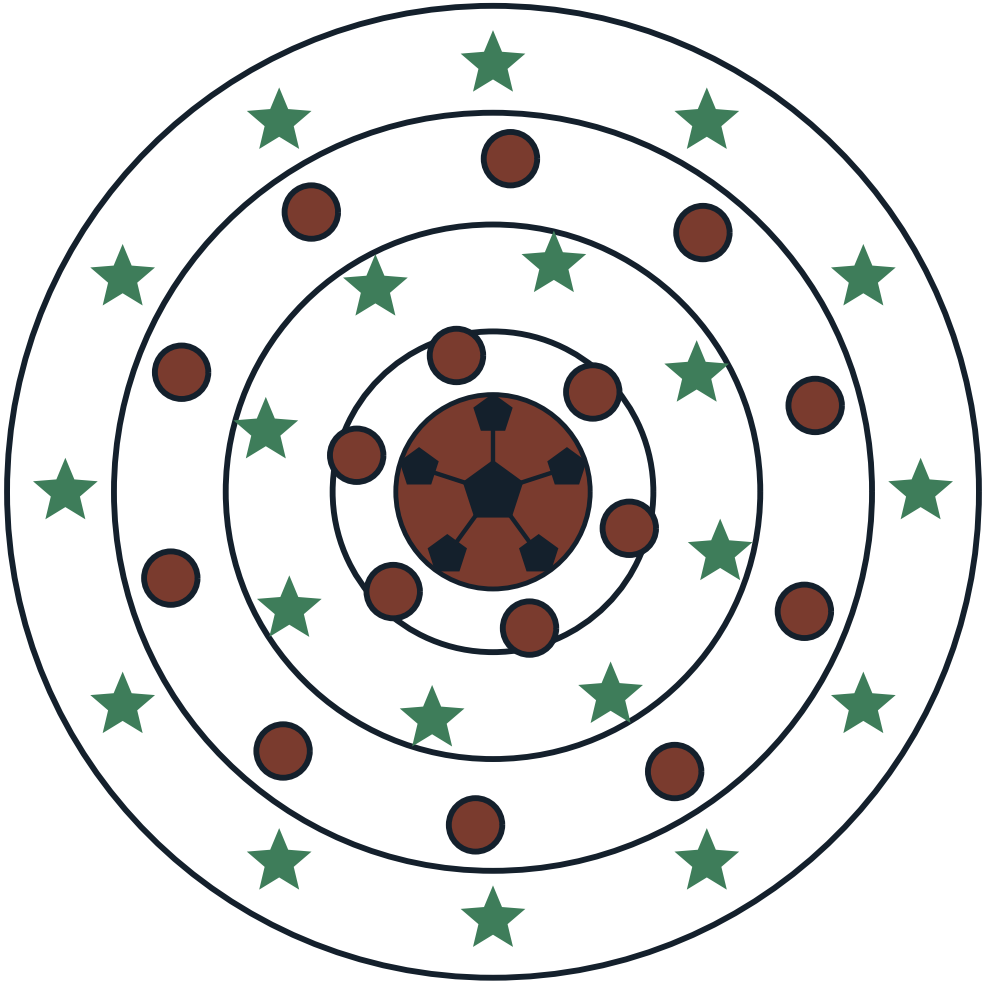
Gear Close-Up



Champions!



The Mandala of the Game



About This Book

Governing body: GAA Handball. Laws edition the site's rules file follows: GAA Handball Playing Rules, 9 February 2025 (4-Wall, Wallball and 60x30 Softball & Hardball). Everything in this book comes from Sport on Earth's own verified sport files — the same words you can read on the sport's page at Sport on Earth. The illustrations are original artwork drawn by computer for this book series. They are not pictures of real players, real teams or anybody else's characters.

More Books in the Family

- The Cartoon Book of Kabaddi
- The Cartoon Book of Sepak Takraw
- The Cartoon Book of Pelota and Jai Alai
- The Cartoon Book of Calcio Storico
- The Cartoon Book of Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling
- The Cartoon Book of Eton Wall Game
- The Kabaddi Colouring Book
- The Sepak Takraw Colouring Book

My Notes

Gaelic Handball

The Cartoon Book of Gaelic Handball — a Sport on Earth Book.

Text from Sport on Earth's verified sport files. Illustrations: original programmatic artwork created for this series, including the site's own sport mark. No copyrighted characters, team logos or player likenesses appear in this book.

Collect the whole shelf: a cartoon book and a colouring book for every one of the 442 sports and games on Sport on Earth.

