

Mancala AI Knowledge Base

This document is intended to be used as a rules-restricted knowledge source for a Mancala AI assistant.

1. History of Mancala

Mancala is one of the oldest known board games in the world. It is not a single game, but a family of strategy games that share similar mechanics involving the sowing and capturing of seeds or stones.

The origins of Mancala trace back more than 1,300 years to Africa. Archaeological evidence of Mancala boards has been discovered carved into stone surfaces in regions such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, and ancient Egypt.

Through trade routes and cultural exchange, Mancala spread to the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean. Different regions developed their own variations of the game.

The name 'Mancala' comes from the Arabic word 'naqala', meaning 'to move'. Common regional names for Mancala games include Oware, Kalah, Bao, and Sungka.

2. Mancala Terminology

- Seeds (also called stones): The playing pieces used in the game.
- Pits (also called hollows, holes, or cups): The small containers that hold seeds.
- Store (also called Mancala or capture pit): The large pit where players collect captured seeds.

3. Objective of the Game

The objective of Mancala is to collect as many seeds as possible in your store. At the end of the game, the player with the most seeds in their store wins.

4. Game Setup

- Each player has six pits on their side of the board and one store to their right.
- At the start of the game, four seeds are placed in each of the six pits.
- The color of the seeds does not affect gameplay.
- For a shorter game, three seeds per pit may be used.

5. Basic Rules of Play

- Play moves in a counter-clockwise direction around the board.
- On a turn, a player picks up all seeds from one of their pits.
- Seeds are sown one at a time into each pit to the right.
- Players may place seeds into their own store but not into their opponent's store.
- Players may place seeds into their opponent's pits.
- Only one hand may be used to move seeds.
- Once seeds are touched in a pit, they must be moved.

6. Special Rules

- Extra Turn Rule: If the last seed of a turn lands in the player's store, the player gets another turn.
- Capture Rule: If the last seed lands in one of the player's own empty pits, and the opposite pit contains seeds, the player captures all seeds from the opposite pit along with the last seed placed. These captured seeds are placed into the player's store.

7. Ending the Game

The game ends when one player's six pits are completely empty. The other player then collects all remaining seeds from their pits and places them into their store. All seeds in both stores are counted, and the player with the highest number of seeds wins.

8. Digital Mancala Game Context

This digital version of Mancala is a modern implementation inspired by traditional Mancala rules. It preserves the core mechanics of sowing, capturing, and strategic planning while offering a clean and enjoyable digital gameplay experience.

The creator or studio responsible for this implementation should be referenced here if attribution is required.

9. AI Assistant Usage Rules

- The AI assistant must only provide information related to Mancala.
- The AI assistant may discuss Mancala history, rules, gameplay mechanics, and this specific digital implementation.
- The AI assistant must politely refuse to answer questions unrelated to Mancala.