



Jump Rope History

By Lynn VanDyke

Learn the history of jumping rope as it pertains to health and fitness. Get creative with your cardio workouts!

While many people associate jump roping with children on a playground, the fact is that jump rope history goes back to early human history. From the earliest days of rope jumping to today, the sport has evolved considerably and is now a competitive sport.

Known as jump rope, skip rope, rope jumping, and skipping, the activity dates back to ancient civilizations.

The Egyptians used to jump over vines, aborigines jumped over bamboo, and paintings from the medieval period show images of children jumping hoops. Many people associate jump roping with girls' play, but history indicates that jump roping was originally a man's game.

No one knows the exact jump rope history. There are a number of versions of the sport's history. What is known, however, is that the practice originated a long time ago, and eventually traveled around the world to become a popular pastime, a favorite form of exercise, and a competitive sport.

The Early Days

The movement of jumping is a natural one. People jump for sport, fun, and even survival, such as jumping out of the way to avoid a bite from a dangerous animal. Most jump rope history researchers seem to agree that jump roping dates back to about 1600 B.C., when Egyptians used vines for jumping.

Some also date jump roping to ancient China; however, the Western versions probably originated from Egypt. What is known is that jump roping, in some form or another, spread through Europe to the Netherlands, and eventually to North America.

Jumping Games

Early Dutch settlers were some of the first jump ropers in North America. Not surprisingly, one of the more popular jumping games is called 'Double Dutch.' In this game, two people hold two ropes and spin them in opposite directions. Jumpers then jump into and over both ropes.

In the early 1940s and 1950s, many children in inner cities used jumping rope as a form of play. It only required a rope, and anyone could play. From the late 1950s until the 1970s, however, jump rope history took a back seat to radio and television.

Jump Roping Revitalized

In the 1970s, an increased interest in physical fitness and overall health emerged. From programs promoting jump roping to keep kids from other unhealthy activities, to organized jump roping events made jump rope history evolve into a jump rope craze.

Since that time, jump roping has been recognized as a great way to get exercise. It is a fun activity, almost anyone can do it, and it requires very little equipment. Serious jumpers have developed a number of intricate jumping moves and combinations.

All forms of jumping, from individual jumping to multi-person Double Dutch jumping, involves highly technical moves and amazing stunts.

Jump roping organizations and clubs can be found almost anywhere. Jump rope competitions are serious business, requiring specific timing and a high level of skill. With the ongoing interest in jump roping as an exercise option and as a sport, jump rope history may be a thing of the past.

Lynn VanDyke is a master trainer and fitness nutritionist. She has authored the wildly popular ebook called [Melt the Fat \(http://www.melt-the-fat.com\)](http://www.melt-the-fat.com), and she offers personalized [online personal training \(http://www.trainerlynn.com\)](http://www.trainerlynn.com).

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