

# Gateball So Simple

- Gateball is a game played between two teams, each with five players.
- Gateball is a 30-minute game.
- The leading team uses red balls [odd numbers] and the following team uses white balls [even number].
- Each ball is numbered from 1 to 10. It indicates the stroking order which alternates between the red and the white balls. Each player strokes his/her own ball, with the number corresponding to the stroking order.
- The player strokes the ball from the start area towards the first gate to pass the ball through it. Then, the player aims to pass his/her ball through the second gate and the third gate in that order, with his/her play finishing when the ball strikes the goal-pole.
- One point is awarded each time the ball passes through the first, second and third gates, while two points are awarded when the ball hits the goal-pole, so that a player scores a total of five points. The team therefore scores 25 points if all five team members finish, which is defined as a perfect game.

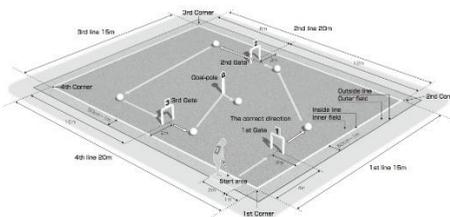
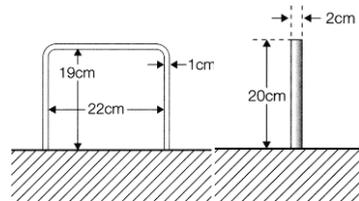
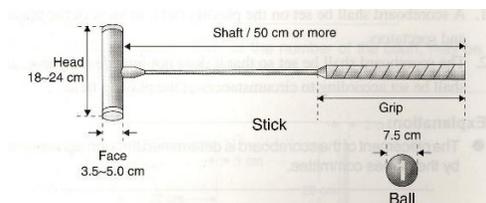
Points Awarded	
Ball passing through the first gate	1
Ball passing through the second gate	1
Ball passing through the third gate	1
Finished ball	2
<b>Total number of points</b>	<b>5</b>

- When a ball passes through the gate in the correct order and is awarded a point the stroker gains the right for a continuation stroke.

- The winning team is the team with the greatest number of points at the end of the game, 30-minutes.

## The Necessary Equipment

Gateball requires four types of equipment – the stick, the ball, the gate and the goal-pole. There are 10 balls – Red 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, and White 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10.



## Touches and Sparks

Touches and Sparks play important roles in the Gateball game.

### Touch

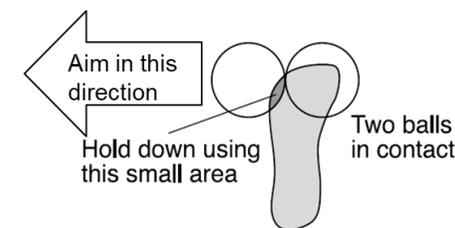
A touch refers to stroking one's ball so that it hits another ball [belonging either to one's own team or the other team]. If both the stroker's ball that has been stroked and the touched ball remain in the inner field, the stroker gains the right to spark.

After a successful spark is achieved the stroker gains the right for a continuation stroke.

Hint. Stroke the ball so that both your own ball and the other ball remain on the inner field.

### How to Spark

1. Pick up the touched ball.
2. Point left hand in direction of intended spark [if you are right handed, if left handed point right hand in direction of intended spark].
3. Step firmly on your ball where it stopped [using your left foot slightly forward of your instep if you are a right-handed stroker, place your right foot behind you no less than 1 metre, if a left-handed stroker use your right foot slightly forward of your instep to step firmly on the ball where it stopped, place your left foot behind you no less than 1 metre].



4. Place the touched ball so that it is in contact with your own ball, and in the direction that you want to stroke the ball.
5. Remove your hand from the touched ball ensure knee is bent forward, ensure that your weight is over knee.
6. Stroke your own ball so that only the touched ball moves.
7. Remove your foot from your own ball.

A successful Spark gives the player the right to stroke his/her ball once more.

Hint. When sparking, consider the overall development of the game and strike the touching ball in a direction that is advantageous to your team. For example, if the ball belongs to your team, pass it through a gate, and if it belongs to the other team, make the ball an “out-ball” or spark it to where the next player in your team can gain an advantage from it [make sure that the ball number doesn’t stroke before your next player’s turn].

## **Individual skills and team skills [cooperative skills]**

The structure of skills in Gateball is similar to Croquet. This is because the game is played with only one player ever stroking at one time and therefore requires a high level of individual skill. In addition, the game skill [team strategy] that develops with every turn not only adds a sense of thrill to the game, however can also be described as a “mind game” that can be enjoyed equally by the spectators as they try and predict the outcome of the game.

The structure of skills in Gateball can be summarised as follows:

1. The skill of being able to “control the ball” is everything when stroking the ball, and the team or the individual’s mental control, such as being able to predict the development of the game and powers of concentration are also highly relevant to the game.
2. Because only one player is ever playing at one time during the game, “linked skills” that are relevant to the team’s next stroker are an important aspect of “team skills”. In many cases, therefore, the game requires not only individual skills but also the psychological element of “teamwork”.
3. “Game skills” [team strategy] can be divided into “a strategy that enables one’s team to score” as a result of the formation of the balls and a Touch [an offensive play] and “a strategy to prevent the other

team from scoring [a defensive play]. In addition, as the team’s strategy can easily affect the outcome of the game, there is a strong relationship between strategy and individual and team skills.

## **History of Gateball – A sport born in Japan**

Gateball is a Japan-born sport invented by Eiji Suzuki of Memuro town, Hokkaido in 1947 as a game to be played by children during the turbulent times after the World War II, inspired by the popular traditional European game of Croquet. The local children immediately fell in love with it and the town was filled with their joyous voices playing Gateball.

## **From Japan to the World**

From the 1960s to the 70s, Gateball gradually gained popularity among all ages all over Japan. During the 80s, Gateball began spreading from Japan to world, starting from China, South Korea, Brazil, USA and Chinese Taipei. The World Gateball Union was founded in 1985 and 16 countries and regions are its members now.

In 1986, the first World Gateball Championship (WGC) was conducted by the World Gateball Union (WGU) was held in Hokkaido, the birthplace of Gateball. Up until 1990 it was an annual event and from 1994 onward it has been held once every four years.

Parallel to the WGU activities, the South America Gateball Union (SAGU) which is organising the South America Gateball Championship (SAGC) every two years, and the Asian Gateball Union (AGU) which is holding the Asian Gateball Championship (AGC) every four years, were set up in 1987 and 1991 respectively.

70 years have passed since its birth. The three charms of Gateball – being a team sport, and intellectual and strategic sport, and a “universal” sport – have reached

to 50 countries and regions in five continents. Gateball has now grown into an international sport, being enjoyed by more than 12 million people worldwide.

Gateball is a team sport which combines tactics, strategies requiring the use of the brain along with mild physical exercise. It can be played by anyone, young or old. Because there are no age restrictions, the elderly and young children can play it together. It is a vibrant, friendly and sociable game. However, it is very competitive with tactics and strategies continually changing throughout the game.

Gateball is a team game played between two teams of five players. A time limit of 10 seconds applies between strokes. A match is played for 30 minutes. The winning team is the first to score 25 points or the team which has scored the most points after 30 minutes of play. Each player attempts to pass through the three gates in the correct direction [anti-clockwise] and then hit the goal-pole [such action is called “agari”].

What an incredible growth story. Clearly Gateball has appeal to all age groups and continues to attract new players.

More information can be obtained at:  
[www.gateball.com.au](http://www.gateball.com.au)