

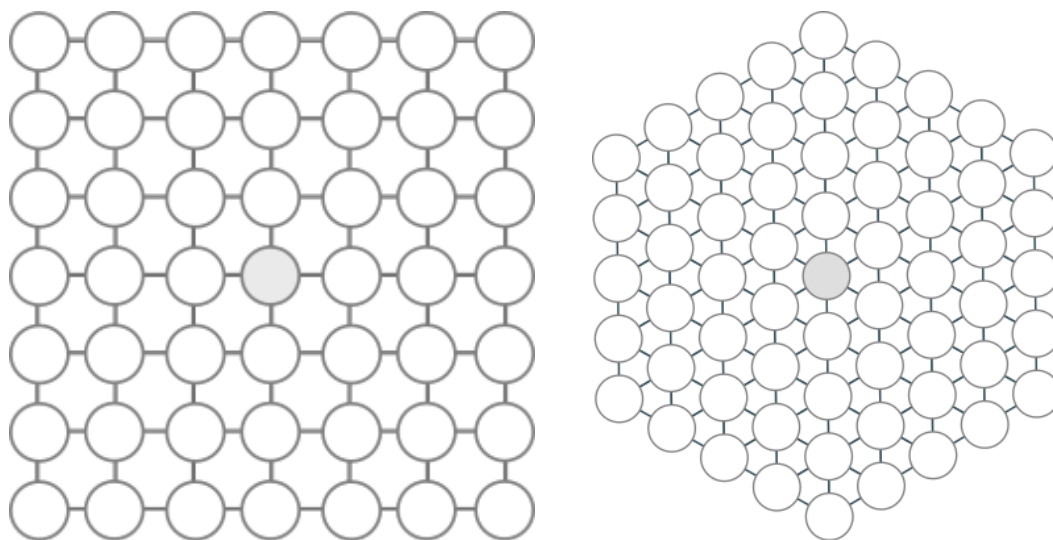
# Hermit

2020, Phil Leduc, <https://sites.google.com/site/theowlsnest02/home/hermit>

**Hermit** is a two player abstract strategy game in which players drop stones to create connected, owned groups of stones of odd sizes 1, 3 and 5 only. The game ends when neither player can legally place a stone. The player with the most groups on the board at game's end wins. Ties are broken by the most groups of size 1, then by the most groups of size 3, and finally, the last player to place a stone wins. Because Hermit is a simple placement game, it can be played with paper and colored pens or pencils.

The game of *Hermit* requires the following components:

- A 7 x 7 square (standard) or 5 x 5 hex game board,
- Two sets of 30 stones



Definition: A **group** is a set of edgewise/orthogonally connected, like-colored stones of size 1, 3 or 5 stones. Groups of size 1 are referred to as **hermits**. Even sized groups are not allowed.

Players decide who is to play first.

The first player must place/drop a stone on any empty cell other than the center cell.

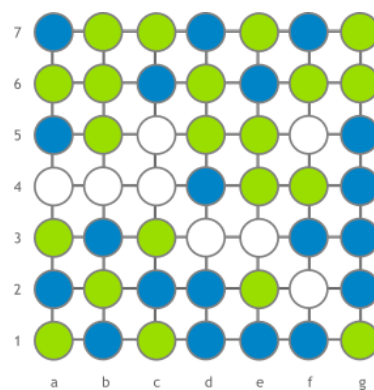
From then on, players alternate playing stones, and must place a single stone per turn on any empty cell, such that groups of like-colored stones are formed on the game board. Group size is limited to 1, 3 and 5 only. This means there will be empty cells that may not be used by one or both players because groups of even size or any size greater than five may not be created. As more stones are placed, some of these off-limit cells may become available again! Note that opposing stones may be

placed adjacent to each other because only like-colored stones contribute to the size of a group.

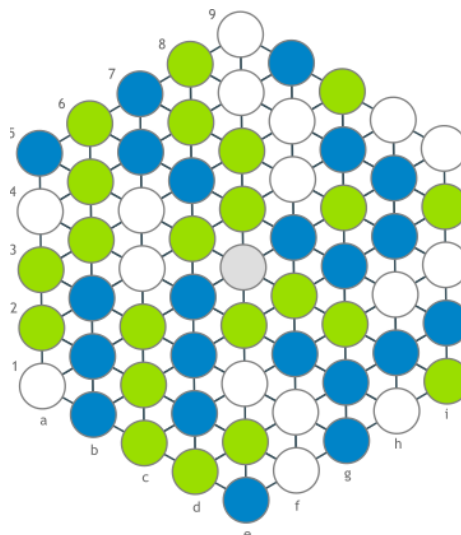
Players may pass their turn only if they have no legal placement. Their opponent continues play if possible. When both players have no legal moves, the game is over and a winner is determined.

## Winning the Game

The winner of the game is the player with the **most groups** on the board at game's end. If there is a tie, whichever player has the most groups of size 1 wins. If still tied, the player with the most groups of size 3 wins. Finally, if still tied, the player to last place a stone wins! See Figures 2 and 3 for scoring examples.



*Scoring Example. Blue has 12 groups, Green has 11 groups. Blue wins.*



*Tie-breaker Example. Blue has 8 groups, Green has 8 groups. The tie is resolved by hermit (singleton) count. Blue has 3 hermits and Green has 4 hermits. Green wins the game.*

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