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# Backgammon Checkers

## Catalogue

February 2025



# About This Catalogue

I'm a backgammon player, historian and collector. This catalogue is designed to facilitate my sales of occasional backgammon items I have acquired over time and am ready to part with. Rather than duplicating the efforts of description and posting in various venues, I'll maintain this catalogue, updating as needed and posting it to various interest groups. This document is intended for viewing on digital devices in landscape mode – not for printing.

The most current version of this catalogue can always be found here: <https://nebackgammon.org/index.php/backgammon-in-bakelite/>

## Representation of Items

The pictures offered here have been deliberately rendered to provide a fair representation of the items, while taking up no more than a single page in the catalogue. *If there are flaws or blemishes, I have taken care to make them visible.* So, for instance, you can trust that the "hidden" surfaces in a picture of 30 checkers are just as good as the 30 sides you can see. Pictures of doubling cubes will reveal all 6 faces. Where there are meaningful flaws in an item, I will draw attention to them in the descriptive text. The resolution of the images is high enough that zooming in on them on your device will reveal substantial detail. **Please be careful to note item size before offering to purchase.**

Measurements were taken in inches and converted to metric, and in the case of checkers, were based upon the practical needs of use in a backgammon set: the width of six checkers side by side to fit into a table quadrant, and the height of each stack of 15 checkers, to fit into checker trays. Individual piece measurements are then based on these larger group measurements. Caliper readings of individual checkers can be misleading, as minor variations of thickness and diameter (and color) are common in bakelite backgammon pieces. Differences in the stack heights may be visible in the photos, but any substantial variations among pieces will also be explicitly noted in the text description.

Accurate descriptions make for realistic expectations, simple, trouble-free transactions and repeat sales to happy buyers over time.

## Prices are Firm

I have priced items based on the upper end of what similar ones tend to fetch on auction sites such as eBay. Collectors may very well "do better" by patient following of online or local auction listings. My items have the virtue of being available for purchase immediately.

In some cases an elevated price reflects my ambivalence about letting an item go. **Prices may be lowered – or raised – in subsequent versions of the catalogue.** Items will be marked as sold when no longer available, and will be removed in the next full revision of the catalogue.



# What is “Bakelite?”

I use the term “bakelite” as a broad generic term for 20th-century decorative plastics that have in common a pleasing density, coloration, and tendency to build a patina that will cause a Q-tip smeared with Simichrome polish to turn yellowy-orange. Most of the checkers and doubling cubes hailing from the 1930’s would more accurately be called “Catalin,” referring to the corporation that applied the original bakelite formula to decorative items such as brooches, bangles, household implements, and game pieces. But the term “bakelite” is broadly applied to a variety of companies that produced such items over time, until its production was outlawed in the United States due to health hazards sometime in the 1960s.

Some bakelite items, particularly black and ivory-colored pieces, so not pass the Simichrome test because they do not build up the typical patina that colored pieces demonstrate. Experienced collectors know bakelite when they see it first-hand, and you can be confident I am an experienced collector. If I have doubts, I will share them in the description. Learn more at <https://nebackgammon.org/index.php/backgammon-in-bakelite/>

I will name other plastics when I can, or refer to them as a “modern resin” and price them accordingly.

## Cleaning and Polishing

I employ a very gentle vibratory tumbling process for anywhere from a few hours to an entire day to remove light wear, dirt, and abrasions *without* stripping away the patina that builds up on bakelite over time and provides much of its appeal. I aim for a clean, gleaming surface that shows off colors and subtle variations, not a high gloss effect. At right is an example of checkers (top) with a “dusty” residue that I’ve removed without markedly affecting the checker colors (zoom in for closer detail). Once a patina has been demolished, it may not return for decades. *Checkers that have been further polished by a buyer are not eligible for return.*

## Guarantee of Satisfaction

I will provide a full refund *including* shipping costs for any item found to have been meaningfully misrepresented in my listings. I will also happily provide an *item-price refund* (not shipping costs) for any item the buyer wishes to return for any other reason.

Items must be returned in as-delivered condition and postmarked within 14 days of delivery.



# Payment

Payments may be made via **Venmo, Zelle, Apple Cash, or Paypal ("Family & Friends" gift mode) only**. In-person payment and delivery is also possible if you will be in the Boston area or if you would like to arrange a purchase at a backgammon tournament that I attend (NY Metro, San Antonio, and Chicago are most likely). If you would feel more secure transacting with eBay as an intermediary, I can list an item for you that way, but the Item price will be increased by 20% to cover eBay and PayPal fees.

# Shipping

**I ship all items via USPS Priority Mail** and charge the actual amount based on weight and the buyer's address. Buyers may request extra security measures such as **insurance**, signature confirmation, or for the parcel to be held for pick-up, the cost of which will be added to your bill.

# Risk of Loss

Outright losses by USPS are *exceedingly* rare, but theft from front porches or mail boxes may be common in your area, and is beyond my control. ***A USPS tracking confirmation of delivery to the proper address will stand as sufficient proof of delivery. The filing of a USPS insurance claim by the buyer will be the only recourse in the event of an item lost or damaged in the mail.*** Only in the event that improper packing is determined to be the cause of loss in the course of an insurance claim will the seller provide a refund for an item confirmed as delivered by USPS.

# Reputation & Trust

I am a well-known and respected member of the backgammon community and an organizer of the New England Backgammon Club (NEBC). I have been a seller in good standing on eBay since 1998 under the username *Wickerman5*.

# Listing Order & Purchase Requests

Items in this catalogue are ordered by price, from highest to lowest within categories (Checkers, Cubes, etc). **To make a purchase, email your request, including the Item #, along with your name, shipping address, and preferred method of payment to: [asteg@mindspring.com](mailto:asteg@mindspring.com)**





## Extra Large Size - Bakelite

A handsome and lustrous set of oversized mocha-brown and yellow checkers, ideal for a custom table-top or furniture set -- or for a portable one if you've got a strong arm. There are some tiny brown spots around the edges of some yellows, visible in the pictures below.

Diameter: 1.95" (49.53 mm)

Thickness: .66" (16.76 mm)

Lot Weight: 39.2 (1111 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 11.69" (29.69 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 9.875" (25.08 cm)





## Extra Large Size - Bakelite

I am quite certain that these sleek, blood-red checkers came from a 1970's-era Asprey set, based on past auction images. The flat profile of these wide, thin checkers were part of a luxury style popular in the 1970's. The bakelite is 'flat' too -- no swirling. I'd love to find a cream-colored set to pair with these -- and if I ever do, I sure won't be selling them! Checkers are in very nice condition, with a small ding on one edge (visible at top center of the image below).

Diameter: 1.94" (49.28 mm)

Thickness: .38" (9.65 mm)

Lot Weight: 12.6 (357 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 11.625" (29.53 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 5.625" (14.29 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

While green & yellow are one of the more common backgammon color schemes, this set has developed an unusually deep patina, yielding a deep forest green and a burnt butterscotch yellow. They've been carefully polished to a nice gleam without compromising the colors. The green stack is about 1/8" shorter than the yellow owing to some typical variations in thickness.

Diameter: 1.55" (39.37 mm)

Thickness: .52" (13.21 mm)

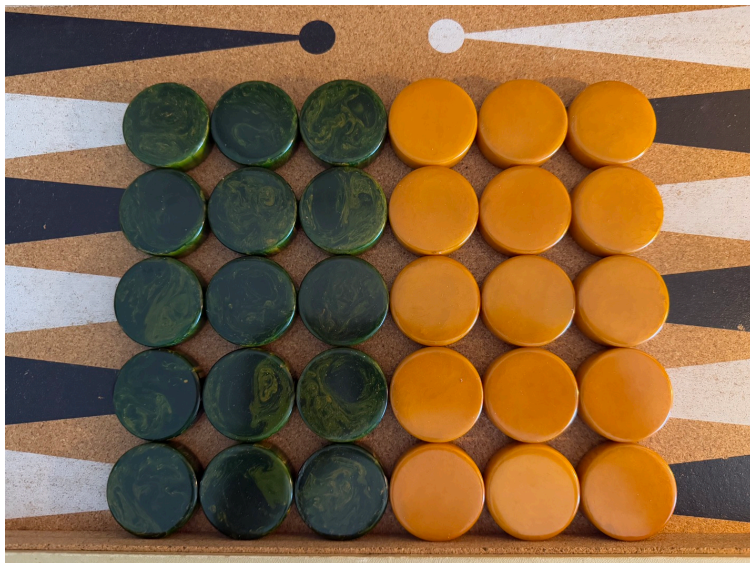
Lot Weight: 26.6 (754 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 9.3125" (23.65 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7.75" (19.69 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

This handsome set of checkers features an unusually dark "yellow" set whose patina has deepened to a slightly uneven burnt caramel color. Zooming in on the images will reveal some darker and lighter areas on some checkers. The flat surfaces show some wear with abrasions on some sides, but they have been polished to a pleasing gleam and to go much further might spoil the patina.

Diameter: 1.73" (43.94 mm)

Thickness: .5" (12.7 mm)

Lot Weight: 26.2 oz (743 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.375" (26.35 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7.4375" (18.89 cm)





**Tournament Size - Bakelite**

This distinctive thick-ringed carving style dates these checkers to sometime in the 1960s, possibly a Crisloid product. There is an unusual dose of yellow coloration in the green checkers, lending a close harmony between the two sets of 15.

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

Lot Weight: 21.8 (618 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 6.875" (17.46 cm)





**Tournament Size - Bakelite**

A pristine set of cherry-red and lemon-yellow checkers in an attractive ringed carving pattern. Possibly an early Crisloid set.

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

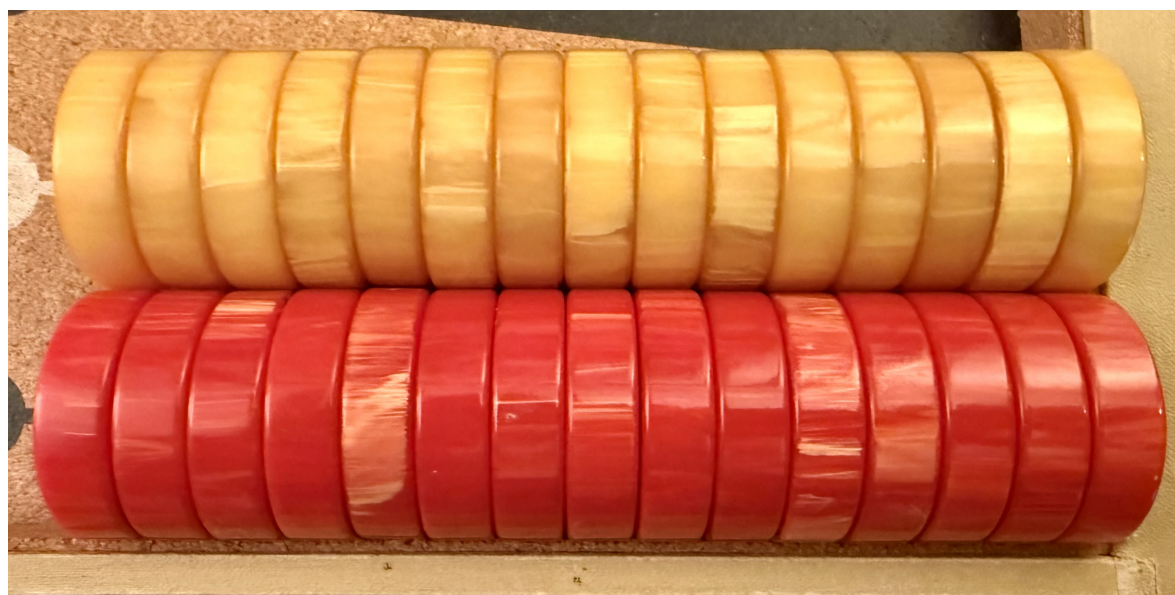
Lot Weight: 21.8 (618 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 6.875" (17.46 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

A fine set of tournament-size checkers with attractively subtle swirls and edge striping. Colors are a bright fire truck red and pale yellow -- blond, not butterscotch.

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .52" (13.21 mm)

Lot Weight: 26.2 oz (743 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7.75" (19.69 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

This attractive set of emerald green & butterscotch yellow flat checkers shows little signs of wear. One of the best color choices for a bright, festive board design.

Diameter: 1.72" (43.69 mm)

Thickness: .6" (15.24 mm)

Lot Weight: 24 (680 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.3125" (26.19 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 8.9375" (22.7 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

This is a fine set of Brown & Yellow checkers in the popular style of the 1970s. The browns are on the dark side, with dramatic edge striping. Very clean, with mild surface wear. Note the brown stack is just about .125" taller than the yellow stack. (Not something you'll notice unless you compare them closely.)

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .53" (13.46 mm)

Lot Weight: 26.3 (746 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 8" (20.32 cm)





## Tournament Size - Bakelite

The thinner form of these bright red & yellow checkers is similar to that of modern checkers, so this set might be a good candidate if you're looking to swap bakelite into an existing board -- check those checker tray dimensions! In nice condition, polished to a gentle gleam. Just a couple of tiny edge flecks. The red stack is marginally shorter than the yellow, by just around .19".

Diameter: 1.72" (43.69 mm)

Thickness: .43" (10.92 mm)

Lot Weight: 21.7 (615 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.3125" (26.19 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 6.375" (16.19 cm)





**Tournament Size - Bakelite**

A gorgeous set of carved, blood-red checkers. There is one replacement checker that is not original to the set, but it is very unlikely anyone would notice it over the board. Can you spot it?

Diameter: 1.72" (43.69 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

Lot Weight: 10.7 (303 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 10.3125" (26.19 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 6.875" (17.46 cm)





## Tournament Size - Modern Resin

A very attractive set of jet-black and cream-white swirled checkers, the latter gently translucent, probably from the Crisloid post-bakelite era of the 1980s. Note some tiny ingrained dots on a few of the white checker edges. Note also the black stack is slightly shorter than the white one. A great option if you're looking for bakelite-style swirls but desire a white rather than yellow complement.

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .5" (12.7 mm)

Lot Weight: 23 (652 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7.434" (18.88 cm)





## Medium Size - Bakelite

The close thickness-to diameter ratio lends these mid-size checkers a chunky heft. The yellow set is largely translucent with opaque swirls adding texture, and the cherry reds are wholly opaque with just a few sporting dramatic dashes of yellow. There is some variation in the diameter of the reds, and the yellow stack is a tad longer than the reds (see image), owing to some variations in thickness.

Diameter: 1.49" (37.85 mm)

Thickness: .47" (11.94 mm)

Lot Weight: 17.5 (496 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 8.9375" (22.7 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7" (17.78 cm)





**Medium Size - Bakelite**

Simple, bold checker set with minimal variations in the red set and flat ivory-yellow mates.

Diameter: 1.48" (37.59 mm)

Thickness: .47" (11.94 mm)

Lot Weight: 18.2 (516 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 8.875" (22.54 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 7" (17.78 cm)





**Medium Size - Bakelite**

Here's your classic lemon-lime combination color scheme in a medium-sized flat set. Some light scratches and abrasions are visible if you zoom in on the images.

Diameter: 1.46" (37.08 mm)

Thickness: .45" (11.43 mm)

Lot Weight: 17.1 (485 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 8.75" (22.23 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 6.8125" (17.3 cm)





**Medium Size - Bakelite**

A nice set of carved-ring checkers in bright red and yellow.

Diameter: 1.46" (37.08 mm)

Thickness: .43" (10.92 mm)

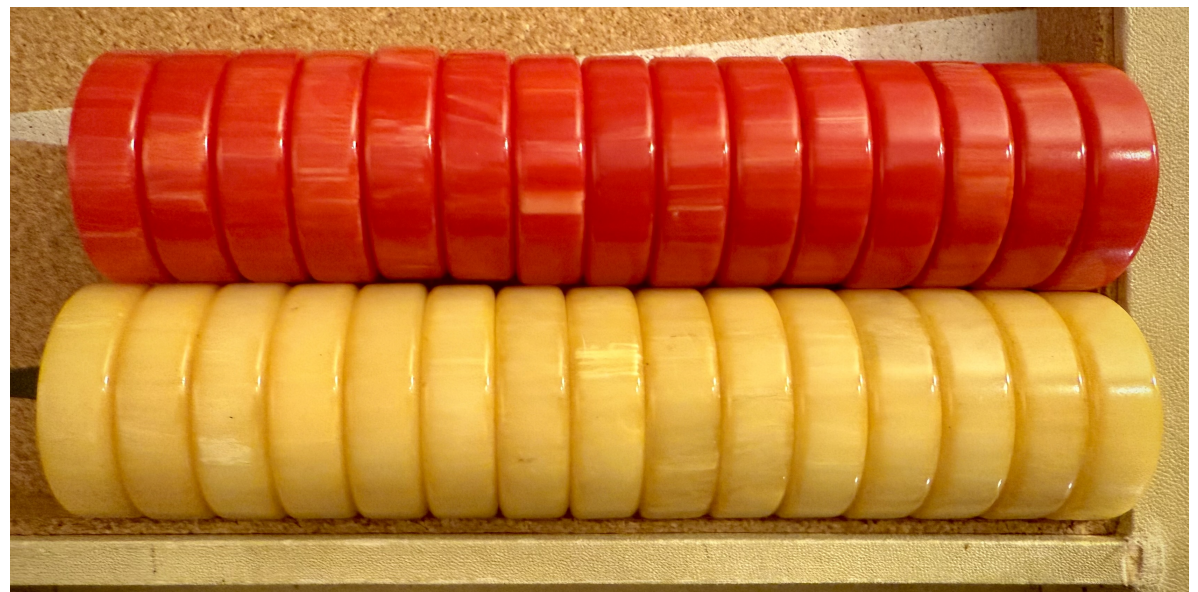
Lot Weight: 14.1 (400 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 8.75" (22.23 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 6.375" (16.19 cm)





## Medium Size - Modern Resin

These checkers appear to be from the post-bakelite era, designed to simulate qualities of the earlier material, with only small variations in coloring. It is a hard, shiny material, with some small dings, visible in the pictures. Colors are red and a peculiar white tinged with grey. Note also a fair amount of variation in thickness, evident in the picture of the checkers on edge below.

Diameter: 1.49" (37.85 mm)

Thickness: .52" (13.21 mm)

Lot Weight: 18.2 (516 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 8.9375" (22.7 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 7.86" (19.96 cm)





## Medium Size - Modern Resin

Can't say I see much appeal in this set of mottled brown and white checkers. Note the White stack is taller than the brown one, and the checkers don't stack very tightly due to various inconsistencies in the edges and surfaces.

Diameter: 1.39" (35.31 mm)

Thickness: .43" (10.92 mm)

Lot Weight: 15.8 (448 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 8.3125" (21.11 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 6.4375" (16.35 cm)





## Small Size - Bakelite

A lovely set of small travel checkers: jet black with cream-colored swirls and very slightly marbled yellows.

Diameter: 1.21" (30.73 mm)

Thickness: .34" (8.64 mm)

Lot Weight: 8.9 (252 g)

### QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 7.25" (18.42 cm)

### TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checkers: 5.125" (13.02 cm)





**Small Size - Bakelite**

Very nice brown & yellow coloration in this small "travel size" checker set.

Diameter: 1.22" (30.99 mm)

Thickness: .38" (9.65 mm)

Lot Weight: 8.5 (241 g)

**QUADRANT TOLERANCE**

Width of 6 checkers: 7.31" (18.57 cm)

**TRAY LENGTH**

Length of 15 checkers: 5.75" (14.61 cm)

