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KULAMI

A strategic connection game for two players ages 9 and above

By Andreas Kuhnekath

Game materials

17 wooden panels of various sizes:

4 x 6 fields, 5 x 4 fields, 4 x 3 fields, 4 x 2 fields

2 x 28 red and black glass marbles

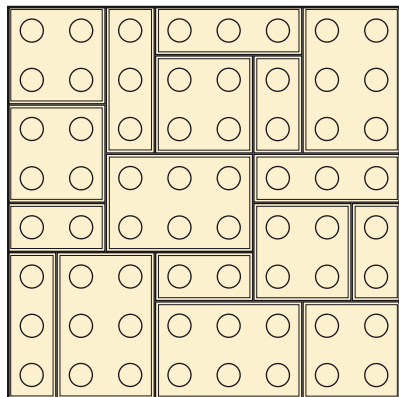
Object of the game

Two players place their marbles on a game field of interconnecting wooden panels. Each player attempts to win control over as many panels as possible by strategically positioning his or her coloured marbles (red or black) in the free spaces. A player wins control of a panel by occupying a majority of spaces on the same panel.

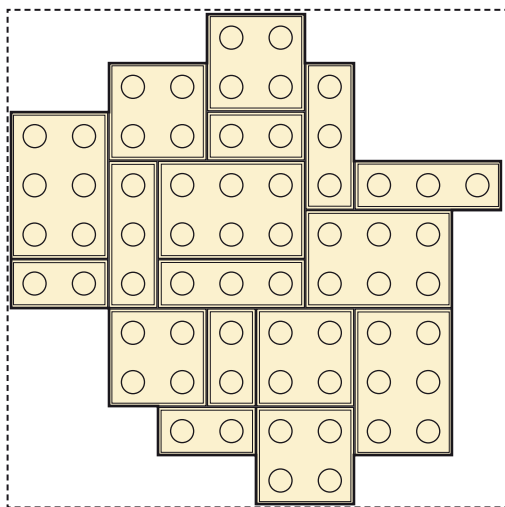
For the advanced version, extra points are scored for intersecting chains or areas dominated by one player's colour.

Game field

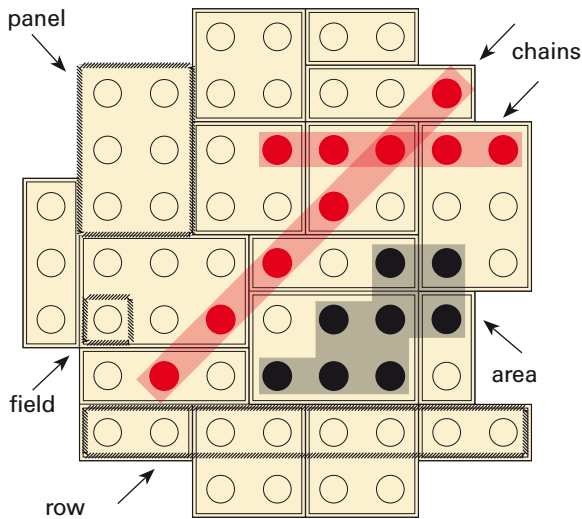
17 interconnecting panels can be arranged in any order. Either of these combinations is possible:



Closed square of equal rows with 8 fields



Irregular game field: an extended area with a maximum of 10 fields in any direction.



Definition of terms

The game rules below refer to five key terms – panel, row, field, chain and area.

You can identify the meaning of each term in context from the graphic display alongside.

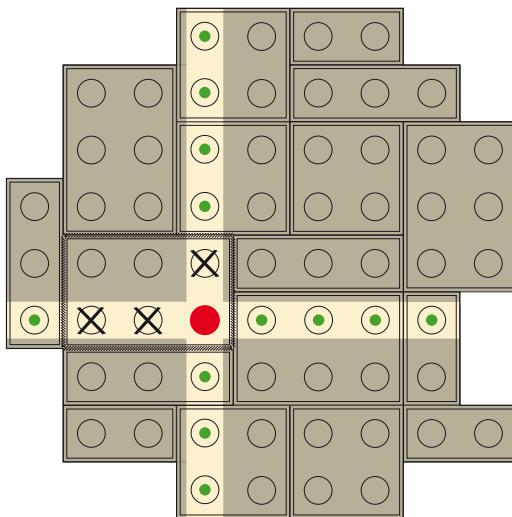
Preparation

Each player selects a colour and is allocated a corresponding box containing 28 marbles.

Choosing the first player:

One player hides a red marble in one hand and a black marble in the other and presents his or her fellow player with closed fists.

The other player selects the hand that also reveals the first player's colour.



How to play

Each player takes it in turn to put one of his or her own coloured marbles in any available space.

The first player starts by placing a marble in any free space inside the field, thus indicating the possible connections for the next player:

- The next marble must be placed in one of two rows intersecting with the position of the previous marble.
- Marbles cannot be placed on the same panel as the previous marble.

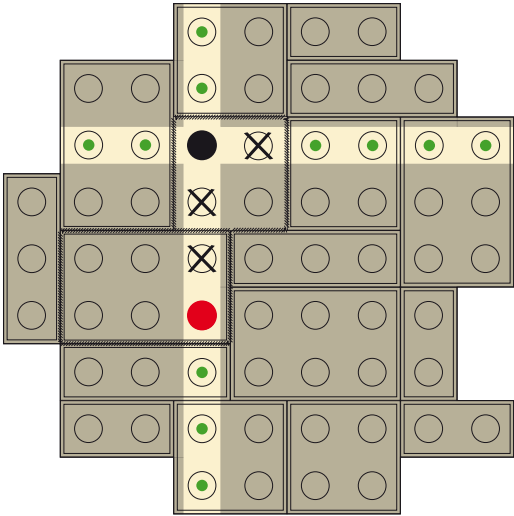
⊙ = black positions allowed

⊗ = black positions not allowed

The second player defines a new intersection zone by strategically positioning his or her marble.

The next marble may be placed in either of these available rows, but **not on** the last panel used **and not on** the panel used beforehand.

Please note: a row continues across any holes or gaps in the field (see sketch below right).



- = red positions allowed
- ⊗ = red positions not allowed

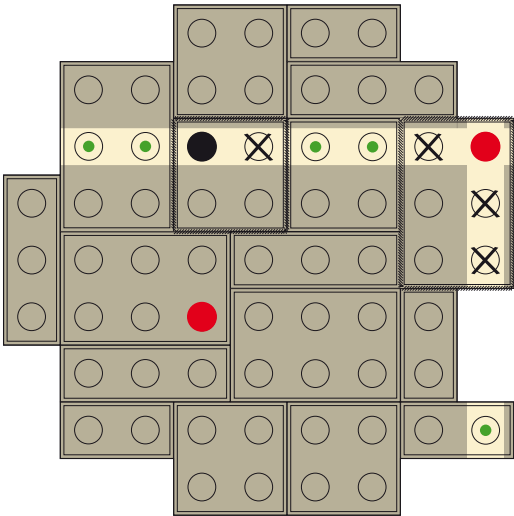
You must respect these two rules until the end of the game:

Positioning rules

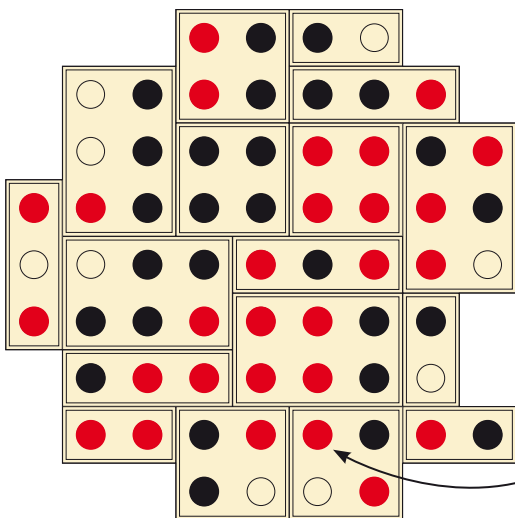
- In all cases, the last marble put down determines the two possible rows for the next player to place the next marble.

Off-limits rules

- The two panels last used are off limits for the next marble. However, panels used beforehand can be used again.



- = black positions allowed
- ⊗ = black positions not allowed



Game end

The game ends when all marbles in place, or when a player cannot put a new marble in place.

This can occur if both rows are filled with marbles, or if the off-limits rules mean a player cannot use any of the free spaces still available in any rows.

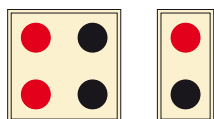
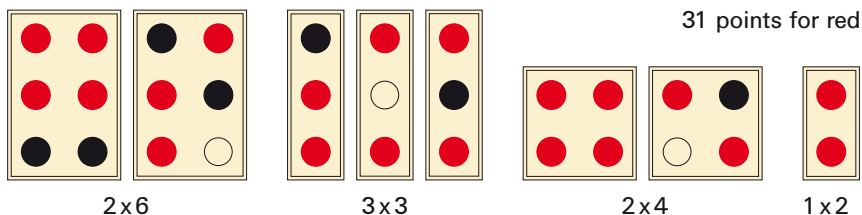
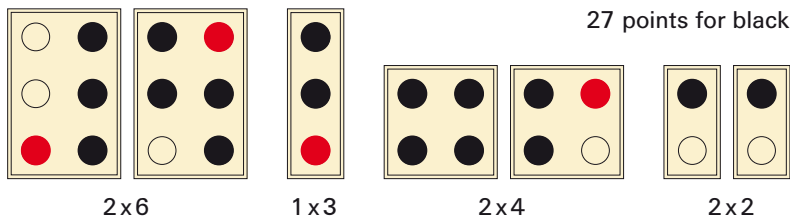
Final game position, example.

Last red marble; no more black positions available.

Scores

To make scoring easier, you can disconnect the game field. Each player removes and places in front of him or her any panels with a majority of his or her coloured marbles.

Scores are computed according to the number of fields on each panel – so it does not matter how many marbles are in place on the panel. For instance, a panel with 6 fields scores 6 points. A panel with 4 fields scores 4 points and so on. The winner is the player scoring the most points.



Panels with no clear winner are excluded from the final scores.

Advanced game rules

Two advanced game versions enable players to create areas or interconnecting chains of their coloured marbles to earn extra points. This invites different strategies to achieve the best results!

For LEVEL 1, as previously, scores are calculated for all panels with a clear winner and, additionally, the largest area covered by a single colour.

For LEVEL 2, scores are calculated for panels, areas and chains.

LEVEL 1

Before you disconnect the game field and add up the scores for the individual panels, the final scores are computed for the largest interconnecting area occupied by a single colour. (Marbles diagonally next to each other count as areas not interconnected.) The player who controls the larger area can add up his or her points surplus.

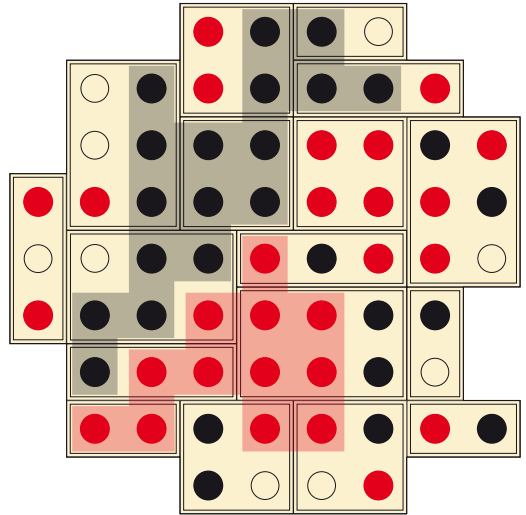
LEVEL 2

Before you disconnect the game field, you can add up the scores for the largest area and all same-coloured chains with 5 or more marbles. The number of points for each chain depends on the chain length:

5 marbles = 5 points,

6 marbles = 6 points etc.

The extra points, which players can earn for areas or chains, are added to the points scored for the other panels. The player with the higher overall score is the winner!

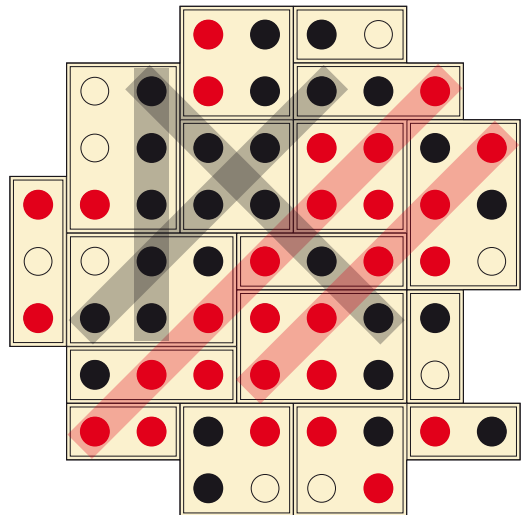


Scores for largest areas

Largest red area = 12 fields,

largest black areas = 17 fields.

Results: 5 extra points for black.



Scores for chains

Red chains = 1×7 , 1×5 = 12 fields

Black chains = 3×5 = 15 fields.

Results: 3 extra points for black.