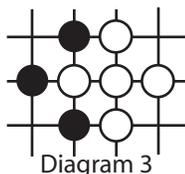


**Ko:** (...continued from page 3)

When there's a ko, both players could stubbornly persist in capturing one another's stones and the game would go on forever.

Because of that, there's a rule that says that you must play a move elsewhere, before you can recapture the ko (on your next turn).

**Ending a ko:** If Black has to play elsewhere after Dia. 2 (prev page) then White has an opportunity to fill the ko, resulting in Dia. 3.



**Ko threats:** If the ko is important, Black might not want White to fill it. So Black needs to find a way to distract White for one move and then recapture. This kind of move is called a *ko threat*.

For example, Black might threaten to capture some other white stones and if White fills the ko, Black will capture them. If White answers Black's ko threat, then Black can recapture the ko, taking us back to Dia. 1. At that point White will need to come up with her own ko threat.

You needn't worry about losing a ko if you can get enough compensation from your ko threat.

If ko sounds confusing, don't worry. You'll understand it better after playing some games. For now, you just need to know what it is.

**Other rules:** Congratulations! You now know everything you need to start playing Go!

As you gain experience, you might discover special rules for tournament play, and other ways of counting the score. But these nuances don't fundamentally change the game. Your Go journey starts here. Have fun!



[gogameguru.com/learn](http://gogameguru.com/learn)

## What is Go?

Go is a fascinating and ancient strategy board game that's been popular for at least 2,500 years (and probably more).

Go is a two player game, where players take turns to place stones on a board.

Go is a mental martial art.

Its simple rules and deep strategies have intrigued everyone from emperors to peasants for generations. And they still do today.

Go is fun and exciting for people of any age, and playing Go helps you to improve your memory, concentration and self control.

Go can be played almost anywhere. In fact, it's even been played by astronauts in space!

All you need is a Go set and a partner.

*"Go uses the most elemental materials and concepts – line and circle, wood and stone, black and white – combining them with simple rules to generate subtle strategies and complex tactics that stagger the imagination."*

– Iwamoto Kaoru 9 dan  
Go Master

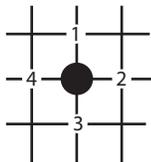
# How to Play Go

(a basic introduction to the game)

## How to Play Go

- Two players (*Black* and *White*) take turns to place *stones* on the board (Black moves first).
- Stones are placed on the *intersections* of the lines (not in the squares).
- Once you place a stone, it doesn't move for the rest of the game, unless it's *captured* and removed from the board.

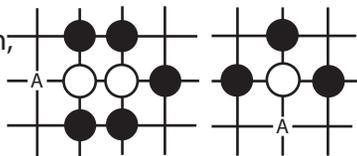
The intersections adjacent to a stone are called *liberties*. This stone has four liberties (the diagonals don't count).



A *group* of adjacent stones (of the same color) share their liberties. When stones run out of liberties, they're captured and removed.

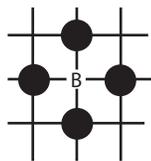
**Capturing:** If Black plays at A (below) he can capture (and remove) White's stones.

If it's White's turn, she can escape by playing at A.

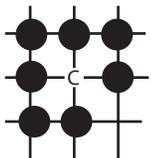


**Suicide:** A stone placed on a point where it has no liberties is already surrounded, so it will be captured immediately.

White shouldn't play at B now, because her stone would be surrounded. If she plays there, Black will take her stone.

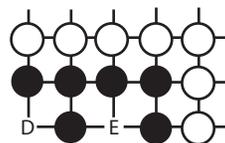


**Eyes:** White can't play at C until she's removed all of Black's outside liberties. After that, playing at C will capture the black stones. The point at C is called an *eye*.



**Living:** This black group has two separate eyes. White can't capture with D or E, because neither will remove Black's final liberty and White's stone will be captured instead.

Because of that, groups that have two eyes can never be captured and are *alive*.



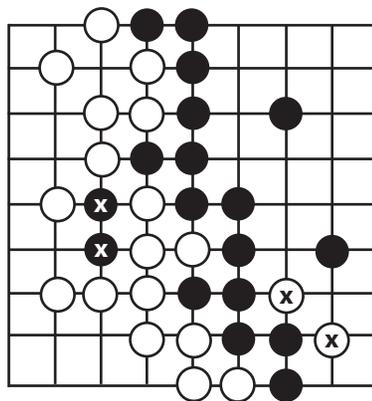
**Your goal:** You want to control more of the board than your opponent does. Imagine that the Go board is an island and that the game is a race to claim its valuable land.

The winner is the player with more stones on the board at the end of the game. That means you can win by capturing the other player's stones and defending your own.

**Example game:** Here's a game in progress.

The players have divided the board between them.

The stones marked with x's don't have enough space to make two eyes and will eventually be captured.



Both players keep taking turns until the board is almost full. But remember that each group needs at least two eyes, otherwise it might be captured.

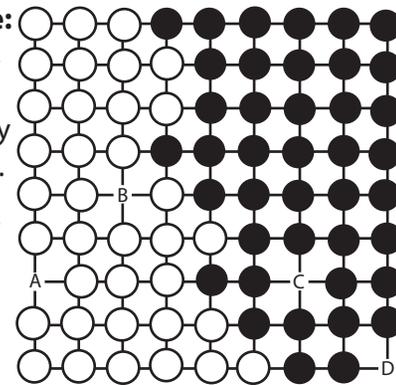
If there aren't any moves for you to play, you can pass and let the other player move. The game ends when both players pass.

On page 3, we see the same game from earlier. White has eyes at A and B and Black at C and D.

**Ending the game:** After both players pass, the game is over and now they can fill in the eyes.

White puts stones at A and B and Black puts stones at C and D.

Now let's count.

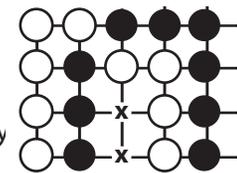


**Scoring:** If you count the stones on the board, you'll see that White has 38 and Black has 43. So black wins by 5 points.

*Tip:* Taking the stones off the board and making groups of 10 makes it faster and easier to count.

## Advanced Concepts:

**Seki:** Here's an interesting situation. Three black stones and four white stones seem to be trapped, but they're actually perfectly safe.



Nobody wants to play at x, because if they do their stones will be captured on the next turn. That means that these stones are alive without eyes. This sort of situation is called a *seki*.

**Ko:** Sometimes a position like this appears in a game. White can capture one black stone, which would lead to Dia. 2. But then Black can capture one white stone, which would take us back to Dia. 1!

This situation is called *ko*, which means eternity in Japanese.

(continued on the next page...)

