

Hunt the Slipper

Source:

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Folk Games of Jamaica

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Folklore Publications, 1922

Cob - bler, cob - bler, make my shoe,
Get it done by half past two.
Half past two is at the door
Get it done by half past four.

Alternate text:

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe.
Get it done by half-past two;
Half-past two is much too late,
Get it done by half-past eight.

Opie, Iona and Peter, *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*

Game Directions

All the players but one sit on the floor in a circle with their legs crossed (Turkish fashion), one acting as Chief, all pretending to work at making or mending shoes.

The other player brings a slipper to the Chief Cobbler, and desires it to be mended, saying:

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe,

Get it done by half-past two.

The child walks away, and returns in a few moments and asks whether the shoe is ready.

The Cobbler says, "Not quite; call again in an hour's time," or makes any other excuse which occurs to him.

When the child calls again, she is told it has been sent home.

After several pretences the child declares an intention to search for it.

The Cobblers in the ring then all place their hands under their knees, and pass the slipper secretly from one to another in such a way as to prevent the owner of the shoe getting it for some time.

The Cobbler from whom the slipper is taken becomes the owner next time.

- Gomme, Alice B., *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, Vol. 1.

Background Information

This is a West Indies variant of a traditional English children's game. In the Jamaican version, the players pass the slipper behind their backs.