

Playground markings are an excellent way for schools to brighten up plain tarmac areas, improve on-site facilities and provide useful curriculum resources for teachers. The creation of more focused areas, with stimulating games and activities for pupils to play during break times, can encourage better social interaction between different age and gender groups, as well as promote cooperative play. Focused play also promotes safer play, reducing the risk of falls and collisions caused by chaotic running around.

## CURRICULUM LINKS

**Foundation Stage**  
1,2,3,5,6

**Mathematics**  
KS1 – Ma2, Ma3  
KS2 – Ma2, Ma3

**Art & Design**  
KS1 – 1ab, 2ab, 4ab, 5abcd  
KS2 – 1abc, 2abc, 3ab, 4b, 5abcd

## HOW TO DESIGN and PAINT your own Playground Markings

Before painting markings onto your playground, consider your school's needs fully. Permanent markings must relate to the school's policy on play and staff should think about how they can be used in the development of the curriculum. Ensure provision covers different gender, ethnic and age groups in the school.

Alvanley Primary School, Cheshire, and Coombes CE Infant School, Berkshire, produced markings for the Growing Schools Garden which included games invented by the pupils and mathematical problem-solving games.

First, make a detailed scale plan of the playground, clearly marking any existing features or playground markings. There must be enough room for pupils to play around each marking without overlapping with the adjoining game. Involve your pupils in this process and get them to draw their ideas in colour.

Once you have selected your designs, enlarge the drawings to the desired scale and mark them out on the playground with chalk. Using a stencil for complicated designs will ensure a neater finish. To mark out straight lines stretch a piece of string between two fixed points. To mark out a spiral, attach one end of a piece of string to a bucket at the centre point and the other to a piece of chalk and walk around the bucket in circles, chalking the ground as you go, until you reach the middle. To mark a circle, attach a piece of string to a centre point, then walk around it, pulling the string taut and chalk a circle as you walk.

Use emulsion, gloss or road paint, or special playground marking paint from commercial suppliers (see overleaf). Road paint will last the longest and can be applied with aerosol sprays or sponges. Check the cans for health and safety instructions first as some paints give off toxic fumes.

Before starting to paint, sweep the surface to remove any grit. The older and rougher

the surface, the shorter lifespan your markings will have. Avoid painting in very cold or very hot weather.

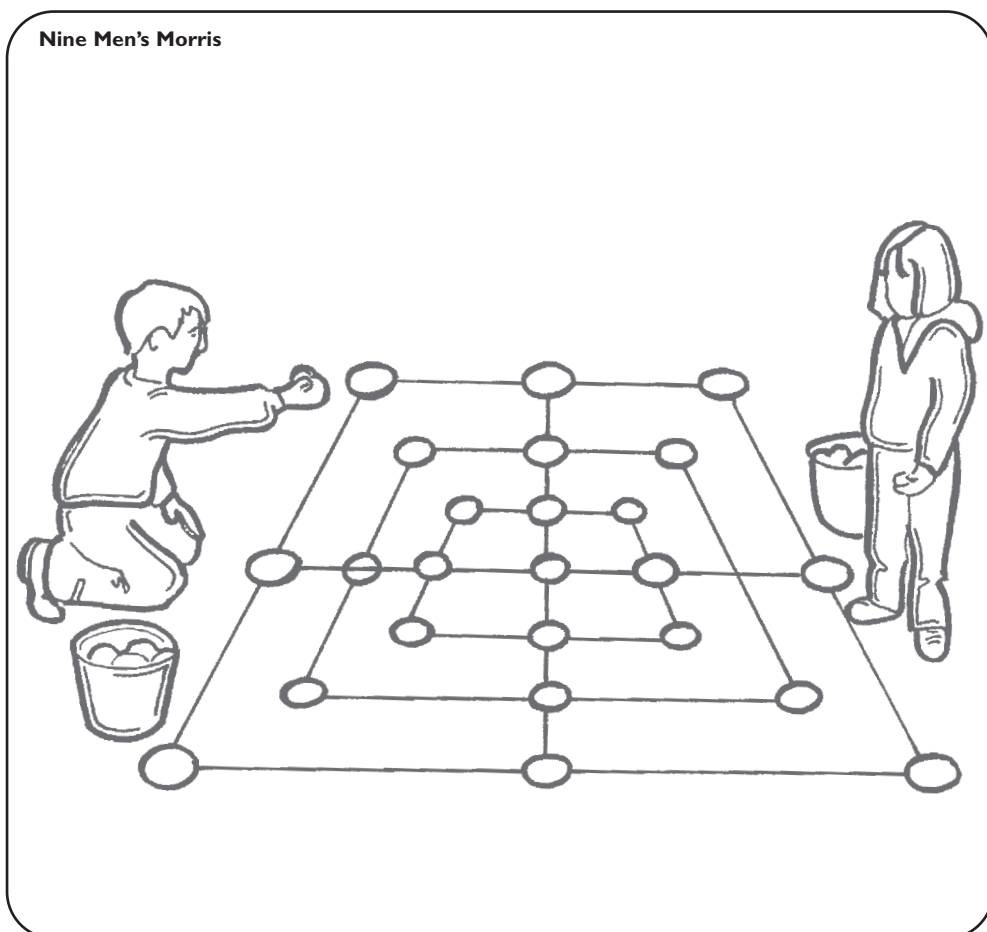
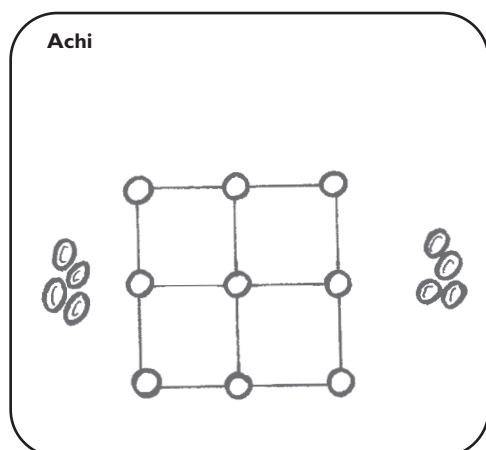
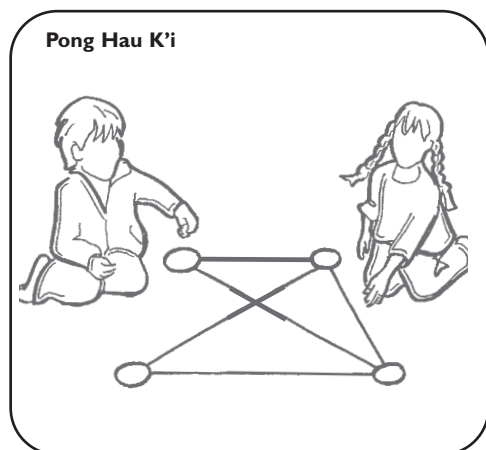
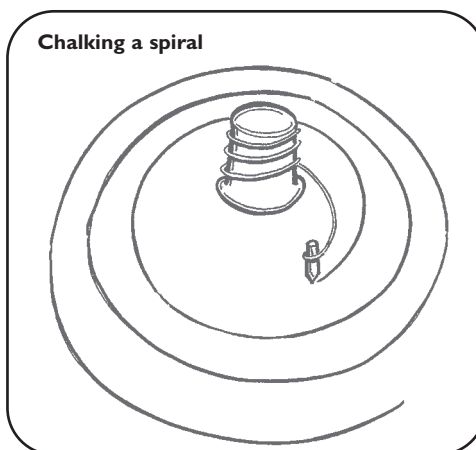
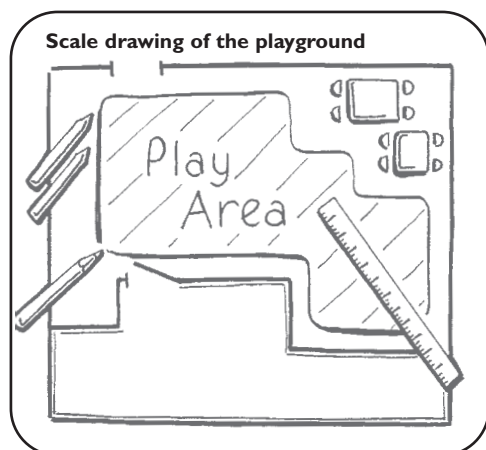
Coombes CE Infant School provided three games: Pong Hau K'i, Achi and Nine Men's Morris.

**Pong Hau K'i** is a Cantonese game in which each player has two stones. One player's stones are positioned on the two points on the left-hand side of the board as shown in the illustration overleaf, and the other's on the right-hand two. Players take turns in moving their stones along any of the lines to the next empty point. The aim of the game is to block the opponent and prevent them from moving.

**Achi** is a game from Ghana played in two phases. Each player has four stones, with a different colour or shape for each player. In phase one, the stones are placed onto any empty spaces on the board in alternate turns of play. When all eight stones are in position, phase two begins. Players take it in turns to move their stones along the lines to the next empty space in an attempt to make a row of three (as in noughts and crosses). The first row of three stones wins.

**Nine Men's Morris** is a game believed to date back to ancient Egypt, and is also played in two phases. Each player has nine stones which are placed onto any empty spaces on the board in alternate turns of play. Players attempt to form a row of three stones. If they achieve this they can remove one of their opponent's stones from the board.

Once all the stones are on the board, phase two begins. Players take it in turns to move their stones along the lines to the next empty space in an attempt to make a row of three (as above). For every line of three, players can remove one of their opponent's stones. A player blocking all the opponent's stones or reducing them to two pieces wins the game.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more games consult: The Oxford Book of Board Games by Andrew Parlett, published by Oxford University Press ISBN 0-19-212998-8

Playground markings are available from the following: **COLAS LTD** ☎ 0121 561 4332 [www.colas.co.uk](http://www.colas.co.uk) (thermoplastic markings)

**FLEET LINE MARKERS** ☎ 01684 573535 [www.fleetlinemarkers.com](http://www.fleetlinemarkers.com) (playground paint, machines, aerosols and gels to remove markings and graffiti)

**MAGICAL MARKINGS** ☎ 01977 662500 [www.magicalmarkings.co.uk](http://www.magicalmarkings.co.uk) (pre-formed thermoplastic system paint to suit each school's individual needs)

**PRISMO LTD** ☎ 01802 989732 [www.prismo.co.uk](http://www.prismo.co.uk) (markings based on individual school's designs)

**ROCOL SITE SAFETY SYSTEMS** ☎ 0113 232 2800 [www.rocol.com](http://www.rocol.com) (playground paint, paint applicators and stencils)