

GO

Age 5+

Go is a strategy game which has been played for 2500 years. Also, it is believed that the game has been played for 4000 years. The rules of Go are so simple but its strategy and acquisitions are very profound.



ACQUISITION:

- Abstract thinking skill
- Developing long term strategies
- Characteristic skills as patience and calmness

Which Game Board:

Go can be played on 3 different game boards as 19x19 grid, 13x13 grid, and 9x9 grid boards.

13x13 grid board is the ideal one for the beginners and medium players. For high level players might prefer 13x13 grid board if they want to finish the game in short time. 9x9 grid board is suitable for children, beginner in Go.

The Aim of the Booklet:

The aim of this booklet is to teach the rules of Go to beginners. It does not include the topics such as tactics or exercises.

THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME:

- In the beginning, the board is empty.
- Weak player begins with black pieces.
- The pieces are positioned on the board in the way that the center of the pieces overlaps with the intersection points of lines.
- The next player places a piece as a movement.
- The pieces never move on the board. They are only removed from the board when they are "captured."
- If there is the strength difference among players, the pieces called handicap are placed. There is a certain rule for placing these pieces which are given to the black side in advance. Therefore, the strength difference is eliminated and the game becomes more enjoyable. If black places the pieces given in advance, this counts the first movement.

RULES:

- The aim of the players is to have more vacant place than the rival has, at the end of the game. In order to do that, players should surround the vacant places and remove the pieces

of the rival.

- When players are not able to surround each other anymore, the game is over.
- At the end of the game, the points are calculated by reducing the number of captured pieces from the number of vacant places.
- At the end of the play, the points that are not surrounded do not belong to any player. If players are not sure about who surrounded the point, the game continues and they decide on who did it.
- A player can pass over in his/her turn if he/she wants.
- If players pass over their turns one after another, the game is over and points are calculated.
- A piece or a group of pieces is removed from board when all the empty neighbor points are surrounded. The removed pieces are called as "captured." Captured pieces would be needed for re-using. Thus, note down the numbers of captured pieces.
- There is a rule called "Ko" in order to prevent recurring same positions. (see also Ko)
- If there is a seki position, at the end of the game, that position is ignored and points are not given to any player.
- "Joseki" is not a rule but it is an edge by edge expansion developed throughout the history. Joseki creates an equal beginning for both two players.

CAPTURE:

- After the pieces are placed on the board, they do not move to any direction. When they are captured, they are removed from the board. In order to capture a piece or a group of pieces, rival must surround it or them. Cross points are ignored.
- In the position A, the white piece is surrounded by rival from below and from left side. With the black piece that will be placed on the point 1, the white piece is captured and removed from the board. You should pay attention to the fact that the black side does not have to place any piece to

cross points (2, 3, 4, or 5) in order to capture it. This is valid for groups of pieces also.

- In the position B, the black piece is captured and must be removed from the board. There is no point to cover on the left side or below of the piece so the white piece is captured when black side places pieces on above and on the right side.
- In the position C, in order to capture the black piece, white side should place the pieces on the points 1 and 2.
- In the position D, the black pieces create a group by connecting to each other. White side make the group be in the state of atari by surrounding the group. If white side places a piece on the point 1, the group of black pieces is captured and removed from the board. However, what is interesting here is that a piece of white is also in atari. If black moves to the point 2, a white piece will be captured and consequently flee from the state of atari. Both two sides are in the state of atari. The one who plays next captures the rival.
- In the position E, two white pieces and a black piece are in the state of atari. If black moves to the point 1 or 3, white is in atari. If white moves to the point 2, black is in atari.

LIBERTY:

A piece or a group's neighboring empty points through a line are called as "liberty." The piece placed on the corner of the board has 2, the one placed on the side of the board has 3, and the one placed in the middle of the board had 4 liberties. For groups, liberty number depends on the size of the group. The group or the piece which has only one liberty is in atari. If the last liberty is covered by rival, that group or piece is removed from the board. Liberties in the groups are called as "eyes."

ATARI:

Atari is the state that a group or a piece will be removed from the board

in the next turn.

- In the position A, point 1 is the last liberty of the white side and the group is in atari.
- In the position C, the black piece's liberties are points 1 and 2. If the white side covers one of these points, the black side will be in atari.
- In the position D, the black group is in atari because of the last liberty, point 1. The white piece is in atari also because of the last liberty, point 2.
- In the position E, two white pieces and one black piece are in atari because both of them have their last liberty.

Explanation with Examples:

- In the position A, white surrounded black. The point 1 is the last liberty of the black group. What you should pay attention here is that the black group is captured if white moves to the point 1. However, white must be captured by itself while doing it. Under the standard conditions, white cannot capture itself so white should not move. However, there is an exception under these kind of conditions. If a player is able to capture the rival's piece or a group of pieces, he/she can move to that point and capture the rival although the player is surrounded. Thus, these two rules are very crucial:

The group which has eyes cannot escape from being captured.

If a group has two eyes, the player cannot cover the eyes because he/she cannot move twice. In the game of Go, the group which has two eyes can never be removed.

- In the position B, black has two liberties but the liberties are not eyes because the black pieces cannot create a group. If white moves firstly to the point 1 and then to the point 2, white cannot capture the black pieces.
- In the position C, although the black pieces cannot create a group, black protect its liberties from white by

placing the pieces very brilliantly. White cannot move to the points 1 and 2 one after another so cannot capture the black pieces.

- In the position D, it is a similar position to C. Because the pieces are not placed brilliantly, they will be captured. White moves firstly to the point 1 and captures the piece on the left. Then, white moves to the point 2 and captures the other piece. In the similar positions, you should pay attention to the eyes that seems they are in the group but in fact, they are free from the group.

SEKI :

Seki is the state that the groups cannot make the rival be in atari unless the group itself is in atari. The groups are neither alive nor death in this state. At the end of the game, the points are ignored for the state of seki. In the picture, the black pieces nearly surround the white pieces and the white ones do so. This is the turn to capture.

- In the position A, black cannot move to the point 1 because white will move to the point 2 and capture the black pieces. Similarly, if black moves to the point 2, white will move to the point 1 and capture the black pieces. It is not possible to move to the point 3. Under these circumstances, black does not have a move in this position. Black has to think over moving to the other points on the board.

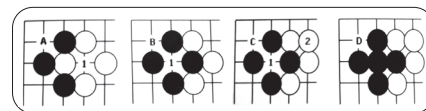
If white moves to the point 1, black with the point 3 captures the white group. If white moves to the point 3, black will do the same. It is not possible to move to the point 2. White also has to think over moving to the other points on the board. The player cannot make their rivals be in atari unless they will be in atari. This is called "seki." At the end of the game, this will be ignored and it will not be added to the calculation of points.

- The position B is also a seki position.

Please, analyze the fact that moving to the point 1 or 2 makes both sides be in atari. Seki could be perceived as an equality state in which the players cannot overtop each other.

KO:

Ko is a vicious cycle position. There is this rule to avoid the vicious cycle. Let's explain with the example:



In the position A, the white piece is in atari. If black captures the white piece by moving to the point 1, the position B comes out. White is in the position that black was before. If white moves to the point 1 and capture black, the board turns into the position A.

Thus, there will be a vicious cycle. For avoiding this, there is the rule of Ko. In order to prevent this cycle, white is banned from moving to the point 1.

In general, in these kinds of positions, the movement which creates the same position before cannot be done. If the player wants to move to that point, the first movement is done to another point and then to that point. Of course, rival will not allow the player to do so and will have already covered that point.

Let's look at the positions C and D. In the position C, for preventing the vicious cycle, although white wants to move to the point 1, white must move to another point. Let's assume that white moves to the point 2. It is black's turn. Naturally, black does not allow white to move there so black prevents the danger as seen in the position D. Black also benefits from the position by capturing a piece.

BRAINSTORMING:

- Some commanders study over war strategies by playing Go throughout the history. According to you, is it reasonable? Can there be any connection between playing Go and war?
- Do you know any other game that can be traced in earlier times of history? Or any other games of which the inventors are unknown, on where they have been played first? Discuss with friends.
- Which characteristic futures should you come up with and should you subordinate while playing Go? (Having rushed, thinking with strategies, greed, usage of time, etc.)

