

# Let's Play Waltes!

A Traditional Mi'kmaq Game

Kyla Bernard





"Grandpa, what games did you play when you were little?" asks Callie.

"Well," says Grandpa, "the game I liked best was Waltes. People have played it for many years. Many people still play Waltes today."





"I made a Waltes game long ago," says Grandpa. "First, I had to find rock maple wood to make this bowl."



"Then I made 6 round dice.  
I used deer bone.  
I painted 1 side of each dice."



Sometimes these sticks are used for 5 or 6 points.

"I also made counting sticks. They help keep score. These straight sticks are worth 1 point."



"This game looks like fun!" says Callie.  
"Will you teach me how to play?"



"We need 1 more thing," says Grandpa.  
"We need a quilt.  
We put it under the bowl.  
Now we are ready to play!"



"Callie, you can go first," says Grandpa.  
"Put the dice in the bowl face down.  
Then lift the bowl a little bit  
and bang it down."



"Look how the dice landed!"  
says Callie.

"Very good!" says Grandpa.  
"When 5 dice land the same you get  
1 point. Here is 1 counting stick.  
You also get another turn."



"Now I have 3 up and 3 down.  
Do I get a point?" asks Callie.

"No, you need 5 or 6 to land the same,"  
says Grandpa. "Now it is my turn."



"Grandpa, all the dice landed the same!" says Callie.

"That is very good and very lucky!" says Grandpa.

"I score 5 points and get 5 sticks. I also get another turn."



"Oh, 2 dice are up and 4 are down. Do you get 1 point?" asks Callie.

"No. You only get 1 point when 5 dice land the same. And 5 points when 6 dice land the same," answers Grandpa.



"I score a point! I get a stick.  
Now I have 2 points," says Callie.

"I hope this turn all 6 land the same.  
They did! I get 5 more points!  
And I get another turn!"



"1 fell out. Is that okay?" asks Callie.

"You miss a turn," says Grandpa.

"Callie, soon I must make dinner.  
Let's play until 1 of us has 10 points."

"Okay! Who do you think that will be?"  
asks Callie.

# How to Play Waltes

## What You Need

- a wooden bowl
- 6 round dice
- counting sticks
- a quilt or blanket



## What You Do

1. Put the dice in the bowl face down.
2. The first player lifts the bowl about 5 centimetres, then bangs it down onto the quilt.
3. Count how many dice land face up.

## How to Score

1. If fewer than 5 dice land the same (that is, fewer than 5 dice land face up or face down), you score no points and lose your turn.
2. If 5 dice land face up or face down, you score 1 point and get 1 stick and play again.
3. If all 6 dice land face up or face down, you score 5 points and get 5 sticks and play again.
4. If a dice falls out of the bowl, you lose your turn.
5. The first person to get to 10 points wins the game!

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## Visual Credits

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