

Go

is a strategic board game for two.

This game is for you if you enjoy head-to-head competition using strategy, tactics, and only the luck you can create.

There are very few rules in Go, making it easy to learn, but those simple rules create a complex universe of possibilities. The road to mastery in Go is one that takes years, but enjoyment starts at the very beginning.

囲碁



igo

圍棋



wéiqí

바둑



baduk

With more than 2500 years of history, Go is known by many names.

how to play

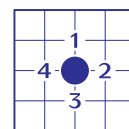
In the beginning the board is empty. Players take turns adding a single stone to the board on any of the 361 line intersections. Black always goes first, but White starts with 7½ points as compensation (called **komí**).

Whoever occupies more of the board, wins!

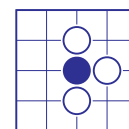
A player occupies territory that they surround only if it cannot be successfully invaded or captured. When no useful moves remain, a player may pass. The game ends when both players pass, one after the other.

how to capture

The best players rarely capture, preferring instead to profit from the mere threat of capture. Stones are captured when they have been fully surrounded by the opponent. A player may not cause their own stones to be captured, to do so would be **illegal suicide**.



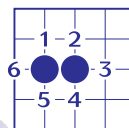
This black stone has 4 **liberties**.



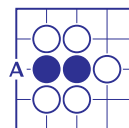
Now it has 1 liberty left! It's in **atari**.



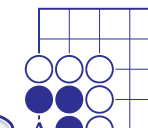
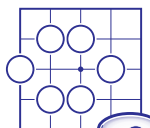
White can capture and places the captured stone in her lid.



Here, Black has 6 liberties.



Now, if it's White's turn, she can capture by playing at A.



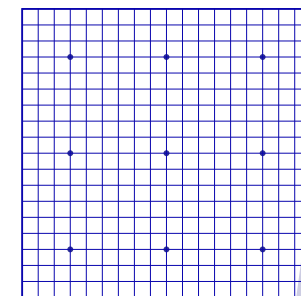
Similarly, in each of these examples, White can capture. Notice that it's not illegal suicide since White is capturing.



the stones

361 stones, 2 bowls & lids

One's captured stones are conveniently placed in the lid.



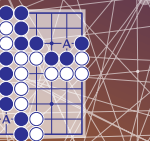
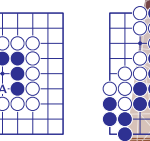
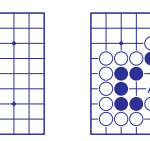
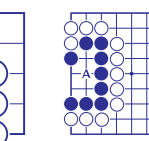
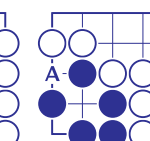
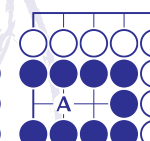
the board

19x19 lines — edges too!

The dots on the board are just for reference. Often, boards with fewer lines are used for practice.

how to live "how to not get captured"

A group of stones is in danger of being captured if all its liberties can be filled. But if a group has **two eyes** (two separate spaces within the group) it can never be captured because the opponent cannot fill both eyes with one move.

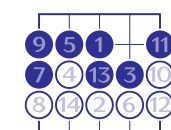


In these examples, Black will live if he plays at A. If White plays there first, Black's group will die.

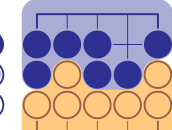
how to count

After both players pass, counting the score decides the winner. First, remove any dead stones, to avoid counting them by mistake. Then add up the total **area** occupied by each player. This includes surrounded space and stones on the board.

Many players prefer a different method, called **territory counting**, but it takes longer to explain.



The numbers above show the turn sequence.



* we've ignored komi for this tiny example

Black = 13

Black wins!

White = 12

