

# SEA ISLAND LIFE

FALL/WINTER 2022/23

EXPLORE THE DUNES, SALT MARSHES  
AND MARITIME FORESTS OF THE

*Georgia Coast*

**FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS**

A passion for reading brings people together

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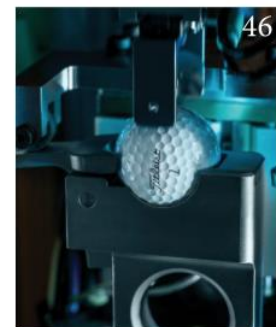
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# LET'S *Play* CORNHOLE

CORNHOLE HAS BECOME THE  
GO-TO ACTIVITY FOR TAILGATING  
AND BACKYARD BARBEQUES.

| BY JOE RADA |

**W**hen you hear a certain unmistakable "thunk" sound, repeated every few seconds, followed by cheers or groans, you know the game of cornhole is being played somewhere nearby.

Poolside, in backyards, on beaches, at tailgate parties and elsewhere, this easygoing game of tossing sewn-cloth beanbags through holes in wooden boards continues to gain fans. For serious cornhole players, make that specifically one-pound bags filled with dried corn (not beans) aimed at exactly six-inch diameter holes in two-by-four-foot wooden platforms raised at a 10-degree angle and placed precisely 27 feet apart.



While some cornhole enthusiasts may be meticulous, many players enjoy the game with flip-flops, relaxed attitudes and adult beverages and allow ample wiggle room for the distance rule and other cornhole particulars.

#### DEBATABLE ORIGINS

It is believed that what evolved into modern cornhole started in the mid-1900s among college students in Ohio. Others say Kentucky pioneers devised the game well over a century earlier. Yet they might have learned it from Native Americans who played something similar with rudimentary tools. Research also points to a cabinetmaker in Germany who, in 1325, supposedly introduced grain-filled bags and spare cabinet lumber to the sport.

Whatever its true roots, the pastime's many nicknames include bag-o, chuck-o, beanbag toss, tailgate toss, soft horseshoes and (for reasons unclear) doghouse. Despite the casual nicknames, the sport has an official governing body, the American Cornhole Association, which oversees rules, organizes tournaments and promotes participation.

#### HOW TO PLAY

Players take turns pitching their bags at the cornhole platform. A bag in the hole scores three points, while one landed on the platform scores one point. The person or team with the most points wins the round. The winner of the game is the first to score 21 points.

#### LEARNING THE LINGO

Cornhole newcomers sometimes think they're learning a whole new language as they navigate the sport's quirky lingo, and players invent new terms all the time.

A bag that goes into the hole is a "cornhole," one that lands at the hole's rim but doesn't fall in is a "hanger," while one that plops down without further movement is a "cowpie." "Sliders" slide across the board and into the hole, well-placed "blockers" block opponents from achieving sliders and "back doors" tumble over blockers to score anyway. Bags tossed directly through the hole without touching the sides are "airmail."

Multiple terms describe how bags are thrown, such as underhand "fold-overs," Frisbee-like "slings," basketball-style "jump shots" and "in-betweeners" using both hands swung between legs. Players develop personal styles to suit their skills.

#### COLLEGE-LEVEL CORNHOLE

In 2018, James Graham and Hunter Yaklin, two Georgia Southern University freshmen, traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to the first ever National College Cornhole Championship. The ESPN-televised tournament offered lucrative scholarships as prizes. In 2021, two Middle Georgia State University freshmen, Chelsea Hubbard and Michael Radney, followed a similar path from their campus and finished seventh out of 40 doubles teams. These student-athletes played cornhole recreationally with families and friends at an early age.

The Championship, operated by the American Cornhole League (ACL), crowns the best collegiate players and teams from around the country. The open format allows for any size college to participate. A college entry includes a team of four players, who receive a bid to the event by winning a qualifying tournament hosted by a sanctioned ACL Director, purchasing a bid directly for \$500 or by winning a free bid from the ACL College Tour. The tour makes 10 stops in the fall in search of the best collegiate cornhole players.

#### DIY CORNHOLE

While cornhole sets are available from many sources, building your own is easier than you might think. "My grandfather has a passion for woodworking and an impressive home workshop, so together we built cornhole boards and painted them in my future school's colors," reminisces Claire Peterson, Sea Island marketing coordinator. "Friends started asking us to make sets for them, and before long we'd built dozens as graduation presents."

To satisfy cornhole aficionados, Peterson and her grandfather built to regulation standards. "The playing surfaces must be two feet by four feet, the holes are six-inches in diameter and centered nine inches from the top edge. The legs on the raised side should measure 12¼ inches," Peterson explains.

Materials needed include half-inch-thick plywood for the playing surface, two-by-four-inch studs for frames and legs, plus carriage bolts, washers, nuts and wood screws to hold everything together. Finishing involves sanding surfaces smooth, painting designs to suit personal interests and applying a clear polyurethane coat for added smoothness and protection from the elements.

Peterson offers one learned-from-experience tip. "Sewing dried corn into tossing bags can attract hungry squirrels, so instead we used plastic pellets. They feel and weigh about the same as their corn-filled counterparts."

Whether you are playing casually at a family gathering or getting competitive during a tailgate, Peterson's most important piece of advice is always remember to "have fun!"

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## CORNHOLE ON RAINBOW ISLAND

Enjoy a round of cornhole during a Rainbow Island Supper, a Sea Island tradition created more than a half century ago. Tracing back to the 1950s, Rainbow Island Suppers began as an outdoor feast on Friday nights, featuring roasted oysters, shrimp, collard greens and fried chicken. Today, guests and members can enjoy these same classics and take the Jeep train between the Beach Club and Rainbow Island.

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