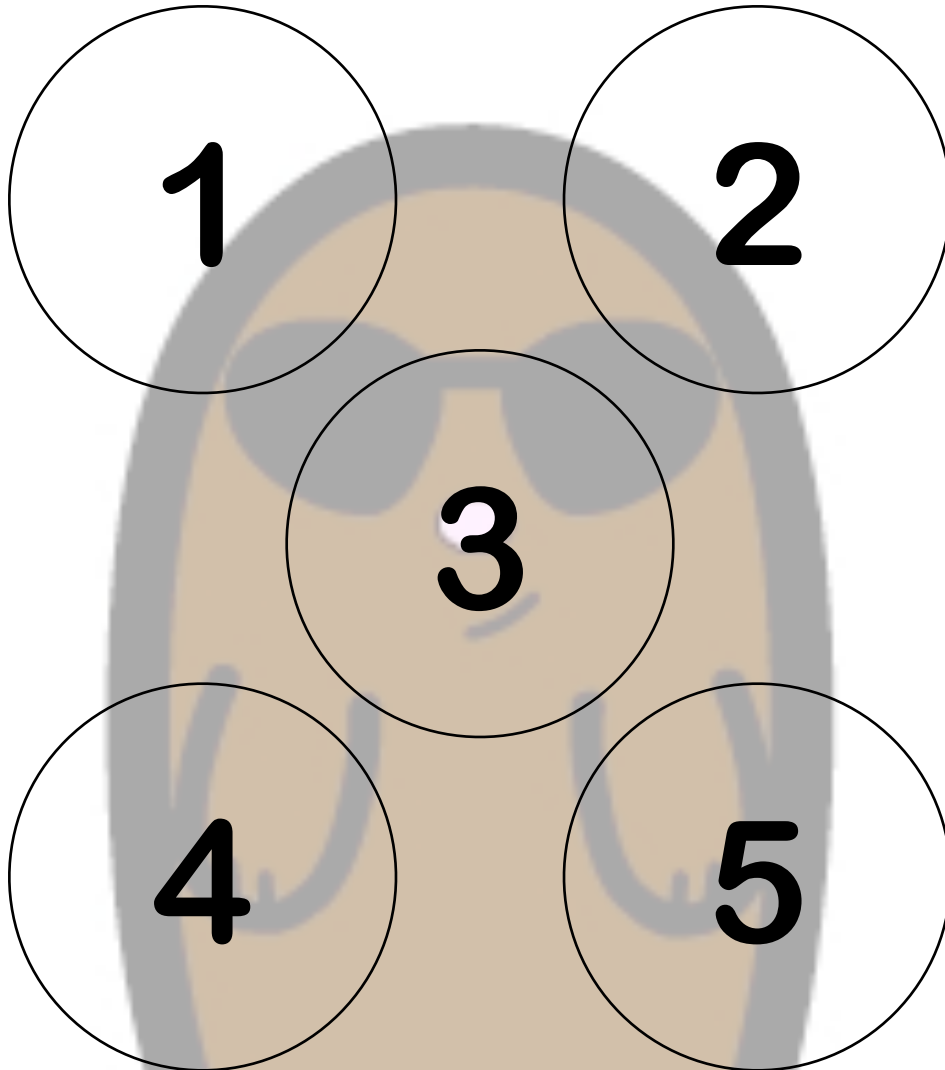


Whakka Mole
A whacky game for two or more players.
by Jonathan Leistikio



Goal: Score 50 points by staying out of your mole holes for as long as possible without getting whacked by your opponents. You also earn points for whacking your opponents' moles.

You Need: About 10 tokens (pocket change should work just fine), a piece of paper and pencil, and a copy of this play sheet for each player.

Set Up: Claim a Whakka Mole play sheet, some tokens, paper, and pencil for yourself. Divide your paper into three columns: Popup, Whack!, and score.

Play: All players play Whakka Mole simultaneously. Whakka Mole turns have the following phases: Prepare, pop up, whacking, scoring.

Prepare – Choose the hole or holes your moles will emerge from (or stay in) during the upcoming pop up phase. Write this down in your Popup column. Choose the hole you're going to whack this turn. Write this down in the Whack! column. When everyone is done writing, pop up starts.

Pop Up – Reveal what you wrote during the previous turn. Put a token in every space on your Whakka Mole play sheet that you noted in the Popup column.

Whacking – Compare the number you wrote in your Whack! column to the Whakka Mole play sheet of the player to your left. If you whacked a hole that has one or more tokens in it, score 6 points and remove all of the tokens from that play sheet.

Scoring – Count the tokens on your play sheet. Score that many points.

When everyone is done scoring, a new turn starts.

Winning: If a player has 50 points or more at the end of a turn, the game ends. If you have the most points at the end of the game, you win!

Origin and Credits: Sharon and I were playing Boggle at 'round 9:00 PM on August 8th. We took a little break so she could hydrate and log her exercise time. While she was doing that, I thought a bit about what would make a funny game. I was thinking about funny games because earlier we had discussed whether I should try to attach a funny theme to a very serious game I'd made up the previous day (The game's working title: Pollution Monster Dice).

The first funny thing I thought of was whacking moles on the head with padded mallets, except instead of being the whacker, you'd play the part of the moles. Running with that, I started with the idea that you'd all be moles sharing one "board" of mole holes and the mallet would just be a random die roll. I didn't like that because it reduced your strategy to just figuring the odds of your hole(s) getting rolled by the mallet die. I also didn't like the idea that greedy players could crowd other players out of getting a hole.

To prevent players from crowding each other out, I switched to each player having his or her own mole hole board. To make the game feel more strategic, I set up a whacker / whackee relationship between the players. This introduced lots of opportunity for strategy, fake-outs, bluffing, feints, and all sorts of fun. To keep the game short, I set the end game condition to 50 points. To keep your mole strategy as a significant influence on whether you win or lose, I reduced the reward for whacking a mole from 10 points to 6.