

When we were kids, the do-over was our savior. Those weak throws, the missed catch, a wayward hit, the blown goal, the unfortunate die roll, that wretched strike, the maddening missed turn of the rope, those slow mashings of game controller buttons, and that damned inability to stay frozen during freeze tag—each could be



Tidepools 2010:  
Do-Overs  
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cleanly wiped away simply by declaring, “Do over!” Like penance or pardon, the do-over provided *tabula rasa* for play. But what about adults? When we grow up, do we relinquish our entitlement? Should we live life as if there are no do-overs? Always careful...never taking risks? Calculating every step to avoid *needing* a do-over? Many would argue there are no do-overs in real life, but going back to school, starting a new job, getting married, getting divorced, moving out of the country—each of those new experiences could count as a second chance, a do-over. And if there was no such thing as a second chance, shouldn't we be living accordingly? As a nation, we can't recant shootings, crusades, fraud, bombings, hostile takeovers, Ponzi schemes, induced hunger and poverty, willful neglect, or feigned ignorance. We could, however, stage a do-over: a powerful, national effort to begin again, to right our wrongs, to save face countrywide. The last election was supposed to be a mandate, a political do-over, but it's going to take us holding our leaders accountable and ourselves responsible for our country's actions for this second chance—this change—to take hold. And what about personal do-overs? Would you use a do-over for your first marriage? Your first divorce? Would you choose to not have your kids? Have more kids? Change your major? Accept that job offer? Get that tattoo or piercing? Move in with that boyfriend/girlfriend? Throw that first punch? Buy that house? Take that drug? Eat that dessert? Utter those fightin' words? Or would you use a do-over to say “I love you”? Would you take that leap, do something so uncharacteristic that it might change your life? Would you say “I do” instead of “I won't”? Would you turn off your computer and your phone and spend a sun-filled day with your family and friends? Maybe you don't need or want a do-over, but it sure is fun to think about what you could accomplish...and maybe do-overs are always available, and we just need to recognize and accept the second chances they give us.