

HISTORY OF AN ENDURING GAME The first references to the game being played in the English-speaking world date from the late 17th century, when it was named scotch hop. Scotch is another word for a scratch or line. In the late 1800s, it was known as hop-score in Yorkshire and scotch hobbies in Suffolk. In Glasgow, it was called peever, the name for the marker, often a shoe polish tin filled with dirt. A player tosses the marker, usually a stone or coin, so it lands within square 1, before hopping past it to the end of the course, straddling the squares placed side by side. The player then returns, retrieving the marker without stepping on a join, missing a square or losing balance. Only if the player is successful can it be thrown onto the next number in the sequence, until the course is completed.



MAKING A HOPSCOTCH COURT

MATERIALS

- 10 paving slabs, approximately 12in (30cm) square
- Gravel or horticultural grit
- Child-friendly paint or chalk
- Rake
- Garden fork
- Herbs for planting

Step 1: A suitable area is chosen to accommodate the court. A sunny spot helps prevent the squares from becoming slippery. The soil is raked level after gravel is added and weeds removed.



Step 2: The slabs are carefully laid in place under adult supervision. Gloves are worn to protect the hands and care is taken to keep toes safe from falling flags.



Step 3: Using a garden fork, holes are dug both around the edges and in between the squares. Plants such as scented thyme, which will release their fragrance if stepped on, are placed in the holes. The gravel or grit in the soil aids drainage.



Step 4: More gravel can be placed on the soil surface around the herbs for added decoration. The numbers are painted or chalked in the centre of each square in the court, completing a simple but fun outdoor game.

HERBS TO PLANT

- **Thyme:** A low-growing herb that enjoys full sun. It has fragrant oval-shaped leaves and pale purple or white flowers.
- **Camomile:** A daisy-like plant, it has a sweet fragrance, similar to apples.