

PAGODA

Rules

a game of strategy for two players

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Introduction

Steeped in the mysterious past of Eastern Asia lie the origins of PAGODA.

With 6,000 possible combinations, it completely eclipses the other great board games (Chess 400, Go 1,800).

PAGODA is completely different to play from the classic games mentioned above. It is a competition to form the most valuable shapes on the board, while preventing the opponent from doing the same. For all its richness, PAGODA is often of short duration. Decisions before the tenth move are common. Ties on the other hand are extremely rare.

Contents

1. Board
2. Two sets of pieces, 14 green and 14 red, 7 of each of which are square and 7 round (stones and columns respectively).
3. Rules

Preparation

The board is placed between the players so that they can read the letters horizontally and the numbers vertically. Each player receives a set of pieces. Lots are drawn for colour and first move.

Rules

Each player in turn moves a single piece, in order to occupy a square, to move from one square to another, or to remove a piece from the board.

Stones can either be placed on the board or removed from the board. **Columns** can either be placed on the board, where they remain, or moved to any other square **of the same colour**.

When **all** a player's pieces are on the board, he is allowed to "**demolish**", i. e. to remove as many of his **own stones** from the board in one move as he wishes. These stones are still in the game, and may be played again. A player may not demolish again until his opponent has also demolished.

A player can also **tear down** his opponent's **fences, walls and ruins** (see **Buildings**). These pieces are then taken and may not be played again.

An individual opposing piece can be taken, by encircling it, so that it lies on the point of intersection

of 4 of one's own pieces, each pair of which should be the same distance from the opposing piece, (e. g. e5 is encircled by e1, e9, c5, and g5). Such a "**Cross**" must be declared. Only if the opponent fails to respond by removing the piece from the board (if it is a stone) or moving it to another square (if it is a column) can it be taken.

It is not compulsory to demolish, tear down or take.

The Pieces and their Functions

By placing pieces on the board or by moving them, the players seek to form shapes on the board, which are called Buildings. There are various shapes:

- Hut** = 4 pieces on adjacent squares forming a square (e. g. e3, f3, e4, f4).
There are 64 possible huts.
- House** = 4 pieces separated by 1–3 squares to form a square. The smallest house is thus 3×3 squares large, and the largest house measures 5×5 squares. A house may only be built on straight lines not on diagonal lines: b3 b6 e3 e6 = house; d2 b4 f4 d6 do not form house. There are 110 possible houses.
- Castle** = 4 pieces separated by 4–7 squares to form a square. The smallest castle measures 6×6 squares, and the largest castle measures 9×9 squares. Like a house, a castle can only be built on straight lines, not on diagonals. There are 30 possible castles.
- Tower** = 4 pieces forming an extended rectangle, with all pieces on the edge of the board, and each pair on adjacent squares and opposite each other (e. g. f1 g1 f9 g9). There are 16 possible towers.
- Pagoda** = 4 pieces on diagonal lines forming a square, with all pieces standing on the delineated cross which divides the board into four. The smallest pagoda is d5 e4 e6 f5; the largest pagoda is a5 e1 e9 i5. There are 4 possible pagodas.

The above are all "positive" buildings. In addition there are "negative" buildings:

- Fence** = 3 pieces in a row, separated by equal distances. Fences do not occur on diagonals.
- Wall** = 4 pieces in a row, whatever the distance from one piece to the next. Walls do not occur on diagonals.
- Ruin** = Hut, House, Castle, Tower, or Pagoda consisting only of columns.

Huts are the most modest buildings, houses the most common, castles the hardest to recognise, towers very simple in this respect, pagodas the most valuable. When huts, houses and castles are formed, the square below on the left and the square above on the right always have the same colour. Squares which would give rise to a fence or wall if occupied are called **lost squares**. They play an important role in all combinations.

Value of the pieces

A piece only has real meaning as part of a building, and only stones have an actual points value:

Columns = 0 points

	on opponent's colour	on own colour
Stone = in hut	1 point	2 points
= in house	5 points	10 points
= in castle	10 points	20 points
= in tower	11 points	22 points
= in pagoda	15 points	30 points

If a building is made solely of stones, each stone is worth double.

The value of a building ranges therefore from 1 point (hut consisting of three columns and 1 stone, standing on opponent's colour) to 180 points (the biggest pagoda, consisting only of stones, two on their own colour).

Stones which form part of **combined buildings** and belong to 2 or even 3 buildings, score for each building of which they form part.

Aim

When a player successfully completes a building, he may announce it on his next move, or later, and calculate its value. The opponent is then allowed one more move. If he succeeds in building a more valuable building on this move, he wins. Only one building (or double building) scores, not the total of several separate buildings. Naturally, one chooses the most valuable.

Take care that in completing your building you haven't made a fence or wall, otherwise, the building is not valid! It is up to the individual player to decide whether to call an end to the game after completing his first building, or whether to continue building in order to reach a higher score. When a match consists of several games, only the points total of the winner is recorded, not the difference between the winning building and one of the opponent's buildings.

A game can be ended when a player resigns. In this case, the most valuable building of the opponent counts. If he has not yet completed a building, each stone he has on the board counts 10, (20 on its own colour). To resign at the right moment is a great art, for normally Pagoda is played over several games, the number being decided in advance. Ten is the classical number.

Although rare, a match can end in a draw. This is either agreed on, when both players have lost so many pieces that no more buildings can be formed, or when a move is repeated three times to produce the same position.

Tactical tips

Unlike chess and Go, no known strategies exist for Pagoda. It is worth noting the following, however:

Squares on the perimeter and on the central cross are the strongest. The coloured squares are stronger than the black ones. The centre square is particularly weak.

It is normally best not to concentrate pieces too much, but to spread them widely over the board. If possible, stones should be placed on their own colour.

To seek directly to form a building is usually an ineffective way to win a game; it is much more useful to use the threat of a building in order to make the opponent operate in an unfavourable way.

For example, he can be forced to create lost squares, or to place his columns disadvantageously: for example, if one player's columns all stand on red or black squares, the other player has great freedom of movement on the green squares.

The effective completion of buildings often depends on the development of two at a time, so that either could be completed with the same move. The opponent can then only prevent one of them.

It is a great advantage to be the first player with all his pieces on the board. To achieve this, the opponent has to be forced to move his columns or withdraw stones from the board.

Finally, it should be remembered that one game does not decide the match, and if an opponent's victory cannot be avoided, it is best to keep his score as low as possible, by timely resignation.

How all the rules and tactics work is best demonstrated by playing the following two practice games.

Stone = S; Column = C; removes = m; declares = dec; takes = t; demolishes = dem; cross = +.

Move	Green	Red	Explanation
1.	Se4		attempts small pagoda (stone on own colour!)
		Se6	prevents (stone on own colour!)
2.	Cb4		attempts house
		Sh9	ignores; is he planning a house, too?
3.	Ch7		attempts a second house
		Se1	almost has a valuable house
4.	Ch6		prevents
		Se1	attempts pagoda or tower
5.	Se7		double house attempted! Red can prevent only one (h4 or b7)
		Sf1	counter-attacks with attempted tower
6.	Cf9		prevents
		Ca5	now attempts large pagoda
7.	Ci5		prevents
		Ci4	attempting a house?

8.	Ch7—b7!		(NB, same colour) House complete! (Not possible to move S to b7, because it is a lost square, since beh7 = fence)
		Si1	attempts valuable house!
9.	Cf4		could declare house, but must prevent Red from moving S to f4
		Ci9	attempts tower; not dangerous to Green, because h1 is a lost square (4 pieces in the line would make a wall); would have been dangerous if Se1 were a column (then Se1 to h1 = tower!)
10.	dec		declares house (be4 be7) worth 20 points (two stones on their own colour in a house). Red cannot beat this on his next turn.

Second Practice Game

Move	Red	Green	Explanation
1.	Ch4		harmless
		Cb6	symmetrical counter move
2.	Sb9		(NB own colour)
		Sh1	symmetrical counter move (attempted castle would be more effective b1)
3.	Cf9		attempts house
		Cd1	ditto
4.	Cf5		increases threat
		Cb5	purely defensive move. Why not attempt a more valuable house by placing stones on d5 and h5?
5.	Sg9!		strong threat of castle (with g4) and tower (with g1; after removing C from f5: fence!)
		Cd1—g4	prevents castle and eases his position in first row.
6.	Sd5		attempts pagoda!
		Se4	prevents
7.	Cf5—f2		frees f1
		Ch2	attempts double building (house and hut)
8.	Cf2—f8		attempting a hut?
		Ce2	increases threat of double building and also attempts a pagoda
9.	Sf1		counter attack with threat of tower
		Sg1	prevents
10.	Sg2		prevents double building
		Se8	increases threat of pagoda
11.	Ch5		prevents
		Si5	attempts next pagoda
12.	Sa5		prevents
		Cg5	prepares a cross (h5)

13.	Sb8		prepares house (b4 f4)
		Ch9+	completes cross (h1 g5 i5 h9)
14.	Cf9—i9		sacrifices Ch5 in order to open f4 (otherwise a wall is formed)
		t Ch5	
15.	Cb4		strengthens threat of house
		Cg5—f4	fence! Red cannot tear it down, because Green is threatening to build a pagoda on h5. Although h5 is a lost square, he could sacrifice the wall on the h-row.
16.	Ch5		prevents pagoda
		m Se4	removes fence
17.	Cb4—i2		attempts castle (b2)
		Ch2—b2	prevents
18.	Ca1		last piece, attempts tower and castle
		Sa2	attempts castle (a9, h2 = lost squares for Red!)
19.	dem a5 b8 b9 g9 f1		Demolition at the right moment! Removes massive threat of a castle.
		Sa9	prevents corner castle and attempts castle (Cb2—h2)
20.	Sg5		counter-attacks with threat of 80 point house (Sd2)
		Cb6—d2	forms a wall!
21.	t Sa2 Cb2 d2 e2		tears down the green wall on the second row, taking the pieces; great material loss for Green
		Ch9—d2	prevents house once more
22.	Sa2		attempts tower (i1)
		Si1	Makes fence. Cannot resign, because Red has 4 stones on his own colour (80 points)
23.	t Sg1 h1 i1		Attempts castle (g8, in spite of fence, which Red can afford to sacrifice)
		Cf4—i1	Green has no choice; prefers to stop the 160-point castle and leave Red the tower
24.	Sa8		
		Ci1—g8	
25.	Si1		tower is complete
		Cb5—a4	resigns. Could equally well have been any other black square, for this column is the only piece with which Green can still do anything. All other columns are blocked, because they are preventing very valuable buildings.
26.	dec		declares tower with 44 points (2 stones on their own colour). Green is happy, because he has escaped lightly, and he doesn't make the last move which is his open to him.

Darstellung einiger positiver Gebäude



