

Jianzi



Get sporty



45 mins



Challenge yourself

Aim of activity

How long can you keep your colourful shuttlecock in the air? Discover a traditional Asian folk game and create your own jianzi.

What you'll get out of it

- Make and decorate your own shuttlecock.
- Practise your kicking and balance skills.
- Get active.

What you'll need

- A large, clear space
- Paper straws, 1 per girl
- Scissors
- Pieces of cardboard, big enough to make 4 circles per girl
- A compass and pencil or a round object
- Ballpoint pens
- Masking tape
- Round coins, 2 per girl (2p works best)
- Glue
- Large coloured feathers, several per girl
- A shuttlecock (optional)

Note to leader

We recommend playing the active part of this game outside.



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding



Jianzi is a traditional Chinese sport. Competitors try to keep a shuttlecock in the air for as long as possible without using their hands. They use lots of different materials to make their shuttlecocks, but most of them have very brightly coloured feathers.

What to do

1 You're going to make your own jianzi. Grab a paper straw, scissors and piece of cardboard and get crafting.

Instructions

- Take one end of the straw and cut four slits up it, each about 2cm long. Then trace around the round object or use the compass to draw four separate circles on your cardboard. Cut these out and mark the centre of the circles.
- Push your pen through the centre of one of the circles to make a hole. Push your straw through, flattening the four slits against the cardboard. Tape these to the cardboard.
- Stick two coins to another one of your circles. Sandwich this with another circle and tape it closed.
- Glue your circle with the straw to the top of the sandwich. Glue the last circle to the bottom of the jianzi, putting tape all around the edges.
- Attach your feathers to the paper straw and decorate it.

2 Next, practise throwing your jianzi up vertically but not forward. Now, try to kick it with the inside or outside of your foot. Aim to hit the weighted base. How many times can you kick it before it falls?

The coins you've sandwiched inside create a weight that helps your jianzi fall down in the same way as a shuttlecock.

Top tip

Put your foot back down to the ground between kicks to help you balance.

3 Finally, try out the jianzi challenges below to see if you can master the moves! Why not make up your own challenges as well?

Jianzi challenges

- Who can keep it up the longest?
- How many times can you kick it in 30 seconds?
- Can you get from one side of the space to the other without dropping your jianzi?
- Get into pairs and pass the jianzi back and forth. Which pair can pass it the most?
- Get into a group and pass it around the circle. How long can you keep going?
- Can you make a human chain passing the jianzi from one side to the other?

Try it this way

Why not create your own jianzi championship and choose someone to be a judge to award points?