

PETANQUE TERMINOLOGY

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BASIC TERMS

- (LA) PÉTANQUE:** From *pieds tanqués* which means “feet tied together” from the Provençal *ped tanco*
- (LE) ROND:** The throwing circle, traced on the ground
- (UNE) MÈNE:** An end, the part of a complete game played from each new throwing circle; a match is made up of as many ends as necessary to arrive at thirteen points
- POINTER:** “To Point,” to roll or lob a boule, the object being to stop its movement near to the *cochonnet*
- (UN) POINTEUR:** A player who specializes in pointing or placing his boules as close as possible to the *cochonnet*
- (UN) MILIEU:** An all rounder in a team who can point or shoot equally well
- (L') ARBITRE:** The umpire
- (LE) COULOIR:** The shape formed by a group of spectators standing round a game in progress; the word literally means corridor
- TÊTE-À-TÊTE:** One player playing against another; a singles game, 3 boules per player
- DOUBLETTE:** Game composed of 2 players per team, with 3 boules per player
- TRIPLETTE:** Game composed of 3 players per team, with 2 boules per player
- QUADRETTE:** Game composed of 4 players per team with 2 boules per player; not official per FPUSA
- (LE) BUT:** The target ball made from wood, smaller than a boule, it is thrown first; it will be necessary to get close to it with your boules; other terms: *bouchon*, *cochonnet*, *gari*, *le petit*
- (LE) COCHONNET:** The target ball; the word literally means piglet
- (LE) GARI:** Another name for the *cochon*
- (LE) KIKI:** Another name for the *cochon*
- (LE) PICHOUN:** Another name for the *cochon*
- (LE) PETIT:** Another name for the *cochon*; sometimes also called *le petit ministre*—the little minister
- FAIRE FANNY:** “To make Fanny,” to win a match with the score of 13-0; some competitions award a consolation prize to the first team to be fannied

BON HOMME:	A compliment given to a particularly good player
(UN) BRAS D'OR:	Literally a golden arm; a compliment given to a good thrower
(LES) BOULES CLOUTÉES:	The old kind of boules which were made by hammering large-headed nails into boxwood cores
(LE) (LES) STRIAGE, STRIES:	The rings, stripes or design cut into the surface of boules to make them grip the ground better
(LES) BOULES LISSES:	Boules that have no rings or stripes cut into their surface; many shooters favor this kind of perfectly smooth boule for an easy release
(LES) BOULES QUADRILLÉES:	Boules that have a large number of stripes or rings cut into their surface; often favored by pointers, they are nicknamed “pineapples”
(LES) BOULES FARCIES:	Boules that have been tampered with by the injection of either mercury, sand, or heavy oil, which moves their weight off center and makes them more accurate when pointing; fortunately they are very rare—and, of course, illegal
(UN) PORTE-BOULES:	A carrier for a set of boules
(UN) GRATTON:	A stone or bump on the piste which deflects an otherwise well thrown or rolled boule
BOULODROME:	An indoor place for playing pétanque; composed of 4, 8 or more courts
(LE) TERRAIN:	The piste
(LES) LIGNES TRACÉES:	Pistes which are marked out with lines—often of string
(LA) PISTE:	That part of the whole terrain on which the game is to be played
(LA) GRAPHIQUE:	The desk used by the organizers during a competition
(LES) KIPLY:	A measuring tape device, which also sometimes has a built in score recorder
PILE (OU FACE):	The French for tails (or heads); the person tossing the coin often calls either “pile” or “face” himself before throwing it in the air and catching it on the back of his hand; sometimes, if he is being particularly polite, he will give the other side the call and sometimes he will let the coin fall to the ground; however, the important point is that the French do not usually wait until the coin is in the air for a call

GAME PLAY TERMS

(LA) CONSOLANTE:	The Consolation Competition organized for those that do not qualify for the final rounds of the Main Competition, the <i>Concours</i> ; entry into
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this secondary competition is often automatic and there is sometimes also a Wooden Spoon Competition for those that do not qualify for or are eliminated from the *Consolante*; the elimination games for the Main Competition are usually played in pools, but the final rounds of the Main, *Consolante*, or Wooden Spoon Competitions are normally played on a knockout basis

- (LA) MÉLÉE:** Choosing teams by drawing lots
- (LE) TIRAGE AU SORT:** French for drawing lot and it may, therefore, be heard during a competition with the sense of “making the draw,” i.e. to decide which teams are to play each other
- MARQUER:** When it is necessary to pick a boule or *cochon* up during the progress of a game, it is usual to mark its exact position by tapping it into the ground with another boule and then drawing 2 or 3 radii from this central mark
- AVOIR L’AVANTAGE:** “To have the advantage” is to find yourself with more boules better placed compared to your adversary
- AVOIR LE POINT:** “To have the point” is to have a ball better placed with respect to the *cochon* than that of your adversary
- REPRENDRE LE POINT:** “To regain the point” occurs when your adversary had the point, but you manage to regain it with the following throw
- DEFENDRE LE POINT:** “Defend the point” is to defend a well-placed boule while hitting the adversary’s boule which is better placed
- HOLDING:** A team is said to be holding for as long as their boule is closest to the *cochonnet*
- PUSH THE BOULE:** To move or push a boule, which is located in front of the *cochon*, either on purpose or accidentally with another boule
- JOUER POUR LA GAGNE:** “To play for the win” occurs when you have in hand the boules needed to arrive at thirteen and to win the match
- (LA) POUSSETTE:** *La poussette* occurs when the *cochon* or boule is pushed forward or when an opponent’s boule is used to bounce your own off towards the *cochon*; *la poussette* is literal French for “the push chair,” a rickshaw
- (LE) POUSSE-POUSSE:** Either when the *cochon* or boule is pushed forward or when an opponent’s boule is used to bounce your own off towards the *cochon* *le pousse-pousse* is the French for “the rickshaw”

AJOUTER:	“To add”—your adversary does not have any more boules to play; any boules that remain are yours (or your team’s) and will hopefully be played to enlarge your score
(LA) REVANCHE:	The revenge, a return or second match in a series of three
(LA) BELLE:	The final and deciding game of three; the second is <i>la revanche</i> , the revenge
(LA) MUSIQUE:	Deliberate distracting behavior during the playing of a game, expressly forbidden by Article 16 of the Rules
(FAIRE LE) PASSET:	To step out of the throwing circle too early
SAUTÉE (TIRER À LA):	To shoot at the boule or the <i>cochon</i> which is behind an obstacle
TOUR DE MAIN:	(Turn of the hand)—the effect given by the turn of the wrist by the shooter or pointer during the throw of the boule
SERRER (UNE BOULE):	To impart back-spin to a boule
TANQUER (SA BOULE):	To throw a boule very high and, at the same time, to spin it
TOURNER (UNE BOULE):	To spin a boule so that on landing it moves either to the right or the left
PARTIR:	When a thrown boule, rolls too far and fails make the point
APPUI:	A boule thrown a little too strong, but stopped by another boule
BEC:	A boule’s path changed in direction by hitting another boule
SERRER (LE JEU):	To point with no hope of scoring but with the intention of hampering the other side so that their score is kept as low as possible; a defensive move
TÂTER LA DONNÉE:	Before a throw, to drop a boule on to the intended landing spot in order to get some idea as to how it will behave when thrown there
(UN) TÉTARD:	A tadpole, the same as <i>biberon</i> , which is when a particularly good pointing boule comes to rest actually touching the <i>cochon</i>
TÉTER:	To succeed in making a <i>biberon</i> or <i>tétard</i> i.e. pointing a boule right up against the <i>cochon</i>
TOURNER:	When members of a team change their role, e.g. from <i>tireur</i> to <i>pointeur</i> , in the middle of a game; these folks are called a <i>milieu</i> —an all-rounder or middle
(LE) CADRAGE:	The method of eliminating some teams/players so the main competition can be run with the more manageable numbers of 16, 32, 64, etc.

BOULE PLACEMENT TERMS

(UNE) DONNEE:	The landing spot—the ideal place where you intend your boule to land, before it rolls
PLACER:	The action of pointing a boule in the direction of the <i>cochon</i> so it stops as close to it as possible
BOULE DERRIÈRE:	Boule placed behind the <i>cochonnet</i> ; in general, it isn't a very good placement because other players can point to it
BOULE DEVANT:	The French saying: <i>Boule devant, c'est boule d'argent</i> , a boule in front is a boule of silver, means that you should always try to keep pointing boules in front of the <i>cochon</i> , as here they will always have additional value as obstacles; when the other side tries to get near the <i>cochon</i> , they are in danger of knocking these blocking boules even closer to the <i>cochon</i>
SE MELANGER:	“To mix” is to point your boules so as to touch those of the adversary, in front, behind or on the sides
(LE) POINTAGE:	The attempt to place a boule as close as possible to the <i>cochon</i>
SERRER LE JEU:	“To tighten the play” means that the few boules which remain are played as defensive boules to limit point losses or gains to the other team
(UN) BIBERON:	When a thrown boule is touching the <i>cochonnet</i> it is a <i>biberon</i> , a baby bottle; you've just made a <i>bibe</i> or a <i>tétard</i>
EMBOUCHONNER:	To put a boule up against the <i>cochon</i> , to make a <i>biberon</i> , baby's bottle
GENDARME:	French for “policeman”—when one boule is located right next to an opponent's boule, which is next to the <i>cochon</i> , thus giving the appearance that it is watching the boule like a “cop”
(UN) CONTRE:	“Against”—your shooting boule ends up against the <i>cochon</i> or another boule
(LES) BOULES COLLÉES:	Boules that are side by side and touching
(LE) DEVANT-DE-BOULE:	When a boule finishes up in front of and touching an opponent's boule; this is a particularly effective placement as the opponent risks moving his or her own boule in an attempt to remove it
SE PLANTER:	When a boule hits the ground very heavily after a high throw and so digs itself well in

POINTING TERMS

(LA) ROULETTE:	A way of pointing, only possible on a smooth surface, in which the boule is rolled nearly all the way from the playing circle to the <i>cochon</i>
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BONNE MAMAN:	A way of rolling the boule on a very smooth surface in which the player bends forward from the waist and releases the boule near the feet
ROULER:	To point a ball so that it rolls the total distance between the circle and the <i>cochon</i>
(LA) DEMI-PORTÉE:	A half-lob is to point a boule so that it falls halfway between the circle and the <i>cochon</i> , and then rolls towards the <i>cochon</i>
PORTÉE:	To point a boule so that it falls into the last third of the distance between the circle and the <i>cochon</i> ; the boule will roll very little if done correctly
(LA) PLOMBÉE:	A high lob is to point a boule so that it falls close to the <i>cochon</i> ; the forward momentum of the boule is deadened by its fall, immobilizing it at once or almost at once; used on rougher ground
(LA) PORTÉE:	The more usual name for the pointer's high, backspun lob which is also called <i>la plombée</i>
(FAIRE UN) NARI:	To do very bad pointing
(LE) RÉTRO:	The back-spin which is imparted to a pointing boule by swinging the wrist forward during the throwing action
(LA) ROULETTE-DIRIGÉE:	A pointing throw in which the boule is delivered from a semi-crouching position, and guided/rolled nearly all of the way to the <i>cochon</i>
VISSER (LA BOULE):	To point a boule very low and with spin

SHOOTING TERMS

(UN) TIREUR:	A player who is better at shooting than pointing
(UN) TIR:	A shot aimed at hitting an opponent's boule and, in doing so, removing it
(LE) TIRAGE:	Shooting or trying to knock one boule out of the way with another
TIRER:	“To Shoot” is to strike an opponent's boule with the goal of removing it from play or to reduce it as a threat
TIRER A LA RAFLE:	“To shoot at the edge” means the boule arrives at the edge of the piste, but does not touch it, i.e. it is still live
TIRER AU FER:	“To shoot on iron” means that the boule is launched in the air, does not touch the ground, but comes to land directly upon the opponent's boule
(UN) CARREAU:	When shooting, the boule scores a perfect direct hit on the target boule and, in doing so, not only knocks it away, but takes its exact position; the origin of the term is thought to have come from the fighting expression “rester

carreau” — “to remain on the spot, to be laid out cold;” “le carreau” means the “floor”, usually only applied to one that is either tiled or paved

- REUSSIR UN CARREAU:** To perform the perfect shot—your boule, by shooting, struck the opponent’s boule, and drove it out and took its place exactly
- PALET (FAIRE UN):** To hit one of the opponent’s boules and then stay close to it; to make a carreau
- (UN) PALET COURANT:** A poor carreau which, having hit its target, rolls on too much
- (UN) PALET ROULANT:** To hit a target boule by throwing short and rolling onto it
- REUSSIR UN PALET:** The almost perfect shot (see above) except that the shooting boule moved away a little after the impact, between 0 and 50 centimeters behind
- POINTER EN TIRANT:** “To point while shooting” is to make a *carraeu* and get the point at the same time
- UN RETRO:** The opposite of the *palet* because the shot boule moves towards you after the impact
- FAIRE UNE SAUTÉE:** “To do a jump,” a delicate shot because the boule to be dislodged is behind another boule
- NOYER (LE BUT):** To shoot at the *cochon* and, by removing it from the defined piste, nullify the end
- (LA) RASPAILLETTE:** The more usual name for the kind of shooting throw which lands about two or three meters from the target boule and then hits it by rolling forward; although the French often disapprove of the shot, it can be most effective—especially on a smooth piste; see also *raclette* and *rafle*
- (LA) RACLETTE:** Another name for “la raspaillette,” a rolling kind of shot which, instead of hitting the target boule directly from the air, is thrown and lands a short distance from it and then knocks it out of the way—French purists frown on this kind of shooting, but players from other countries—notably the Belgians and English—use it to great effect on occasion
- (UN) RAFLE:** Much the same as “la raclette” and “la raspaillette” except that it is kept much shorter, lower, and sometimes spun
- TIRER A CINQUANTE DEVANT:** “To shoot to the front fifty” means to insure a shot, the shooter throws the boule so it lands and rolls for 50cm before running up against the boule intended to be hit
- (LA) CASQUETTE:** When a shooting boule bounces off the top of the target boule without moving it at all; the word literally means “a cap”

- FAIRE UNE CASQUETTE:** “To make a cap” the shooting boule almost hits the aimed for boule, but only touches it lightly, not moving it
- CHIQUER (UNE BOULE):** When a shooter just tips the target boule and hardly moves it at all
- FAIRE UN TROU:** “To make a hole” is to shoot and miss the boule(s), i.e. to not succeed in your objective