

PETANQUE TERMINOLOGY

collected by J.L.Widen

BASIC TERMS:

- (la) Pétanque** From "pieds tanqués" which means "feet tied together" Originally Provençal "ped tanco"
- (le) Rond** The throwing circle, traced in the ground.
- (une) Mène** An "end", the part of a complete game played from each new throwing circle. A match is made up of as many ends as necessary to first arrive at thirteen points.
- Pointer:** "to Point" action to roll/lob a boule, in order to stop its movement near to the cochon.
- (un) Pointeur** A player who specializes in pointing or placing his boules as close as possible to the cochon
- (un) Milieu** An all rounder in a team that can point or shoot equally well
- (l') Arbitre** The Umpire
- (le) Couloir** The shape formed by a group of spectators standing round a game in progress. The word literally means "*corridor*"
- Tête-à-Tête:** One player playing against another; a singles game, 3 boules per player.
- Doublette:** Game composed of 2 players per team, with 3 boules per player.
- Triplette:** Game composed of 3 players per team, with 2 boules per player.
- Quadrette:** Game composed of 4 players per team with 2 boules per player (not official per FPUSA).
- (le) But:** Made from wood (or FPUSA accepted synthetic), smaller than a boule, it is thrown in first, than it will be necessary to get close to it with your boules. (other terms. bouchon; cochonnet; gari; let; petit)
- (le) Cochonnet** The aim ball. The word literally means "little pig"
- (le) Gari** Another name for the cochon.
- (le) Kiki** Another name for the cochon
- (le) Pichoun** Another name for the cochon
- (le) Petit** Another name for the cochon. Sometimes also called "**le petit ministre**" - the little minister.
- Faire Fanny:** "to make Fanny" to win a match with the score of **13-0**. Some competitions award a consolation prize to the first team to be fannied
- Bon Homme** A compliment given to a particularly good player
- (un) Bras d'or** Literally 'golden arm'. A compliment given to a good thrower
- (les) Boules Cloutées** The old kind of boules which were made by hammering large-headed nails into boxwood cores.

- (le) (les) Striage, Stries** The rings, stripes or design cut into the surface of boules to make them grip the ground better
- (les) Boules Lisses** Boules that have no rings or stripes cut into their surface. Many shooters favor this kind of perfectly smooth boule for an easy release.
- (les) Boules Quadrillées** Boules that have a large number of stripes or rings cut into their surface. This kind of boule is often favored by pointers. They have been nicknamed “pineapples”
- (les) Boules Farcies** Boules that have been tampered with by the injection of either mercury, sand, or heavy oil. This moves their weight off centre and makes them more accurate when pointing. Fortunately they are very rare - and, of course, illegal
- (un) Porte-Boules** a carrier for a set of boules
- (un) Gratton** A stone or bump on the piste which deflects an otherwise well thrown/rolled boule
- Boulodrome:** An indoor place for playing Petanque. Composed of 4, 8 or more courts.
- (le) Terrain** The piste.
- (les) Lignes Tracées** Pistes which are marked out with lines - often of string
- (la) Piste** That part of the whole terrain on which the game is to be played
- (la) Graphique** The desk used by the organizers during a competition
- (les) Kiply** A measuring tape device, which also sometimes has a built in score recorder
- Pile (ou face)** The French for Heads (or Tails) The person tossing the coin often calls either "Pile" or "Face" himself before throwing it in the air and catching it on the back of his hand. Sometimes, if he is being particularly polite, he will give the other side the call and sometimes also he will let the coin fall to the ground. However, the important point is that the French do not usually wait until the coin is in the air for a call

GAME PLAY TERMS:

- (la) Consolante** The Plate Competition organized for those that do not qualify for the final rounds of the Main Competition. Entry into this secondary competition is often automatic and there is sometimes also a *Wooden Spoon Competition* for those that do not qualify for or are eliminated from the Plate Competition. The elimination games for the Main Competition are usually played in pools, but the final rounds of the Main, Plate or Wooden Spoon Competitions are normally played on a knockout basis.
- (la) Mêlée** The choosing of teams by drawing lots
- (le) Tirage au sort** French for “the drawing of lots” and it may, therefore, be heard during a competition with the sense of “making the draw” ie. to decide which teams are to play each other
- Marquer** When it is necessary to pick a boule or cochon up during the progress of a game, it is usual to mark its exact position by tapping it into the ground with another boule and then drawing 2 or 3 radii from this central mark

Avoir l'avantage:	“To have the advantage” to find yourself with a more boules better placed compared to your adversary.
Avoir le point:	“To have the point” to have a ball placed better than that of the adversary, with respect to the cochon.
Reprendre le point:	“Regain the point” your adversary had the point, but you manage to regain it with the following throw.
Defendre le point:	“Defend the point” defend a well-placed boule while hitting the adversary’s boule which is placed better.
Holding:	A team is said to be holding for as long as their boule is closest to the cochonnette.
Push the Boule:	When a boule which is located in front of the cochon, is “pushed” or moved, either on purpose or accidentally by another boule.
Jouer pour la gagne:	“to play for the win” you have in hand the boules to arrive at thirteen and to win the match.
(la) Poussette	Either when the cochon or boule is pushed forward or when an opponent's boule is used to bounce your own off towards the cochon. “la poussette” is literally the French for “the push chair”
(le) Pousse-Pousse	Either when the cochon or boule is pushed forward or when an opponent's boule is used to bounce your own off towards the cochon. “le pousse-pousse” is literally the French for “the rickshaw”
Ajouter:	“to add” - your adversary does not have any more boules to play. Any boules that remain are yours (or your team’s) and will hopefully be played to enlarge your score.
(la) Revanche	The revenge, a return or second match in a series of three
(la) Belle	The final and deciding game of three. The second is “la revanche” (the revenge)
(la) Musique	Deliberate distracting behavior during the playing of a game. This is expressly forbidden by <i>Rule 17</i> of the rules
(faire le) Passet	To step out of the throwing circle too early
Sautée (tirer à la)	To shoot at the boule or the cochon which is behind an obstacle
Tour de main:	(turn of the hand) - the effect given by the turn of the wrist by the shooter or pointer during the throw of the boule.
Serrer (une boule)	To impart back-spin to a boule
Tanquer (sa boule)	To throw a boule very high and, at the same time, to spin it
Tourner (une boule)	To spin a boule so that on landing it moves either to the right or the left
Partir	When a thrown boule, rolls too far and fails make the point
Appui:	A boule thrown a little too strong, but stopped by another boule.

Bec:	A boule's path changed in direction by hitting another boule.
Serrer (le jeu)	To point with no hope of scoring but with the intention of hampering the other side so that their score is kept as low as possible. A defensive move.
Tâter la donnée	Before a throw, to drop a boule on to the intended landing spot in order to get some idea as to how it will behave when thrown there
(un) Tétard	Literally "a tadpole", the same as "biberon" which is when a particularly good pointing boule comes to rest actually touching the cochon
Téter	To succeed in making a "biberon" or "tétard", ie. pointing a boule right up against the cochon
Tourner	When members of a team change their role, eg. from <i>tireur</i> to <i>pointeur</i> , in the middle of a game (these folks are called a <i>milieu</i> - all-rounder)
(le) Cadrage:	The method of eliminating some teams/players so the main competition can be run with the more manageable numbers of 16, 32, 64, etc.

BOULE PLACEMENT TERMS:

Une Donnee:	"Landing spot" the exact ideal place where you intend for your boule to land, before it rolls.
Placer:	The action of pointing a boule in the direction of the cochon so it stops as close to it as possible.
Boule derrière:	Boule placed behind the cochonnet. In General, it isn't a very good placement because other players can point to it.
Boule Devant	The French saying "Boule devant, c'est boule d'argent" (a boule in front is a boule of silver), means that you should always try to keep pointing boules in front of the cochon as here they will always have additional value as obstacles. When the other side tries to get near the cochon, they are in danger of knocking these blocking boules even more closer to the cochon.
Se melanger:	"to mix" to point your boules so as to touch those of the adversary, in front, behind or on the sides.
(le) Pointage	The attempt to place a boule as close as possible to the cochon
Serrer le jeu:	"to tighten the play" The few boules which remain are played as defensive boules to limit point losses (or gains to the other team).
un Biberon:	When a thrown boule is touching the cochonnet. It is a Biberon ("Baby-Bottle"). You have just made a "bibe" or a "tétard".
Embouchonner	To put a boule up against the cochon, (to make a "biberon" baby's bottle)
Gendarme	French for "policeman" - when one boule is located right next to another (opposing boule) which is next to the cochon - with the appearance that it is watching the boule like a "cop"
Un contre:	"against" - your shooting boule ends up against the cochon or another boule.
(les) Boules Collées	Boules that are side by side and touching.

- (le) Devant-de-Boule** When a boule finishes up in front of and touching an opponent's boule. This is a particularly effective placement as the opponent risks moving his or her own boule in an attempt to remove it.
- (se) Planter** When a boule hits the ground very heavily after a high throw and so digs itself well in
-

POINTING TERMS:

- (la) Roulette** A way of pointing, only possible on a smooth surface, in which the boule is rolled nearly all the way from the playing circle to the cochon
- Bonne Maman** A way of rolling the boule on a very smooth surface in which the player bends forward from the waist and releases the boule near the feet
- Rouler:** to point a ball so that it rolls the total distance between the round ("Le Rond") and the cochon.
- (la) Demi-portee:** "Half-Lob" it is to point a boule so that it falls halfway from Le Rond and the cochon, and then rolls towards the cochon.
- Portee:** To point a boule so that it falls into the last third of the distance between Le Rond and the cochon. The boule will roll very little if done correctly.
- (la) Plombée:** It is to point the boule with a high lob so that it falls close to the cochon. The forward momentum of the boule is deadened by its fall, immobilizing it at once or almost at once. Used with rougher ground.
- (la) Portée** The more usual name for the pointer's high, backspin lob which is also called "la plombée"
- (faire un) Narri** To make a very bad pointage
- (le) Rétro** The back-spin which is imparted to a pointing boule by swinging the wrist forward during the throwing action
- (la) Roulette-Dirigée** A pointing throw in which the boule is delivered from a semi-crouching position, and guided/rolled nearly all of the way to the cochon
- Visser (la boule)** To point a boule very low and with spin
-

SHOOTING TERMS:

- (un) Tireur** A player who is better at shooting than pointing
- (un) Tir** A shot aimed at hitting an opponent's boule and, in doing so, removing it
- (le) Tirage** Shooting or trying to knock one boule out of the way with another.
- Tirer:** "to Shoot" to strike an opponent's boule with the goal of removing it from play/threat.
- Tirer a la raffle:** "to shoot at the edge" the boule arrives at the edge of the piste, but does not touch it (still "live")
- Tirer au fer:** "to shoot the iron" The boule is launched in the air, does not touch the ground but comes to land right upon the opponent's boule.

(un) Carreau	When a shooting, the boule scores a perfect direct hit on the target boule and, in doing so, not only knocks it away, but takes its exact position. The origin of the term is thought to have come from the fighting expression "rester carreau" - "to remain on the spot, to be laid out cold." "Le carreau" means the "floor", (usually only applied to one that is either tiled or paved.)
Reussir un carreau:	The perfect shot. Your boule, by shooting, struck the opponent's boule, and drove it out and took its place exactly.
Palet (faire un)	To hit one of the opponent's boules and then stay close to it; to make a carreau
(un) Palet Courant	A poor carreau which, having hit its target, rolls on too much
(un) Palet Roulant	To hit a target boule by throwing short and rolling onto it
Reussir un palet:	The almost perfect shot (see above) except that the shooting boule moved away a little after the impact, (between 0 and 50 centimeters behind).
Pointer en tirant:	"to point while shooting" it is to make a Carreau (palet) and get the point at the same time.
Un retro:	The opposite of the Palet because the shot boule is moved towards you after the impact.
Faire une sautee:	"to do a jump" a delicate shooting because the boule to be dislodged is behind another boule.
Noyer (le but)	To shoot at the cochon and, by removing it from the defined piste, nullify the end
(la) Raspaillette	The more usual name for the kind of shooting throw which lands about 2 or 3 meters from the target boule and then hits it by rolling forward. Although the French often disapprove of the shot, it can be most effective - especially on a smooth piste. See also Raclette and Rafle
(la) Raclette	Another name for "la raspaillette" which is a rolling kind of shot which, instead of hitting the target boule directly from the air, it is thrown and lands a short distance from it and then knocks it out of the way. French purists frown on this kind of shooting but players from other countries - notably the Belgians and English - use it to great effect on occasion
(un) Rafle	Much the same as "la raclette" and "la raspaillette" except that it is kept much shorter, lower and sometimes spun
Tirer a cinquante devant:	"to shoot to the front fifty" to insure a shot, the shooter throws the boule so it lands and rolls for 50cm before running up against the boule intended to be hit.
(la) Casquette	When a shooting boule bounces off the top of the target boule without moving it at all. The word literally means "a cap"
Faire une casquette:	"to make a cap" the shooting boule almost hits the aimed for boule, but only touches it lightly, not moving it.
Chiquer (une boule)	When a shooter just tips the target boule and hardly moves it at all
Faire un trou:	"to make a hole"- it is to shoot and miss the boule(s). To not succeed in your objective.