

IMAGE BY MICHAEL HAMPHREY COURTESY OF PUBLIC GRANDE MUSEUM, CITY OF PHOENIX

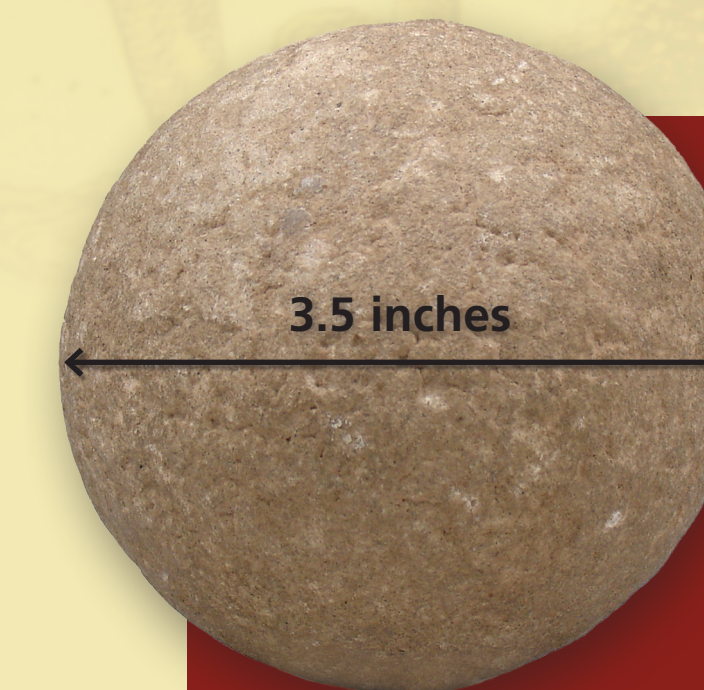
Ball Games, Platform Mounds, and Great Houses

Does the hollow, oval mound you see before you remind you of a sports stadium? Just like today's arenas, this ball court was a place where crowds of people regularly gathered more than 1,000 years ago.

Every society needs public places to get together. Here the ball court, platform mounds, and the Casa Grande all served as community centers for the Ancestral Sonoran

Desert People—but at different times. Archeologists see clues that once the platform mounds to your right were built, people suddenly abandoned this ball court.

Then when the Casa Grande was built, around 100–150 years after the platform mounds, it became the center of the community.



The Old Ball Game

Players used stone balls larger than today's professional baseballs. Archeologists have identified about 200 ball courts like this in Arizona. A fine caliche plaster made the central playing fields hard and smooth.

Abandoned about 950 years ago