

Game for 2 Players

HANGMAN

Object

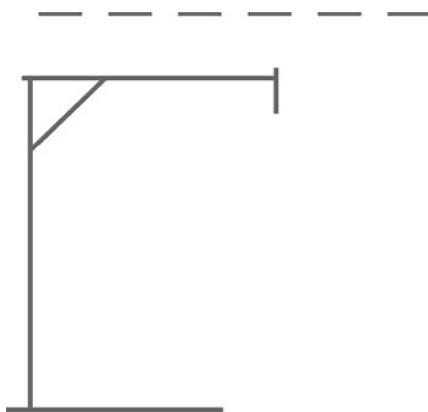
Long before *Wheel of Fortune*, folks of all ages played Hangman — often on the backs of place-mats in diners.

The object is to determine what word your opponent has in mind by guessing letters to fill in a series of blanks. The game’s name refers to an intriguing method of keeping score by adding one line to a stick-figure drawing for each miss.

The Play

One player (the “thinker”) decides on a word (usually one with eight or fewer letters) and creates a row of dashes on a paper, one for each letter in the word. For instance, if the word chosen was “potter,” six dashes would be drawn.

Near the dashes, the thinker draws a simple representation of a gallows.



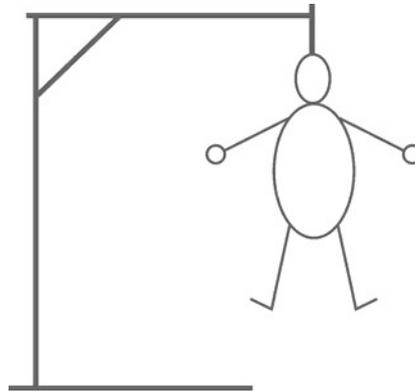
The guesser now names a letter of the alphabet (an “e” for instance). If that letter is in the word

— — — — E —

the thinker writes it in its proper place and the guesser names another letter (say, a “t”). The thinker writes in all instances of each letter named.

— — T T E —

Each time the guesser names a letter that is not in the word, the thinker draws a part of the hanging-man stick figure. Typically, this figure has ten parts (one head, one torso, two arms, two hands, two legs, and two feet) allowing for nine wrong guesses, but if younger folks are playing, more parts may be added.



If the guesser correctly guesses the word before the stick figure is completed, she has won. The guesser may guess what the word is before all the letters have been named, but an incorrect guess of the word is treated as an incorrect naming of a letter.

Variations

Some players allow a specified number of free guesses of vowels. Some start off by writing in all vowels before the first guess is made.

If a gallows seems inappropriate, any simple drawing could be substituted. Perhaps a STOP sign or a carton of eggs. Of course, one could just keep a simple score or tally. ■

