

Agoraphobia

In Agoraphobia, players try to keep their pieces (agoraphobes) out of the crowd. Agoraphobia is an abstract strategy game for two players in which each player seeks to push their opponents pieces into large groups. Each turn, a player places one agoraphobe on a hexagonal grid. When it is placed, each agoraphobe pushes all adjacent pieces away by either one or two spaces, depending on the size of the piece that was played. An agoraphobe may only be placed if it pushes at least one piece away, leaving it sufficient breathing room. The game ends when one player can not place any of their remaining pieces. The player who ends the game with the largest group of adjacent pieces is the loser.

Materials and setup: Each player begins the game with 10 small agoraphobes and 5 large agoraphobes. Not all agoraphobes will be used. The game is played on a 7x7 hexagonal grid.

Gameplay: Players alternate placing agoraphobes on the game board. Each turn a player selects an agoraphobe from their supply (either a large agoraphobe or a small one) and places it on the board.

Pushing: Agoraphobes dislike being confined, so upon placement, they push all adjacent agoraphobes away. Small agoraphobes push other pieces one space, large agoraphobes push adjacent pieces two spaces away. Pieces are only pushed in a straight line away from the agoraphobe that has been placed. Pieces may not be pushed off the board or onto a hex that is occupied by another agoraphobe. It is possible that when placed, an agoraphobe may not be able to push an adjacent piece, either because there is another piece blocking it, or because the adjacent piece is at the edge of the board. Only pieces immediately adjacent to the placed agoraphobe are affected by pushing.

An agoraphobe may only be placed in such a way that it pushes at least one other agoraphobe. Large agoraphobes must be able to push at least one other piece the maximum of two spaces away. In placing the large agoraphobes, all adjacent pieces are pushed the full two spaces away if there is sufficient room. However, some pieces may move only one space or not at all if blocked, as long as at least one piece is pushed away by the maximum of two spaces. How far pieces are pushed relates only to the size of the piece that has been placed. Once placed, large and small agoraphobes move in exactly the same manner.

Game End: The game ends immediately when one player can not play any of their remaining pieces. This will occur before the board is completely full, since no piece can be placed unless it can push another adjacent piece into an empty hex (large agoraphobes must be able to push an adjacent piece two spaces into an empty hex).

Winner: At game end, each player counts the largest group of agoraphobes of their color. In counting adjacent pieces, large agoraphobes count as two. (An adjacent group of two large and one small agoraphobe would have a value of 5.) The player with the largest group of adjacent agoraphobes is the loser. If each player's largest group is the same size, the player with the largest number of groups is the winner. If players have the same number of groups, it is a draw.