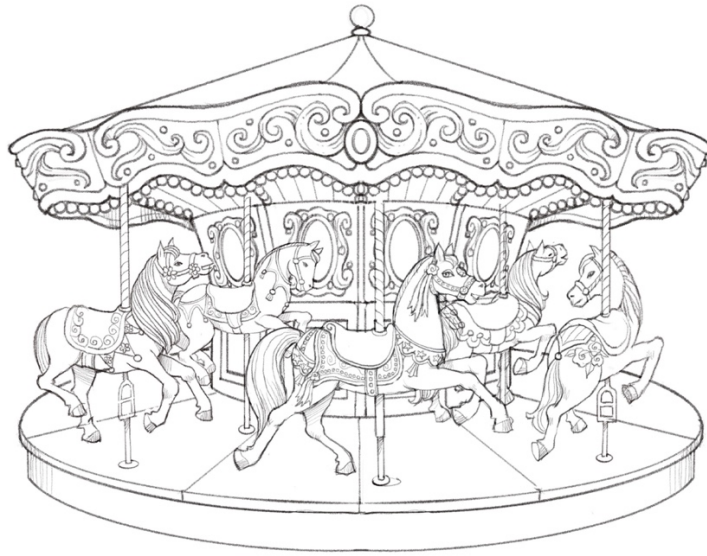


The History of Carousels



A long, long time ago—before there were amusement parks or cotton candy—carousels began as something very different. Believe it or not, the first carousels weren't for fun at all! They were training machines for knights in the Middle Ages. Knights would ride real horses in a circle, practicing how to use their swords and spears. This spinning game was called a "carosella," which means "little battle" in Italian.

Over time, people thought it looked like fun, so they made wooden versions for children and people who weren't knights. These early carousels were turned by horses, donkeys, or even people walking in a circle to make it spin. Later, steam engines were used, and then electricity made them even faster and brighter!

The horses we see on carousels today—colorful, shiny, and full of personality—have their own special history too. Carvers, who were really artists, spent hours making each wooden horse look unique. Some looked wild and powerful, while others looked sweet and gentle. Many had real horsehair tails and fancy saddles painted in gold, red, and blue.

Carousels became super popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s, especially in the United States and Europe. Each carousel had its own music, its own style, and its own special horses. Some even had lions, tigers, or dragons instead of horses!

Today, carousels are still spinning in parks and fairs all over the world, bringing joy to kids and grown-ups alike. Every time you ride one, you're taking a magical spin through history!