

Traditional Polish Games



Palant

As the time passed by, almost every traditional Polish game was forgotten. Nowadays there are only some small villages where people still play games such as palant or ringo. These are the games that aren't totally forgotten and weren't replaced by other types of sport more characteristic of our times.

Palant

The history of this sport begins in the Middle Ages. In the 19th century the interest in "palant" increased, and so some competitions were held. This sport was so popular that the Polski Związek Piłki Palantowej (Polish Organisation of Palant Ball) was founded. Unfortunately, this organisation didn't last long. It was transformed into Polski Związek Baseballu i Softballu (Polish Organisation of Baseball and Softball). Palant is quite similar to baseball. You also hit the ball with a bat whose name is "palant". After you hit the ball you have to run to the finish line and then back to the "nest". The task for the opposite team is to hit the running player with the ball. Now "palant" is played in the village of Grabów (near Łódź), where the title "King of palant" has only positive connotations. (In Polish palant also means a fool, dumbass).

Ringo

This game was invented by Włodzimierz Strzyżewski, a Polish fencer and journalist, who demonstrated how to play the game while he was covering the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City.



Ringo is played on a rectangular court with a raised net, similar to volleyball or badminton. Individual players or teams stand on opposite sides of the net and throw a small rubber ring back and forth, without letting it hit the ground. When it is played one by one, then there is only one ring, when more - two. The winner of the game is the person/team that will first score 15 points. To score a point the ring has to hit the floor on the opponent's side. Players can catch the ring with both left and right hands, but they have to throw it with the same hand they caught it with. With the ring in hand the player can make four steps, then he or she has to throw it. You lose a point

when:

- you touch the ring with some other part of the body than a hand,
- the ring hits the net and falls on your side,
- you change the hand in which you held the ring,
- you throw the ring with both your feet in the air,
- you throw the ring in an inappropriate way.

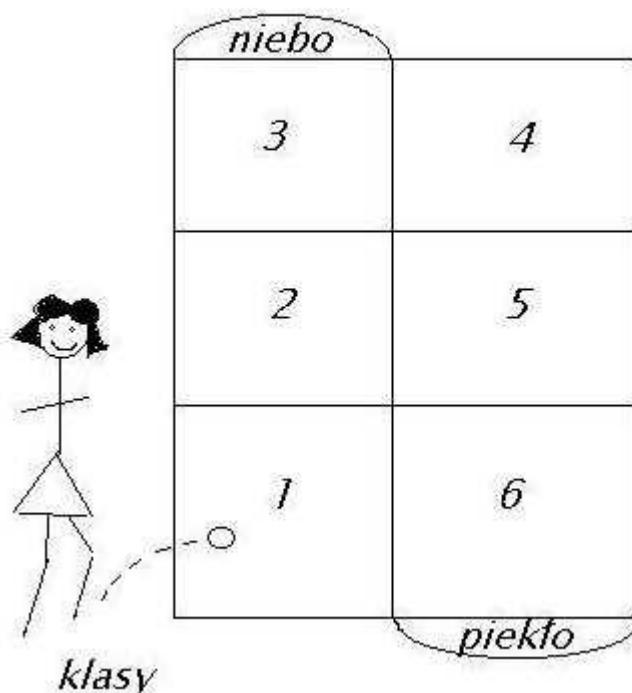
Playground Games for Polish Children

Here is the description of a couple of games which I remember from my childhood. The games are very simple, easy to prepare and learn and lots of fun. Of course, in the present time it seems that all the outdoor social games are replaced by either computer or the cable TV. But maybe it is a good idea from time to time to encourage the kids to play outdoors .

To play the first two games: **klasy** and **chlopek** one need just a bit of the

pavement or sidewalk somewhere out of the way, a piece of chalk and a small rock or stone. These games are similar to American game called hopscotch.

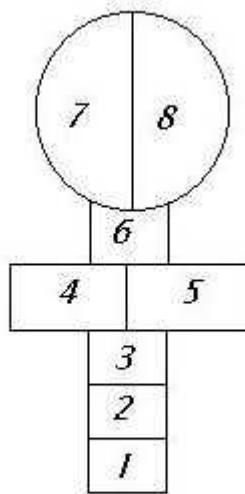
KLASY



this rectangular game is called *klasy*, which can be translated as *sections* or *classes*.

The participant starts by throwing a rock into the field with name "1" - then she/he jumps with one leg and picks the rock up; continue jumping on the same one leg through all the sections keeping the balance, making sure that the leg does not touch the line. If the participant would make this fault - the next person starts and she/he need to repeat it after waiting for her/his tour again. After a participant finish a tour successfully, she/he can continue by throwing the rock into the field number "2" and repeating the same thing until she/he successfully finish all 6 rounds. The first one who finish the all rounds wins. The game can be modified - if the participant would throw the rock in the halfcircle *niebo* (*heaven*) instead of section "3" he would have one extra round, if he would throw the ball into *piekło* (*hell*) instead of "6" he would lose one round.

CHŁOPEK



chłopek

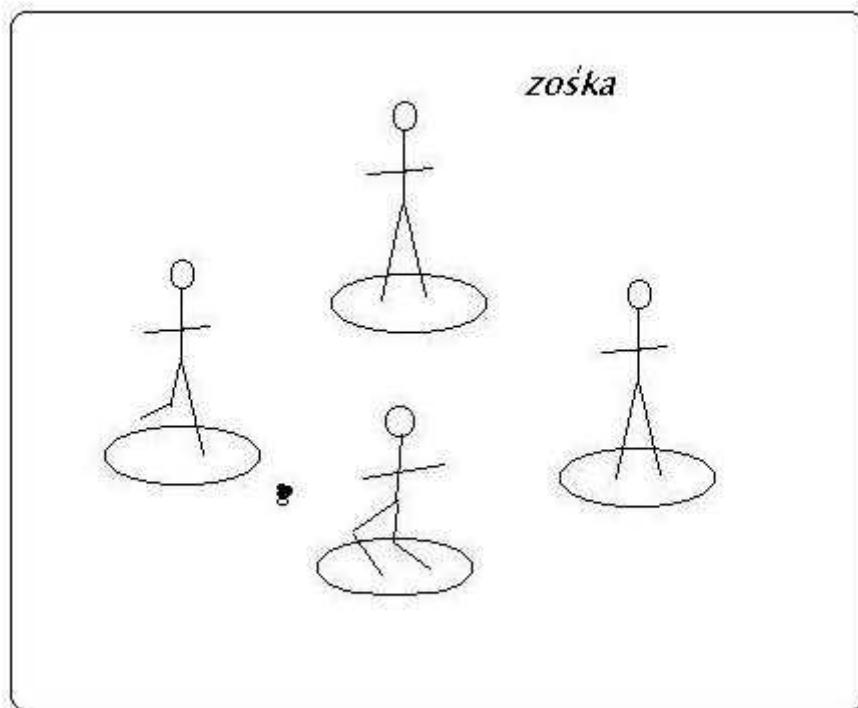
The shape of the figure resembles a boy, so the name is chłopek - in literal translation it means farmer boy.

The game is similar than the previous one - the participant jumps on one leg through the blocks "1", "2", "3", then she/he may rest by putting her/his both legs on the pavement - the left on number "4" and the right on "5", then jumps on "6" and "7" + "8" with both legs, then she/he flips the legs turning 180 degrees and repeats it again.

There are some variations of these two games - the participant can jump in more difficult verions with only left leg or with the crossed legs.

These two games described above were mainly for girls up to 7-8 years old usually, the one below is for boys, even up to 14 years old.

ZOŚKA



Zoska is the abbreviation of the name *Sophie*, in Polish *Zofia*.

Boys play with the "ball" called "zoska" which is either a sack full of barley or sand, or it has a small rock on one site and a piece of wool on the other. Each boy stands inside one circle ~1 m radius. Boys throw the ball by use of every part of the body except hands out of the circle - the most used parts are usually feet and knees.

The fault is if:

- the ball touch the pavement inside your circle- you need to manouver so that you would either throw the ball out or hold it on the top of your shoe for instance.
- you would cross your circle playing with the ball
- you would should the ball so that it would not reach the circle of the other boy