

Episode



6 CYPRUS



Games played in the castles

Narrator 3: Children in castles didn't have video games, televisions, or plastic toys. But they didn't get bored. They used their imagination, simple objects, and open spaces to create fun games.

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Children often watched knights training in castle courtyards. The knights practiced sword fighting, horse riding, and using bows and arrows.

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And what did the children do? They imitated them!

Sticks became swords.

Wooden boards became shields.



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Blankets became royal capes.

Friends became dragons or enemy knights.

They pretended to defend towers, rescue princesses, or guard the castle gates.

Narrator 1: Children in castles during the 15th to 16th century didn't have electronic games like the PS5, television, etc.

Narrator 2: Children used to play outdoor games such as hide-and-seek, tag, tic-tac-toe, and many others. At the same time, they played with wooden swords and wooden shields because there were no electronics.

Child 1: The most famous game was chess.

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Chess? Did chess exist since the Middle Ages? I love that game!

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Yes, of course. It comes from India. It was invented there, then played in Persia, and from there it reached Europe. Travelers brought it with them.

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This game was one of the best for both children and adults because it is a game of strategy and thinking.

Child 2: One of the most popular games is nine men's morris. Sometimes they carved it onto wooden tables or even on stone window seats in castles! Players must try to line up three pieces in a row.

Child 3: They played these games when it was very cold or raining and they couldn't go outside.

Child 2: Some other games helped children become strong. These games are still popular with children today.

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Boys who grew up in castles were often expected to become knights. But girls also played chasing games and took part in imaginative adventures.

Child 1: These games included wrestling, friendly running races in the castle courtyard, jumping contests, and balance games.

Narrator 1: At the same time, most children in medieval Europe lived in villages and towns and worked hard with their families. Still, they found time to play.



Child 3: The games children played in medieval Europe included tag, hide-and-seek, “Follow the Leader,” and relay races.

Narrator 3: These games didn’t require equipment, only energy and fun.

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Children drew circles in the dirt and threw stones into them. They stacked stones and tried to knock them down with careful aim.

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Some games were very similar to today’s game of “jacks,” where small stones are tossed in the air and caught.

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Do you think they argued like we do today when we play?

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Of course! Arguments during games are probably a timeless phenomenon!

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Do you think they also played with a ball?

Child 1: Of course! Balls were made in a specific way.

Narrator 2: Balls were made from leather filled with straw, tightly tied cloth, or wool wrapped with string, and were usually colored in various colors.

Narrator 1: Children usually kicked, threw, or carried the ball. In medieval England, a rough game called “mob football” was played. It had very few rules and a lot of running!

Child 3: The common games that all medieval children played were quite fun.

Narrator 3: To play these games, they used imagination, nature, simple objects, and friendship.

Narrator 2: Through games, they also learned courage, cooperation, balance, strategy, and creativity.

Narrator 1: In castle halls or village homes, families gathered around the fire. Children listened to stories about brave knights, magical creatures, and clever heroes.

Child 3: Riddles were also very popular.

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We learned many medieval riddles. Shall I tell you some?

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As we know, Cyprus during medieval times had strong castles such as Kolossi Castle, Limassol Castle, and Othello's Tower. These castles protected cities and ports.

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Children who lived near Cypriot castles likely saw soldiers guarding towers, messengers running with news, and archers practicing.

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They probably imitated what they saw. Just like we do today. They may have pretended to guard gates or reenacted rescue missions...

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They may have played throwing games with pebbles, running races among olive trees, hide-and-seek behind stone walls, or rolling hoops with wooden rings.

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Because Cyprus has a warm climate, children played outside most of the time.

Child 1: What do you say, everyone? This afternoon let's also play medieval games and detox a bit from screens.

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Let's play Knucklebones!

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How do you play?

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We need 4–5 sheep knucklebones or small stones (since it's hard to find sheep bones today) and a flat surface (ground, wooden floor, or table).

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We scatter the knucklebones on the ground. We throw one into the air. While it is in the air, we quickly pick up one from the ground. We catch the one we threw before it falls. We repeat, picking up one each time. Then we continue in rounds, picking up two at once, then three, and so on.

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If a player drops one, fails to catch the thrown one, or accidentally moves the others, their turn ends.



The winner is the one who completes the most rounds.

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Wonderful! But afterward, we'll also play knights and princesses!