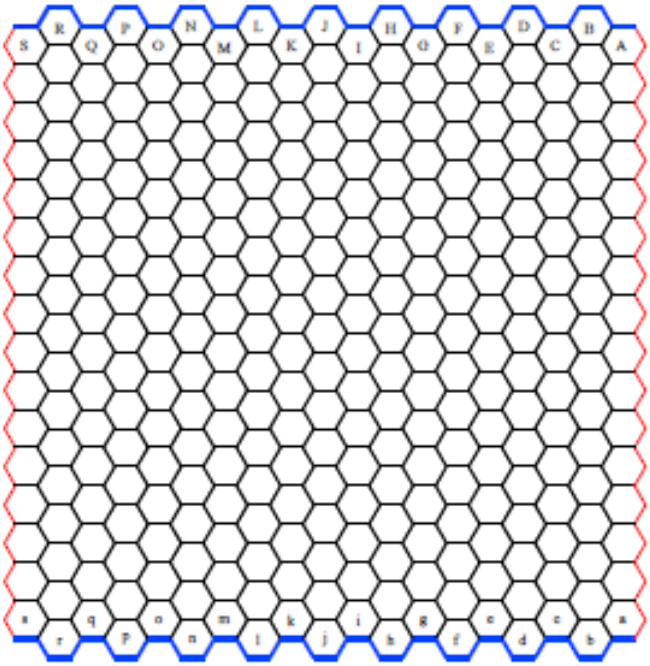
## Palanquée

Palanquée, a 1988 game by  Ludovic Robillard, is a formalized jungle where plants fight to control the territory and eliminate enemy plants. A board of 304 hexagonal cells forms the terrain where 2 to 5 players can compete.



Each player has 50 pawns called sprouts and three pawns called seeds.  The game begins with an empty board.  Players take turns, and their first action is to place a seed on the board on the cell of their choice, provided it is at least 3 cells away from any enemy pawn.  This seed will be the embryo of their first plant, which they will have to grow in subsequent turns.

The first thing to learn to play Palanquée is therefore what a plant is and how to manipulate them.  A plant is a group of pieces of the same color comprising at least one seed and possibly reduced to just that seed.  An isolated sprout or group of sprouts, meaning not in contact with a seed, cannot survive on the board.  A plant can be the subject of four different types of actions:

- **Growth**: a sprout or a seed is placed on an empty cell touching the plant.
- **Movement**: one of the plant's sprouts is taken and re-placed on an empty cell touching that plant.
- **Harvest**: one of the plant's seeds is taken and returned to reserve.
    - Harvesting is only possible on a plant that has at least two seeds.
    - Furthermore, it is forbidden to harvest a seed if this leads a sprout or group of sprouts to become isolated.
- **Simple Pruning**: one of the plant's sprouts is taken and returned to reserve.

These actions can have different consequences that are easily deduced from the definition of a plant:

- **Fusion**: following a growth or movement action, two plants of the same color touch each other and form only one single plant.
- **Massive Pruning**: following a simple pruning or movement action, a sprout or group of sprouts becomes isolated. It is immediately removed from the board.
- **Separation**: following a simple pruning or movement action, a plant finds itself separated into two or three distinct plants.
- **Grafting**: following a movement action, a group of sprouts is transferred from one plant to another.

The main thing to remember about these consequences is that isolated sprouts are only removed once the action is completed, and the board is always "readable" without having to remember the course of the game.

At each turn, each plant is subject to a number of actions equal to the number of seeds it contains at the moment the player to whom it belongs takes control.

If a plant has two seeds and a first action leads to separation, the second action can be applied to either of the plants thus generated. Similarly, if two plants are separated when a player takes control, and a first action causes them to merge, the second action can occur anywhere on the resulting plant.

The case with three seeds follows the same logic. If a three-seed plant separates into a one-seed plant and a two-seed plant during a first action, the second action can be performed on either of the resulting plants, and the third must be performed on the resultant plant that has two seeds. If three one-seed plants merge during a first action, the two remaining actions can be performed anywhere on the resulting plant.

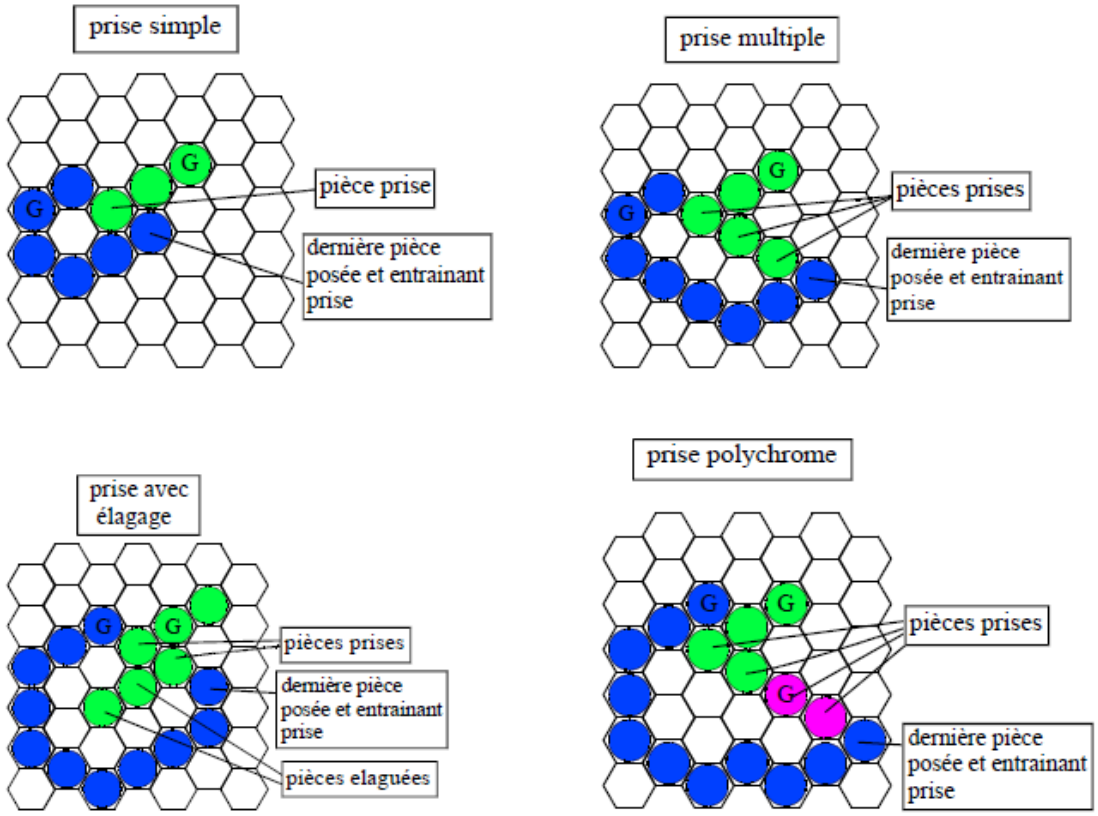
The main thing to remember is that the number of actions executed by a player can under no circumstances be greater than the number of seeds of their color present on the board when they take control. Furthermore, one cannot use the action related to one plant to manipulate another.

Finally, a player is required to execute all actions they are entitled to each turn, unless they still have one or more seeds in reserve, in which case they can choose to place one of these seeds anywhere on the board instead of executing one of the actions they are entitled to. This special action is called sowing.

If a player forgets to act on one of their plants or forgets an action on a plant with multiple seeds, their opponent(s) can declare that plant dead or moribund and remove one or more of that plant's seeds from the board. Any sprouts thus isolated are also removed from the board.

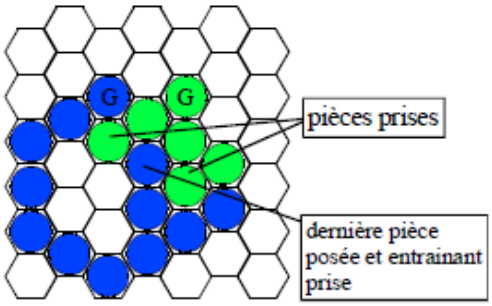
Now, it remains to be seen how these plants can be captured. Three capture techniques are possible:

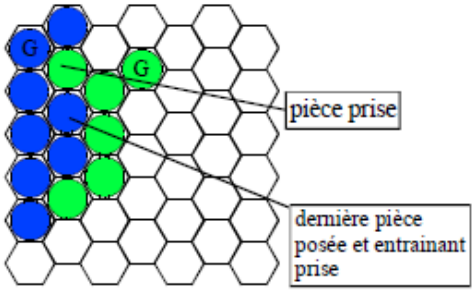
1. **Pincer Capture**: A piece, or an alignment of pieces of any color surrounded on both sides by two pieces of the same opposing color, are removed from the board. Sprouts thus isolated are also removed. Captured sprouts are returned to their owner, as always when sprouts are removed from the board. Only captured seeds are permanently eliminated, just like seeds taken from a dead or moribund plant.



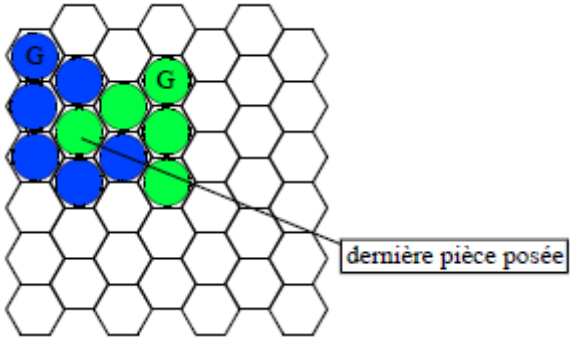

*"prise simple" (simple capture), "prise multiple" (multiple capture), "prise avec élagage" (capture with pruning), "prise polychrome" (polychrome capture)*

2. **Precedence Rule**: A player can place a piece in a position where it is captured, provided that this allows them to achieve a capture that nullifies this danger. Similarly, a player can place an alignment of their own pieces in a position to be captured if this action allows them to achieve a capture that nullifies the danger. Thus, the two following moves are valid:

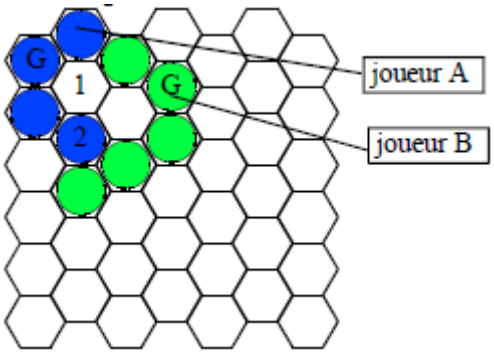


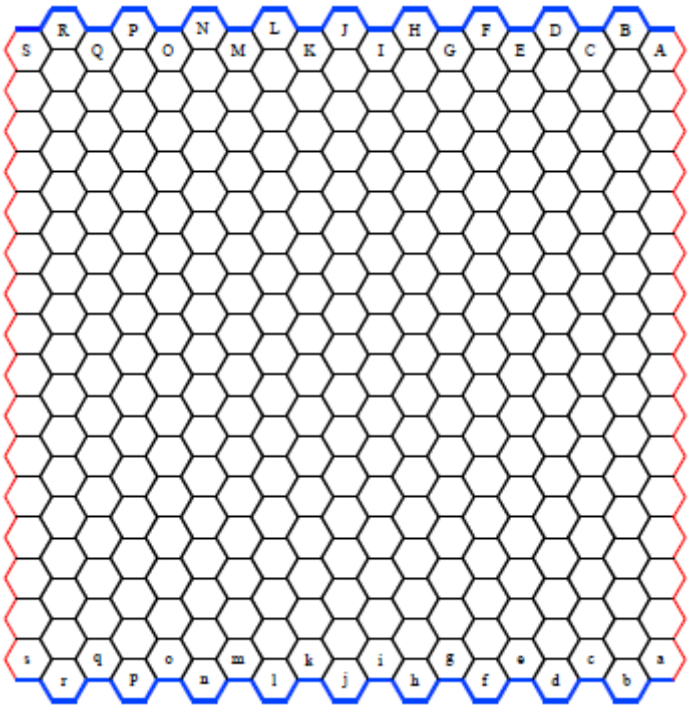

On the other hand, it is formally forbidden to perform an action that places a piece or group of pieces in a position to be captured if this action does not nullify the danger by achieving a capture. Thus, the following move is not valid:




Finally, the following configuration or similar configurations may occur and lead to an uninterrupted series of uninteresting captures. Indeed, if player B places a piece at 1, they capture the piece located at 2, and in the next turn, player A can place a piece at 2 to capture the piece located at 1, and so on. Only the first of these captures is authorized.

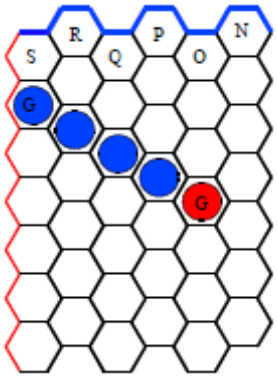


The other two types of capture require a closer look at the board. The blue edges and the red edges do not have the same properties.




The blue edges are transparent. A plant can have a seed at "A" and sprouts at "a,b,c" for example. The board therefore represents a cylinder cut along this line and laid flat. This is to avoid uncapturable positions.

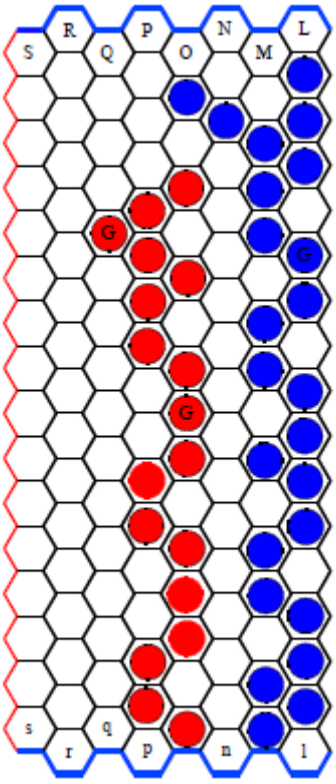
The red edges are impassable and allow for a **capture against the edge**: a piece or an alignment of pieces of the same color that touches this edge can be captured by an opposing piece placed in the extension of that alignment.




*Capture against the edge:*
*The blue pieces are captured*

3. **Saturation Capture**: If a column on the board does not contain two contiguous empty cells, it is said to be saturated, and all pieces in it are removed from the board. Sprouts thus isolated are also removed. As with other capture techniques, all sprouts removed from the board are returned

to their respective owners, and seeds are permanently eliminated. One can voluntarily saturate a column, but be careful, the pieces of the player who saturated the column are not spared.

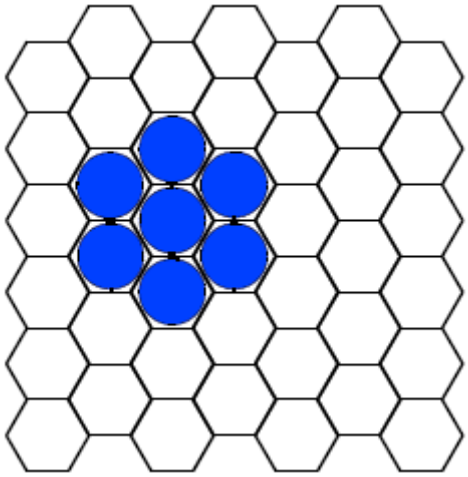



Neither column M nor column L is saturated. Column O, however, is saturated. All pieces in it are removed from the board.

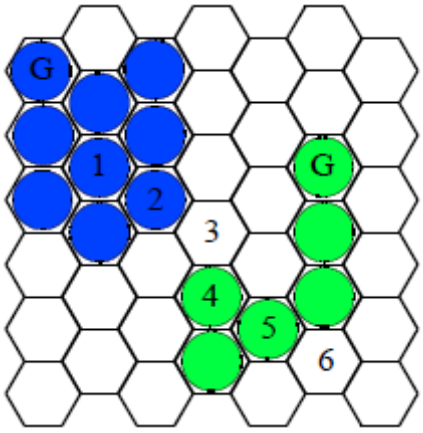
During a game, players must strive to eliminate their opponents from the board. However, they must not place any piece less than 3 cells away from any enemy piece during the first three turns. Finally, if a player no longer has pieces on the board but still has seeds in reserve, they are required to place one in the next turn. The last player remaining on the board is declared the winner.

**PARASITISM**

When a player creates the following figure (which must only be composed of sprouts), called a button, connected or integrated in any way to one of their plants, they immediately gain a new type of action for the plant with which they created this figure: parasitism.



Parasitism consists of moving the central sprout of this figure along a path of at most 6 cells to parasitize an opposing plant. This path is not necessarily straight, and only its last cell must be empty.




To become a parasite, this sprout must meet two conditions:

- Not be in contact with any piece of the same color at the end of its movement.
- Be in contact with an opposing plant.

To survive, this parasite must remain in contact with the plant it has parasitized or with another opposing plant. In the next turn, and as long as this parasite is alive, the player to whom it belongs must apply an action to this parasite. If they fail to do so, their opponents can declare it dead and remove it from the board.

Actions related to parasites are perfectly similar to those of plants and are:

- Growth, by adding an additional sprout.
- Movement:
    - A parasite consisting of a single sprout can move one cell per turn as long as it remains in contact with an enemy plant.
    - For a parasite formed of several sprouts, the movement is strictly identical to that of plants.
- Simple pruning, by removing a sprout.

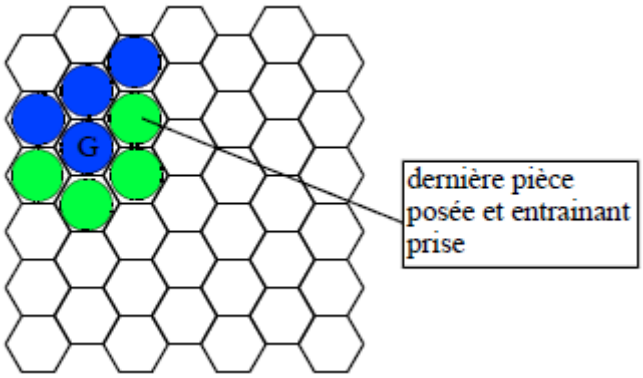
The consequences of these actions are also perfectly similar to those encountered on plants.

One of them still deserves some attention. A parasite formed of at least three sprouts can separate into two parts, following a movement. If these two parts are in contact with an opposing plant, they then form two parasites from the next turn.

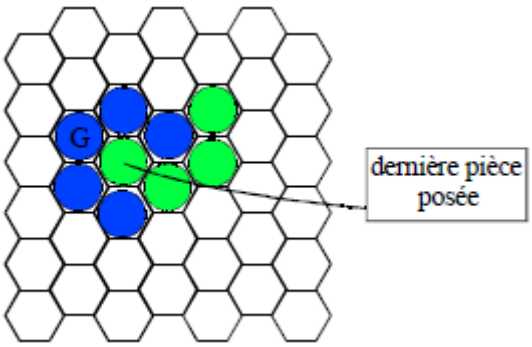
The sprouts forming a parasite can be captured in exactly the same way as the pieces constituting a plant. The consequences for isolated sprouts are the same as for plants. Simply, the isolation must be stronger. Indeed, a parasite sprout or group of sprouts survives as long as they are in contact with an opposing plant.

A plant can also prune itself to get rid of its parasites, and in this case, the parasite disappears if it is no longer in contact with any plant.

The precedence rules also apply to parasites, but it can happen that a parasite dies while performing a capture due to its isolation once the capture is completed. Thus, the following capture is perfectly valid and does not contravene the capture rules stated in the basic rules.




The following capture, however, is forbidden, in application of the basic rules.




Finally, one can parasitize a parasite. A parasite can form a button. Two buttons can have common sprouts but must be complete to hatch. Furthermore, the same plant or the same parasite cannot launch multiple parasites in the same turn.

The obligation for players to always have pieces present on the board applies literally when parasitism is introduced. A player is therefore not required to place a seed on the board as long as they have a living parasite.

At the end of the game, if a player who no longer has seeds either in reserve or on the board manages to capture the last seed(s) of their enemies by means of one or more of their surviving parasite(s), the game is declared a draw.

To summarize, a parasite is easily recognized: it is a group of sprouts in contact with one or more enemy plants. The only ways to form a parasite are:

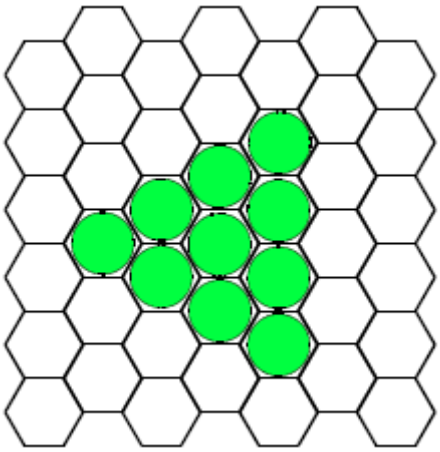
- Hatching a button.
- Splitting an existing parasite into two.

The pruned part of a plant that would still touch an enemy plant is therefore not promoted to the rank of parasite. However, one can graft a piece of a plant onto a parasite and vice versa.

One cannot use actions related to parasites to harvest or sow a seed. This is to prevent the placement of two seeds in the same turn.

**ACCELERATED GROWTH RULE**

When a player manages to create the following figure, called a leaf, connected in any way to one of their plants, they will be able to perform one more action per turn on the plant that bears this leaf, starting from the next turn.



To maintain this advantage, they must leave this leaf untouched throughout their turn.

It is therefore not forbidden to use the button contained within a leaf to launch a parasite, but this causes the loss of the additional action for the turn in which the parasite is launched and until the turn after the leaf is re-counted. A leaf must not contain a seed.

A plant can have several leaves but cannot benefit from more than two additional actions per turn. Two leaves cannot have common sprouts. A parasite can have leaves and is subject to the same limit of a maximum of two additional actions per parasite.

Additional actions cannot be harvesting or sowing; this is always to prevent the placement of two seeds in the same turn.

Ref: https://escaleajeux.fr/jeu/palan.0.0, François Haffner