

Snowflakes

2021, Chris Huntoon, <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/2607962>

There are two players: White and Pale Blue. White goes first. Pieces are stones representing ice crystals.

The board is hexagonal - but not a hexhex board. Rather a square board laid out with a hexagonal pattern. It should be sufficiently large that allows for the growing of several different Snowflakes. I'd say about 20x20 or even larger.

Players take turns setting stones. There are two ways to set stones. First is creating a nucleus. That is setting a stone that is free on all six sides. The other way is growing a Snowflake. That is setting a stone touching another stone but not touching another Snowflake.

A Snowflake is considered a grouping of like stones. But there is a distinction between True Snowflakes and False Snowflakes. A True Snowflake has six-fold radial symmetry. Meaning that the pattern it forms is perfectly symmetrical in all six directions. So, a False Snowflake may grow into a True Snowflake.

When a player decides that he has created a True Snowflake that he doesn't want to add to anymore he "freezes" it by stacking a second stone on the center nucleus of the Snowflake. He can no longer add pieces on to that Snowflake pattern. But it is guaranteed to count. This is not considered a separate move, and a player may freeze any number of his Snowflakes at the end of his turn.

When it is not possible to grow any existing Snowflakes into True Snowflakes, the game comes to end. Each True Snowflake is scored according to how many pieces it contains. While each False Snowflake scores zero.

So, a player might grow small, compact Snowflakes that score big. But also, might grow Snowflakes with long, slender branches that interfere with the growth of their opponent's Snowflakes.