laoCoon

A game for two players by
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Winner of the Golden Pawn at the 1997 Boulogne
Billancourt Game Design Competition
(under the name *Tor*)

COMPONENTS

- An 8 × 8 gameboard of 64 neutral spaces.
- 4 rings (2 white and 2 black).
- 64 color discs (16 blue, 16 purple, 16 orange, 16 yellow).

OVERVIEW

Each player has two rings to move on the board. At the beginning, each space of the board is one of the 4 colors (blue, purple, orange, or yellow), and the colors are distributed evenly on the board. As the game progresses, space colors change, and certain spaces become inaccessible.

Your turn comprises 3 steps:

1. Move one of your rings one space. The colors of space on which your opponent's rings sit are forbidden: You are not allowed to move any space of that color.
2. Give your opponent the color disc from the space you just left.
3. Using the color disc your opponent gave you last turn, change the color of a space.

The first player unable to move loses the game!

SETUP

Before the game, place one color disc on each space on the board as illustrated to the right.

One player takes the 2 white rings; the other takes the 2 black. White plays first.
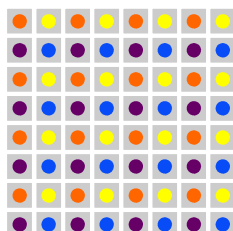
BEGINNING (PLACING THE RINGS)

The *color* of a space is the color of the topmost color disc in that space.
A space is *available* when it has at least one color disc and is not occupied by a ring (right after setup, every space is thus available).

You *control* a color when one of your rings is on a space of that color.

A color is *free* for you if your opponent does not control it.

- White places a ring on an available space. White now controls the color that is in the chosen space.
- Black places a ring on an available space of a free color.
- White places her second ring on an available space of a free color.
- Black places his second ring on an available space of a free color.

FOLLOWING (MOVING THE RINGS)

White still plays first. On your turn, you must perform the following three steps in order (White obviously skips Step 3 on her first turn):

1. Move one of your rings one space orthogonally or diagonally, provided the destination space is available, and is a free color.
2. Take the topmost disc from the space you just left, and give it to your opponent.
3. Place the color disc your opponent gave you on a different-colored available space that has precisely 1 color disc in it. To clarify, you can neither place it atop a color disc of the same color, nor on a space that already has 2 color discs, nor on an empty space.

VICTORY

If you can move neither of your rings for Step 1 of your turn, you lose, and your opponent wins.

VARIANT: RANDOM SETUP

The normal rules apply, with the following exceptions:

Setup: Randomly place one color disc on each space.

Beginning: After Black places his 2nd ring, he may swap any 2 color discs.

VARIANT: QUICK AND SIMPLE

The rules of the Random Setup variant apply, with the following exception:

Following: For Step 3 of your turn, instead of giving the color disc to your opponent, simply remove it from the game.