

Limbo Instructions

Limbo is a traditional game that originated in Trinidad. The basic concept of the game is to walk or dance under a pole of some sort without falling. Music usually is played in the background, but it is optional. There are rules on how to go under the limbo pole correctly, so if you want to play, you'll need to make sure you know exactly how to adjudicate the game.

Turns

Players who are walking or dancing under the limbo bar have to go under the bar one at a time. No one may assist you under the bar and you have to wait until the person ahead of you is completely out from under the bar before taking your turn. If everyone is eliminated during a round, the round is repeated.

Standing

You are considered "out" if you can't remain standing while going under the limbo bar. Standing means that only your feet are touching the floor and you aren't holding onto anyone else, yourself or to the pole or pole stands. This means that you need good balance and that you'll need to demonstrate increased strength as the bar goes lower.

Pole Touching

Touching the pole or pole supports during your turn is forbidden. You must clear all parts of the pole structure to advance to the next round.

Direction

Unless you choose to allow directional variation in the game (all players must agree), you must approach the bar facing forward. You may not change direction in the middle of your turn to make going under the pole easier. This includes twisting at the waist, since the point of the game is to show how far you can bend. All players have to use the same direction for their turn to make the contest fair. The point of this is to force you to bend backward, challenging your flexibility and strength.

Pole Height and Lowering

There is no set requirement for how much the limbo pole may be lowered for each turn. Most players move the pole about 2 to 6 inches per turn, depending on how long they want the game to last and how many people are playing. Regardless of the increment size selected for pole lowering, everyone has to start with the same pole height. Everyone must have a turn at the same height before the pole is lowered to the next height.