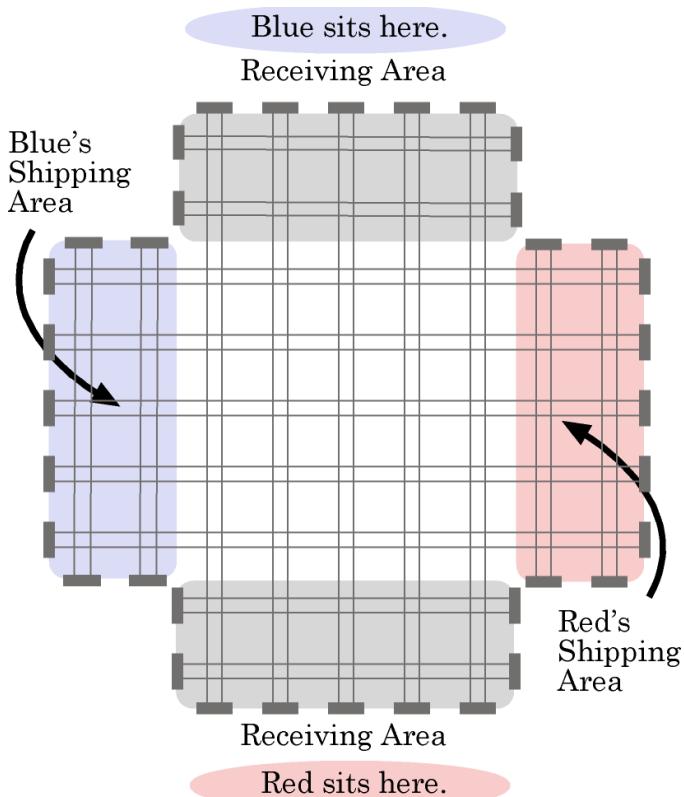


## Switch Yard

2014, Phil Leduc, <https://sites.google.com/site/theowlsnest02/home/switch-yard>

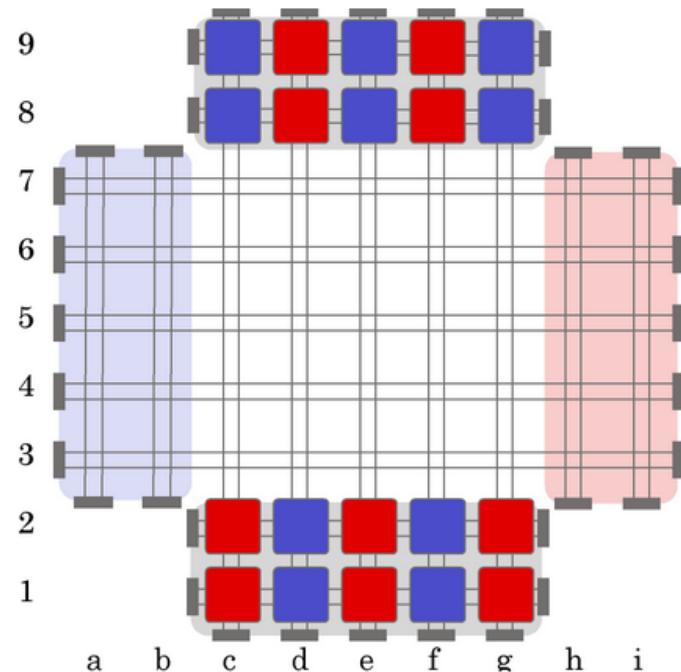
When freight trains arrive at a railroad switch yard, their cars are often redistributed to other trains for delivery to other cities down the line. This reshuffling of freight cars is done in a switch yard.

**Switch Yard** is a dynamic two-player abstract strategy game, with parallels to *Chinese Checkers*, in which players must balance their blocking and racing options. The first to move all their freight cars to their shipping area wins the game.

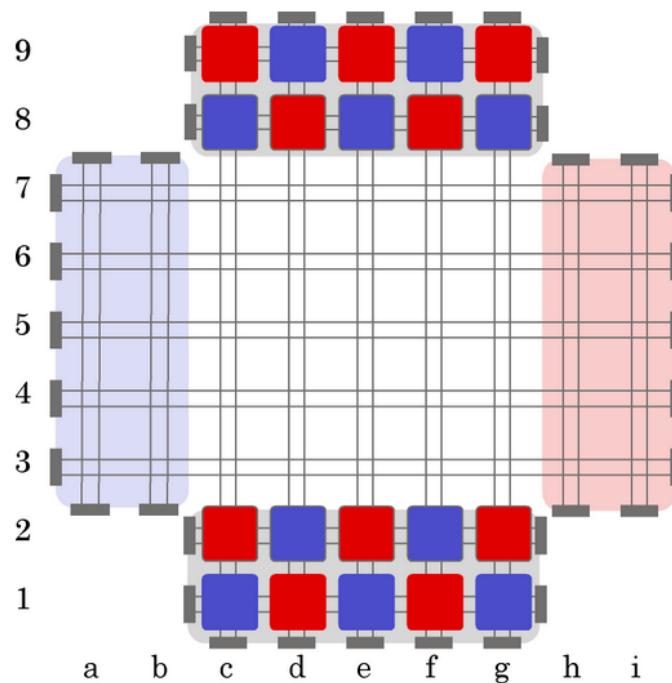


- 20 freight car tokens, 10 red and 10 blue.
- A modified square board of 65 cells (A 9 x 9 board with 2 x 2 regions removed from its corners). The two lower and two upper rows (2 x 5 areas) represent the receiving/setup areas. The two columns (5 x 2 area) on the right are the red players shipping area and the two columns on the left blue player shipping area.

**Setup.** Players set up the board in any symmetrical arrangement. See Figures 2 to 4. Figure 2 is for beginners and trains abound. Figure 3 is more advanced and trains must be created. Figure 4 is an example of a custom setup where players alternate placing tokens in their nearby receiving areas using symmetry where opposing tokens are balanced around e5. Each player places a pair of opposing tokens. They alternate until the receiving areas are full.



**Figure 2.** Beginner's setup



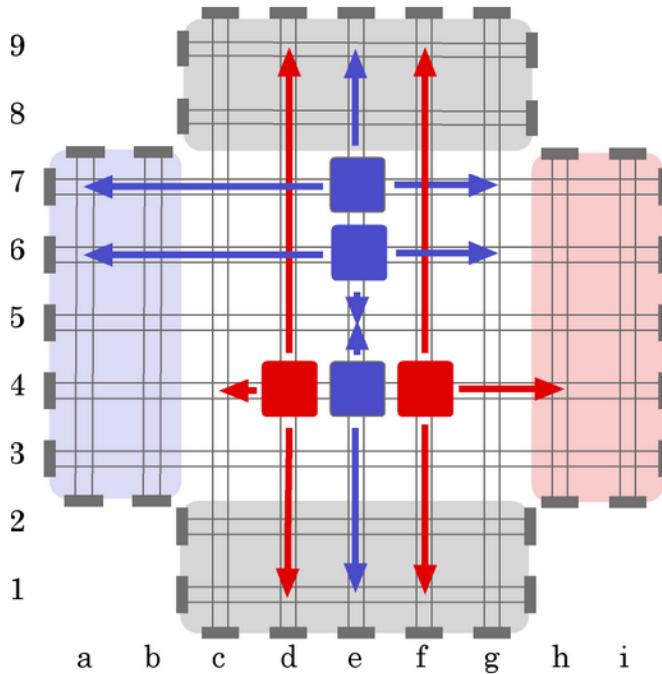
**Figure 3.** Advanced setup which starts slower and requires more train building

Red moves first. Players alternate turns. A player may not pass a turn.

On a player's turn, the player must move a switch engine or a train.

- Switch engine - a single owned token which moves vertically or horizontally any number of empty cells or diagonally one empty cell, like a chess rook and king combined.

- Train - two or more tokens in a vertical or horizontal connected line of which the player owns a clear majority of the tokens. The player then pulls the train by moving either end token horizontally or vertically over one or more empty cells, like a chess rook. The leading "engine" token does *not* have to belong to the moving player. Notice that the trailing tokens can turn a corner when following the leading token but the leading token always move straight from its initial position.



**Figure 5. Trains.**

Red controls two switch engines and one train of length three. The train d4-f4 can move only one cell left since red cars are not allowed in the blue shipping area and it can move up to two cells to the right because blue cars can not go into the red shipping area. Blue controls three switch engines and one train of length two.

### Movement restrictions

- There is no jumping or capturing of tokens.
- A player's token may never be moved into the opponent's shipping area.
- Tokens may never leave their shipping area once they arrive but can move within the shipping area to make room for other tokens.

**Goal.** A player wins when all of his or her tokens are in his or her shipping area.

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