

OUST

by Mark Steere

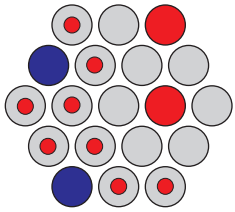


Fig. 1 - Cells available to Red.

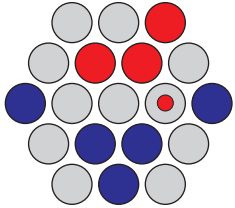


Fig. 2 - Red captures two blue groups.

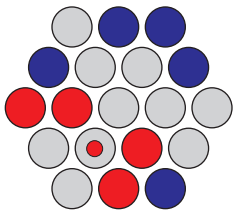


Fig. 3 - Red captures two blue singletons.

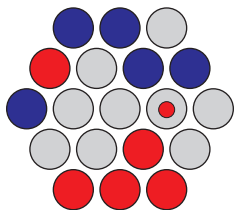


Fig. 4 - Red captures blue group of four.

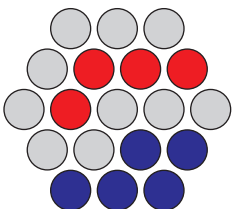


Fig. 5 - Red must pass.

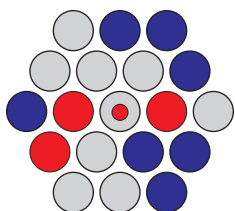


Fig. 6 - Red Wins

INTRODUCTION Oust is a very unusual two player game, played on a hexagonally patterned board, usually around seven cells on a side. The board starts out empty. The two players, Red and Blue, take turns placing stones of their own color on unoccupied cells on the board. The goal is to completely clear the board of enemy stones, to “oust” your opponent - a paradox since the board is empty to begin with. Your opponent has to add at least one stone before you can capture all of his stones.

Normally an Oust board would be considerably larger than the tiny board used here in the diagrams. Draws cannot occur in Oust. Mark Steere designed Oust in July, 2007.

NON-CAPTURING PLACEMENTS A non-capturing placement either forms no connections (adjacencies) with any stones, or forms one or more connections only with enemy stones. A non-capturing placement does not form any connections with stones of its own color. Making a non-capturing placement concludes your turn. In Figure 1 the only placements available to Red are non-capturing placements and are indicated by small red spots.

CAPTURING PLACEMENTS A “group” is a set of interconnected, like-colored stones. A group can be a “singleton” - a single stone which is not connected to any other stones of its color. A group includes all the stones of its own color connected to it.

When you place a stone which forms one or more connections with your own groups, you create a new, larger group of your own stones. You can only make such a placement if said new group will have one or more connections with enemy groups upon its creation and if all said enemy groups are smaller than said new group. Upon making such a placement, all said enemy groups are removed from the board.

In Figure 2, Red’s newly formed group of four captures the two blue groups it connects to. In Figure 3, Red captures the two blue singletons connected to his newly formed group of five. In Figure 4, Red’s newly formed group captures Blue’s group of four.

MULTIPLE PLACEMENTS PER TURN After capturing one or more enemy groups and while it is still your turn, **you must continue to add stones until you make a non-capturing placement**, at which time your turn is concluded.

MAKE A PLACEMENT IF YOU CAN If you have a placement available on your turn you must make one. If you don’t have any placements available you must pass your turn. There will always be a placement available to at least one of the two players. In Figure 5, it’s Red’s turn. He has no placements available and so must pass his turn.

OBJECT OF THE GAME You win by making a placement which captures all of the enemy stones on the board. In Figure 6, Red captures all of the blue stones and wins the game.

AUTHOR’S NOTE Feel free to publish this rule sheet, and to program the game of Oust for online or offline play. There is no licensing fee, and no royalties are expected. However please don’t change the name or the rules, and please attribute the game to me, Mark Steere. My other games can be found at marksteeregames.com.