

# Uptick

2023, Phil Leduc, <https://sites.google.com/site/theowlsnest02/home/uptick>

**Uptick** is a tactical, combinatorial dice game for two players in which dice values are used to determine movement range, freeze opponent dice, and score points.

On a turn, a player may either place a die of any value on any empty cell provided it does not freeze any opponent dice, or may move a die in any orthogonal or diagonal direction any distance up to its value. Each time a die moves, after moving, its value must be increased/upticked by one, otherwise it can not move. Dice are frozen in place by adjacent opponent dice of higher value. Dice are captured by displacement. Captured dice are set aside retaining their values for end of game scoring. The game ends when both players cannot place or move a die. The winner is the player with the greater total pip count on captured dice.

## Components

- A square 8 x 8 checker board.
- Two sets of 12 six-sided dice, in two colors.

**Setup.** The board is empty at the start of the game. Each player starts the game with a set of dice in reserve. Players decide who will play first.

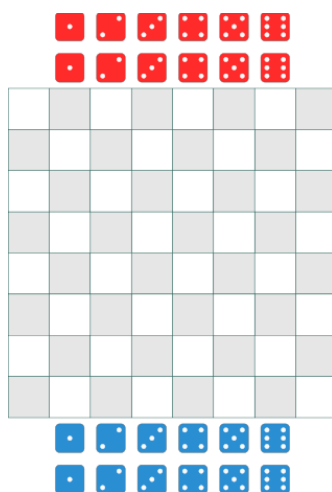


Figure 1. Setup

## Concepts

- **Die value** – The value of a die is its upper face pip/dot count. On this page, a die is referred to by its value. For example, a die of value 4 is referred to as a 4-die or simply as a four.
- **Frozen** – A die is frozen, if it is orthogonally or diagonally adjacent to an opponent die of greater value, **or** the die is a six. Frozen dice cannot move but can still freeze adjacent dice. (Dice of like value do not freeze each other.)

## Game Play

On a turn, a player must place or move a die. If a player is unable to do either, the player must pass. Turns alternate until both players pass consecutively which ends the game.

## Placement

A player takes a die which can be set to any value from his or her reserve and places it on any empty square, provided it does not freeze any opponent dice.

## Movement

Unfrozen dice can move in any one orthogonal or diagonal direction, but with a limited range. The range of movement is from 1 to the value of the moving die.

Dice can move over friendly dice, but not over opponent dice.

The destination square must be empty or contain an opponent's die. In the latter case, the opponent's die is captured by replacement and collected by the active player. Its value should be retained and will be used in final scoring.

**After moving a die**, the moved die's value must be incremented by one. Sixes never move.

Moved dice can freeze opponent dice adjacent to its destination square and incidentally it may unfreeze dice around its starting square!

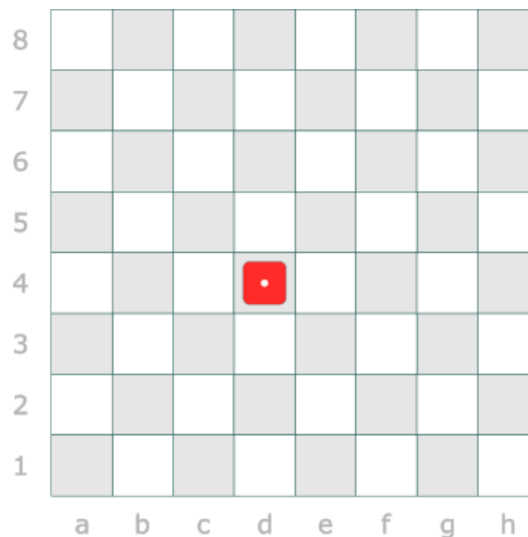


Figure 2. Opening Placement

*Red decides to place a 1-die at d4. Red could have placed the die on any square. Generally, players will start with lower values since a die is always limited to moving a maximum of five times. When a die upticks to a value of six, it can no longer move.*

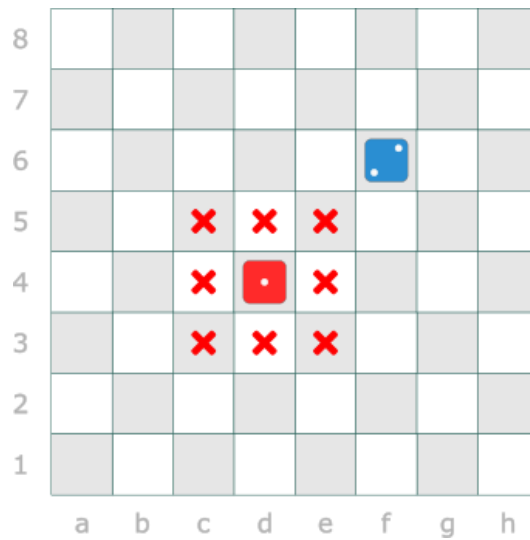


Figure 3. Placement Threat

Blue wants to attack Red's 1-die at d4 with a 2-die, but cannot place it adjacent to the red die as this would freeze it. Instead, Blue places a 2-die at f6, threatening f6 x d4.

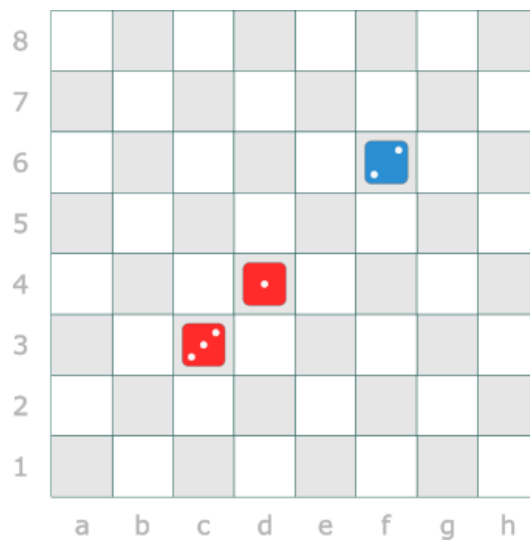


Figure 4. Counter Attack

Red plays a 3-die at c3 to protect d4 and threatens c3 x f6. The red 3-die can jump over the friendly 1-die, whereas Blue cannot jump over an opponent die.

## Game End

The game ends when neither player can place or move a die.

Players then add the values of their captured dice. Highest score wins. In the case of a tie, the last player to place or move a die wins.

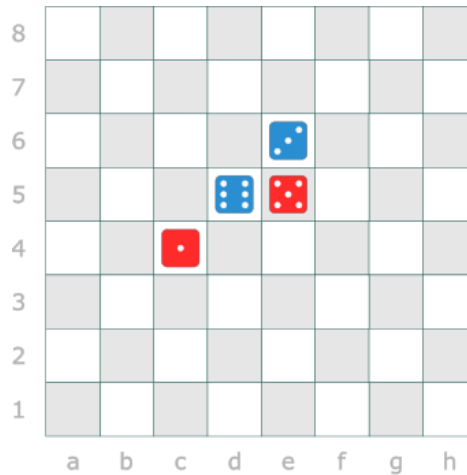


Figure 5. End Game Example

*The blue 6-die freezes both red dice. The red 5-die freezes the blue 3-die. The blue 6-die is frozen because it can not uptick. If both players' reserves are depleted, the game is over.*

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