

円相 enso

Designed by Dieter Stein

2 players / 20 minutes / 8 years and older

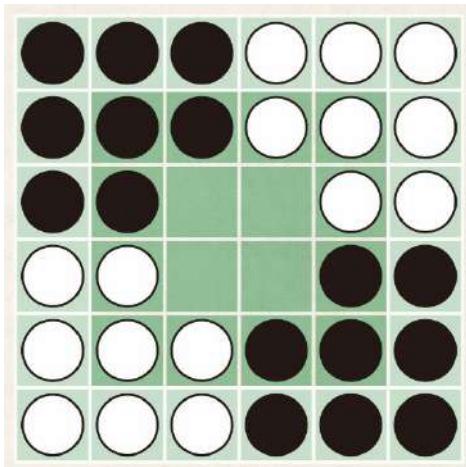
Enso is a game inspired by the Zen concept of the Enso (円相)—the circle drawn by Zen monks. Players move their stones and capture opponents' ones, aiming to position one of the friendly stones so that they are surrounded by open spaces in eight directions, as if enclosed within a circle. What makes this game unique is that the moves a stone can make depend on whether the stone is adjacent to opponent's stones.

COMPONENTS

- Square board (6×6 spaces)
- 16 white and 16 black stones (discs)

SETUP

Place the stones on the board as shown below. Decide which player uses white and which uses black in any appropriate way.



(Fig.1) Setup

DEFINITION

In this game, “**adjacent**” always refers to the adjacency in the eight directions: vertically, horizontally, or diagonally.

GAMEPLAY

Players alternate turns, starting with the black player. On your turn, you must move one of your stones.

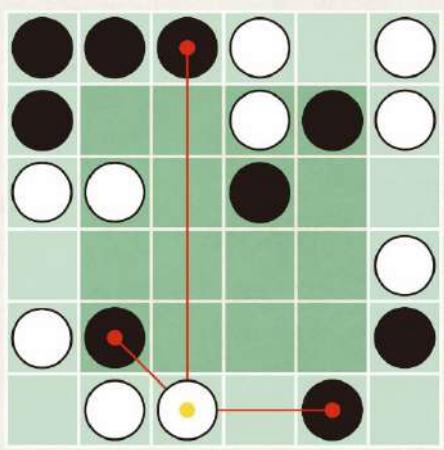
All stones have the ability to move any number of empty squares in a straight line vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Stones cannot jump over other stones along the way.

However, a stone's available moves depend on whether it is adjacent to another stone at the start of its turn, as follows.

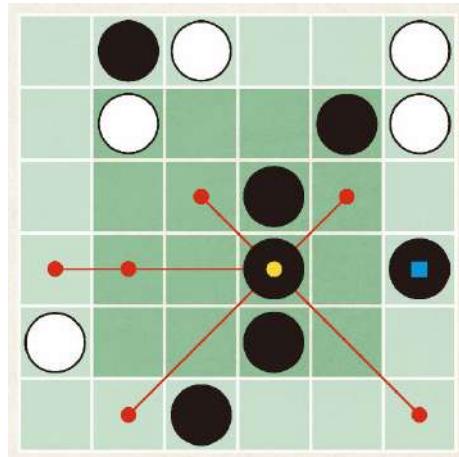
MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS

- If a stone is adjacent to at least one opponent's stone - The stone must make a capture. Capture is performed by moving to the space occupied by an opponent's stone to be captured and replacing it with the capturing stone, as in chess. (Fig.2)
- If it is adjacent only to friendly stones - The stone may only move to a position adjacent to opponent's stones, or to a position adjacent to no other stones of any color. No capture is allowed. (Fig. 3)
- If the stone is not adjacent to any other stones - The stone cannot move. (Fig. 3)

to the back side ⇒



(Fig.2) The white piece marked with a yellow dot is adjacent to an opponent's piece diagonally, so if the white player moves this piece, it must make a capture. A black piece marked with a red dot indicates that the white piece can move to and capture any one of them.



(Fig. 3) The black piece marked with a yellow dot is adjacent only to friendly pieces, so it may only move to a position adjacent to an enemy piece or to a position not adjacent to any piece. These positions are marked with red dots.

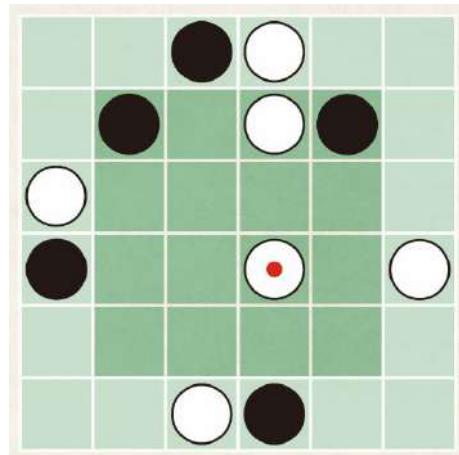
The black piece marked with square blue dot is not adjacent to any piece, so it cannot move.

GAME END

A player with at least one isolated stone surrounded by eight empty spaces ("Enso" stone) wins immediately. Note that this can be achieved by an opponent's move.

If both players have Enso stones simultaneously, the player who made the move wins.

If you cannot make a move on your turn, you lose.



(Fig. 4) The red dot indicates a piece surrounded by eight empty spaces, resulting in a win for the white player.