BRIQUE

by Luis Bolaños Mures

Introduction

Brique is a drawless **connection** game for two players: Black and White. It's played on the squares of a checkered board, which is initially empty. The top and bottom edges of the board are colored black; the left and right edges are colored white.
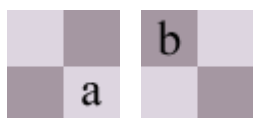
Luis Bolaños Mures designed Brique in April, 2012.

Definitions

The **escorts** of a light square are the square immediately in front of it and the square immediately to the left of it.

The **escorts** of a dark square are the square immediately behind it and the square immediately to the right of it.

See the next diagrams:

15x15 Brique board

On the left, the two dark squares are the escorts of the 'a' square.
On the right, the two light squares are the escorts of the 'b' square.
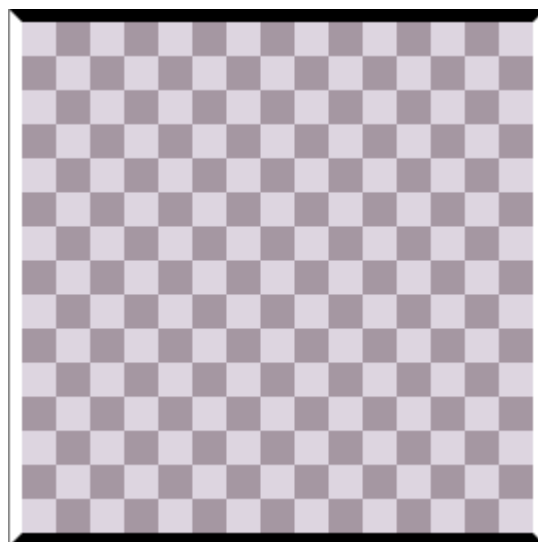
Play

Black plays first, then turns alternate. On his turn, a player must place one **stone** of his color on an empty point.

After a placement, if the two **escorts** of one or more squares are occupied by friendly stones and said squares aren't occupied by friendly stones yet, the player must place a stone of his color on each one of them. Any enemy stones already placed there are removed first.

Note that some squares on the edge of the board have only one escort or no escorts at all. This squares are not affected by this rule.

The game is **won** by the player who completes a **chain** of orthogonally adjacent stones of his color touching the two opposite board edges of his color. Draws are not possible.
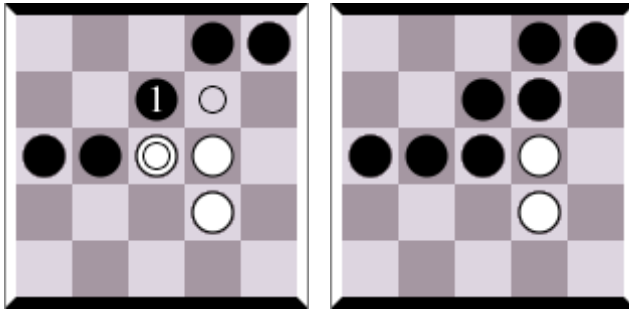
Pie rule

The **pie rule** is used in order to make the game fair. This means that White will have the option, on his first turn only, to change sides instead of making a regular move.

Examples

Normally, a Brique board will be much larger than the tiny ones shown here.


Escorts

On the left, after Black 1, all the escorts of the two marked squares are occupied by black stones, so the player must also place black stones on both of them. Since there's already a white stone on one of them, it must be removed first. The next picture shows the position at the end of Black's turn.

Escorts on the edges
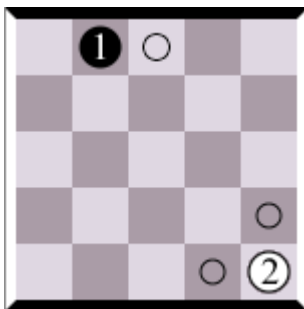
In this picture, Black 1 has occupied the only escort of the marked square to the right of it, but that square won't be filled on the same turn, since only squares with two escorts are affected by the filling rule. Likewise for White 2 and the two marked squares adjacent to it. White 2 is the only escort of those squares.

End of the game
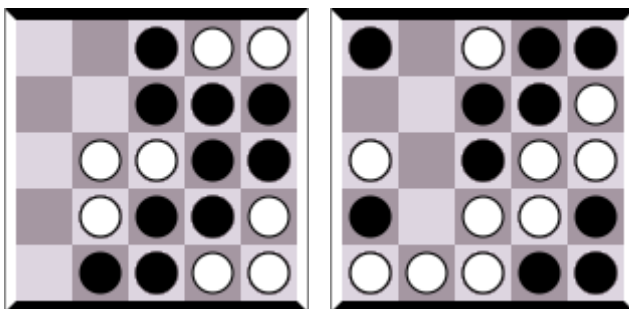
On the left, Black has won by connecting his two opposite board edges with a chain of his color. Likewise for White in the next picture.

Author's notes

Brique introduces an altogether new mechanism so prevent deadlocks on the square grid. Two like-colored, diagonally adjacent stones parallel to the NE-SW diagonal are always connected through a common neighbor in this game. Consequently, each each square has effectively six neighbours and the board behaves like a rhombus, with one diagonal twice as shorter as the other. This is not unlike Hex, but, needless to say, Brique and Hex are very different games.

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