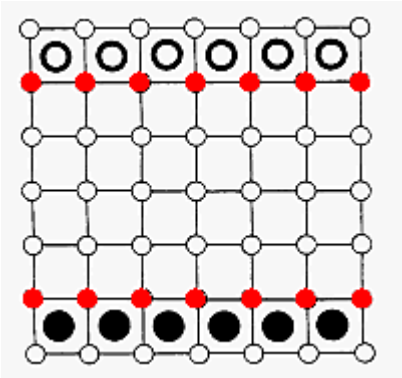
Netzwerk *(Network)*

by © Knut-Michael Wolf
Graphics: Reinhold Wittig

12 robots in two colours (6 per player)
14 battery stones in one colour (front side printed, rear side blank - to determine which one was used during a players turn)

Preparation

Both players sit opposite each other. Each player places the six robots of his colour onto the square fields on the first row of the game-board. Each one gets 7 of the battery stones and places them on the circular energy fields before the robots (printed side face-up). Agree, who starts to play.



Game set-up: In the figure the two robot crews are shown as large black and white circles. The small red circles are the loaded batteries.

How the game is played

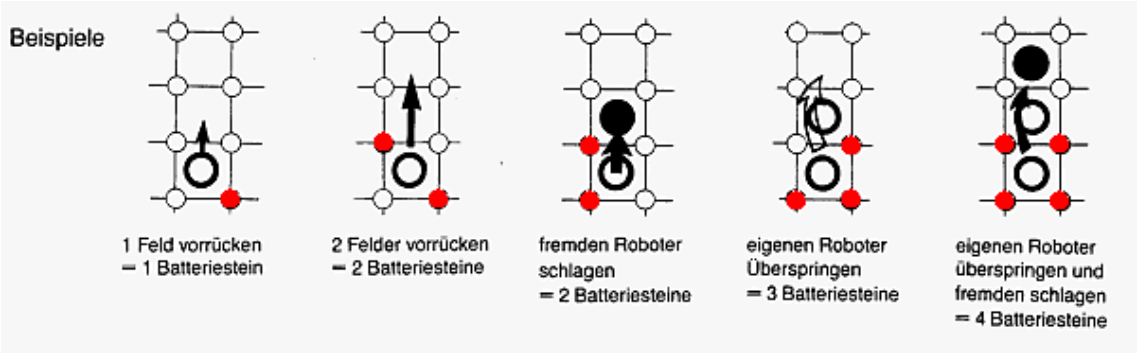
On your turn, make sure that all batteries are printed side face-up: they are loaded with energy every time, when you start your turn. **First you may move as many of your robots as you like, but at least one! Afterwards you can move as many of the battery stones as you like - if you control them!** As soon as you start moving a battery, you may not move any robot any more during this turn. You mustn't move a battery if you don't want to.

The robots

The robots move only forward or sideways on the square spaces, never backwards or diagonally. There may not be more than one robot on each space. You may jump over your own robots, but not over the robots of your opponent. But you may capture your opponent's robots; captured robots are removed from the board.

A robot needs energy to move. It keeps this energy from battery stones which are directly beside him. For moving one space the robot needs one battery. A robot, which does not have a battery beside itself, cannot move at all. On the other hand a robot, which is surrounded by four batteries, may move up to four fields. For a

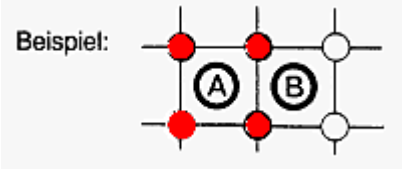
jump you need an additional battery, likewise for capturing another robot. (A robot, which captured another, may not be moved further during the same turn, even if it has still battery stones available.)



Examples:

1. Move 1 space = Need 1 battery
2. Move 2 space = Need 2 batteries
3. Strike opponents robot on next space = Need 2 batteries
4. Jump over own robot on next space = Need 2 batteries
5. Jump over own robot on next space and strike opponent's robot = Need 4 batteries

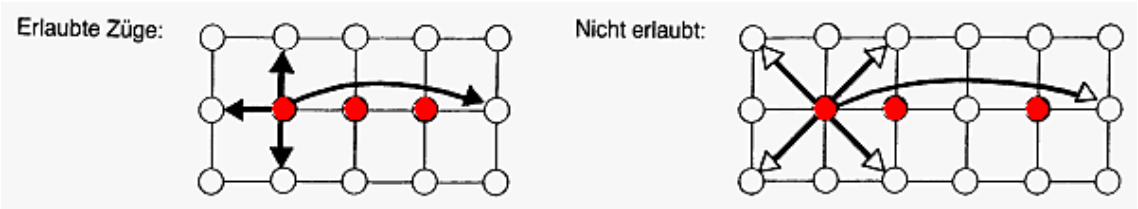
During your turn you can use each battery only once, then its energy is used up. Each battery loads itself up only at the end of your turn. (To show that a battery is used up turn it over so the blank side of the battery-stone is face-up).



If you move robot A four spaces, you cannot move robot B, since you used all four batteries. If you move robot A only three spaces, B has still another battery available.

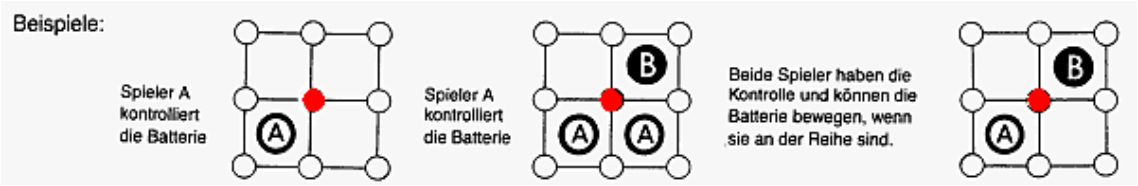
The batteries

They move along the lines onto the **next empty** energy field (forward, backwards or sideways). You may jump over other batteries, but never jump over vacant energy fields.



(on the left: legal moves; on the right: illegal moves of the batteries)

You may only move batteries, if you control them i.e., you must have at least as many robots as your opponent on the adjacent spaces. It doesn't matter whether the energy of the batteries is used up or not.



Examples:
1. Player A controls the battery.
2. Player A controls the battery.
3. Both players control the battery. If it's player A's turn, he could move the battery one space to the left or behind, leaving player B's robot without any energy to move on his turn.

End of the game

You win, if you move **at least half of your robots**, which are still on the board, to the opposite side of the board (the opponent's start-row). Thus, if you have 5 or 6 robots on the board, you must move 3 to the target row; if you only have 1 or 2 on the board (the others captured by your opponent), it is sufficient to get 1 robot to the target-row.

You also win, if you capture all the opponent's robots or if your opponent can't move any robot during his turn (due to lack of energy).

Some hints

Robots, which already reached their target-row, can still be captured, if the opponent left a robot in his starting-row.

A player can even win, when one of his robots is captured. Let's assume you still have five robots on the board, and two of them have already reached the target row. If your opponent now captures one of the remaining three robots, you win, as you now have fulfilled the victory condition (getting at least half of your robots to the other side of the board).

Game variations

- A robot **must** be captured, if possible. This additional rule opens new tactical possibilities.
- If a battery is controlled by both players, it may be moved by none of the two.

In 1984, Network was one of seven games nominated for the German "Game of the Year" award. The game was published in Germany by Edition Perlhuhn.