Harlequin

2024, Phil Leduc, https://sites.google.com/site/theowlsnest02/home/harlequin

Harlequin is a two-player, jump and flip abstract game that combines elements of *King's Court*, *Reversi, and Scurry*.

Players take turns jumping over chains of white cells containing *like-colored* tiles using a single jump token, and then must end their turn by jumping over an *empty* cell with the same token. The player filps any opponent-side up tiles jumped over to his or her own-side and places a tile own-side up on the final empty cell. The game ends when all white cells are occupied or neither player can move. The player with the most own-side up tiles on the board, wins the game. If a tie occurs when neither player can move, the last player to perform a jump wins.

Components

- A square 6 x 6 harlequin board with 36 black cells and 25 white cells.
- Two sets of three jump tokens, one red set and one blue.
- 25 double-sided last-jumped-by tiles, red on one side and blue on the other.

Setup. The last person to hear a mime speak goes first. 😊 Here Red goes first.

To set up the game board, players take turns placing their jump tokens one at a time on any empty black edge cell. When placing tokens be aware that there are two sets of black cells such that tokens never jump from one set to the other. See *Jump Tracks* below.
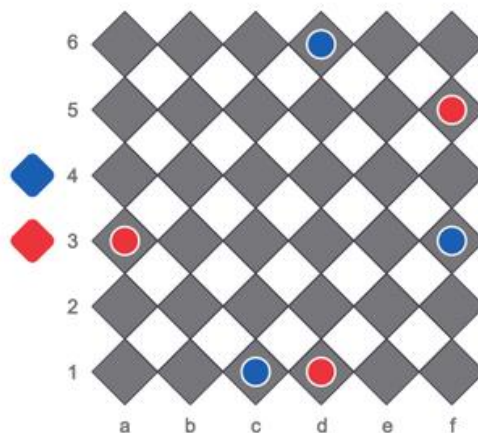
Sample Setup

There are two separate sets of 18 black cells that should be taken into consideration when placing jump tokens. See the *Jump Tracks* figure left. These two tracks are indicated by purple and black cells. Note that each white cell can be jumped using the purple or the black tracks. This is not the case with a regular

checkerboard along its edges. If all tokens are placed on one track, say purple, then jumps attempted from purple to purple may be block because jumps are always to *empty* cells.
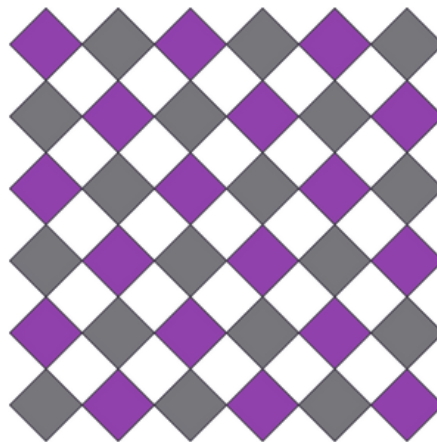
Jump Tracks

Concept

- **Jump Chain**– A jump chain consists of zero or more jumps, using a token on a black cell, over *occupied* white cells, which contain tiles belonging to only one of the players, to empty black cells, *followed by* a jump over one *empty* white cell to an empty black cell. This last jump ends the player's movement. Tokens on black cells block jump to these cells. A player must be able to jump over an empty white cell to complete a turn otherwise the player must skip a turn. Chains can loop back to a previously visited black cell.

Game Play

Red starts game play, turns alternate, passing is conditional.

On a turn, using a jump token, a player:

- May perform a series of jumps over occupied white cells containing like-colored tiles (all owned, or all opponent owned). And,

- Must perform a single jump over an empty white cell. If the player is unable to perform this step, the player's turn is skipped.

If any opponent-side up tiles are jumped, they are flip to own-side up. Whether or not opponent tiles are jumped, an own-side up tile is always placed in the final, empty, white cell. Own-side up tiles that were jumped do not flip.

During a jump chain, the token can revisit black cells and jump over the same white occupied cell multiple times.

Game End

The game ends when all white cells are occupied or neither player can move a jump token.

The player with the most own-side up tiles on the board, wins the game. If a tie occurs, the last player to perform a jump wins.

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