



## Make a Nine-Men's Morris Board

### Overview

While exploring the Village's 3D tour, you probably noticed a few toys or games throughout the buildings. In the 1830s, some toys and games were available for purchase at a store like the Asa Knight Store. Others, like the wooden houses you may have spied at the Freeman Farmhouse, were simple and handmade. These directions will help you make your own Nine-Men's Morris board using basic materials.

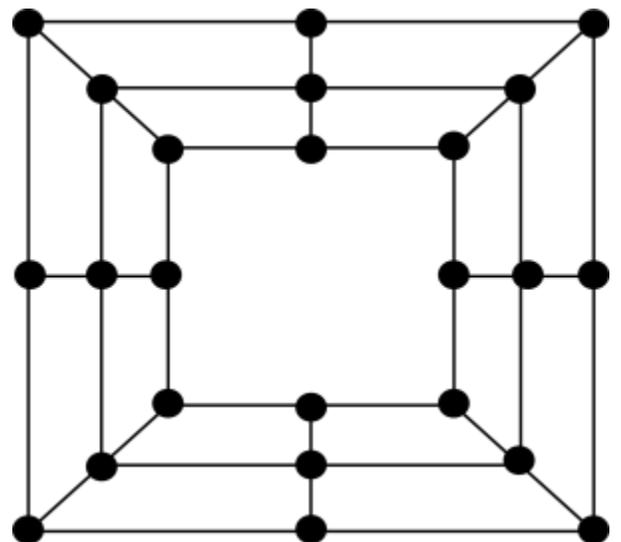
Nine-Men's Morris is a very old strategy game. It is also called merrells or mills, among other names. While people played it in the 1830s, it dates back all the way to Ancient Rome. There are photographs of 9-Men's Morris boards carved into stone! It was a popular game among soldiers throughout the ages as it requires very few supplies and the board can be drawn in the dirt.

### Supplies

- A surface to draw on (paper, cardboard, even chalk on your driveway!)
- Pencil to draw with
- Ruler
- 2 sets of 9 playing pieces (at the Village, we use dried corn and beans, but you can use whatever you have on-hand, like pennies, candy, marbles, etc.)

### Directions: Making the Board

1. Draw a square, using your ruler. It does not matter how big the square is, but you want to make it big enough that you can draw more squares inside it.
2. Using your ruler, make a smaller square inside your square.
3. Make a third, even smaller square inside the other two squares. See the image to the right if you need a better idea of what this looks like.
4. Draw a dot in the corner of each of the three squares.
5. Draw a dot on the side of each of the three squares. Make sure they are in the middle of each side. You should end up with 24 dots in total.
6. Use your ruler to draw straight lines to connect your dots. You should have four straight lines and four diagonal lines. That's it!



## Playing the Game

This game is for two players, though you could play in teams. Each player gets 9 pieces, or "men," to play with. Pass out your corn and beans, or whatever else you are using as game pieces.

1. Place your men on the board, alternating between players. While you place them down, try to prevent your opponent from making a mill. A mill is three pieces in a row. If you make a mill, you get to take away one of your player's pieces. This is called "pounding."
2. Once all your pieces are placed, you and your opponent start moving your pieces, alternating turns. You need to move along the lines and cannot jump over other pieces.
3. Any time you form a mill, or three pieces in a row, you can take one of your opponent's pieces.
4. The game is over when one player is reduced to just two pieces.

