

Skully

A crash course for the urban bottlecap game

About Skully

Skully (f.k.a. skelly) is a game that originated in city streets. The earliest reported skully games were in the 1930s, although finger-flicking games like marbles and crokinole have been around for longer than that. If you know more about the history of the game, please tell us!

To learn more about skully, visit <http://www.streetplay.com/skully/>

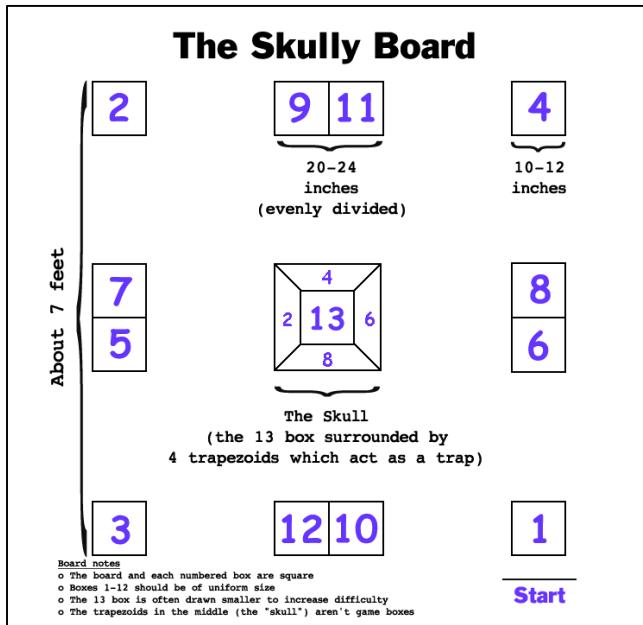
Game Essentials

Players: at least 2, ideally 3-6 (there's no limit)

Materials needed:

- Bottlecaps
- Chalk (for drawing board)
- Smooth playing surface, approx. 7-8 ft. sq.

Time to play: About 30-60 minutes



The skully board

A skully board should be drawn on a smooth surface in the manner shown in this diagram. The board doesn't have to be exactly the dimensions shown; you can draw a skully board so it fits in the area available (like a basement or garage floor).

How to play

The object of the game is to shoot your cap from "Start" to the "1 box" ("ones"), then on through each numbered square until 13, then back to "1". The player then becomes a "killer" and eliminates other players. The last player remaining wins.

After the players decide the order of play, each finger-flicks his/her bottlecap from the "Start line" toward the 1 box (called "ones"). When a player gets his/her cap into "ones" ("on the line" doesn't count in skully), the turn is continued and the player immediately shoots the cap toward the 2 box (called "going for twos"). When a player gets into the box s/he is going for, s/he can move the cap anywhere within the box before shooting again. A player's turn ends when s/he fails to get the cap into the next box, or fails to hit another player's cap (explained below).

If a player hits another player's cap, that player is awarded the box for which s/he is going (just like shooting it in manually), and the turn is continued. A lot of the strategy in skully (as well as most advancement in the game) is done by hitting other players' caps. Because caps are normally bunched-up at the beginning of the game, this "game bonus" is only granted when a player has gotten into the "2" box manually. If a player hits 2 (or more) other caps in one shot, s/he gets 2 (or more) extra boxes. Another game bonus is called "pipsies," a 2-box award for making it from one box to another in just 1 shot (like a "hole-in-one" in golf).

If a player lands in any trapezoid surrounding the 13 box (the skull), the turn ends and s/he is stuck until another player hits him/her out (beginners often decide that a player who is stuck loses 3 turns, instead of being stuck indefinitely). The player hitting the "stuck player" out gets a bonus of the number of boxes in the trapezoid (for example, if a player is going for "fives" and hits a player stuck in the 6-trapezoid, they get a 6 box bonus and move immediately to the 10 box to go for "elevens."

Others might use more elaborate rules concerning "becoming a killer," but you can play this way: after a player returns to the "ones" (having gone from 1 to 13 and back down to 1), that player becomes a "killer"—the player shoots his/her cap off the playing board, then waits for his/her next turn. A killer must hit a non-killer's cap 3 times *in a row* to eliminate that player from the game, or just *once* if the other player is a killer, too. A killer "owns the board" and thus can use any box to continue his/her turn (including the trapezoids in the skull). A non-killer can become a killer by simply hitting a killer's cap—this speeds up play as the game ends. The last killer remaining wins the game.

The last word

Skully is a simple game at heart, but these rules are just meant to give you a taste of the game and get you started. Over the years, many twists and turns have developed to make the game more interesting. Please be sure to visit <http://www.streetplay.com/skully/> for more complete coverage, including detailed rules. If you come up with interesting rules of your own, we'd love to hear about them!

This Streetplay Rule Sheet is available at: <http://www.streetplay.com/rulesheets/skully/>