Malaysia Weiqi Association

Syllabus & Study Pack

Module A
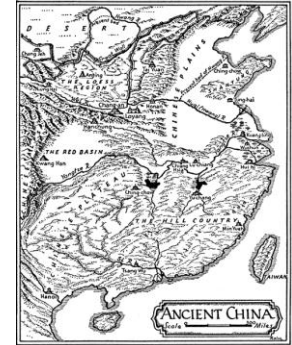
Malaysia Weiqi Association
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Malaysia Weiqi Association

A.1 Introduction

A.1.1 Historical Introduction

Invented in China more than 3,000 years ago

Played in Japan as early as the 7th century AD and was widely played by the aristocrats and in the imperial palace. Studied and developed extensively in Japan under the various Go Houses.

Reached Korea either during Confucius' time or during an invasion that happened around 109 BC.

Spread rapidly after World War II with China and Korea catching up to Japan's dominance.

Approximately 60million players worldwide currently.

Korea is now widely regarded as the strongest Go playing country now although Japan played a very big role in the promotion and development of the game.

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Various names for the Game:

In Japan it is known as IGO

In China it is known as WEIQI

In Taiwan it is known as GOE

In Korea it is known as BADUK

Internationally it is known as GO

Furthermore, there exists various rules, the most widely used being the Japanese Rule, Chinese Rule and the ING rule. The Malaysian Weiqi Association follows the Japanese Rules and the materials here is in line with the Japanese Rules.

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A.1 Introduction

A.1.2 Game Etiquette and Manners

Go is more than a game. It is also a reflection of the self and helps in character development. As with other sports such as Martial Arts, there are etiquette and manners that are generally followed.

1. Greetings – Greet by bowing before the game starts like in the martial arts. In Japanese, the word "Oneigaishimasu" is said (like in Hikaru No Go)

2. Don't take back moves already played. Sometimes especially in teaching games this is okay but in general, it is not okay.

3. When playing, it is not a good habit to talk. Respect your opponent. It is also not encouraged to make excessive noise such as playing with the go stones or singing folk songs. However, in discussion/training/teaching games, talking is of course okay.

4. When watching a game, do not comment or make noises or faces until the game is over.

5. When you win a game, win it graciously. When you lose, lose graciously.

6. Remove the stones completely after playing and put them back in the bowl and equipment to their original position.

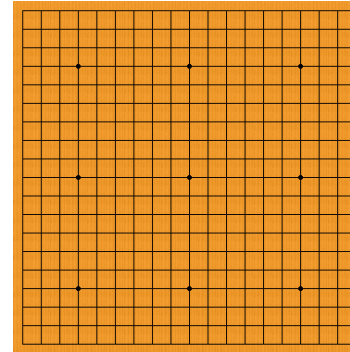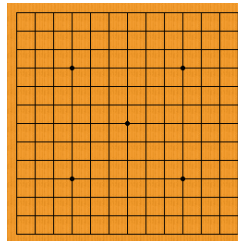7. When making a move, place the stone on the board properly. Don't just "throw" the stone on the board.
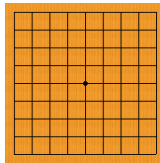
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A.1 Introduction

A.1.3 Go Equipment

Go is played on a board generally of three sizes, i.e. 9x9, 13x13, and 19x19.

Black and White "stones" are played on the intersections of the board. In total, there are 180 white stones and 181 black stones. The additional black stone is because black moves first. The stones are stored in bowls.

Japanese Stones

Chinese Stones

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A.1 Introduction

A.1.3 Go Equipment

Table Go board

Go board with Legs

Traditionally, go boards are made of wood with Hyuga Kaya wood in Japan being the most expensive.
The "stones" are traditionally made from clamshell and slate while the bowl is also made of wood.

For normal play, inexpensive wood/plastic is used for the board and bowl and the "stones" are made of glass/plastic.

In this era of the internet, many people are using software to play and study games.
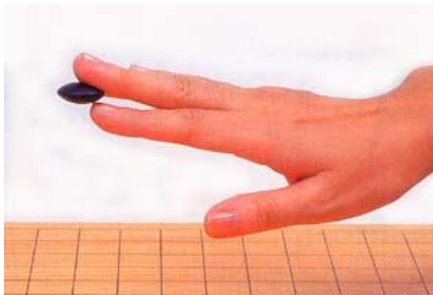
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How to hold a Go Stone

Of course one can hold a stone any way one desires but generally, Go players hold their stones like this:
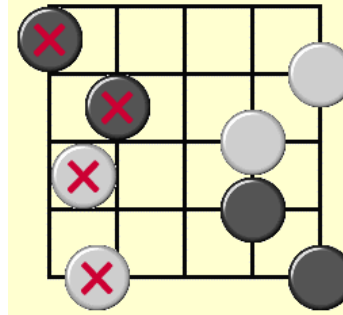
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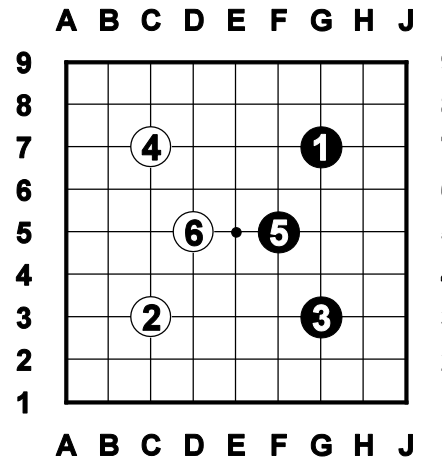
A.2 Getting Started

A.2.1 How to Start?

Go is played at the intersection of the go board.

Black makes a move first then followed by white. Each player takes alternative turns to play and can place only one stone at a time.

The stones can be put anywhere on the board. Stones already put on the board cannot be moved unless it is captured whereby it will be removed.
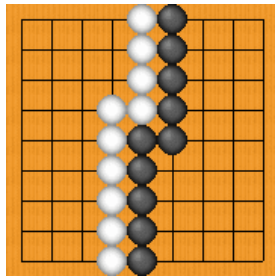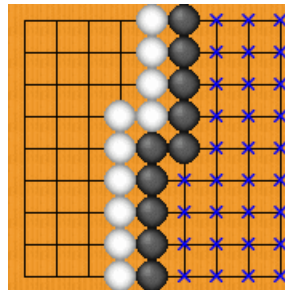
A.2 Getting Started

A.2.2 Object of the Game

The objective of the game is to surround more territories compared to your opponent.
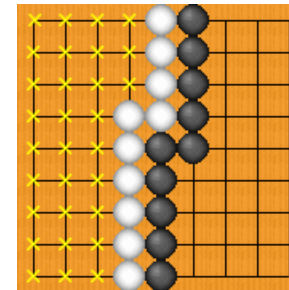
Each intersection on the Go board is counted as One territory point.

Game ends like this with white taking the left side and black the right side

Black has surrounded 31 intersections, thus 31 territory points

White has surrounded 30 intersections, thus 30 territory points

Therefore Black won by 1 point

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.3 How the game Ends?

The game can end by either:

1. The territories have been securely surrounded and both player passes.

2. Either one player resigns the game.

3. Either one player uses all his allocated time on the clock

4. Either one player makes breaks the tournament rules and subsequently expelled from the tournament or suspended from the game
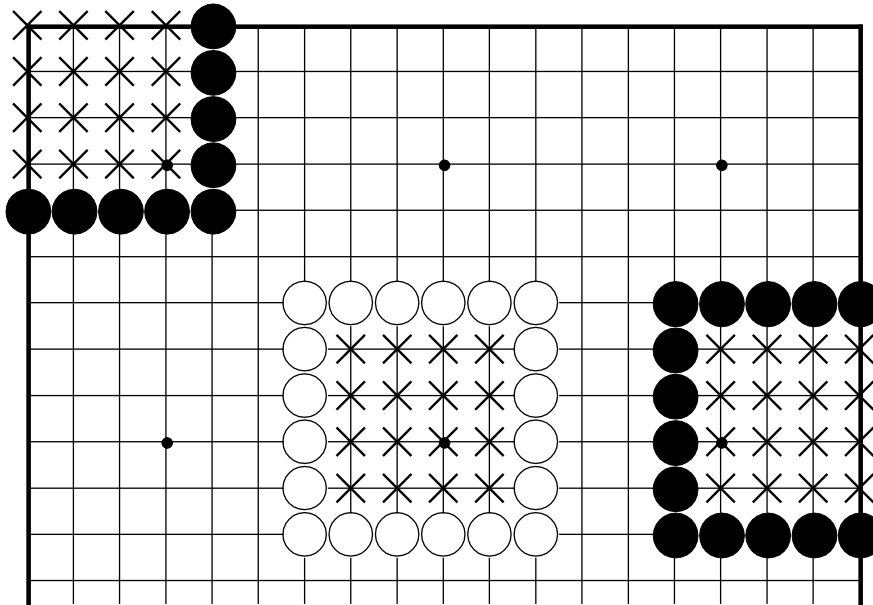
A.2 Getting Started

A.2.4 Building Territories

Since the object of the game is to have more territories than your opponent, let's look at how we can build territory.

Please look at the diagram at left.
All the points surrounded equals
16 points.

However, note how many stones are
Needed to surround the 16 points?

Corner: 9 stones
Side: 14 stones
Center: 20 stones

Using fewer stones to surround more territory is the way to go. It's efficient. **That's why players normally start to play from the corner, then side, then only the center in that order.**
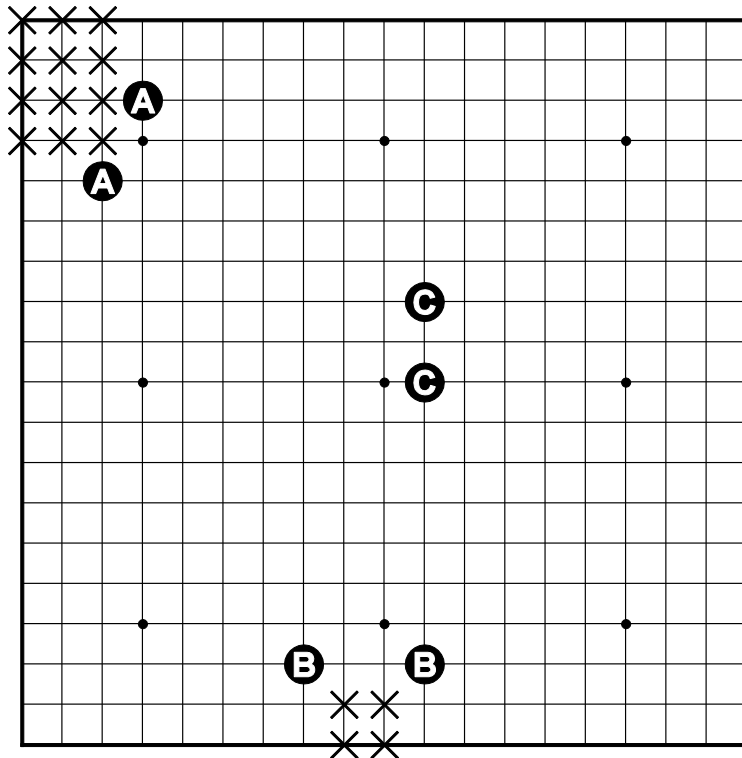
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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.4 Building Territories (*continued*)

Look at the following formations of the two black stones, a pair at the corner marked "A", a pair at the side marked "B" and a pair in the center marked "C"

As you can see, the A group at the corner protects around 12 points, marked "X" and is quite secure.

The B group secures around 4 points and is also quite secure because it has a base.

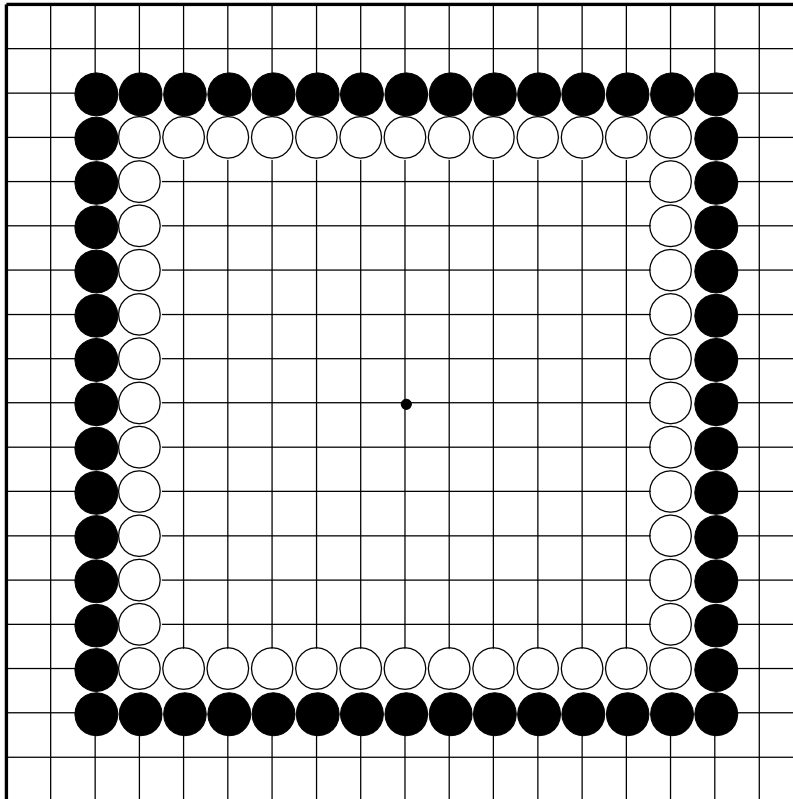However, the C group is floating in the center and therefore subject to attacks, and does not secure any points.

A.2 Getting Started

A.2.4 Building Territories (*continued*)

Another way of understanding why the corner and sides are found to be more valuable can be seen from the diagram below:

From this diagram, notice that black has 136 points while white has only 121 points.

This means that even if black only gets territory on the second line around the board and white gets all of the center, white still do not have enough territory.
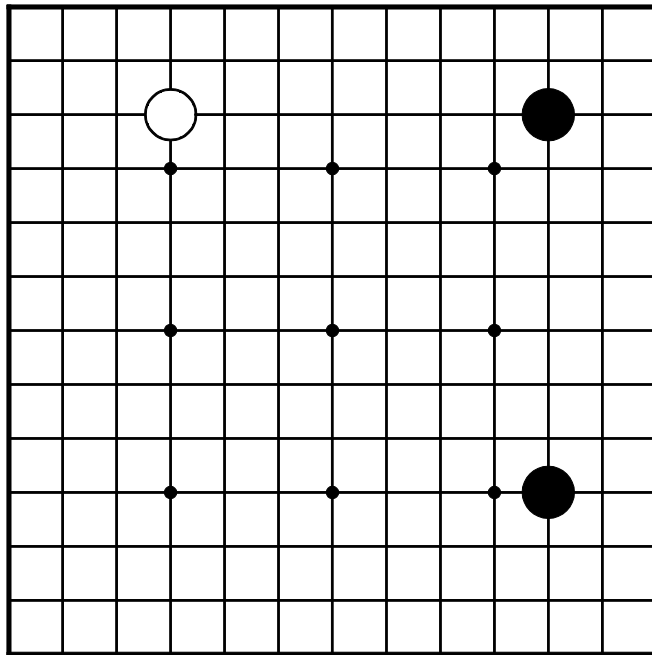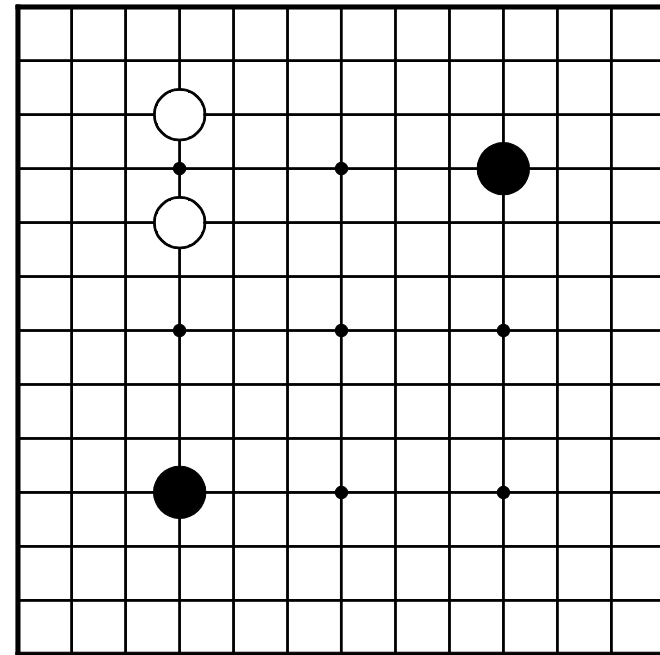
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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.4 Building Territories (*continued*)

Let's look at the following examples. Where should you play? Study these with your teacher.

Black to play

Black to play

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.5 Liberties

Although the final objective of Go is to surround more territory than your opponent, your opponent will not let you do that so easily. Therefore, **fighting between the stones will occur** and stones will be captured in the process. This makes Go so much more FUN!

Stones have life until all its liberties are taken away.
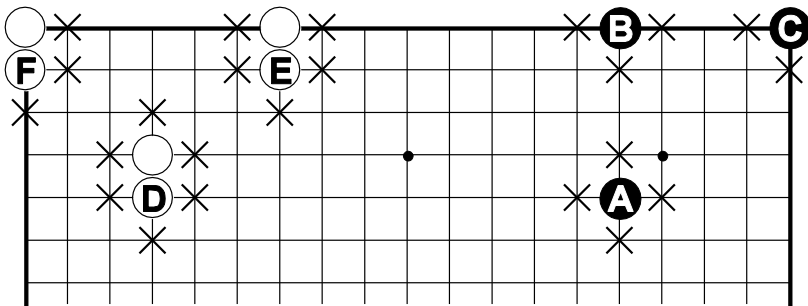
Look at the diagram at left.

The A stone has four liberties (marked "X").
B has three and C has two. **When all these liberties are taken away (filled by opponent's stone), the stone is captured**.

Look at the White stones. A group of stones also has liberties. The D group has six liberties, E has five and F has three. when all these liberties are taken away, the whole group will be captured as prisoners.

Prisoners are used to fill up opponent's territories when the game ends and as such effectively, the territory points are reduced accordingly.
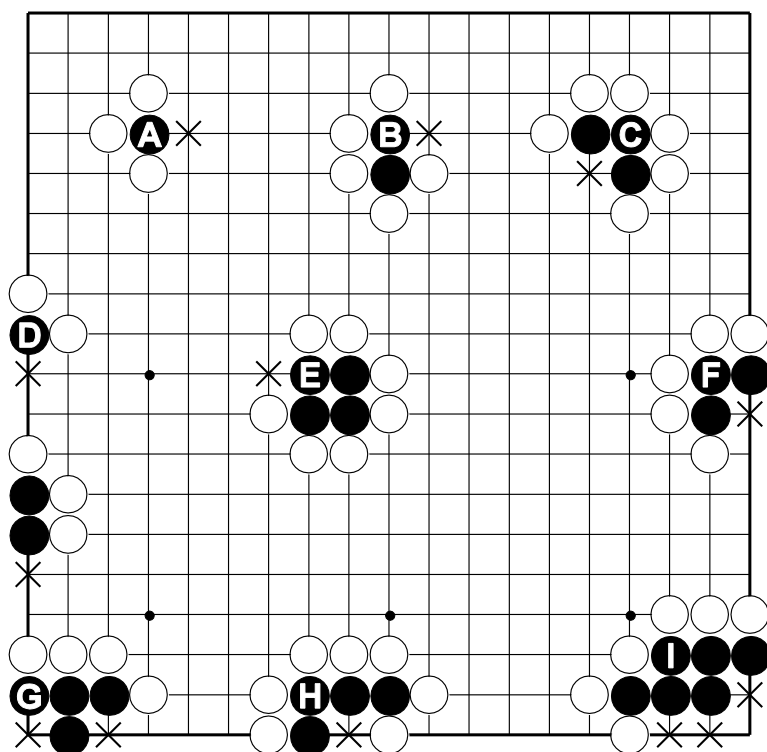
A.2 Getting Started

### A.2.5 Liberties (*continued*)

Since understanding liberties is so important, here are some more examples:

The Black stone marked "A" has only one more liberty marked "X" since three of its other liberties have been taken away by the white stones. Therefore, **to avoid capture, black must play at the "X" intersection point to extend its liberties**.

How many liberties will the A black stone have if it plays at The X intersection and extend out?
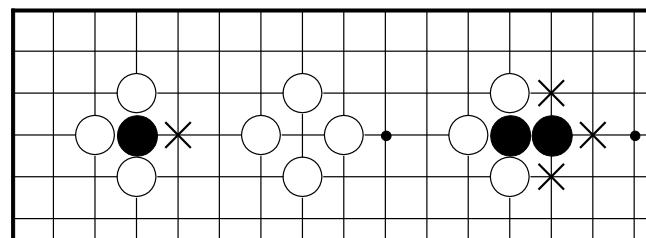
The above black stone has only one more liberty, marked "X". If white plays at "X", the black stone will be captured and removed from the board and white will look like in the second diagram. To escape capture, black must play at "X" and this will result in the third diagram with the black group having three more liberties. To capture this group, white will again have to take away all three liberties.
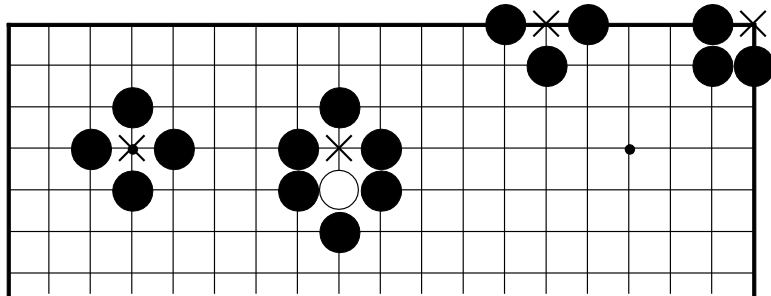
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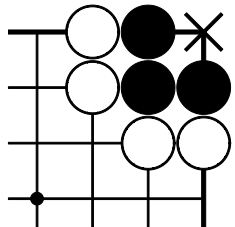## A.2 Getting Started

A.2.6 Invalid Moves

There are two types of invalid moves.

1. Stones cannot "commit suicide"

In the above, white cannot put a stone at the marked intersection because that will constitute "committing suicide". The only exception is when by "committing suicide" it actually is capturing the opponent's stone.

In the diagram to the left, white can play at "X" and this is not counted as "committing suicide" since by playing there, it actually captures the three black stones.

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.6 Invalid Moves (*continued*)

2. A stone that has been taken cannot be immediately re-taken (the Ko rule)
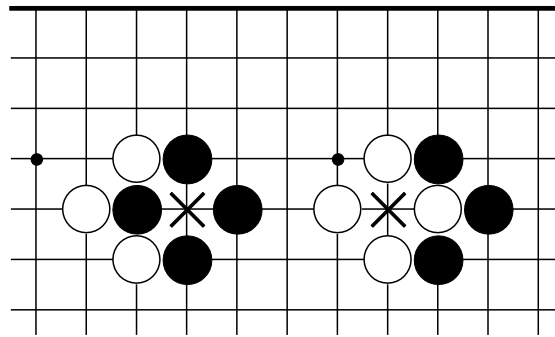
In the above diagram, when white captures the black stone by playing at "X" resulting in the diagram at the right, notice that the white stone itself is short of liberties and black can capture the white stone. If black does that, we will revert to the diagram at the left and white will now be able to capture the black stone again.

As you can see, if this continues, it will be never ending. So the rule is that when white capture the black stone, black cannot immediately capture back but must play elsewhere. If white does not connect at "X", then black can now capture back and white now again cannot immediately recapture but must play elsewhere unless black does not connect back at "X" in the next move.
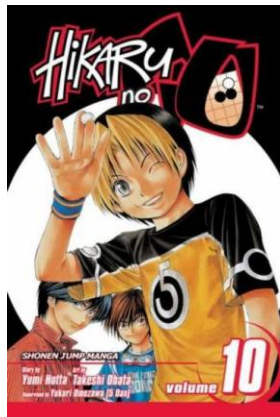
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Hikaru No Go

As you can see, there are a lot of pictures on the top right of the paper. These are pictures from the manga/anime Hikaru No Go.

Hikaru No Go is the story of a boy's journey from a normal school kid to becoming a Go professional, guided by a ghost from the past. The ghost is a very strong player from the past. In his journey. Hikaru met many new friends and there are many interesting characters in the story.

Thanks to Hikaru No Go, many young people started to learn Go, both in Japan and worldwide. In Malaysia, many new players started to play Go after watching the anime or reading the manga, including me myself.

To read more about Hikaru, you can try following this link: http://senseis.xmp.net/?HikaruNoGo

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups

A group can live even if completely surrounded by opponent's stones. **All it needs is two eyes.**
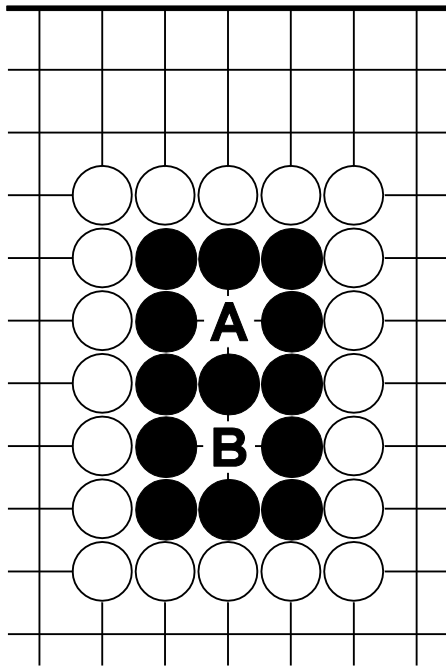
In the left diagram, even when black has been fully surrounded by white stones it can still live. Why?

Because of the no suicide rule.

To capture the black group, white will need one stone at A and one stone at B.

But white can't play both points at the same time and if he plays A first, it **violates the no suicide rule**. If he plays B first, it is the same, he violates the no suicide rule.

Therefore, in this situation, the black group is said to have two eyes.

With two eyes, a group lives even when completely surrounded.

A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups (*continued*)

Here are more examples. **Knowing if a group is dead of alive is CRITICAL to playing Go.**
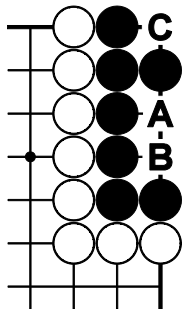
On the left, is the black group alive or dead?
The answer is it is alive because it has two eyes. If white plays at A, it still cannot completely take away all of the black's group's liberties because of the no suicide rule. After playing at A, white cannot play at B.
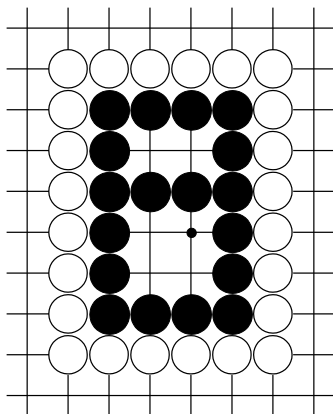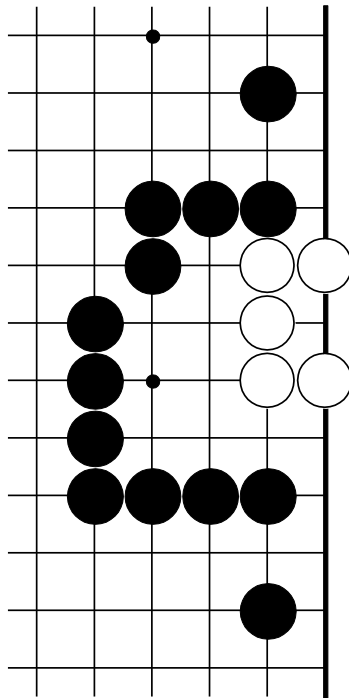
What about this? Does the black group has two eyes to live?

A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups (*continued*)

Now for dead groups. Dead groups are groups that do not have at least two eyes (with exception of SEKI – see below).

Example on the left, to live, the white group needs to make two eyes. Can it make two eyes inside the surrounding black stones?

I don't think so because there is not enough space inside.

If there is not enough space to make two eyes, can the white stone live by running away outside, breaking the black stone's formation?

I don't think so.

Therefore, the white group is effectively dead. **Black do not need to really put all the stones surrounding it to capture it.** They are captured as it is. So black don't need to waste moves inside its own territory.

A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups (*continued*)

More examples:
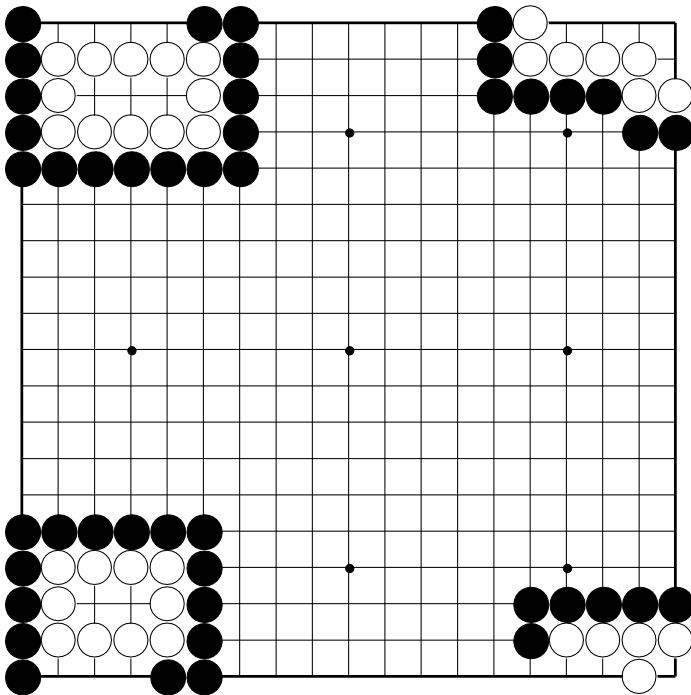
Can the white group in the four examples here live?

Black's turn to play now.

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups (*continued*)

One very IMPORTANT concept in living and dead group is the **FALSE EYE**. Sometimes a group looks like it has two eyes but look closer, one or both eyes are actually false eyes. Here are some examples:
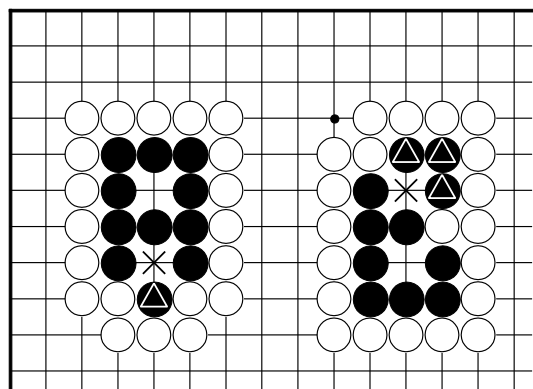
In the two diagrams here, the black groups "looks" like it has two eyes.

But alas!, one of the eye is a "false" eye **because the marked stones can be captured!**

Compare these diagrams with those above with solid two eyes and you will see the difference.

This is very important to know!
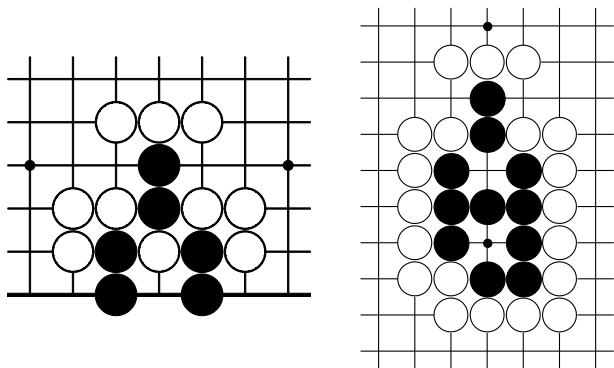
What about these two on the left?

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.7 Living and Dead Groups (*continued*)

Another important concept in living and dead group is **SEKI**. It means that both black and white groups live together because **both also do not have enough liberty to capture one another**. This is the only exception where a group does not need two eyes to live. Here is an example:
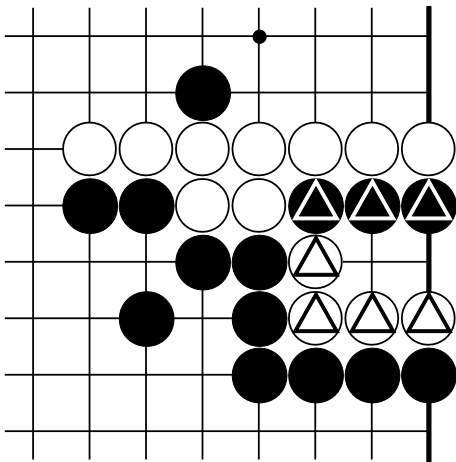
The marked stones are said to be Seki. This is because black can't capture the white stones and white can't capture the black stones.
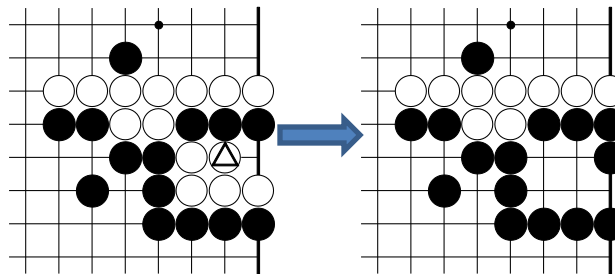
When white plays the marked stones and tries to capture the black stones, black will capture the white stones first.
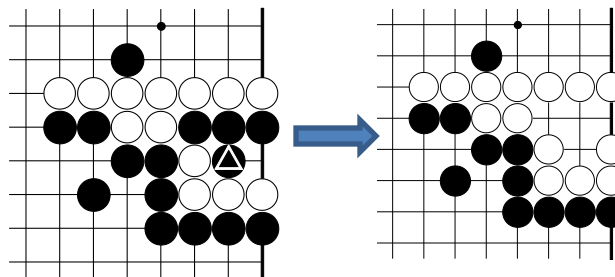
When black plays the marked stones and tries to capture the white stones, white will capture the black stones first.

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A.2 Getting Started

A.2.8 Multiple Eye Space

Here we look at multiple eye space and determine if they are living space or dead space.
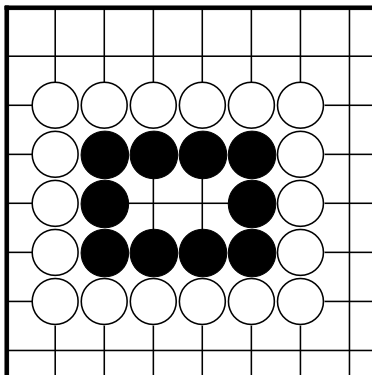
Two eye space: **the group is dead** because it has only one eye
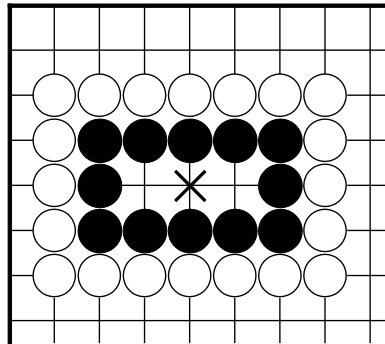
Three eye space: **depends on who play first**. If black plays first on the marked "X" place, it lives with two eyes. If white plays first on the marked "X" place, black dies because white can reduce it to only one eye.
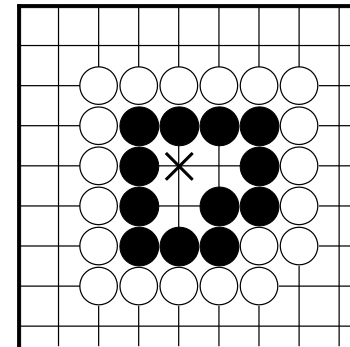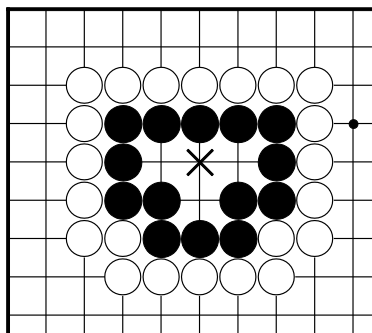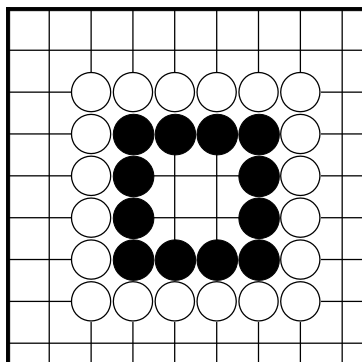
A.2 Getting Started

A.2.8 Multiple Eye Space (*continued*)

Four Eye Space. There are four types, the **pyramid**, **square**, **straight** and **bend-four**.

In this shape, **black first will live** by playing at X. **white first will kill** by playing at X.

Square 4 space is **dead** unless black can play two times consecutively inside.
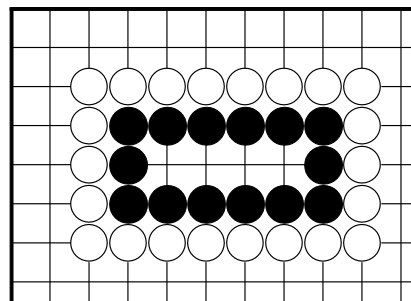
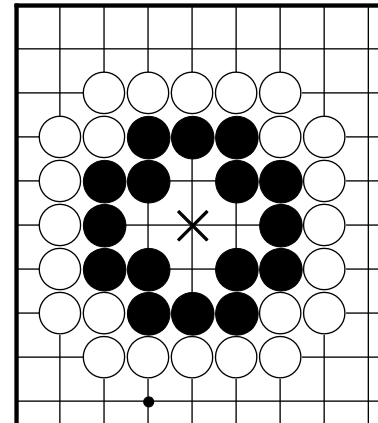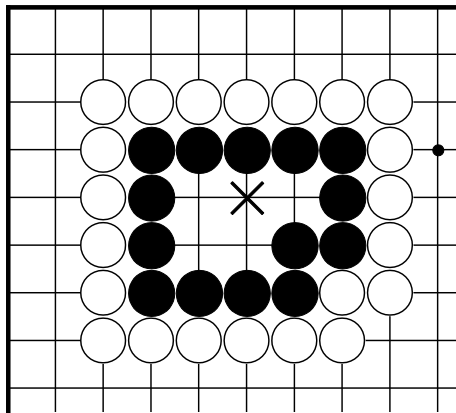A straight 4 is a **living shape** unless black allows white to play two times consecutively inside.
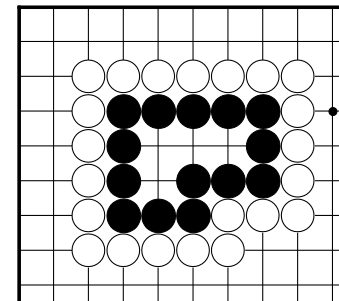
A bend 4 is a **living shape** unless black allows white to play two times consecutively inside.

A.2 **Getting Started**

A.2.8 Multiple Eye Space (*continued*)

Five Eye Space. Here we explore the **Bulky Five** and the **Flower Five**. Straight Five, Bend Five are all living shapes.

For these two shapes, **it depends on who play first**. If black plays first, black live. If white plays first, black dies. The key point is at the marked "X" spot.
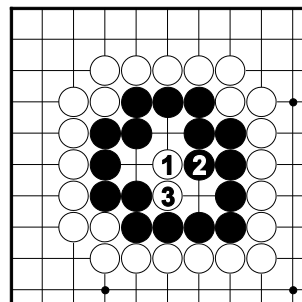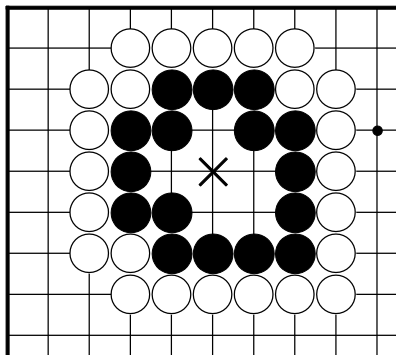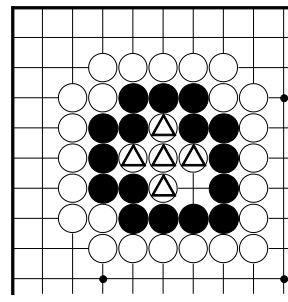
A.2 Getting Started

A.2.8 Multiple Eye Space (*continued*)

Six Eye Space. There are two shapes here to explore, the **flower six** (or also called Rabiity six) and the **rectangular six**.
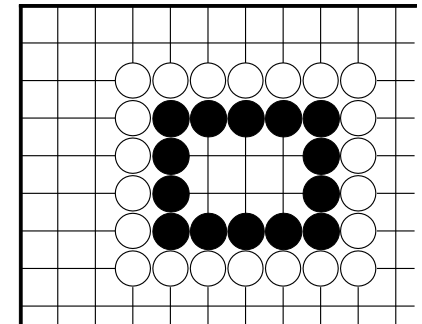

Right sequence

White must create this shape (flower five)
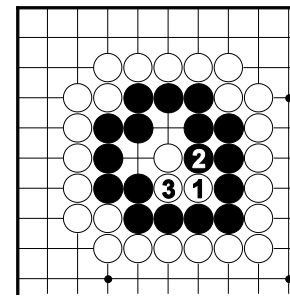
This is seki due to bend 4 shape

A rectangular 6 is a living Shape.

In the flower 6 formation**, it depends on who moves first**. Black first, black lives. White first, black dies. However, white must be careful in reducing the eye space and avoid creating a bend four and make it a seki.
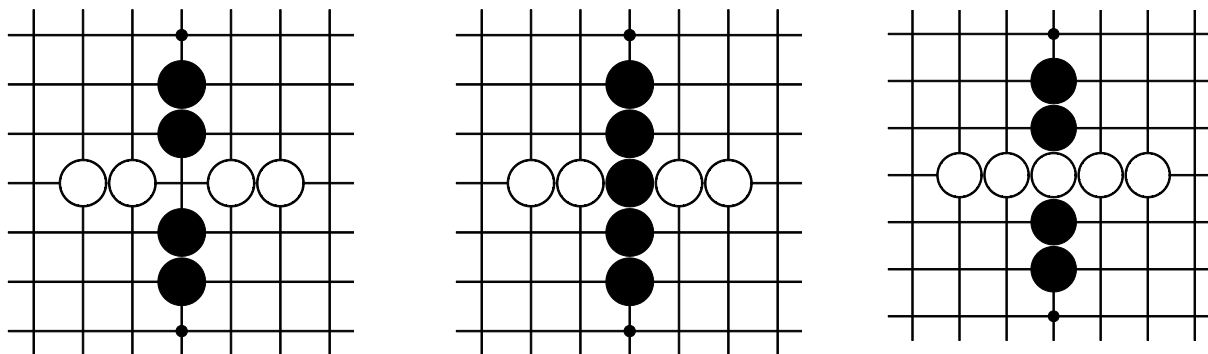
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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.1 Connecting and Cutting

Connecting and Cutting are the first basic tactics in Go. Stones that are connected and cut make a huge difference to the game.

In general, it is always good to keep your stones connected and your opponent's stones separated.
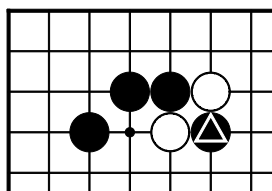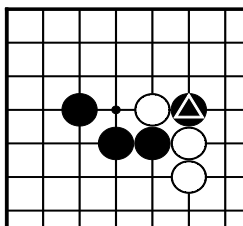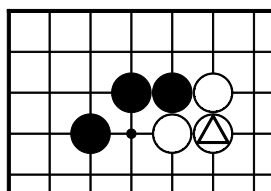
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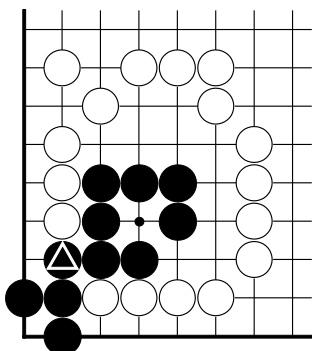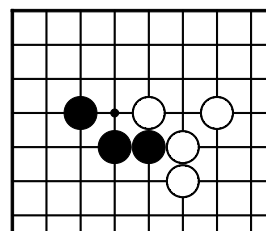## A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.1 Connecting and Cutting (*continued*)

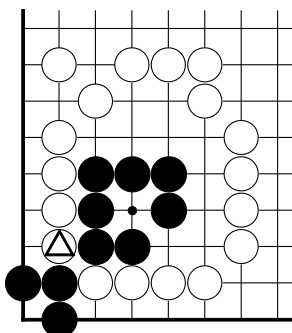Look at more examples below and see the difference between connecting and getting cut.

Vs.

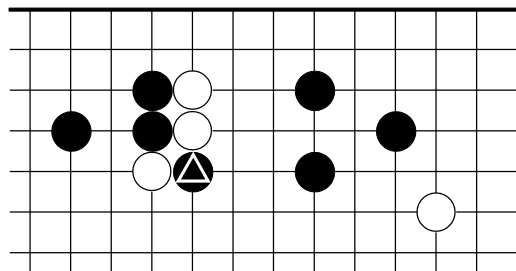In all the diagrams at left left, it is obvious that cutting and connecting makes a huge difference to the game.
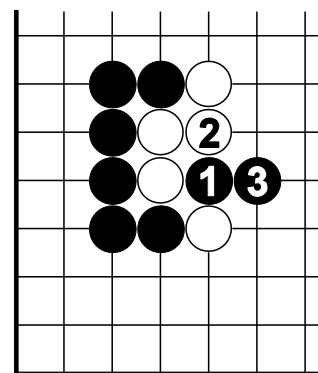

Vs.

Vs.

A.3 Basic Tactics

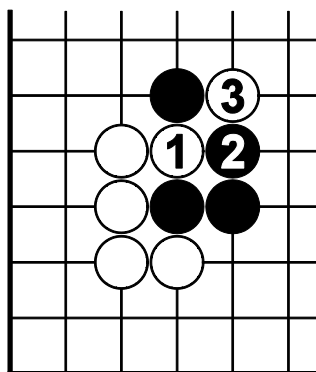### A.3.1 Connecting and Cutting (*continued*)
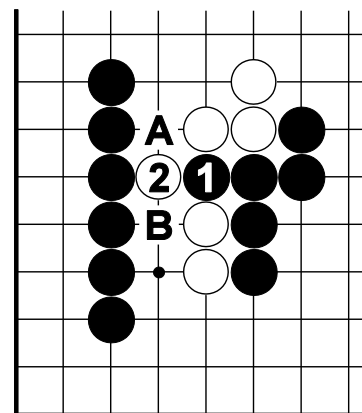
Look at more examples:

Cut and connect your own groups

Atari as a cut

Push and cut is one technique

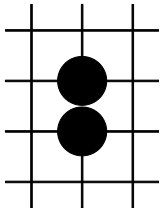Push and create two cutting points.

33

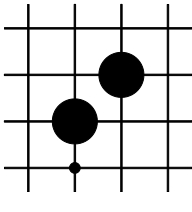# Malaysia Weiqi Association

A.3 Basic Tactics

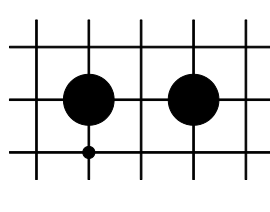### A.3.1 Connecting and Cutting (*continued*)

Here are some basic connecting shapes. (Please study these shapes with your teacher)

Solid connection	Diagonal	One space jump	Two space jump	Knight's move	Large knight's move
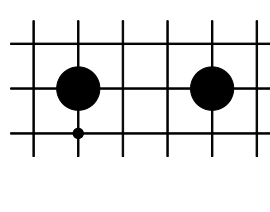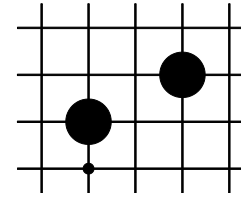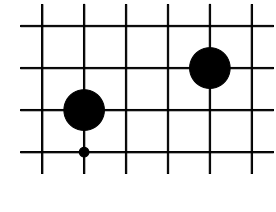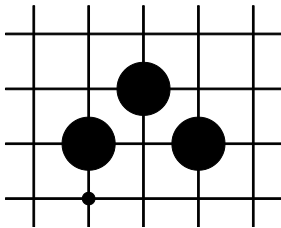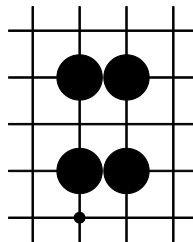
Tiger mouth	Bamboo joint	Table shape	Dog Face	Horse Face
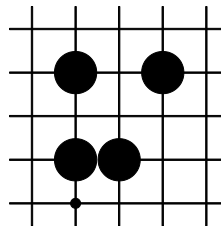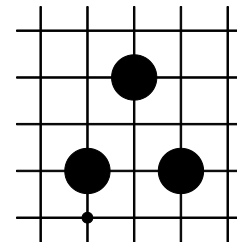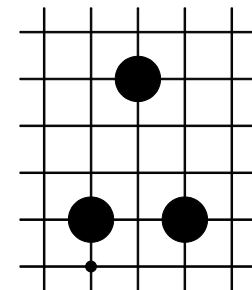
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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.2 Double Atari

Double atari is a move that simultaneously puts two of the opponent's stones/group into capture mode.
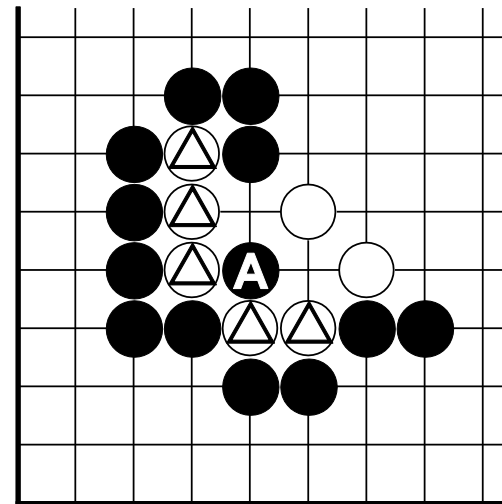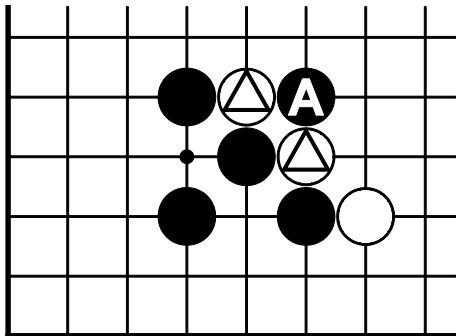
In both the above situations, black A is a double atari on the marked white stones

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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.3 Ladders

One of the frequent occurrence in each and every Go game is the Ladder. **To be able to read out a ladder is a fundamental skill.**
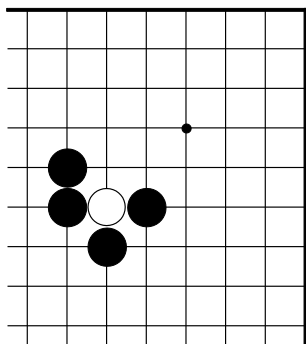
Can black capture the white stone?

Yes, in a ladder.
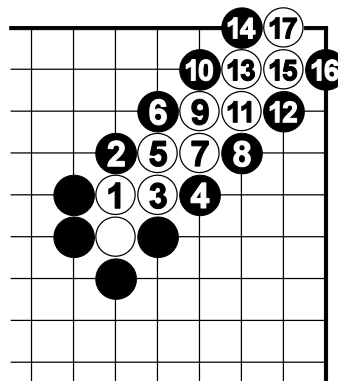
As you can see, with this Series of moves, white is Captured. This series of moves Is called a Ladder
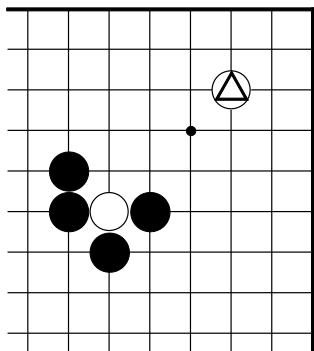
What about now?
With the additional marked white stone there?
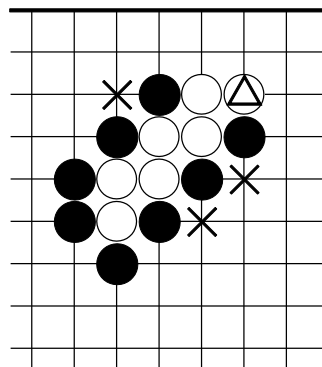
Oops! Not now. Thanks to The marked white stone, it Connects the running white Stones and create many double Atari points (marked "X") in Black.
The marked white stone is called A **ladder Breaker**.

A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.4 Nets

Besides ladders, **nets are also very commonly used** to capture stones.
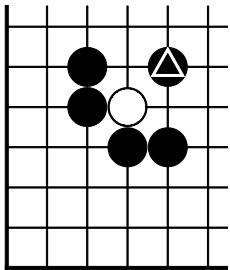
If the ladder is not favourable due to the presence of a ladder breaker Black will play at the marked stone and this is called a **Net**. There is no Way for white to escape.
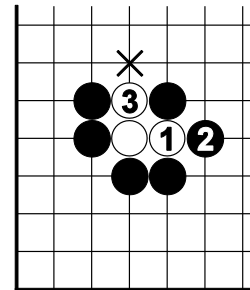
If white wants to push out, black captures him at "X"
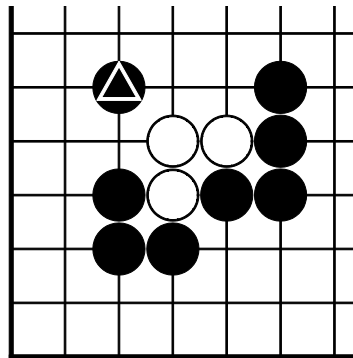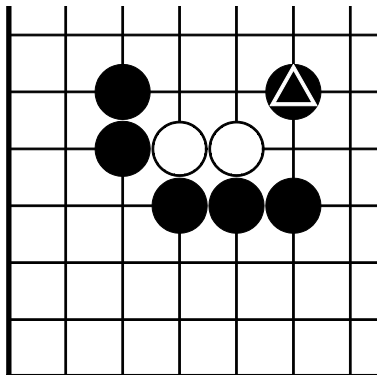
The two diagrams at left are also examples of Nets

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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.5 Snapback

Snapback is one very common tesuji to capture stones.
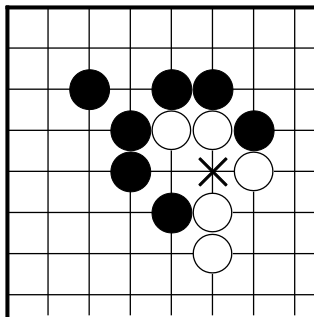
Here is one example. Black can capture the two white stones by Playing at "X"
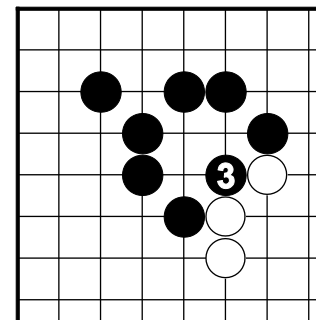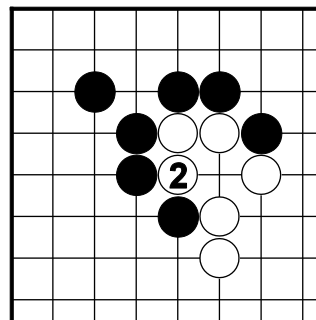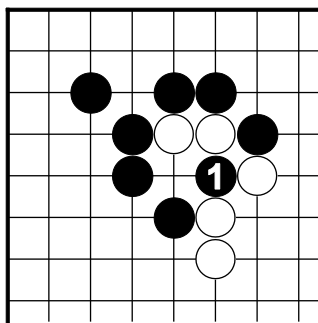
A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.5 Snapback (*continued*)

One more interesting snapback example:
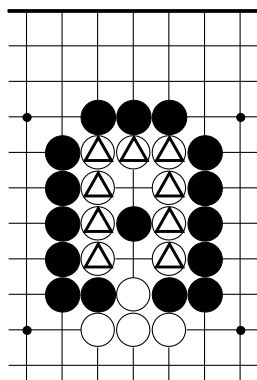
The snapback tesuji will capture all the marked white stones.
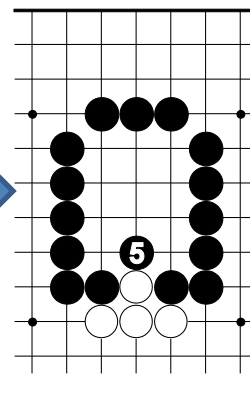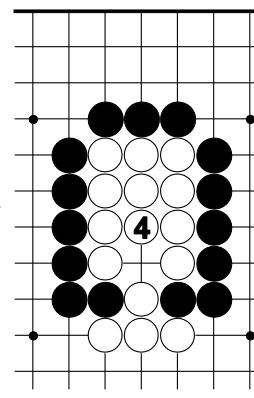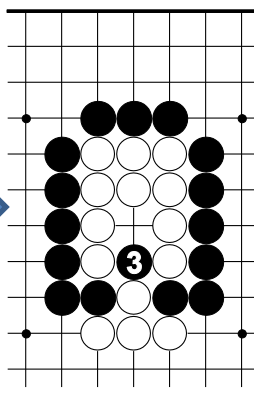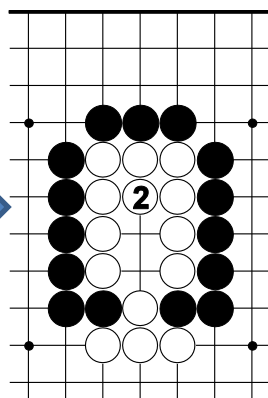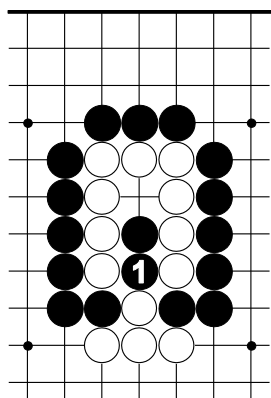
A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.5 Snapback (*continued*)

Here are more examples since snapback is a technique that happens frequently. Please find the answer yourself.
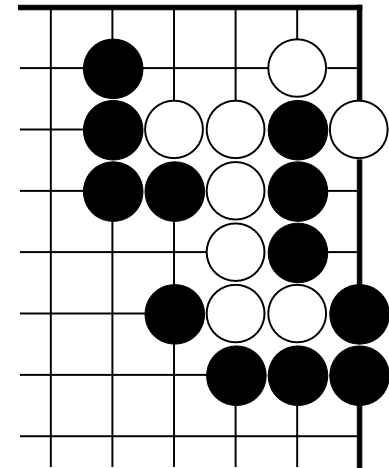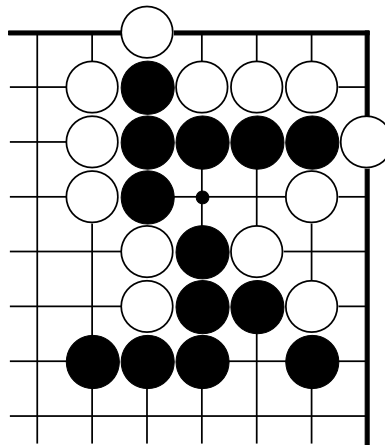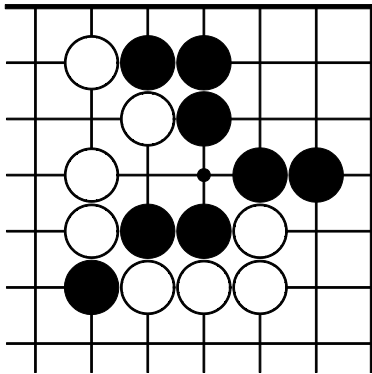
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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.6 Throw-In

Throw-in is one of the most often used tesuji. It is like a bait, giving the opponent take a small bait in return of capturing the opponent's group. As you see in the snapback section just now, for the snapback to work, you need to throw-in a stone. However, there are many other uses of a throw-in. Here are two examples:
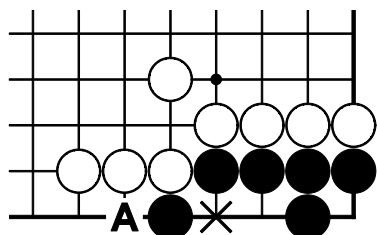
White to move. If white simply atari at A, black will just connect at "X" and the black group lives with two eyes. The right way for white to play is to "throw-in" a stone at "X" and let black capture the stone. If you look at it properly, the spot at "X" then becomes a false eye and the black group dies.

This is an example of the use of throw-in in **life and death, usually to create false eyes in opponent's group.**
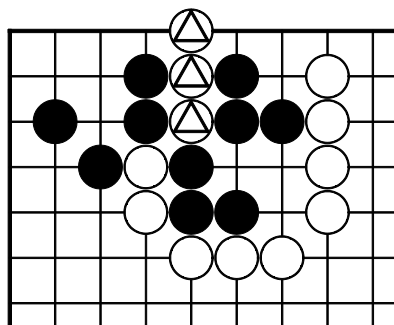
Another use of a throw-in is to **reduce the opponent's liberties** in a capturing race situation (see the section on Capturing Race below). In the example at left, the three marked white stones looked like being captured but it can be saved with the marvellous "throw-in".

How to do that? Please think for yourself and study with your teacher.

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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.7 Pushing and Crawling

Pushing and crawling (or sometimes called "The Stones Go Walking") is common in Go. A player needs to know when it should push and when it should stop pushing as well as when to crawl and when to stop crawling.
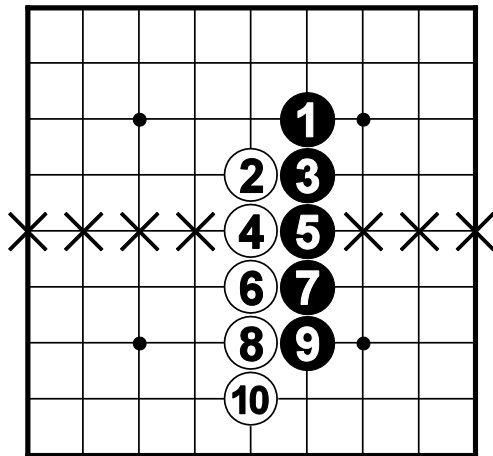
In the diagram here, after black plays at 1, white plays 2 and black answers With 3. Then black continues to push and white continues to "walk" up to the sequence 10.

Let's look at who is better off. **White has four territory lines to the left while Black only has three. Therefore, in this case, white is advantageous.**

Also, in this case, black is called **"pushing from behind" which is generally bad because the opponent's stone (white here) is always one step ahead**. In Go, getting one step ahead is very important.

Because Go is played on different board sizes, it is always important to look in terms of the relative size of the boards.

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A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.7 Pushing and Crawling (*continued*)

On a 19x19 board, generally, there are two things to remember:

1. Do not push on the 4th line
2. Do not crawl on the 2nd line

Of course there are exceptions to these but in general the above is true.
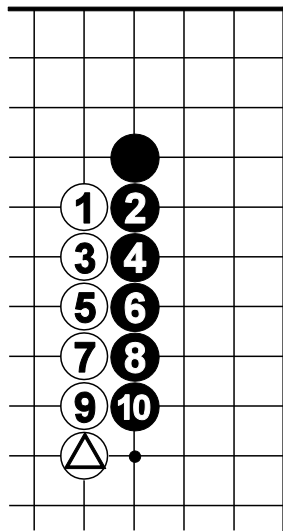
If white continues to press,
Black will continue to follow
and get 4th line territory which
is very big
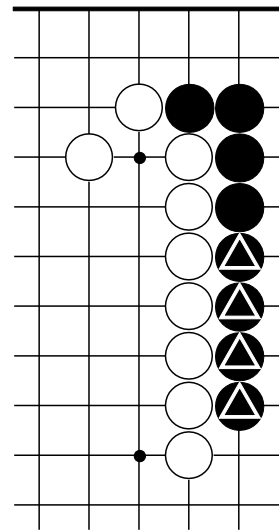
In this situation, the marked black stones should stop crawlingbecause **he is not getting much territory but white is getting a lot of influence towards the center** of the board. **White has so much more potential!**

A.3 Basic Tactics

A.3.7 Pushing and Crawling (*continued*)

Here is an example:
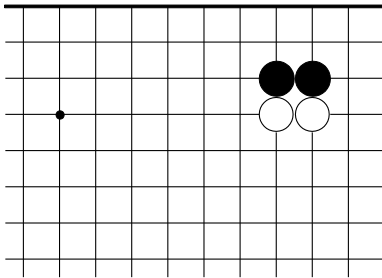
In this diagram, let's study "the stones go walking" and the "struggle to get ahead"
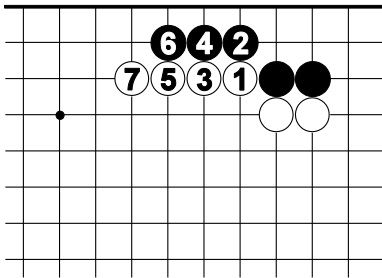
If white plays first, he/she should play at 1, then black answers at 2 and the sequence ends at 7. As you can see, **white is always one step ahead** and effectively pressed black and forced it to push from behind from the second line. With this, **black is limited to only one line of territory but the white stone is outside, facing the big center**. White is much better off.
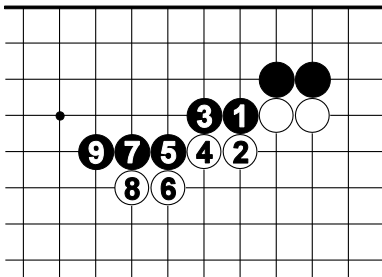
Compare this black stones to the above diagram. When black plays first, he/she should play at 1 and the sequence ends with 9. Just by looking and **comparing these two diagrams, one should understand how important it is to get one step ahead**.

A.4 Capturing Race (Semeai)

A.4 Capturing Race

A capturing race ("Semeai" in Japanese) is a race between two opposing groups to capture each other. Here are some examples:
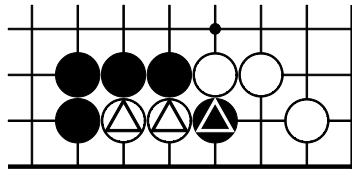
In the diagram on the left, the two marked white stones has two liberties while the marked black stones also has two liberties. They are now in a capturing race to capture each other. Since both of them has each two liberties, the side that plays first will capture first.
Verify this by yourself.
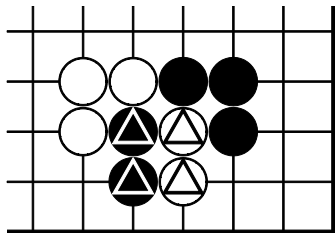
What about the two groups of marked black and white stones in diagram here?

Are they in a capturing race?
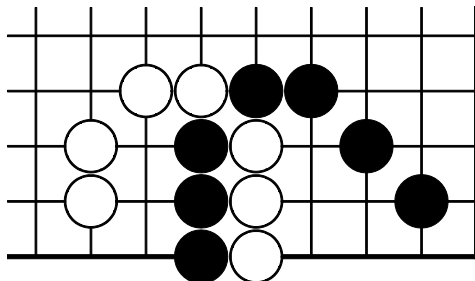
What about this? What is the status?

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A.4 Capturing Race (Semeai)

A.4.1 Capturing Race: Inside Liberties vs. Outside Liberties

From the above examples, you will notice that whoever plays first and seals the opponent's liberties first will win the capturing race. However, this is not necessary true. Here is an example:
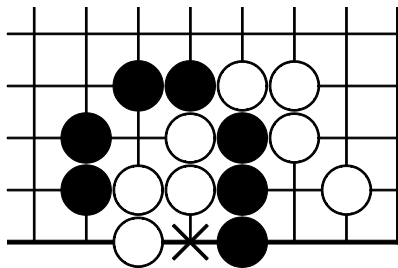
Here you will notice that both the black and white groups inside has 3 liberties each. Therefore you may think that whoever moves first will always win the capturing race. However, this is not really true. Imagine if black plays first and plays at "X". Do you think that black will capture white first?

Please verify this yourself.

In a capturing race, always fill in the OUTSIDE liberties first and then occupy the inside liberties only after all the outside liberties are filled.

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A.4 Capturing Race (Semeai)

A.4.2 Capturing Race: One Eye Beats No Eye

In a capturing race, the group that has one real eye will usually win the capturing race. So if you find yourself in a capturing race situation, see if you can make one eye against your opponent's group. If your group has an eye and your opponent's group do not, then you have the advantage. Here is an example:
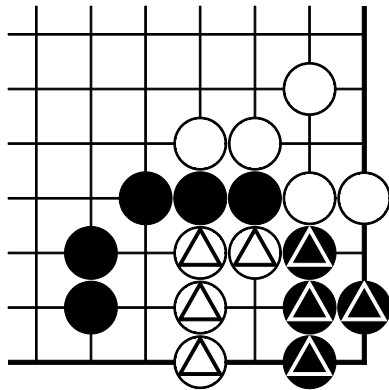
As you can see, although the marked white group has 5 liberties and the marked black group only has 4 liberties, even if white moves first now, black still wins the capturing race.

Verify this for yourself or with your teacher.

So in a capturing race, remember, one eye beats no eyes.

A.4 Capturing Race (Semeai)

A.4.3 Capturing Race: Increasing Liberties

As you already see, liberty is one big issue in a capturing race. The side that has more liberties will win the race. It is therefore natural that you will want to increase the liberties of your own group. Here are some examples on how you can do that.
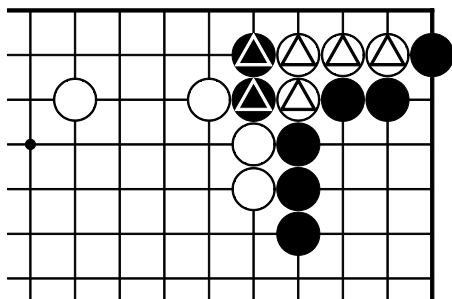
The marked black stones have 2 liberties while the marked white stones have 3 liberties. Therefore, if black plays first and tries to reduce the white stones liberties, the black stones will definitely lose the capturing race.

However, there is a way for black to increase its own liberties first before starting to reduce white's liberties.

Do you know how? Study with your teacher.
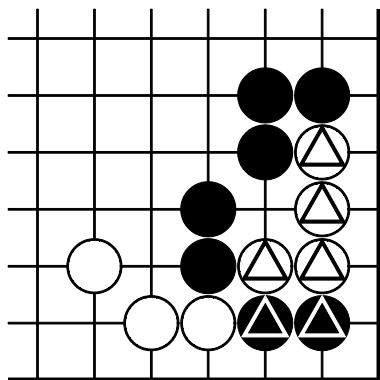
Here is another example. Black to play first.

Black has 3 liberties while white has 4 liberties. Given this, normally black will lose the capturing race.

How can black increase its own liberties so as to win the capturing race?

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Ranking

There is a ranking system in Go and it is important due to the handicap system in Go. New beginner players start with a rank of 30kyu (shorthand=30k) and progresses up to 1k, with the kyu number reducing accordingly. Thereafter, he/she is promoted to 1 dan (shorthand=1d) and then proceeds up to a maximum of 7d. When a player reaches 1 dan, he/she can be considered a reasonably good player, an equivalent to a black belt in martial arts.

Two things to note about ranks here:

First, the ranking system in each country or even each club is different. So a **ranking is only relative** to that enclosed community. New players to the community need to adjust the ranking accordingly. In general, there is up to 2-3 rank difference between the major Go playing countries.

Second, the above is only for Amateur go players. For professional go players, the ranking starts with professional 1 dan (shorthand=1p) and proceeds up to 9p.

Handicap

One of the beauty of Go is the handicap system whereby stronger players allow weaker players to put extra stones on the board at the beginning of the game so that they have some initial advantage. **This makes the game much more interesting for both players**. The number of handicap stones will depend on the difference in ranks between two players. In some clubs where a rating (point-based) system is used, the difference in the number of points will determine the number of handicap stones given.

To read more about ranking and the handicap system, please visit this link: http://senseis.xmp.net/?Rank
and http://senseis.xmp.net/?Handicap

Malaysia Weiqi Association

A.5 **Endgame**

A.5.1 How to end a Game

When neither player has resigned the game and both players has agreed that the game is over, the following is the normal procedure on how to end the game:

1. Agreement that the game is over. The game is over when all the territories have been defined and all fighting has ended. There are no more moves on the board that the player can get more points.

2. Fill in neutral (dame :pronounced as "*dah-meh*") points.

3. Removed captured/dead stones on the board

4. Put back the capture/dead stones into opponent's territory

5. Rearrange the territory so that it is easier to count

6. Count the territories

7. If there is a komi, add the komi and determine the winner by seeing who has more points.

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A.5 Endgame

A.5.1 How to end a Game (*continued*)

Here is an example.
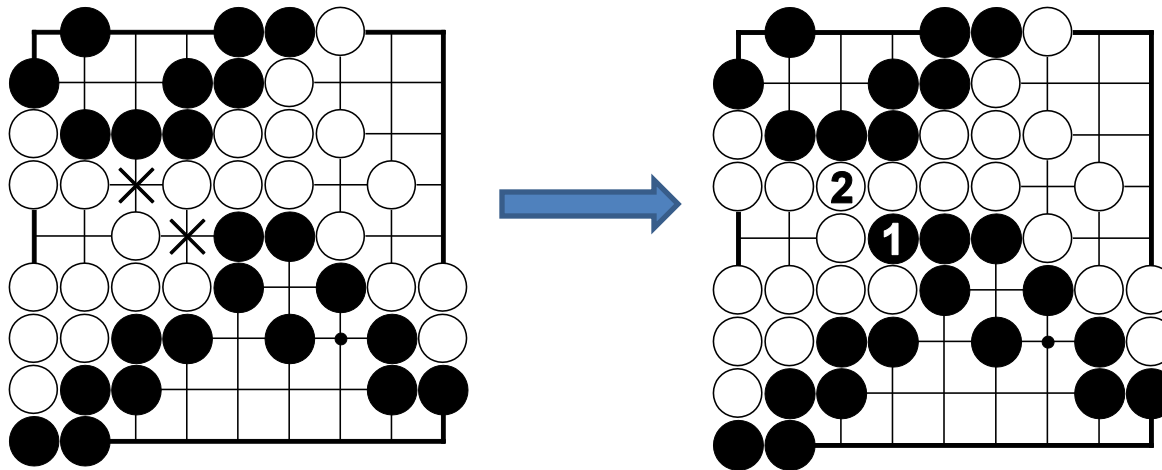
The above diagram is an example of how the game ends. As you can see, all the territories are consolidated and there are no more points left to be obtained. So both players agree to end. However, notice the points marked "X" in the diagram. **These points do not belong to anyone, so they are neutral/dame points**. Therefore the players proceed to fill in the dame points by turn.

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A.5 Endgame

A.5.1 How to end a Game (*continued*)

After all the points are filled in, the stones are rearranged in the territory so that it is easier to count. Arrangements are normally made in multiple of fives or tens. In the same example above here is how the stones are rearranged:
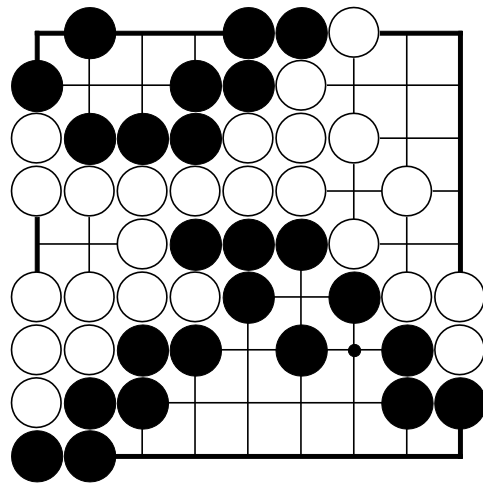
The game ended and dame points filled. Both players has captured one opponent's stone
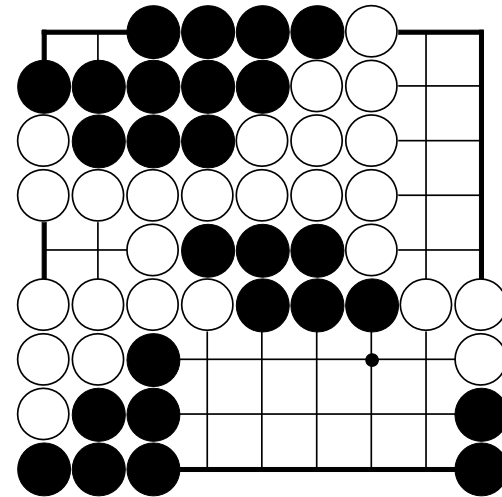
The captured stones are put back in the opponent's territory and stones are rearranged. Rearranged this way, the territory points are much easier to calculate

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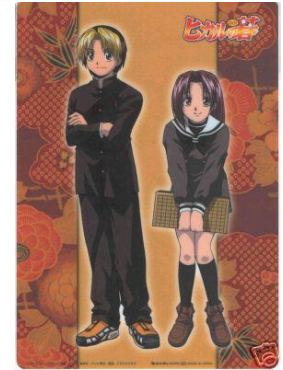
A.5 Endgame

A.5.2 Endgame Tactics

Before the territories are finally decide, when approaching the endgame, there are some tactics to gain more points. Here are some basic ideas.

1. **Expand and Reduce Territories.**
   It is normal to **reduce opponent's territory and expanding your own territory** by simply playing on the edge of the board.
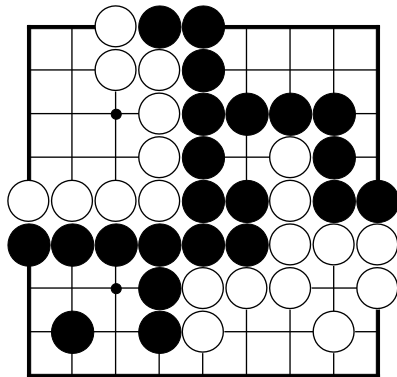
In this situation, where should black play?
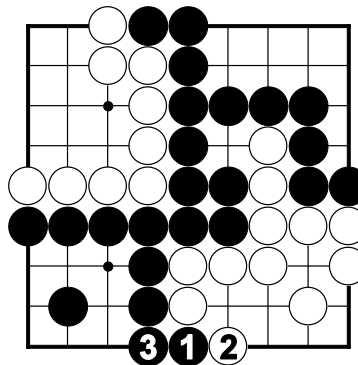
Black should play like this as it reduces white's territory while expanding its own
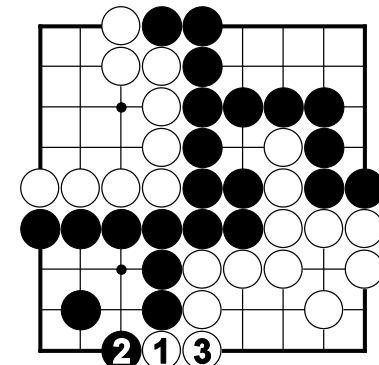
If it is white's turn, white will also play like this.
Do you know how much is the point difference between these two diagrams?

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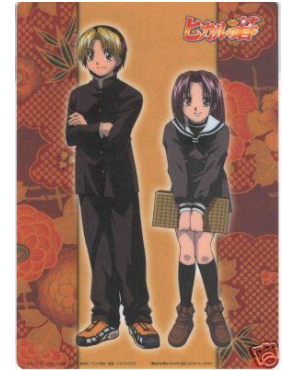
A.5 Endgame

A.5.2 Endgame Tactics (*continued*)

2. Losing Points

Adding unnecessary stones in your own territory will effectively reduce your own points. So do not simply add stones in your own territory unless you have to defend it.
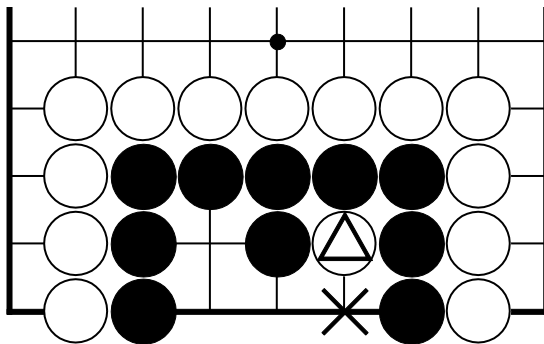
In this diagram, the triangle white stone is already dead inside black's territory and there is no way for white to capture the black group even if white adds two more moves inside the territory.

If black now plays at the "X" spot to capture the stone, **black is effectively adding a stone in its own secure territory and thus losing one point**.

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A.5 Endgame

A.5.2 Endgame Tactics (*continued*)

3. No Gain No Loss

If your opponent adds one stone inside your territory and you add one stone inside yourself, the end result is a no gain no loss situation because white gives you one point and you reduce your own one point by playing inside your own territory.
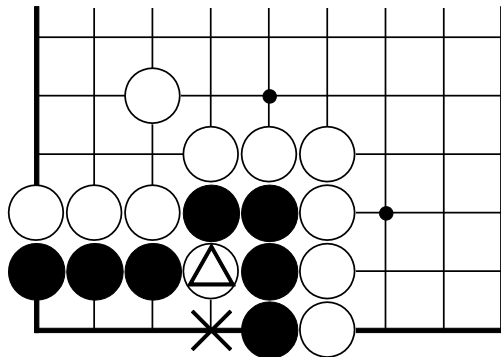
In this diagram, when white plays the triangle stone inside black's territory and black captures the stone by playing at "X", **this is a no gain no loss situation for black.**

A.5 Endgame

A.5.2 Endgame Tactics (*continued*)

4. Open Skirt

When opponent's territory is still open on the edge, there are various tactics to reduce the points. Here are a few examples.
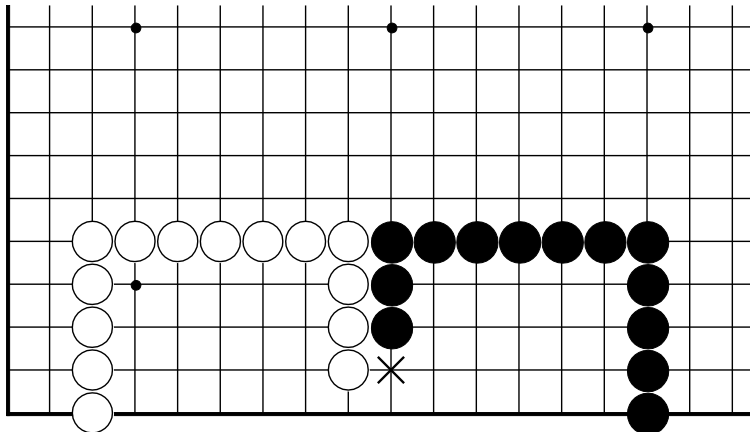
In the diagram, black's territory has a defect at "X" as it is still open. There are various ways for white to reduce black's territory. Let's look at some examples.
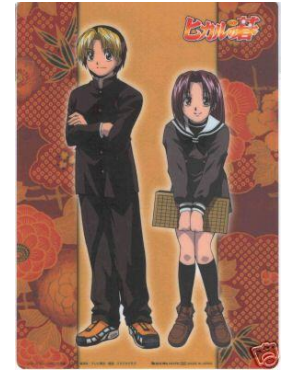
A.5 Endgame

A.5.2 Endgame Tactics (*continued*)

4. Open Skirt (*continued*)

Here are some examples of reducing the **open skirt at the edge**. (Please study these with your teacher).
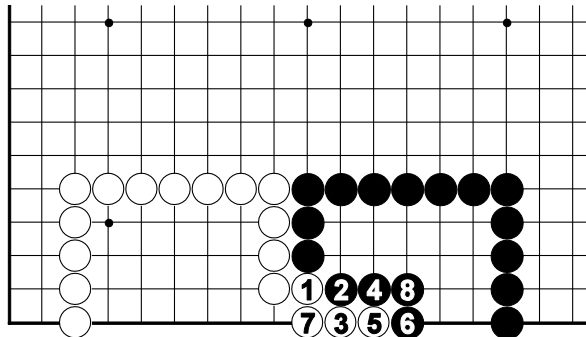
Push
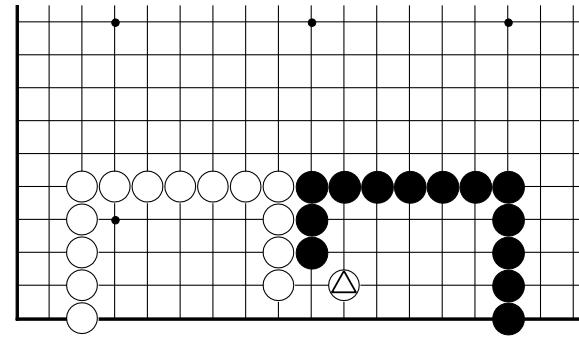
One space jump

Knight's jump
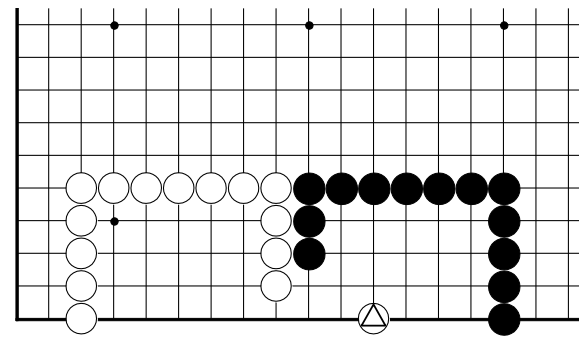
The Monkey Jump

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Internet Available Resources

To start to play on a 9x9 board, IGOWIN will be an excellent program to start playing with. Download it here: http://www.smart-games.com/igowin.html

There are many websites on the internet to further explore the game. Here are some:

Sensei Library – it is practically a wiki on Go. There are many articles there that you can read. (http://senseis.xmp.net/)

The Interactive Way To Go – to complement this document, you can learn Go interactively at this website too. (http://www.playgo.to/interactive/)

Go Problems – solving Go problems is a sure way to improve. This site has many and you can sort it by level and type. (http://www.goproblems.com/)
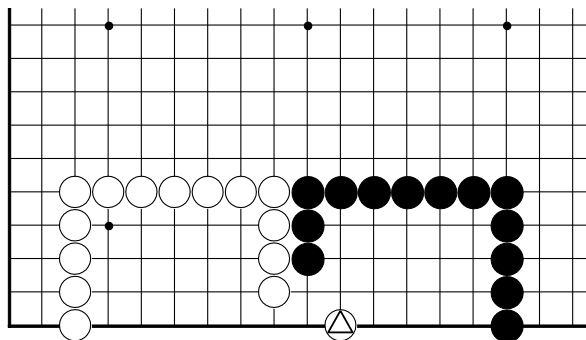
Malaysia Weiqi Association – our official website. Contains a lot of resources, news updates, etc. Join our forum and participate in discussions or asks questions. (http://weiqi.org.my/)

Play Go on the Internet – there are many servers on the internet that one can play Go. One of the most popular one is KGS. In fact, there is a Malaysia room in KGS where many Malaysian members can be found. Just go to the KGS website, create and account by following the on screen instructions. Once you have created your account, go to "Rooms" > "Room List" > "National" > "Malaysia" and click join. (http://www.gokgs.com/)

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Three Tips on Improving

Everyone also wants to improve at Go so that they can know more about the subtleties of the game and enjoy the game more. Here are three tips/advice that can definitely help you improve:

1. Play, Play, Play

To improve, first you must play more games. You cannot improve much just by sitting around and just thinking about the game, eventhough Go is a "thinking" game. You need to get your hands dirty, and gain as much playing experience as possible. There is a saying that as a beginner, one must quickly lose their first 100 games.

2. Do Life and Death Problems

Do simple life and death problems helps a lot in training your "reading", i.e. how you read out sequences. Being able to read out sequences is important in Go as it is the basis of your play. Imagine if you read the sequences wrongly, then you may not be able to execute your strategy, and in worse cases, leading to the capture of your groups!

3. Review Your Games

After playing, it is always good to review your game with your opponent and have someone stronger to review the game for you. This way, you can discover what went wrong and how you can play better next time. Also, stronger players can point out your weakness which may be a blind spot to you.

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Author's Notes

This study material is meant to be a stand-alone study pack where you can learn Go by yourself and assuming you have no prior knowledge. However, there are some sections here where I have mentioned "Study with your teacher". These are sections where it is better to have someone to go through with you and since this material is designed to be used by the Malaysia Weiqi Association ("MWA") as study materials, the teachers at the MWA will guide you accordingly.

All the writing is done by me with consultation to source materials as mentioned below and as such I am fully responsible for all errors and/or omissions. Except as mentioned below, all diagrams are created using SmartGo 2.

If you have any problems with copyright, please inform me.

Materials here are for non-commercial use only.

All feedback and comments will be very much appreciated.

Write to me at hdoong@yahoo.com

Ho Hock Doong
Malaysia Weiqi Association
30 January 2009

Source materials consulted:
1. Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go by Toshiro Kageyama
2. Go – A Complete Introduction to the Game by Cho Chikun
3. The Fun Way to Learn Go – by Nihon Kiin
4. How to Play Go by Tan Yee Fan
5. Mendalami Permainan Igo by Zaid Waqi
6. Tesuji by James Davies
7. Graded Go Problems for Beginners Vol. 1
8. Sensei library

Picture credit:
Page 7: From Kuroki Goishi Ten (http://www.kurokigoishi.co.jp/english/index.html)
Pages 8,9 & 10: From The Fun Way to Learn Go by Nihon Ki-in
All other pictures: from the internet at large, including all Hikaru No Go pictures.