



asterisk



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1-2 players, 20-30 minutes

Goal

One player aims to form dark paths, hexagonal paths, and asterisked paths connecting the three sides of the board. The other aims to form light paths, round paths, and empty paths.

Equipment

The board is a triangular grid of hexagonal cells. The standard board has sides with 11 cells, but 8, 12, 15, and 20 are also possible board lengths.

There are exactly as many pieces as are needed to fill the board. There are six types of pieces. Each has a color (light or dark), a shape (circular or hexagonal), and a marking (empty or asterisked). In the standard game there are:

- 11 dark, hexagonal, empty pieces
- 11 dark, circular, asterisked pieces
- 11 light, hexagonal, asterisked pieces
- 11 light, circular, asterisked pieces
- 11 light, hexagonal, empty pieces
- 11 dark, circular, empty pieces

Note that not every combination of aspects is available. There are no pieces of a single player's shape, color, and marking. As a result, each piece a player puts on the board may help the other player.

The game also includes two large goal markers. These simply serve to remind players what their goals are.

Sequence of Play

Each player takes one of the goal markers. The first player places three pieces of different types in unoccupied cells. The second player must then either place a piece in an unoccupied cell or instead swap goal markers with the first player.

Thereafter the players, beginning with the first, take turns placing any remaining piece in any unoccupied cell. Each player has three goals:

- Connect the three sides of the board with a path of their color.
- Connect the three sides of the board with a path of their shape.
- Connect the three sides of the board with a path of their marking.

The game ends when one player reaches two (or three) of their goals, or one player resigns. Ties are impossible; on a full board, one player must win.

Asterisk Inverted

In this variant, a turn consists of selecting any remaining piece and handing it to the other player, who must place it in an unoccupied cell. The setup, goals, and win conditions are the same as those of the standard version.

Asterisk Solitaire

Set up by randomly drawing pieces to fill the perimeter cells of the board. Then place pieces to form a triangle separated from the perimeter by one cell. The result will be an empty triangle of cells adjacent to the perimeter cells, plus three empty cells in the center.

To play, randomly draw pieces one at a time and place them in the empty cells without creating a path of any color, shape, or marking that connects the three sides of the board. At any time you may look to see which pieces remain to be played, but they must be selected for play randomly. If the very last piece is the first to create any path connecting the three sides of the board, you win.