

If this is the true history of the descent of the cubical dotted die, its evolution must have occurred at a very early time, as the regularly marked stone die from the Greek colony of Naucratis, Egypt, assigned by the discoverer, Mr. Flinders Petrie to 600 BC, bears witness.

Now, the 4 sides of the knuckle bone (*talus*), which were designated among the Romans as *supinum*, *prorum*, *planum*, and *tortuosum*, and correspond with the numbers "three," "four," "one," and "six," receive in the Mohammedan East the names of ranks and conditions of men. The Persians name them, respectively, *duzd* "slave" *dihban* "peasant," *vezir* "viceroy," and *shah*, or *padi shah* "king."

It is apparent that the 21 individual domino pieces represent the possible throws with 2 dice, and that the domino pieces may be regarded as conjoined dice. Of this the Korean dominoes furnish the best material evidence. Consistent with many other Korean objects, they are typical of an earlier age of Chinese culture than that now existing in China.

Dominoes may have been first used as counters or tallies in a dice game or in a method of fortune telling with dice. They existed in their present form in China in the year 1120 AD, according to the Chinese records, with similar astrological associations as at the present day. They are clearly descended from dice, and particularly from that game with two dice which appears to have been introduced into China from western Asia.

In mythology, the Egyptians had gods and goddess playing dice to add days to the calendar, while Greeks had their gods rolling for possession of the universe.

Farkle

A Dice Game

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Ted and I learned to play this game while volunteering at Children's Hospital in Seattle. We worked with teenage cancer patients and this game helped them forget for a moment.

By Daryl Seager

HISTORY OF FARKLE

Farkle is an ages-old dice game. It has the advantage that it can be played with just a set of 6 dice and some paper for scoring. It requires no cards, the counting is easy, and it can be taught in just a few minutes. It also contains a good deal of strategy.

The original game is said to have been first played in Iceland by Sir Albert Farkle in the 14th century. Since then, it has been played in a few different styles, but the original game has survived for over 700 years.

The first printed reference to Farkle is found in a festival directory printed during the time of Shakespeare.

FARKLE IS ALSO KNOWN AS

Five Thousand, Zilch, Farkel, Ten Thousand, Snap, Kaput, Dix Mille (French), Cosmic Wimpout (five dice), Pass the Pigs (played with pigs instead of dice), Keepers (Australian, 5 dice), Forkle, Blewit, Double Cameroon (10 dice) and 5000 Progressive.

NEEDED FOR PLAY

Six traditional dice (6-sided)

Pencil and paper to keep score

Number of Players: At least two players (the more the merrier!)

RULES

Each player rolls a die, and the player with the highest roll goes first.

Players in turn roll six dice, trying to throw ones, fives, 3 of a kind, 3 sets of pairs, or a straight (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

Farkle: throwing dice and coming up with no points. If a player gets a Farkle 3 turns in a row, 1,000 points is deducted from their score.

Booklet distributed by www.SmartBoxDesign.com makers of Farkle for Palm, Pocket PCs, and Treos.

There is no doubt that dice first appeared in the Orient. Arabic merchants and travelers brought dice into Europe. At the beginning of the 18th century, dice made their way to North America.

The oldest dice in Japan are found in remains of Dazaifu, Kyushu. They have 4 chips of wood, 5 by 1 cm each with 1 to 4 lines. It is still not known how they used these dice. The oldest cubed dice were made in about 700 DC, whose face numbers are read only from 1 to 4.

Cubed dice, first excavated in the Mohenjo-Daro remains of Indus Civilization, differs in the number order from modern ones. It has 2 on the back of 1, 4 on the back of 3 and 6 on the back of 5.

Another kind of Indian dice, called by the Arabic name of *k'ab*, or *kabat*, from *k'ab*, "ankle," "ankle bone," are used in the game of *k'abat*, 2 dice being thrown. Either natural astragali, consisting of the knucklebones of a goat, or dice marked on 4 sides with "three," "four," "one," and "six" spots, or cubical dice regularly marked on the 6 sides are employed. The "four" spots on these dice are usually marked in red, and often both the "three" and "four" are marked in this color.

Cubical dice appear to be directly connected to knucklebones. The Arabic name for the knuckle bone and the die is the same, *k'ab*, and like the knuckle bones, which are commonly thrown in pairs, natural pairs from the right and left leg being used, cubical dice are also thrown in pairs. Carrying out the resemblance, cubical dice in India are sold in pairs, and by varying the arrangement of the "threes" and "fours" are actually made in pairs, rights and lefts, like the knucklebones.

and add it to his own score. If he farkles on this roll, Susie can also take a shot at it. *If a farkle comes back to the player who initially rolled it, all scores are reset to 0.* If Momo is successful with my farkle, however, he gets those points and then gets to take his own turn. Lucky Momo....

Obviously, if someone is very, very far ahead of you in points, it's a good strategy to try to reset the scores. Now, on to scoring!

Bonus Points: There are bonus points associated with taking this risk - 100 points after the first roll, 200 for the second time you keep going, 400 for the next, 800 after that, 1600 after that... you get the point.

SCORING VARIATIONS

Four of a kind: 500 times the pips

Six of a kind: 4000 or 1000 times the pips showing.

Six ones: 10000 or 5000

Three Pairs in a single throw: 2000

One of each face: 1500 or 2000

Four of a kind : 2x the value of three of a kind

Five of a kind : 4x the value of three of a kind

Six of a kind : 8x the value of three of a kind

Six of a kind rolled in multiple rolls are worth 500 times the pips showing, 3000: player forfeits other point totals created by rolling the 1's when taking the score of 3000.

HISTORY OF DICE AND DOMINOES

In the ancient ages, people used different objects such as animal bones or sticks to divine the will of gods. These were thrown up and spilled on the ground, making up some figure. By this figure people determined the desires of ancient gods. This ritual marked the beginning of fortunetelling.

After each throw, the player must set aside at least one scoring die. Then the player has two choices: either stop rolling and take their points, or continue to roll and risk their accumulated points for that turn. If a player scores points with all of the dice, they may stop, or continue by throwing all 6 dice.

Play proceeds to the left or clock-wise.

Mis-thrown dice (a die leaning on its side, etc.) are re-rolled.

The first player to end their turn having scored 10,000 points or more signals the final round. Each player in turn then has one last turn to pass the highest score. When the last player in the last round ends his turn, whoever has the highest score wins.

Players cannot combine scores from different throws to make a larger score. For example, if a 5 is rolled in the first throw and removed from the active dice as a score of 50, and then 2 more 5's are rolled in the next throw, the player can't make this 3 of a kind and score 500. The score at this point would be 150. Triples and straights must be rolled in one throw.

SCORING

one spot:	100
five spots:	50
three dice of one spot:	1000
three dice of two spots:	200
three dice of three spots:	300
three dice of four spots:	400
three dice of five spots:	500
three dice of six spots:	600
three pairs in a single throw:	500
one of each face:	1000

GAME PLAY

1. All players throw one dice. The player with the highest throw starts.
2. Player one throws all 6 dice and determines the best combination to keep.
3. Player one then decides if they want to continue to throw the remaining dice.
4. If player one decides to continue throwing, they keep going until they decide the risk is too high to continue or they Farkle.
5. Player one's turn ends and player two throws all 6 dice.
6. As above player two decides if they want to continue throwing the remaining dice or stop.
7. This continues until all players have rolled. Then it starts all over again.
8. Play continues until one player reaches the pre-decided on points. Then the players following them have one last chance to beat the score.

HINTS

To give yourself a better chance at a higher scoring combination, it is better to throw more dice. For example, you throw all six dice and get a 1 and a 5. If you keep only the 1 and re-throw the 5 remaining dice you have better odds of getting a higher score than if you kept both the 1 and the 5 and only threw 4 dice.

If you are significantly behind, it is better to play aggressively than to play conservatively. Conversely, if you are significantly ahead, then it is better to play conservatively than aggressively. Some players are always aggressive or always conservative, but the adaptive player is the one most likely to win.

Throwing all six dice will almost always lead to at least one scoring die. Only the ultra-conservative player will stop

rolling with all six dice in their hand.

Most players agree that hesitation is a bad idea... so roll, already!

RULE VARIATIONS:

Player has 3 throws to get first points.

First throw: points needed to stay in: 500 or 1000 first roll and 350 thereafter (this one is most common), or 500 every roll or 750 first roll and 350 thereafter.

Every throw must have 3 scoring dice to stop rolling.

Combining throws is ok.

To Win: 400+ point for last roll.

If the player doesn't have 1000 points to lose, they lose what they have, and the balance is divided evenly and subtracted from the other players' scores.

If the player uses 5 dice, they then have 3 throws to use the last die.

Loose Points: 1000 every Farkle or after 2 Farkles.

If the Farkled player was "in" and the next player is "in", they can try to steal the points the other person racked up before Farkling.

Example: Let's say I'm playing against Momo and Susie. I roll the dice a few times, get 1500 points, but then (being greedy) I try to get some more and farkle out with two dice. Momo, who sits beside me, can choose to take those two dice and try to add on to the 1500 points I'd accumulated