MINOA

A strategy game for 2 to 4 players by Dieter Stein

Material

- hexagonal board
- 60 black sticks
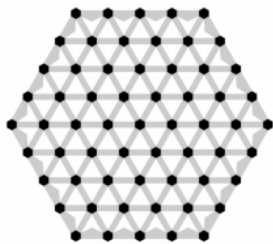- 12 red, 12 blue, 8 yellow, 6 green pieces

Fig. 1 – The Minoa board.

Preparation

The board is initially empty. Each player chooses a color and picks the corresponding pieces.

- 2 players take 12 pieces each (red and blue)
- 3 players take 8 pieces each (red, blue, and yellow)
- 4 players take 6 pieces each (red, blue, yellow, and green)

The black sticks are available to all players.

Play

Red begins. Players take turns in a clockwise direction.
In their turn, players must choose **one** of the following options:

- play **one** black stick or
- play **one** piece of their own color

Black sticks may be placed anywhere on the gray lines except the edges, while the player's own colored pieces may only be played on the edges.
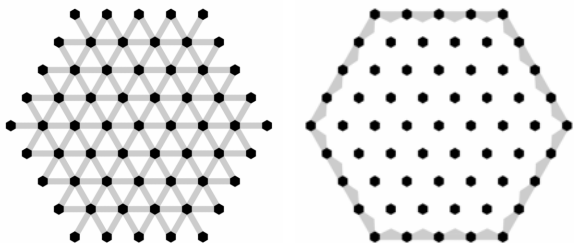

Fig. 2 – Black sticks may only be placed in the interior of the board (left), colored pieces may only be placed at the edges (right).

Only one stick or piece may be placed on a line and sticks or pieces already placed may not be moved again once they are played.

The goal of the game is to **claim the largest territory** on the board by closing off areas with black sticks that have exactly **one** player's color at the edge. All areas in the interior of the board **must**, when closed off, trace to an edge.
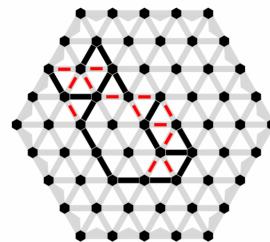

Fig. 3 – In this example placement of black sticks on the red lines is not allowed, because an interior territory without colored edge would be created.
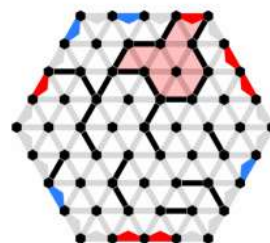

Fig. 4 – An advanced game. Red claims a territory. When a player places their last own colored piece and only **one** of the other players still has colored pieces to play, these pieces are played on the remaining vacant edges (instantly and disregarding the normal turn order).

End of the Game

A game ends when all areas can be assigned to a single player. Players determine the total territory size by summing up all triangles in areas they claim. The player with the largest territory wins. There are 96 triangles in total, so games can end in a draw. Often it is easy to see which player has won, so there is no exact counting necessary.
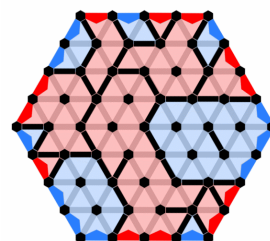

Fig. 5 – Red scores 58 points and wins.

For four Players

Four players should play a partner game. Players facing each other at the table (red/yellow and blue/green) are partners and add their scores at the end of the game.

During the game however, the two team players are not allowed to discuss their tactics.