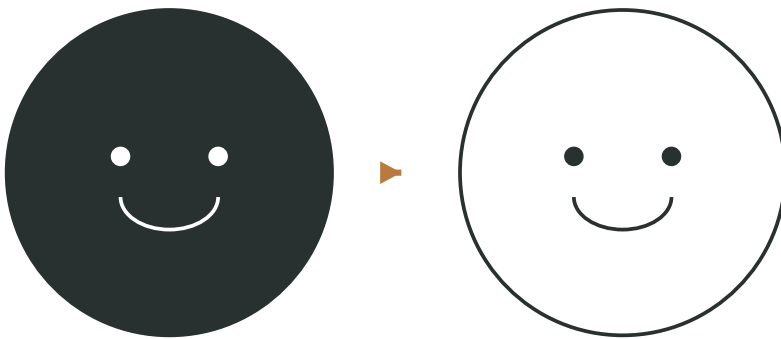


A stone. A choice. A discovery.

Learn to place stones, share space and think ahead. A standalone collection and companion to The Sage Dad Go book.



Take turns. Notice what changes.

- 1 Meet the stones | pages 2-5**
Find crossings, take turns and count the empty neighbors called liberties.
- 2 Try tiny challenges | pages 6-10**
Capture, rescue and connect. Then play a short first-capture game.
- 3 Learn the whole game | pages 11-16**
Add legal-move checks, ko, eyes, territory and a clear scoring method.

Your kit: crayons or pencil, two colors of stones or the paper tokens on page 18. Use the board on page 17. Answers and teaching sources: pages 19-20.

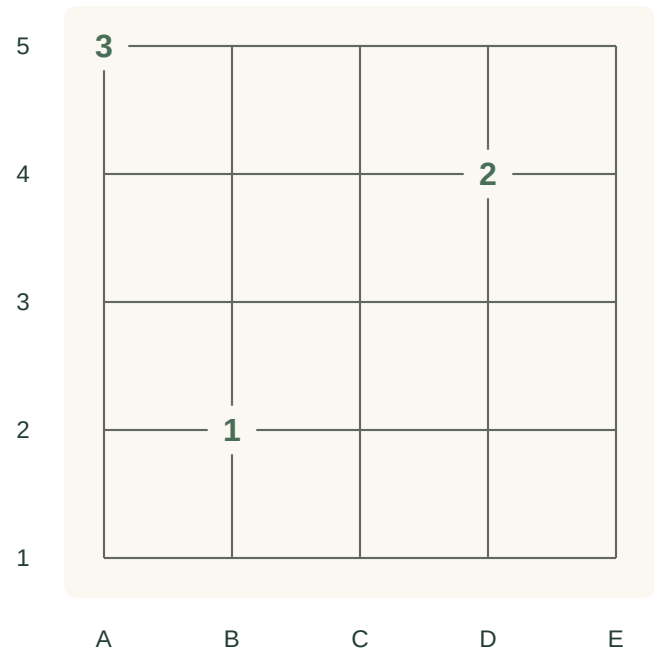
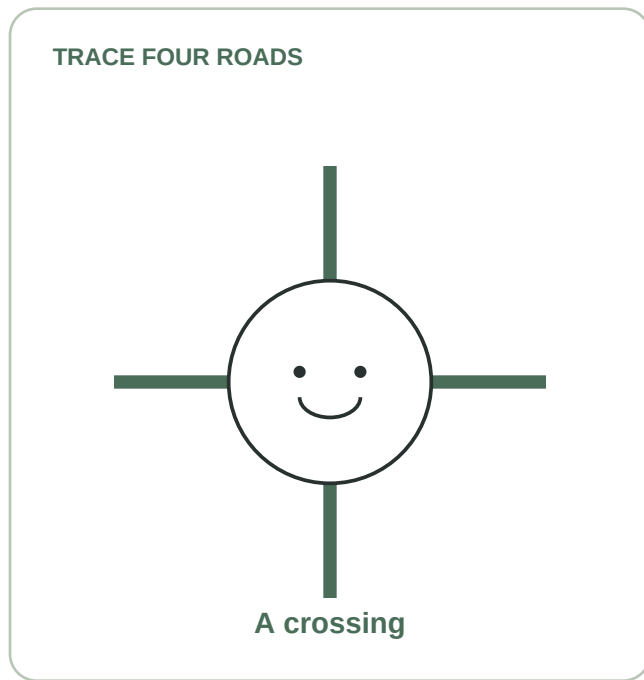
With a book: pair a matching topic with its activity. Without a book: follow this route.

GROWN-UP CUE

Start with 5-10 minutes for ages 4-7. Read aloud and accept pointing or drawing. Older beginners use the same sequence; stretch by predicting an opponent's reply.

Find the crossing places

Go stones sit where lines meet, including the corners and edges. They do not sit inside squares.



1 Find it

Trace the four roads into the large stone. Color the stone.

2 Point to it

Touch the three numbered crossings on the small board.

3 Make your own

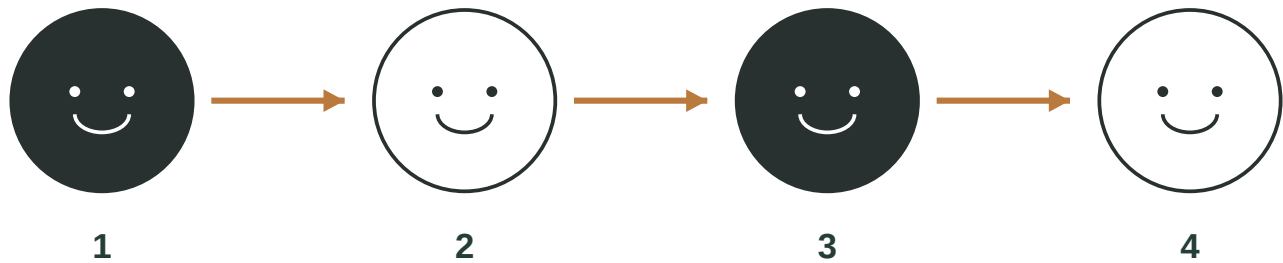
Circle two other crossings. Put an X inside a square to show where a stone does NOT go.

GROWN-UP CUE

Letters and numbers are optional location helpers. B2 means column B, row 2. Let a younger child point while you say the name. All five lines include playable edge points.

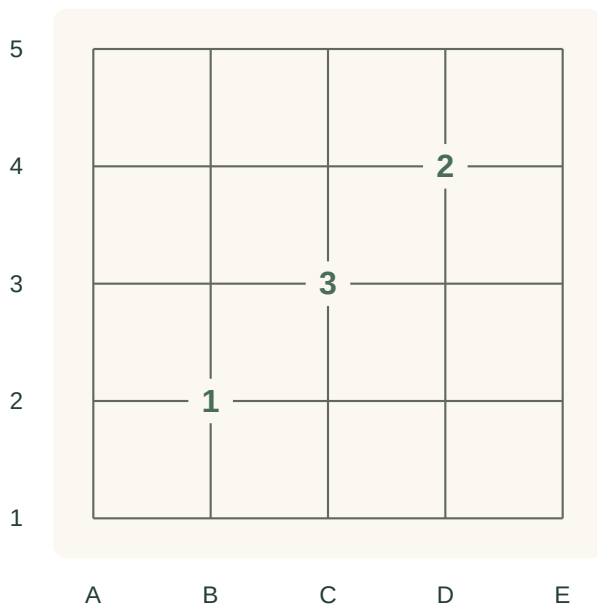
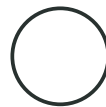
One stone, then your turn

Black goes first. White goes next. A placed stone stays put unless it is captured.



FINISH THE TURN PATTERN

Who plays fifth? Color this stone:



COPY THREE TURNS

1. Black on B2.
2. White on D4.
3. Black on C3.

Choose an empty crossing for White's next stone.

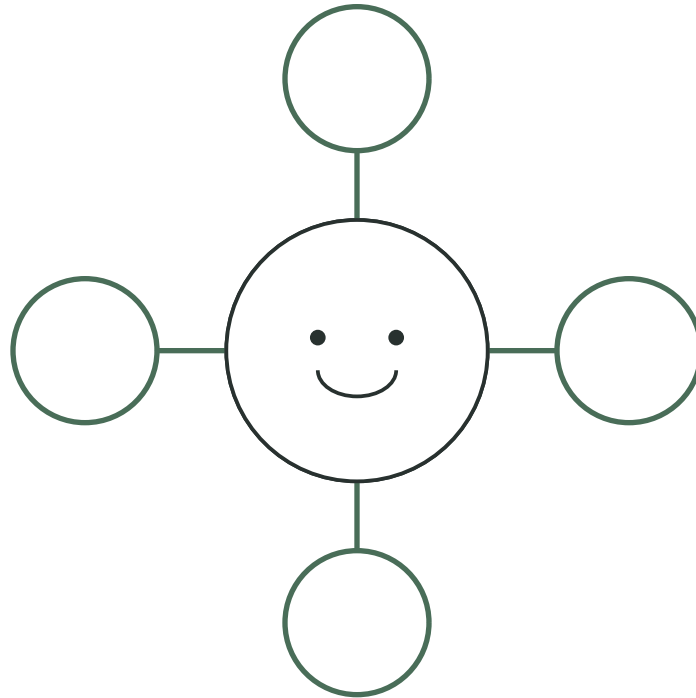
Leave the earlier stones in place.

GROWN-UP CUE

Black plays fifth. At this stage, practice placement only; captures come later. Unlike chess, you do not pick up your stone and move it to a different point on a later turn.

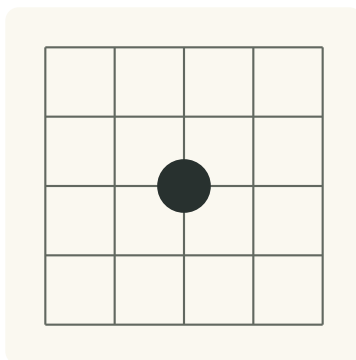
Find the breathing spaces

A liberty is an empty crossing one line-step away: up, down, left or right. Diagonals do not count.



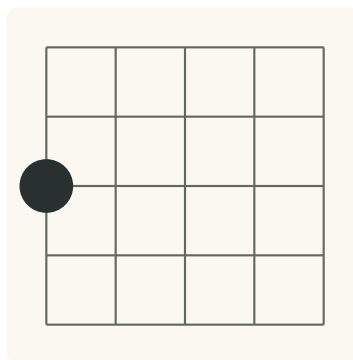
COLOR THE FOUR EMPTY NEIGHBORS

Middle



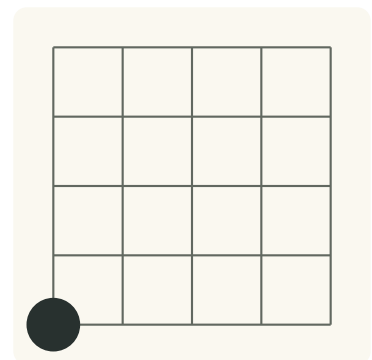
Liberties: ____

Edge



Liberties: ____

Corner



Liberties: ____

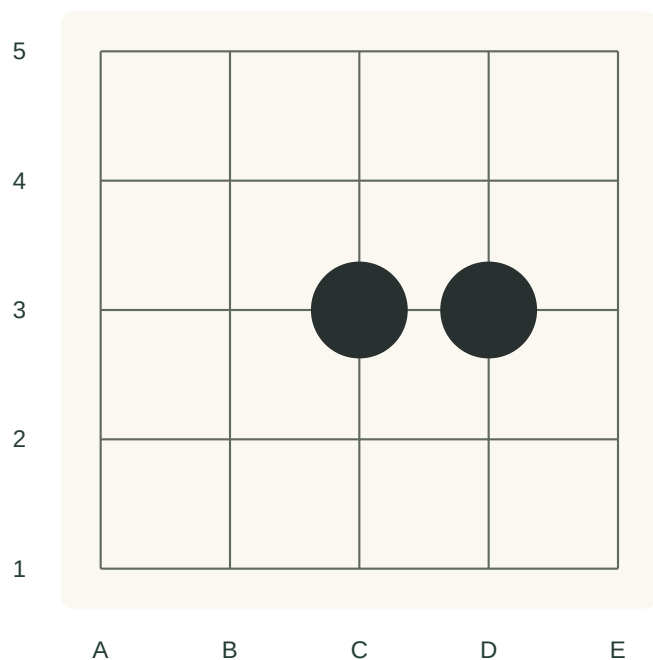
GROWN-UP CUE

On an otherwise empty board: middle 4, edge 3, corner 2. The large circle picture is a counting model. On the actual board, count empty crossings, not squares or diagonal neighbors.

Neighbors make a team

Same-color stones touching along a line form a group. The group shares its liberties.

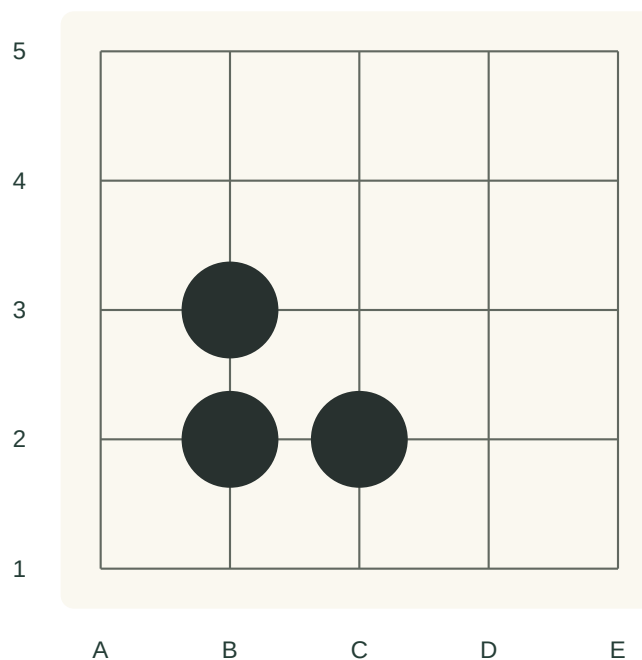
A / TWO CONNECTED STONES



Circle every empty crossing next to A. Count each crossing only once.

A has ____ liberties.

B / ONE BENT GROUP



Do the same for B. One crossing touches two stones; it is still only one liberty.

B has ____ liberties.

TRY A DIAGONAL

On another board, place Black at B2 and C3 only. They touch diagonally but are **not connected**. Add Black at C2: now a line path joins them. Use your finger to trace through friendly stones.

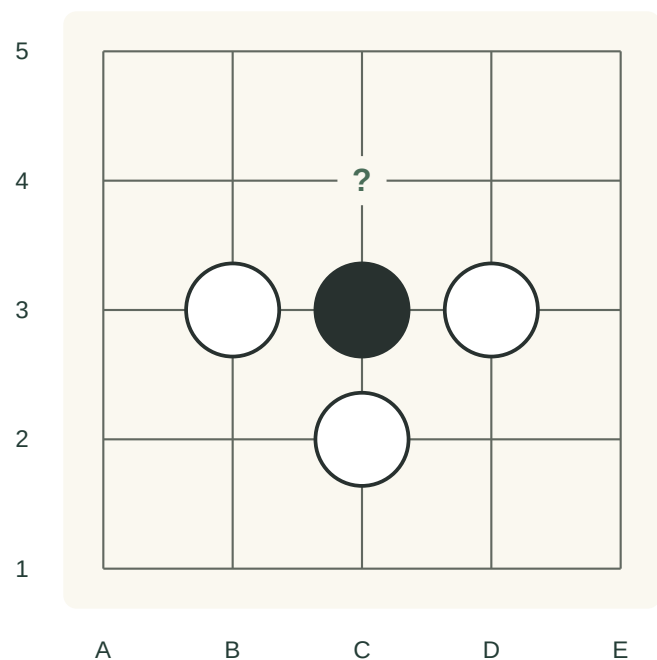
GROWN-UP CUE

A has 6 liberties. B has 7; C3 is shared and counted once. Diagonal neighbors can help each other later, but they are not yet one connected group.

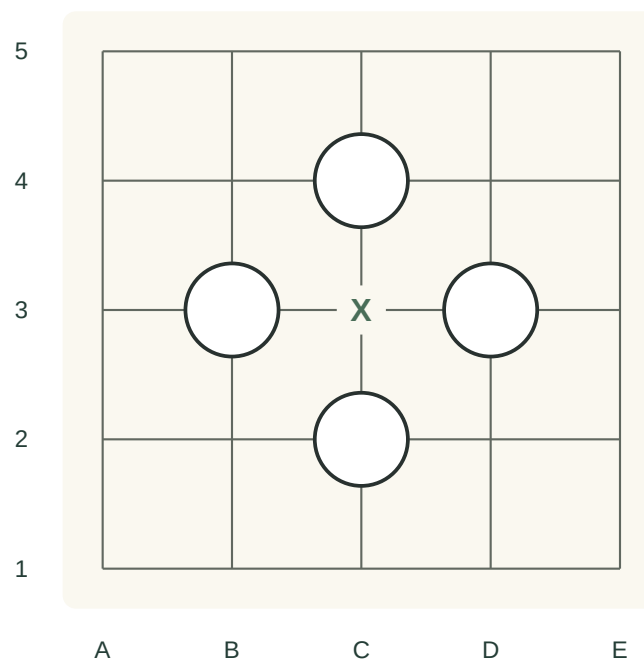
Make your first capture

After your move, remove an opposing stone or group if it has no liberties left.

BEFORE / WHITE TO PLAY



AFTER / SHOW THE CHANGE



1 Predict

Point to the black stone's last liberty.

2 Place

Add one white stone on that crossing.

3 Remove

Lift off the captured black stone. The X marks the point that becomes empty.

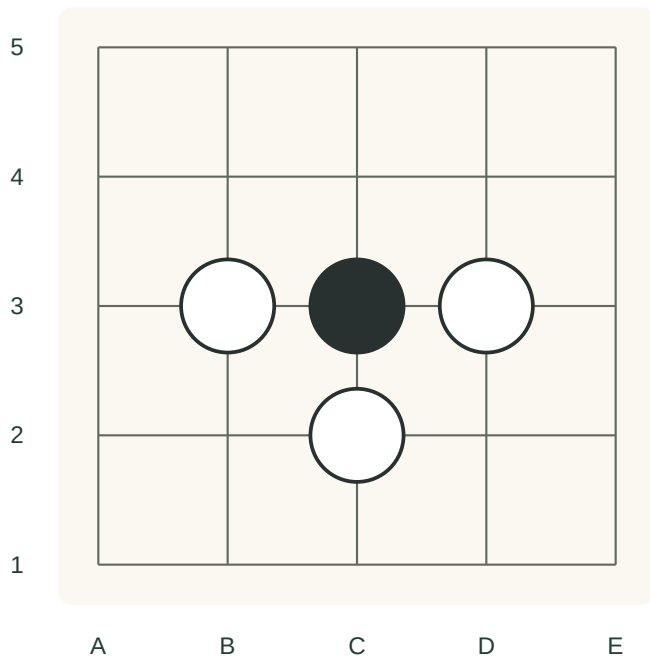
GROWN-UP CUE

White plays C4 and removes Black C3. There is no jumping or sliding. The next turn belongs to Black. A whole connected group is removed when its last liberty is filled.

The one-space warning

Atari means a stone or group has exactly one liberty left.

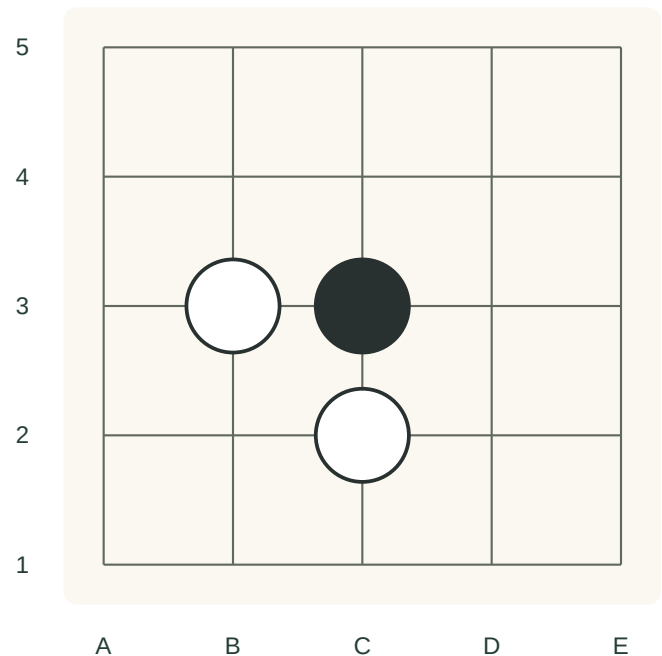
A / COUNT FIRST



Circle the last empty neighbor.

Is A in atari? _____

B / COUNT FIRST



Circle every empty neighbor.

Is B in atari? _____

BE THE TEACHER

Build a fresh one-stone position with exactly one liberty. Ask a partner to find it.

Then remove one surrounding enemy stone. How did the number of liberties change?

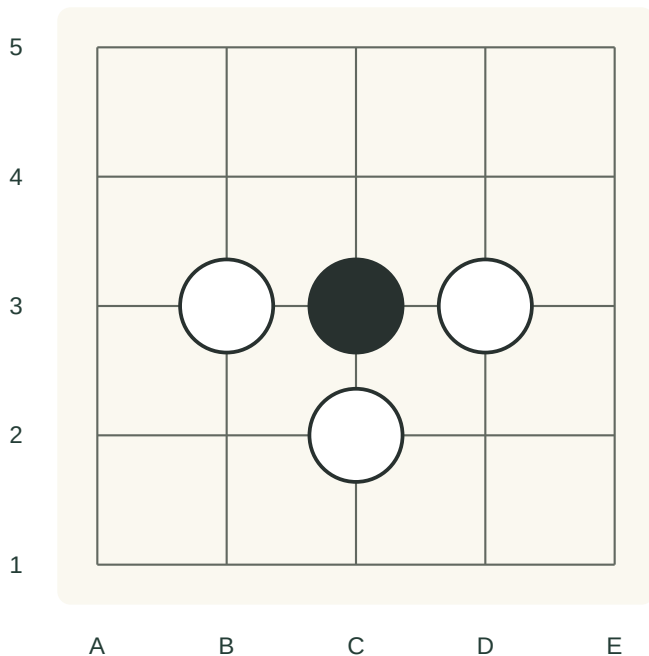
GROWN-UP CUE

A is in atari: C4 is its one liberty. B has two liberties, C4 and D3, so is not in atari. Saying "atari" can help a beginner notice; it is not a required announcement.

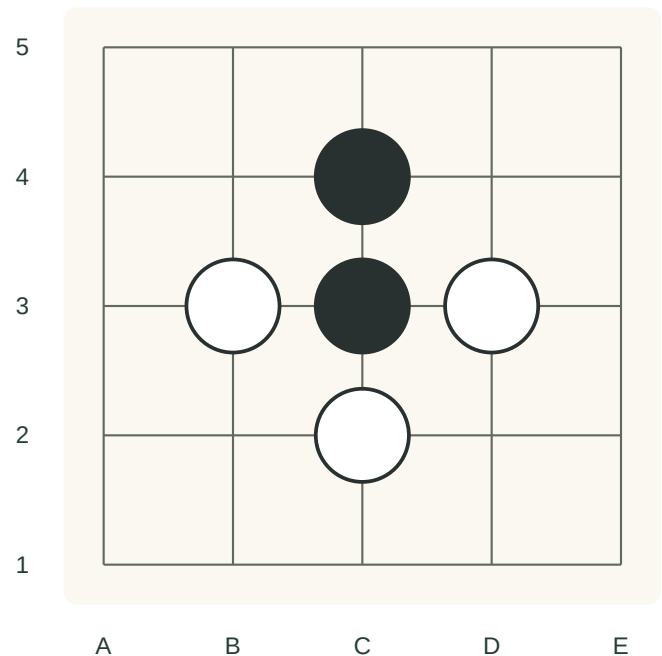
Can you rescue the stone?

Sometimes adding a friendly stone gives the whole group more liberties.

BLACK TO PLAY



AFTER BLACK PLAYS C4



1

Choose

Should Black play at C4 or far away at A5 to help this stone?

2

Test

Add Black at C4. Circle the group's new liberties. How many?

3

Compare

Reset. Play Black A5 instead, then let White play C4. What is captured?

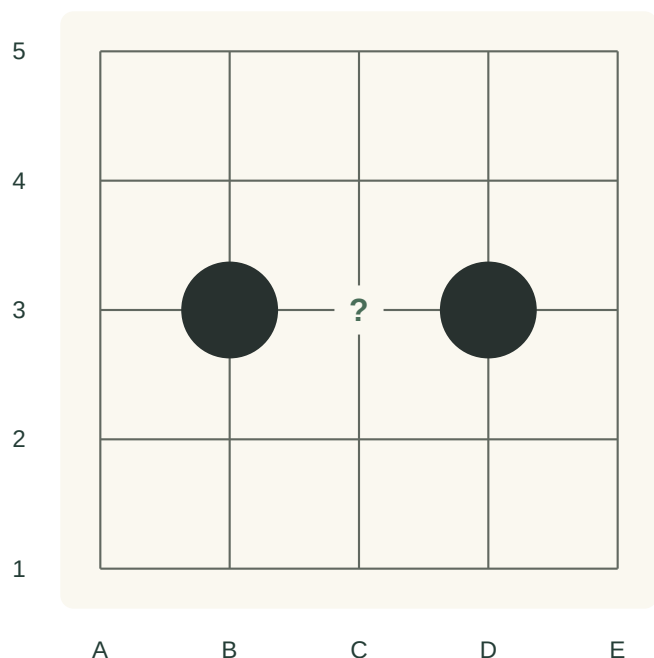
GROWN-UP CUE

C4 grows the group to 3 liberties: B4, D4, C5. After Black A5 and White C4, Black C3 is captured. Extending is not always safe; recount in each new position.

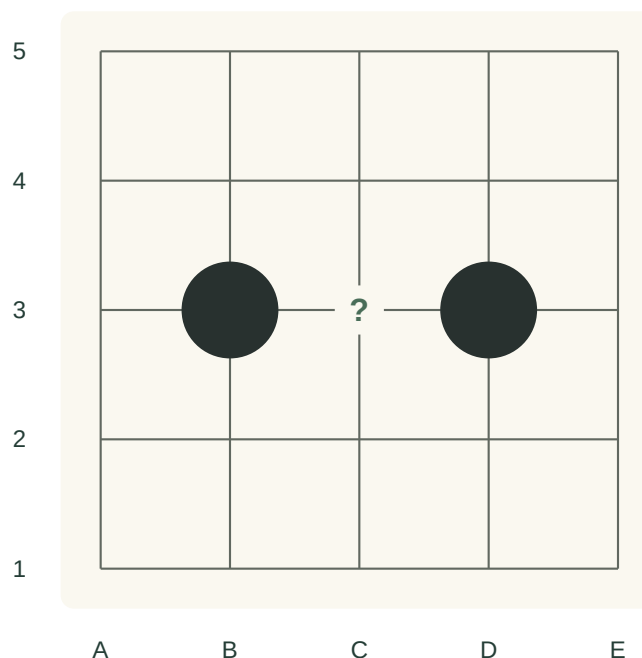
Build a bridge. Find a cut.

The same empty crossing can be a bridge for one color and a block for the other.

A / BLACK PLAYS NEXT



B / WHITE PLAYS NEXT



1

Join

In A, add Black at C3. Trace the connected group from B3 to D3.

2

Separate

In B, add White at C3. Can Black now trace that same friendly line?

3

Think ahead

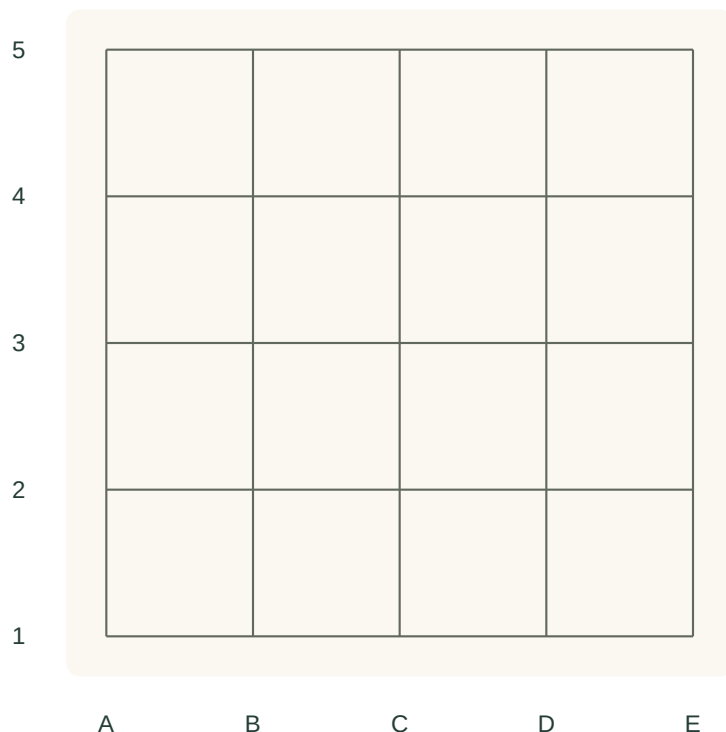
Point to a different place where Black might start a longer connection. The other player will get a turn too.

GROWN-UP CUE

C3 connects Black in A and prevents the direct connection in B. White's cut does not instantly capture either black stone. Connection helps, but liberties still decide capture.

Play the first-capture game

A small goal helps you learn to notice liberties. This practice game ends at the first capture.



YOUR FIRST BOARD

Start with an empty 5 x 5 board.

Use large paper circles or draw stones.

Black starts. Then alternate.

Use page 11 to check a move.

1 Place

Play one stone on an empty crossing. Do not slide it later.

2 Notice

Remove any opposing group with no liberties. The first player to capture one or more stones wins this learning game.

3 Replay

If both players pass before a capture, call this practice round a draw. Swap colors and try again. Move to a 9 x 9 board when ready.

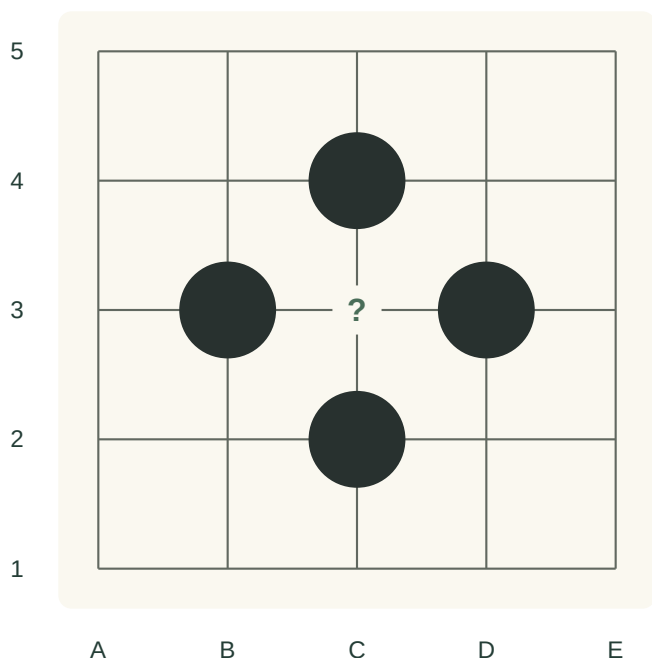
GROWN-UP CUE

This is Capture Go, not full Go scoring. Do not treat captures as the only goal in the full game. After a few rounds, move toward surrounding space on pages 14-16.

Is this move allowed?

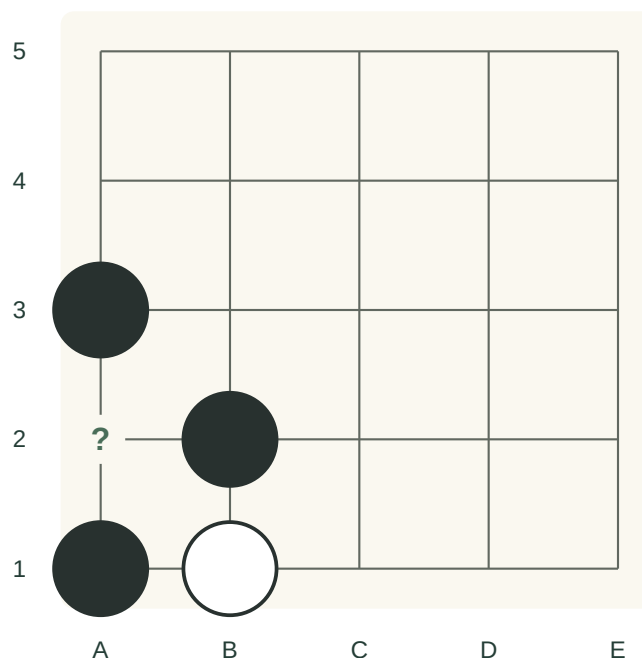
An empty point is not always a legal move. We do not allow self-capture in this collection.

A / WHITE AT C3?



No enemy stone is captured. Does the new white stone have a liberty after the move?

B / WHITE AT A2?



Which black stone loses its last liberty? After removing it, can White breathe?

USE THIS ORDER

1. Place on an empty crossing.
2. Remove any opposing groups with no liberties.
3. Your new group must now have at least one liberty.
4. Check the no-repeat rule on page 12.

GROWN-UP CUE

A is illegal: White would have no liberties and captures nothing. B is legal: White A2 captures Black A1; A1 becomes White's liberty. Do not judge before removing captures.

THE SAGE DAD

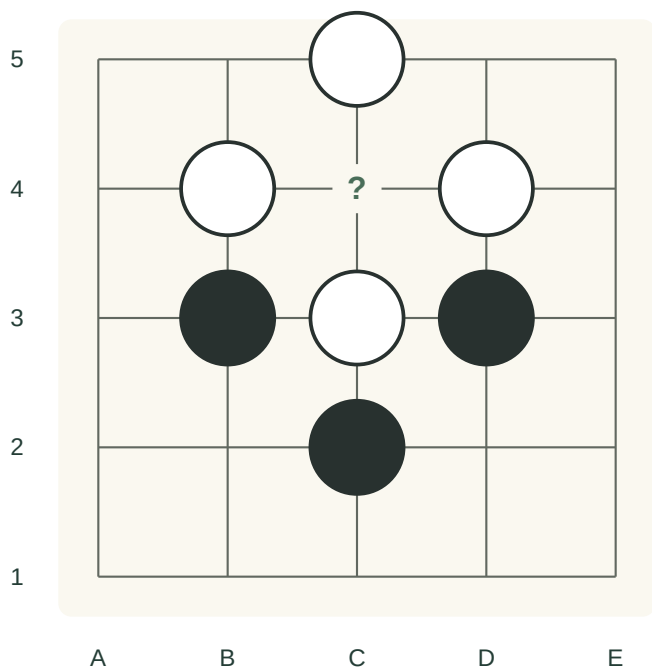
LEARN GO / COLOR, NOTICE, PLAY

11 / KO / A RULE TO PREVENT LOOPS

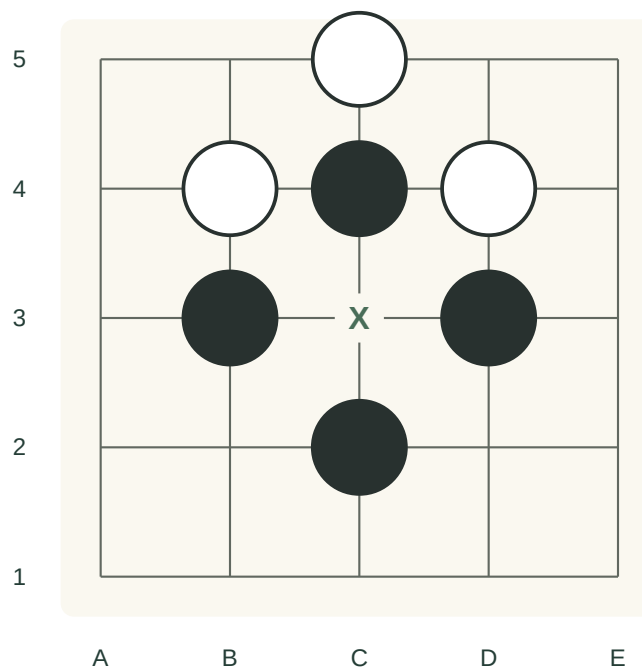
No instant take-back

Some captures could repeat forever. The no-repeat rule stops the board from cycling.

BEFORE / BLACK TO PLAY



AFTER / BLACK PLAYS C4



1 Capture

Black C4 removes the white stone from C3.

2 Compare

If White immediately plays C3, it would remove Black C4 and recreate the picture on the left. That immediate recapture is not allowed.

3 Continue elsewhere

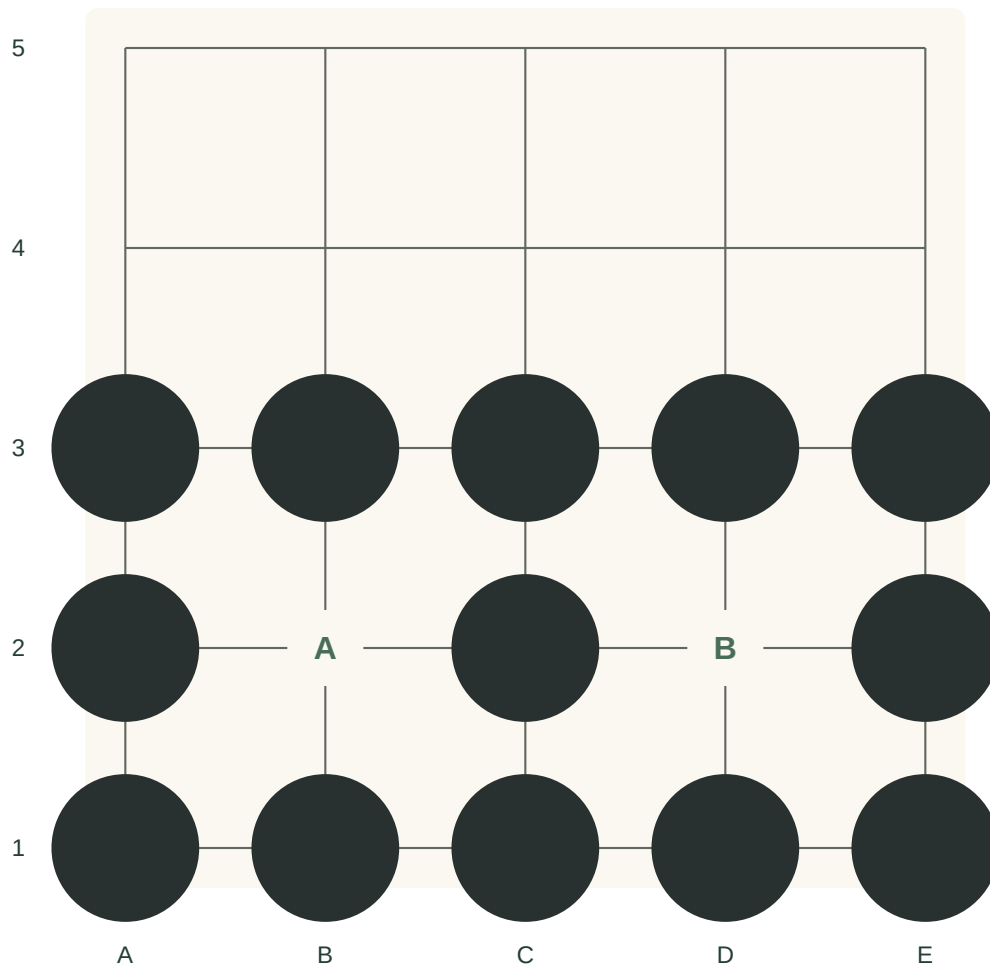
White must choose another legal move or pass. Later recapture may become possible if the whole-board position has changed.

GROWN-UP CUE

House rule for this pack: a stone placement may not recreate any earlier whole-board position; passing is allowed. Formal rulesets differ in repetition details. A pass alone does not reset ko.

Two eyes, one safe group

An eye is an enclosed empty point inside a group. Two separate true eyes give this group lasting safety.



COLOR THE EYES

Keep the eye points empty.

Trace one line-connected black group around both.

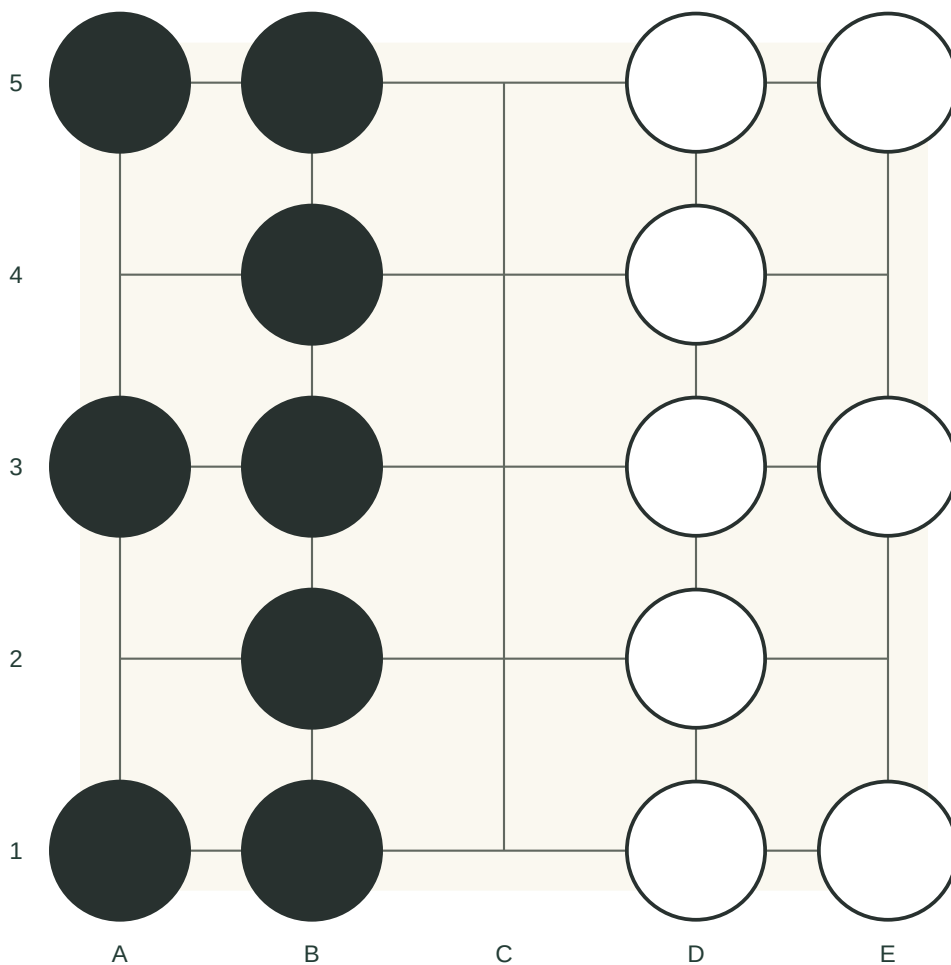
1. Find A and B. These are two distinct empty points.
2. Imagine White trying A. Black still has liberty B, so no black stones are captured; White would have no liberty.
3. Try the same question at B. Explain why that also fails.

GROWN-UP CUE

The two points are true eyes of the same connected group. A ring-like appearance alone is not proof of an eye; false eyes and life-and-death problems can come after these basics.

Whose space is it?

After play is settled, empty points enclosed by one player's living stones are that player's territory.



THREE MARKS

Dot Black's empty space.

Stripe White's empty space.

Put X on empty points touching both sides.

Black's empty points: _____ White's empty points: _____

The empty middle column touches both colors. It is neutral space, not territory for either side.

GROWN-UP CUE

Black: A2, A4. White: E2, E4. C1-C5 are neutral. Each side has two true eyes. In a real game, look for useful neutral-point moves before deciding to finish.

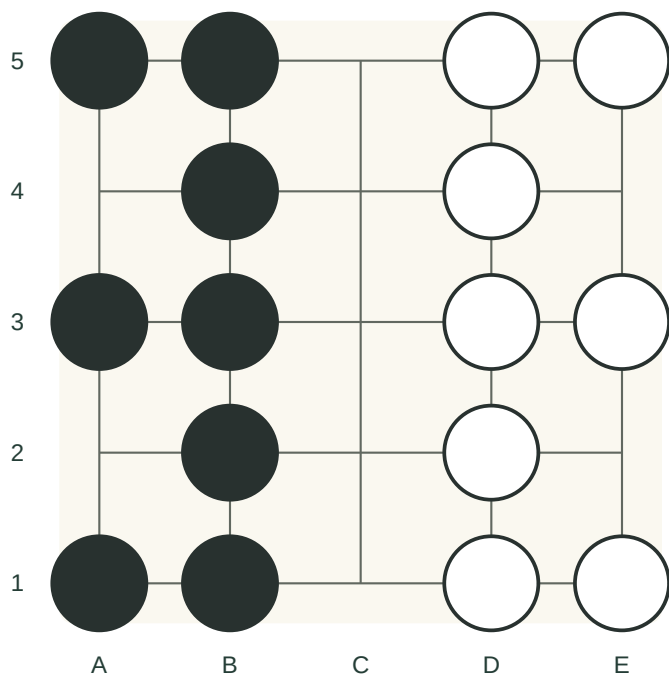
THE SAGE DAD

LEARN GO / COLOR, NOTICE, PLAY

14 / A WORKED SCORING CHALLENGE

Count the whole area

Our practice games use area scoring: living stones + controlled empty points. Do not add captured stones.



USE THE PICTURE

Pretend both players have passed and agreed all groups live.

Count each stone once. Count each controlled empty point once.

Neutral points score zero.

BLACK

Stones ____ + empty territory ____ = area ____

WHITE

Stones ____ + empty territory ____ = area ____

More area wins. With equal totals, this practice game is a draw.

GROWN-UP CUE

8 stones + 2 empty points = 10 per side. With zero komi, it is a draw. Komi means extra points for White to offset moving second; choose it before play, never after seeing the score.

Your first complete Go game

Use the 9 x 9 board on page 17. Aim for more area, not merely more captures.

- 1 Agree before starting**
Use our learning rules: area scoring, no self-capture, no repeated whole-board position after a placement. For these first games use zero komi and swap colors next game; Black has a first-move advantage.
- 2 Take turns**
Black begins on an empty board. Place one stone on an empty crossing, or pass. Leave placed stones where they are; remove captured groups. Pages 11-12 explain legal moves.
- 3 Ask useful questions**
Is a group in atari? Can I connect? Which open area could I surround? Try one reason for your move before placing the stone.
- 4 Finish together**
Two passes in a row signal a possible finish. Agree which groups are alive. Remove stones both players agree cannot avoid capture. If you disagree, resume from the next player's turn and play it out; then pass and review again.
- 5 Count and reflect**
Count each side's living stones and controlled empty points; add any agreed komi to White. Captured stones and passes add no points in this house method. Compare totals and share one discovery.

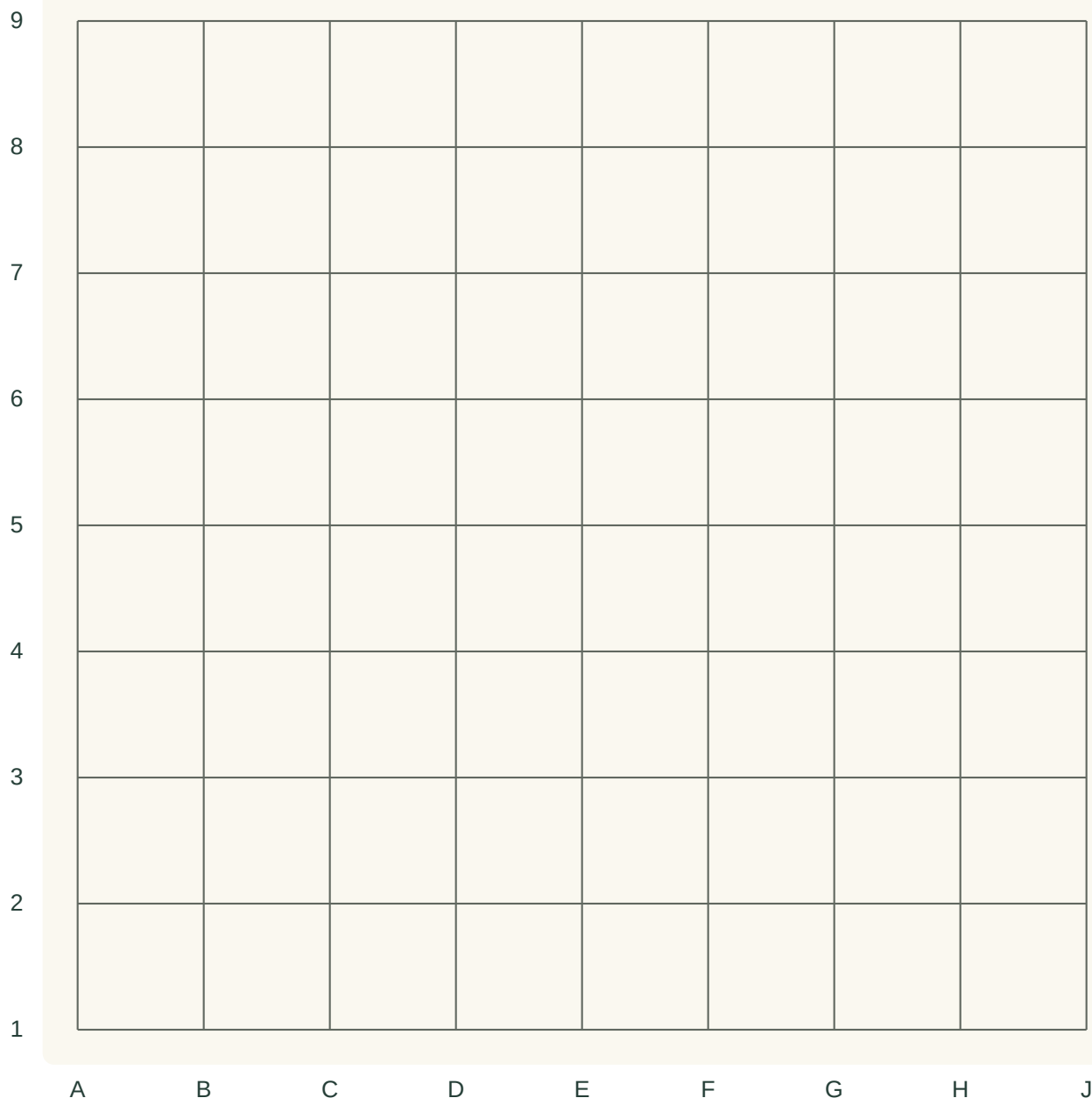
With the book: use a matching chapter before or after a session. **Without it:** these rules and examples are enough for a first learning game. This is a teaching ruleset, not a complete tournament rules manual.

GROWN-UP CUE

For disputed shapes, play rather than guess. Competition rules may use different scoring, repetition, komi and passing procedures. Sources on page 20 help you take that next step.

Your print-and-play Go board

Place stones on the crossings. Black starts. Letters skip I in standard Go notation.

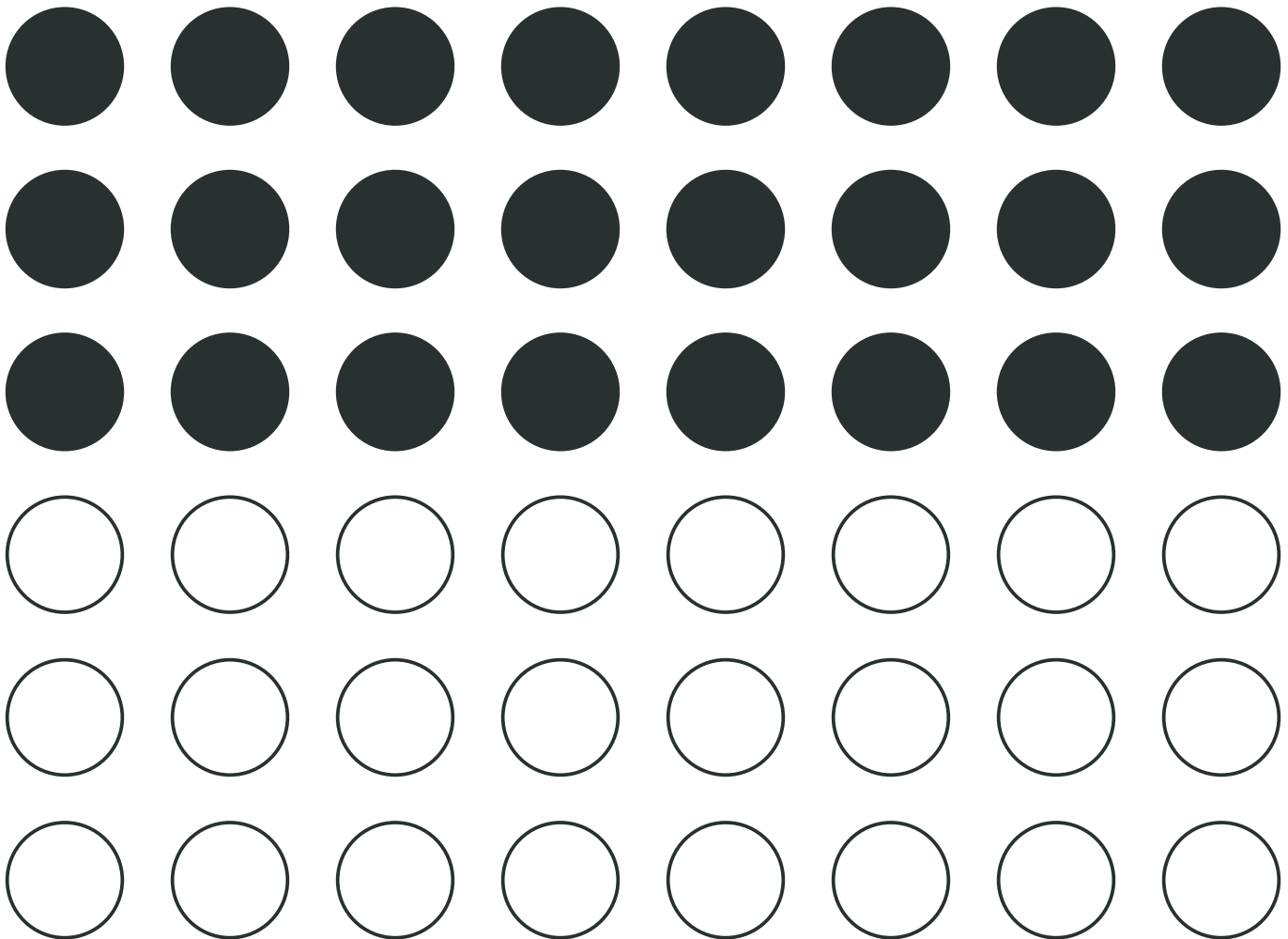


Print at 100% on US Letter, or fit to A4. Use matching-scale tokens from page 18.

For your first capture game, draw a smaller 5 x 5 grid with large crossings.

Make a pocketful of stones

An adult can cut around the circles. Keep one set dark and one set light.



This sheet gives 24 stones of each color. Print two copies for a 9 x 9 game; print more if you run short. Or use a Go set. Keep captured stones aside while counting area.

GROWN-UP CUE

For learners who may mouth small tokens, draw stones instead or let the adult place them. No cutting is required to do the picture activities. Store the two colors separately.

Answers and useful questions

Ask "How do you know?" Accept pointing, talking, drawing or moving a stone.

PAGES 2-3 / PLACEMENT AND TURNS

Any empty crossing is a valid placement target before captures are introduced. Squares are not playing points. Black plays fifth in the color pattern. After B2 (Black), D4 (White), C3 (Black), White chooses a new empty point.

PAGE 4 / LIBERTIES

Middle C3 has 4; edge A3 has 3; corner A1 has 2. Only empty horizontal and vertical neighbors count.

PAGE 5 / GROUPS

A: 6 liberties - B3, C2, C4, D2, D4, E3. B: 7 - A2, B1, C1, D2, C3, A3, B4. Shared C3 counts once. B2 and C3 alone are not connected.

PAGES 6-7 / CAPTURE AND ATARI

White C4 captures Black C3. In the atari comparison, A has only C4; B has C4 and D3, so B is not in atari.

PAGE 8 / RESCUE

Black C4 creates a group with liberties B4, D4 and C5. If Black instead plays A5, White C4 captures C3. A5 remains on the board.

PAGE 9 / CONNECT OR CUT

Black C3 joins B3 and D3. White C3 blocks that direct connection, but captures nothing. Other routes may be possible, depending on later replies.

PAGE 10 / FIRST CAPTURE

Stop at the first capture, then swap colors. If both pass without a capture, the practice round is a draw. This is a learning game; full Go aims for more area.

GROWN-UP CUE

Keep the board small and the question specific. For ages 4-7, show one move and invite imitation; older learners can predict first and explain an alternative.

From first stones to real play

A short explanation and a fresh example are better evidence than a filled-in page.

PAGES 11-12 / LEGAL MOVES AND KO

11A is illegal self-capture. 11B captures Black A1, giving White A2 a liberty. In the ko, Black C4 captures White C3; immediate White C3 is forbidden because it restores the earlier position.

PAGES 13-15 / EYES AND SCORING

B2 and D2 are two true eyes in one black group. In the territory example, Black owns A2/A4; White owns E2/E4. C1-C5 are neutral. Each side scores 8 stones + 2 territory = 10 before komi.

PAGES 16-18 / PLAY, PRINT, RETURN

Use zero komi for the first learning games and alternate colors. Print two token sheets for a 9 x 9 game. After a game, choose one position to replay with a different move.

READY FOR MORE?

Explore false eyes, living groups, simple capturing races and the difference between secure territory and influence. Leave complex life-and-death problems until the learner can explain liberties and captures.

TEACHING IDEAS AND RULES CHECKED

British Go Association: teaching beginners and Capture Go.

<https://britgo.org/organisers/handbook/club4>

British Go Association: junior curriculum and teaching resources.

<https://britgo.org/junior/curriculum>

BGA: rules used in tournaments; follow links for formal rules.

<https://britgo.org/rules/aga.html>

Original Sage Dad activities and vector illustrations. These learning pages use a stated house ruleset; they do not claim to reproduce AGA tournament rules. External worksheets and artwork are not copied. Reviewed October 2026.