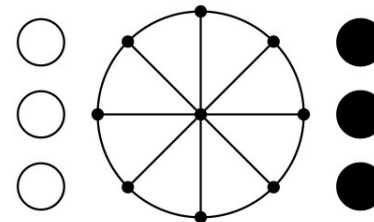# ROUND MERELS

Round Merels, based on Three Mens Morris, originated in Europe and is played around the world. Many boards have been found in various countries, some dating back thousands of years. Nobody knows how the game was originally played, but the rules below are a plausible reconstruction from 1918.
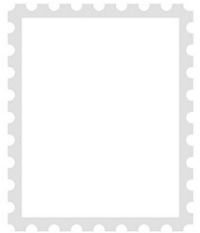

Rules

1. Two players have three pieces of their colour.
2. Players take turns placing one of their pieces at an empty hole.
3. Players then take turns moving one of their pieces to an adjacent empty hole.
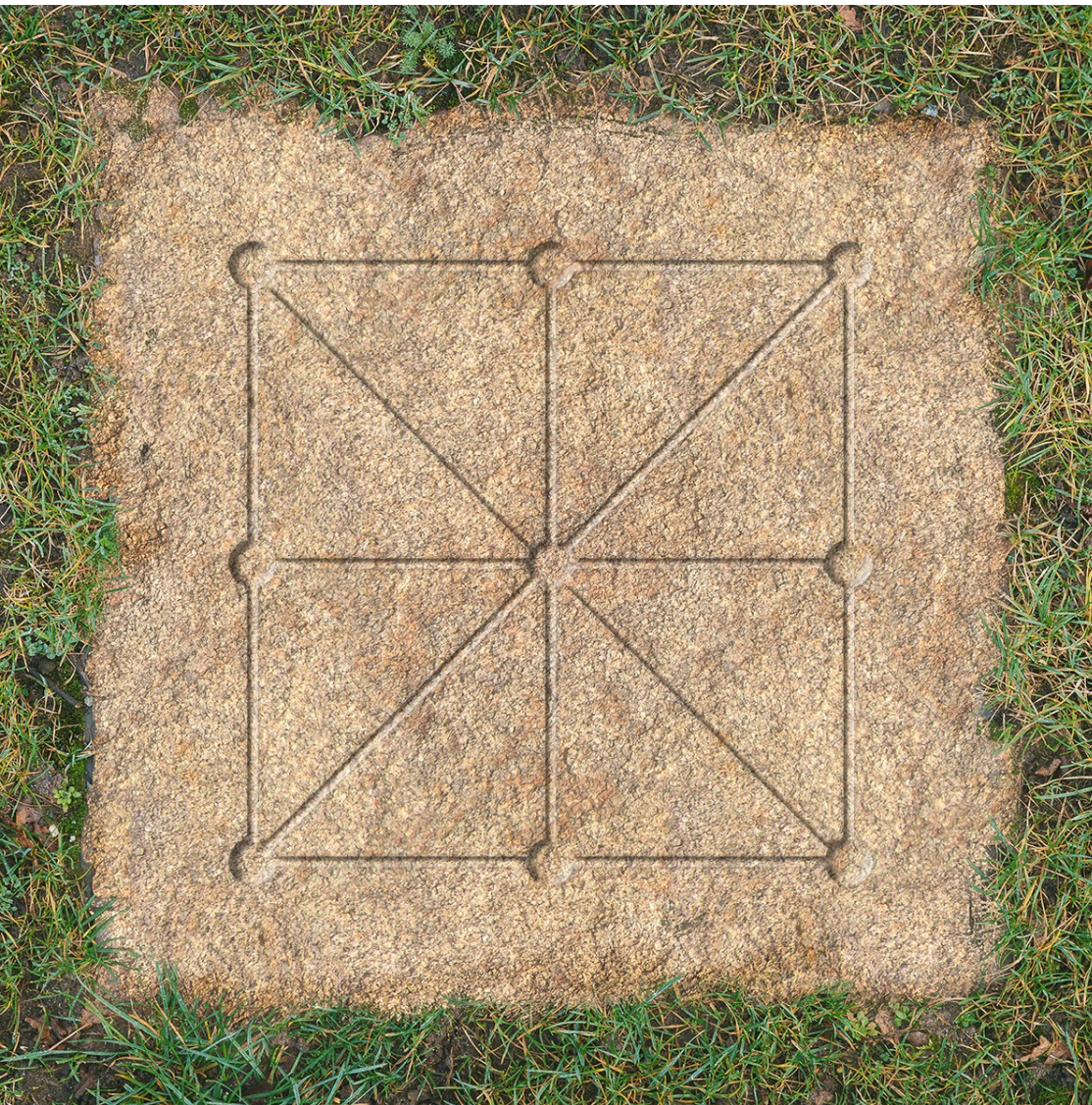4. A player wins by making a straight line of three of their pieces through the centre, at any time.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
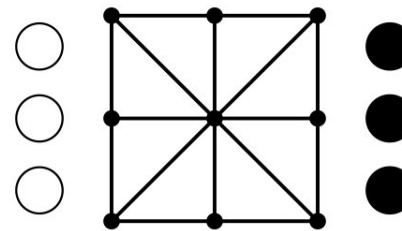Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

ACHI

Achi, also known as Ati or Akidada, was played in the early 20th century by the Yoruba people and in Ghana. It is difficult to trace its history, as it is typically traced in sand and played with sticks as pieces. Games with similar rules have been played worldwide for thousands of years.

Rules

1. Two players each have three pieces.
2. Players take turns placing one of their pieces at an empty hole.
3. Players then take turns moving one of their pieces to an adjacent empty hole.
4. A player wins by making a straight line of three of their pieces through the centre, at any time.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

PICARIA

Picaria was played by Puebloan Native Americans in the Southwest United States. It may have had a Spanish origin as *pedreria* is Spanish for "little stone". Game boards were described in the 19th century but the rules were not; the rules described below were proposed in the late 20th century, based on the common European game Small Merels.

Rules

1. Two players each have three pieces.
2. Players take turns placing one of their pieces at an empty hole.
3. Players then take turns moving one of their pieces to an adjacent empty hole.
4. A player wins by making a straight line of three of their pieces through the centre, at any time.
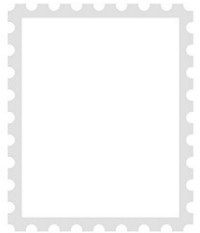
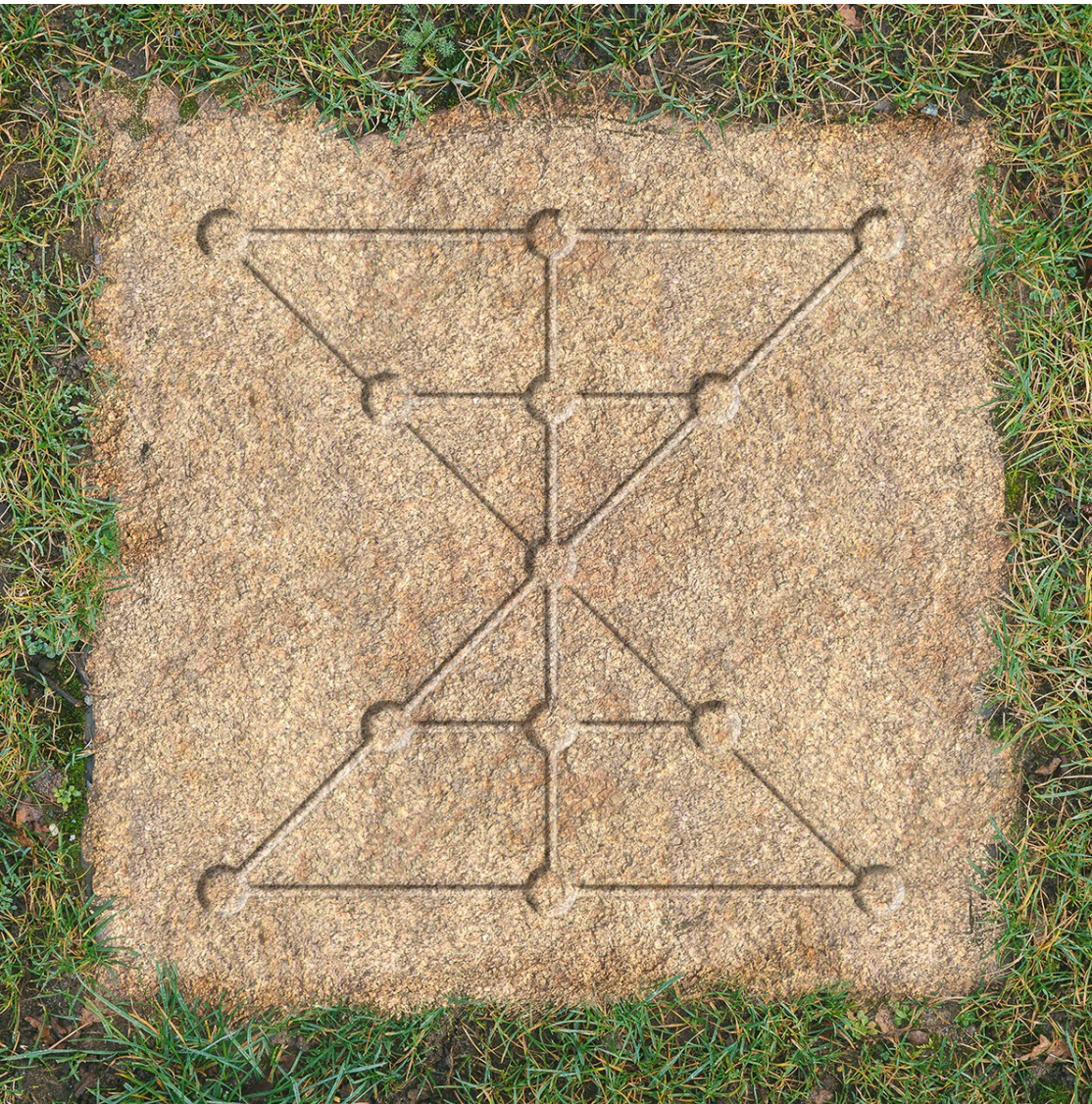Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

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FELLI

Felli is a game that was recently documented in Morocco, but is likely to be quite old. It is related to the game Alquerque, which was adopted in North Africa and Spain with the spread of Islam. Though the board itself is different, the rules are largely derived from Alquerque.
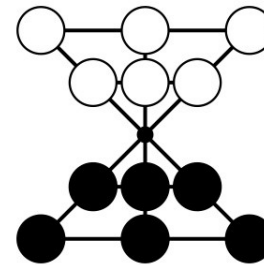
Rules

1. Two players each start with six pieces, arranged as shown.

2. Players take turns moving one of their pieces to either:
   a) an adjacent empty point, or
   b) to jump an adjacent enemy piece to an empty hole beyond, capturing that piece.

3. A Player wins by capturing all enemy pieces.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
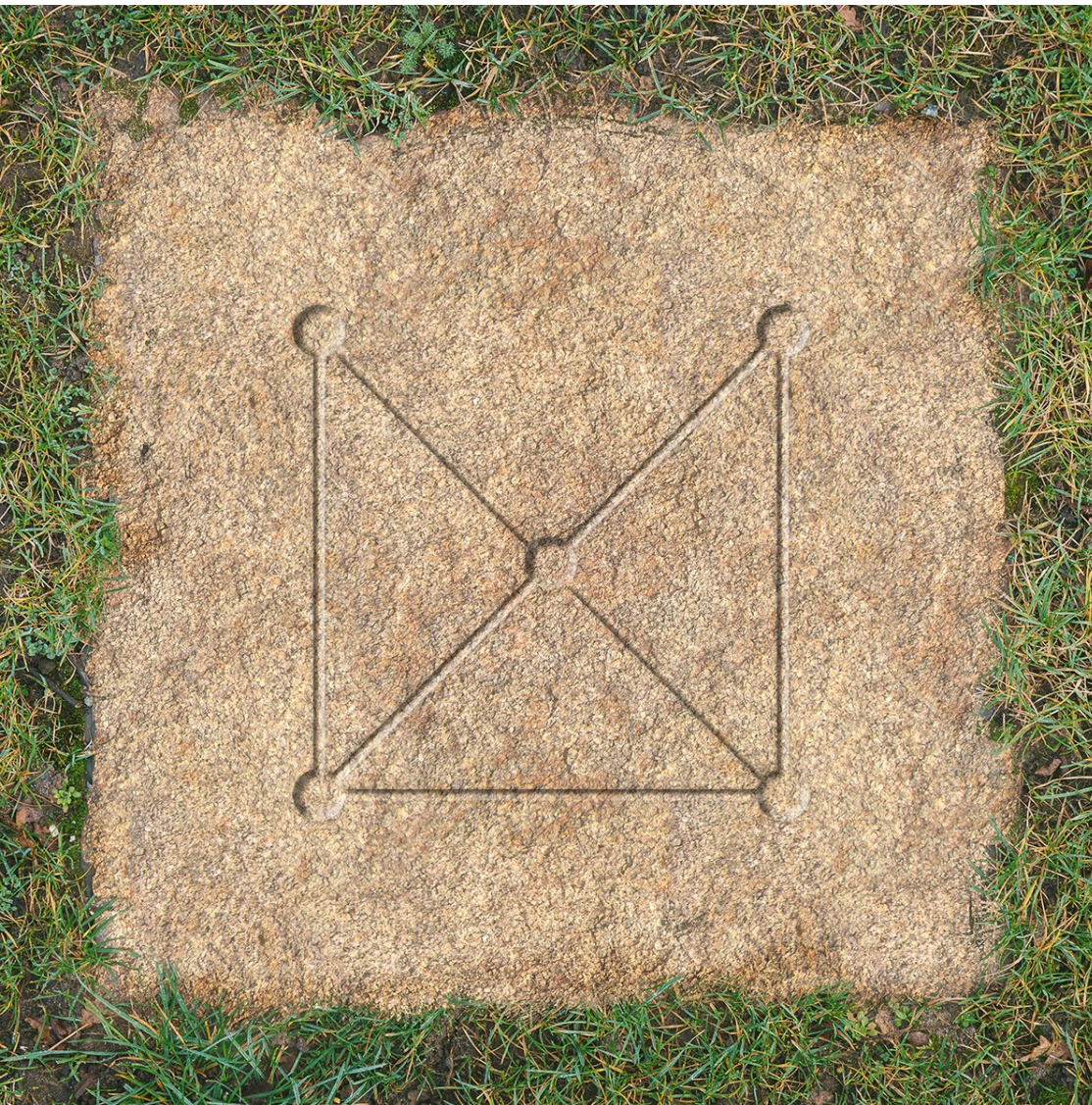Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

PONG HAU K'I

Pong Hau K'i is the Chinese version of a game played throughout East and Southeast Asia, known at least since the 19th century. Graffiti game boards with a similar pattern from 14th–15th century India may suggest that this simple game is much older.
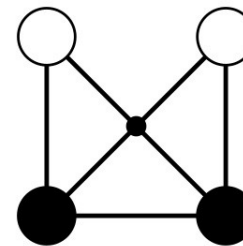
Rules

1. Two players each have two pieces, which start arranged as shown.

2. Players take turns moving one of their pieces along a line to an adjacent empty point.
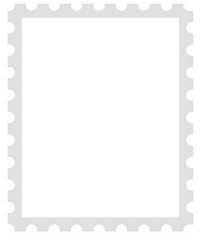
3. A Player wins if their opponent has no moves.

VARIANT: The board starts empty, and players take turns adding a piece to any empty hole.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

SIX MEN'S MORRIS

Six Men's Morris was popular in Europe during the Middle Ages until about 1600. Morris games – or *mills* games – are some of the oldest known games and are still played throughout the world. The rules are the same as for the more well known Nine Men's Morris, but with six pieces per player.
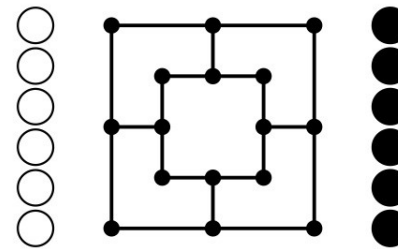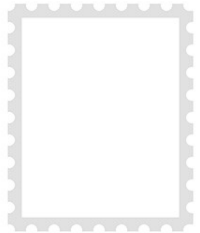

Rules

1. Two players each start with six pieces.
2. Players take turns adding a piece to an empty hole.
3. Players then take turns moving one of their pieces along a line to an adjacent empty point.
4. If the mover make a consecutive line of three of their pieces at any time, they must remove any one of the opponent's pieces.
5. A player wins if the opponent is reduced to only two remaining pieces.

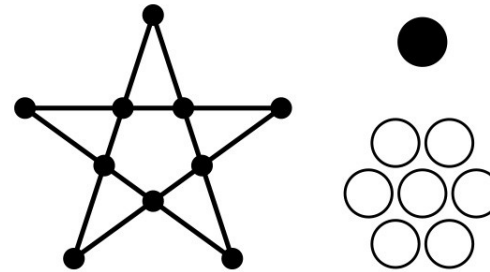Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

KAOOA

Kaooa (or Kawwa) is a *hunt game* documented in India during the early 20th century. Graffiti examples of this board have been found on monuments throughout India, so it is possibly much older.

Rules

1. One player has one *tiger* piece and the other player has seven *kaooa* pieces.
2. Players take turns adding one of their pieces to an empty hole.
3. When a player has placed all of their pieces, they move a piece to an adjacent empty hole.
4. The *tiger* can capture an adjacent *kaooa* by hopping over it. Multiple hops are allowed.
5. The *tiger* wins by capturing all *kaooas*. The *kaooas* win by blocking the *tiger* from moving.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

NEI-PAT KONO

Nei-Pat Kono is a game with leaping captures that was documented in Korea during the 19th century. It is probably much older but the evidence is not clear.
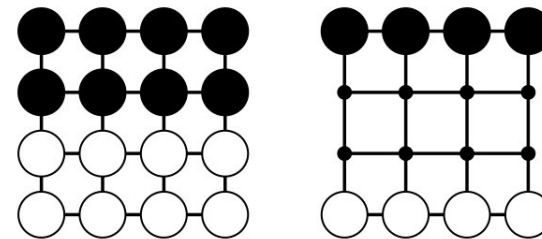
Rules

1. Each player starts with eight pieces (left) or four pieces (right) placed as shown.

2. Players take turns moving one of their pieces either:
   a) to an adjacent empty hole, or
   b) to hop over one of their own pieces to land on an opponent's piece and capture it.

3. A player wins by either:
   a) capturing all but one enemy piece, or
   b) blocking the opponent from moving.

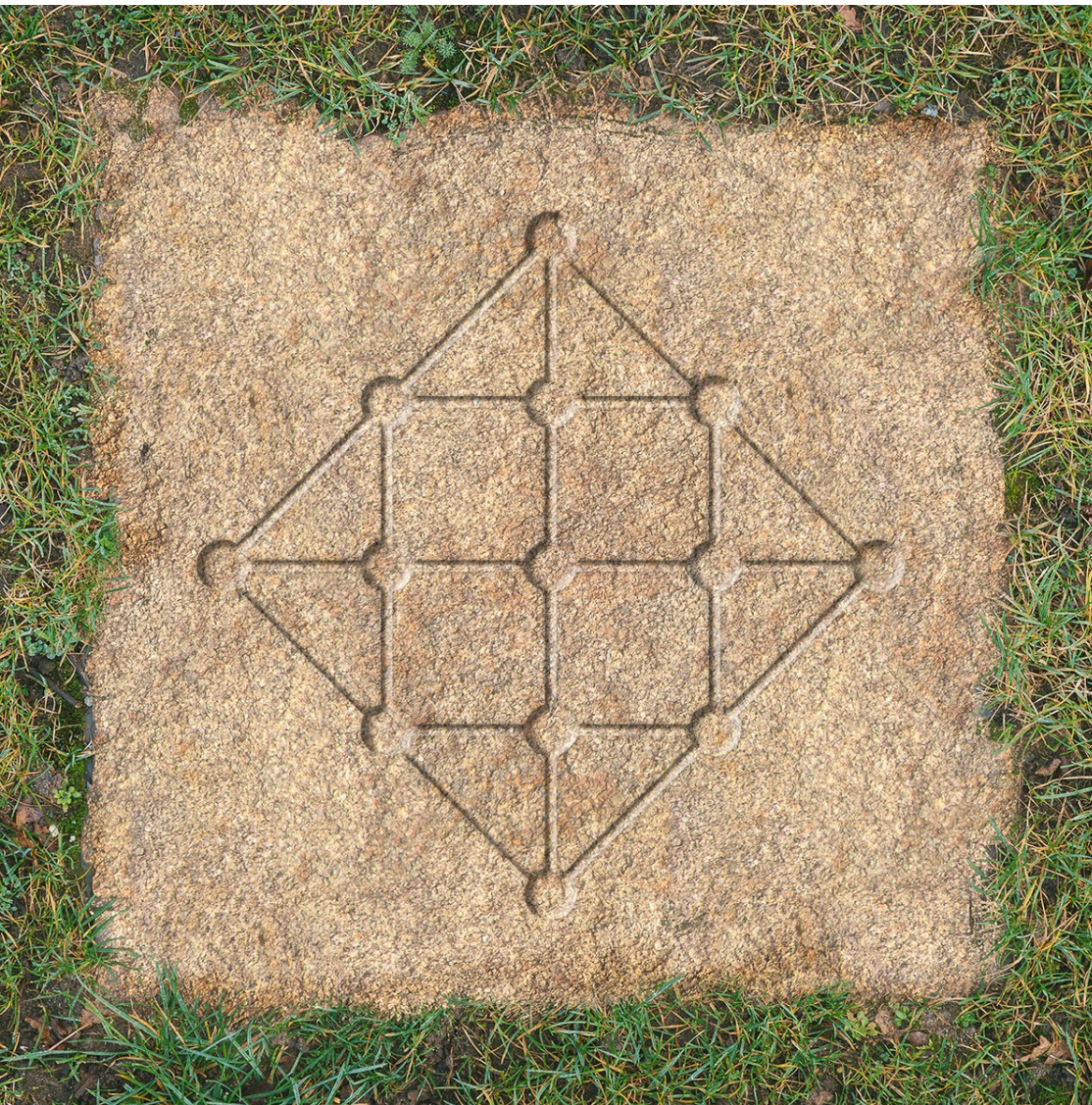Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

BOSEOG GONU

Boseog Gonu (*gemstone*) is a Korean game of capture with an uncertain history. It is unusual in that it involves the *custodial capture* mechanism found in many European games. There is some dispute over how it should be played.
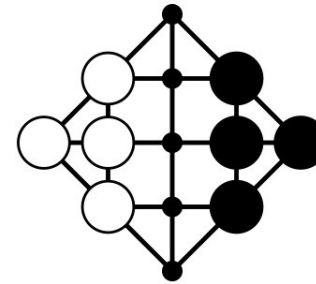
Rules

1. Each player has four pieces, arranged as shown.

2. Players take turns moving one of their pieces along a line to an adjacent empty hole.

3. Players capture enemy pieces by sandwiching them between two of their own pieces, horizontally or vertically (not diagonally). If a piece moves between two enemy pieces it is not captured.

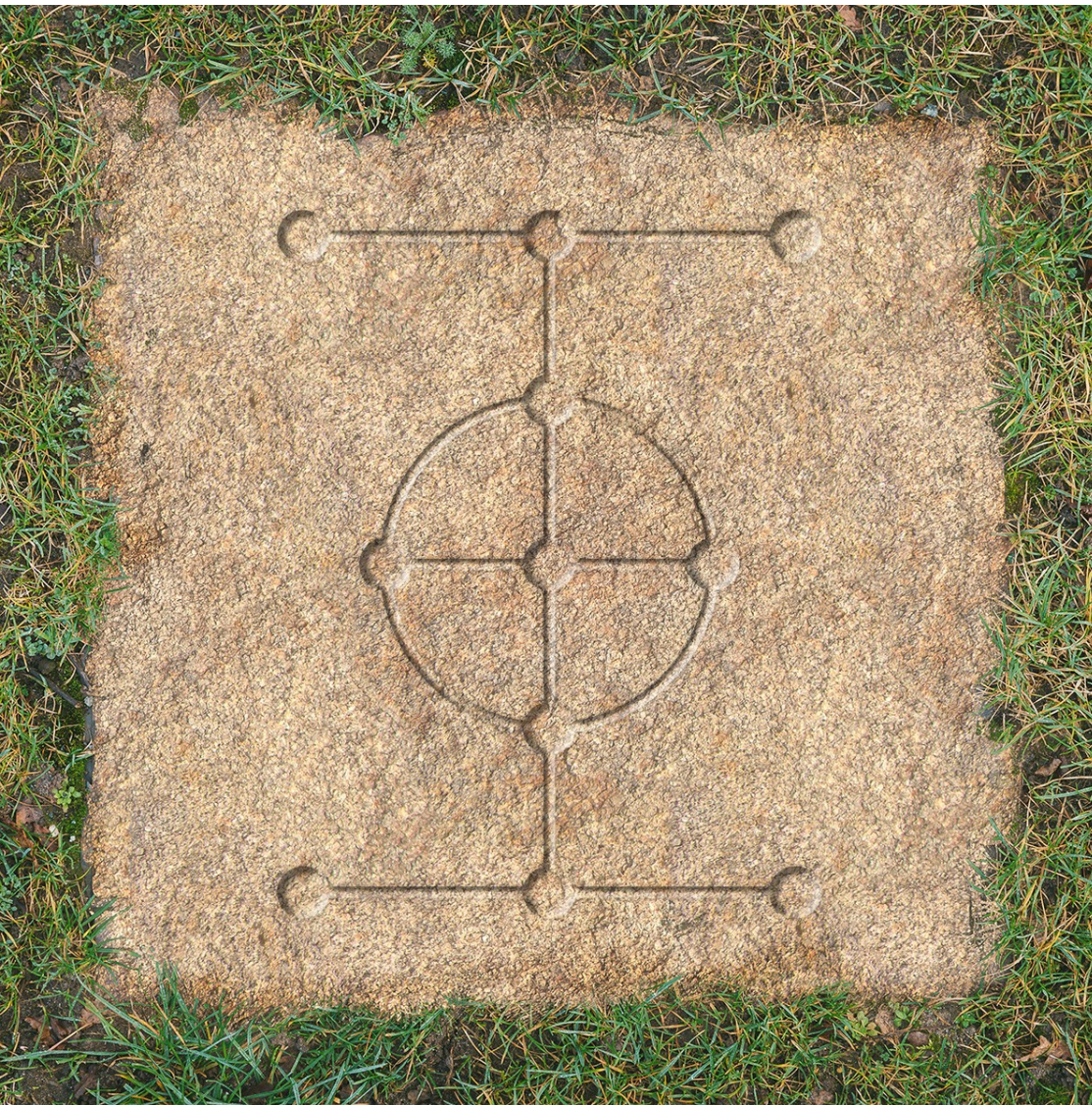4. A player wins by reducing the opponent to a single piece.

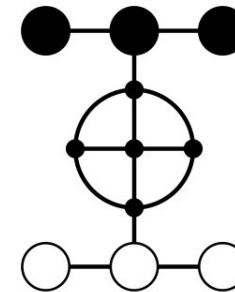Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

HO-BAG GONU

Ho-bag Gonu (*pumpkin game*) is a Korean game with an uncertain history. It is a *blockade game* similar to others found throughout Asia. Different versions of the game exist, some played with four pieces per player.

Rules

1. Each player has three pieces, arranged as shown.

2. Players take turns moving one of their pieces along a line to an adjacent empty hole.

3. Pieces cannot return to their owner's starting line.

4. When a piece reaches the opponent's starting line, it cannot leave that line.

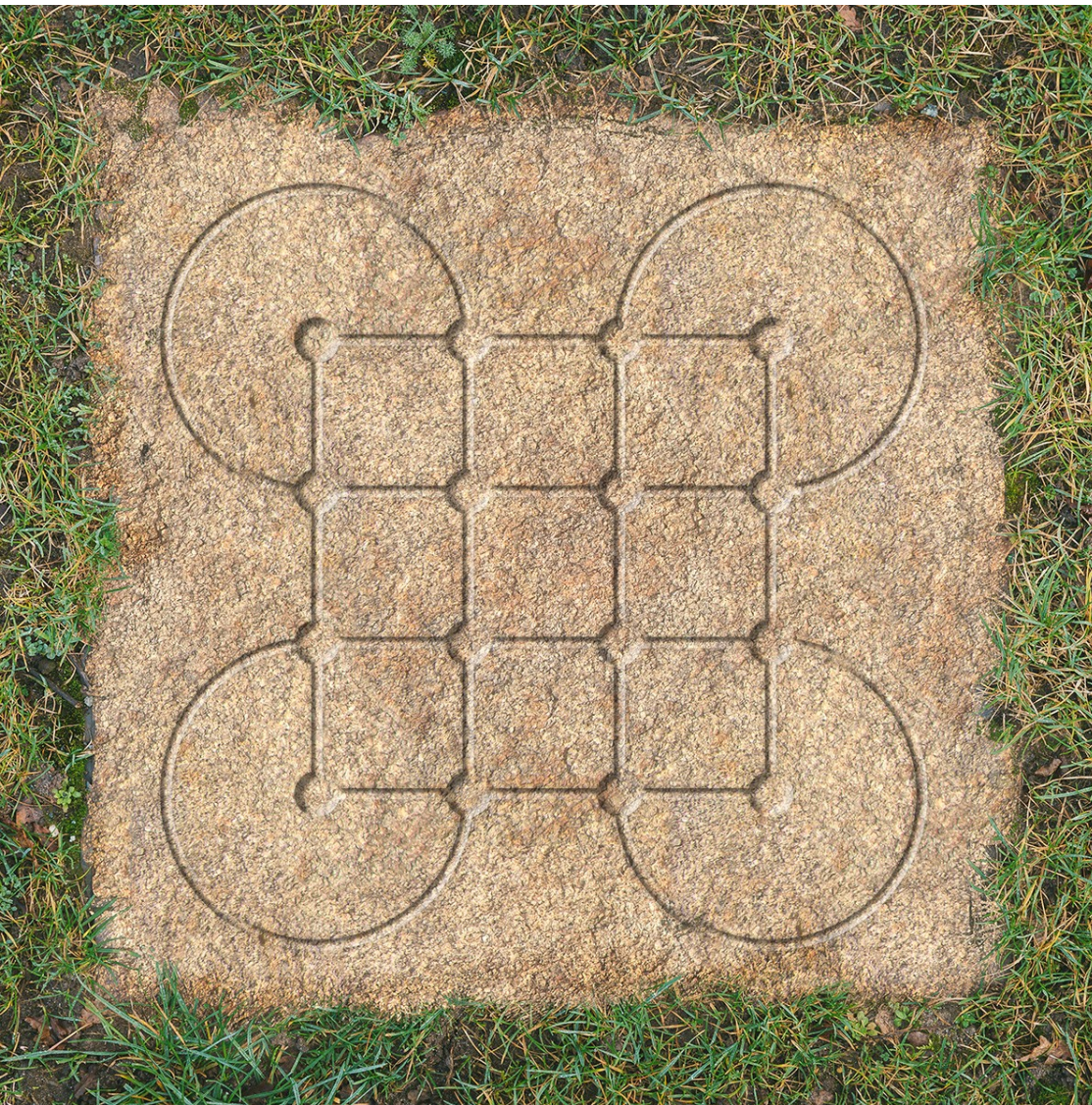5. A player wins if the opponent cannot move.

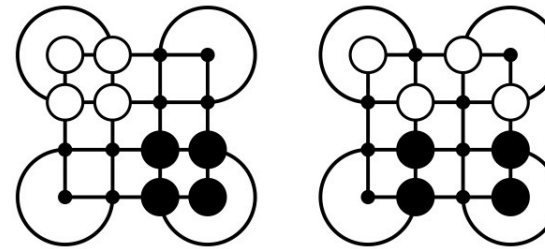Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

BICYCLE

Bicycle is a Korean game of unknown origin. It features an unusual movement rule in which pieces must move through loops to capture enemy pieces. This makes it similar to the game Surakarta, which is played on a larger 6x6 grid, but the relationship between these games is unclear.
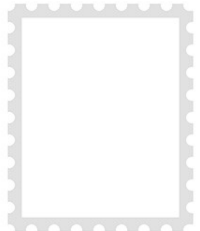

Rules

1. Each player has four pieces, arranged as shown (both starting positions are known).

2. Players take turns moving a piece of theirs either:
   a) along a line to an adjacent empty hole, or
   b) along a line and through one or more loops, following which the piece can land on an enemy piece to capture it (if not blocked by any of the mover's own pieces).

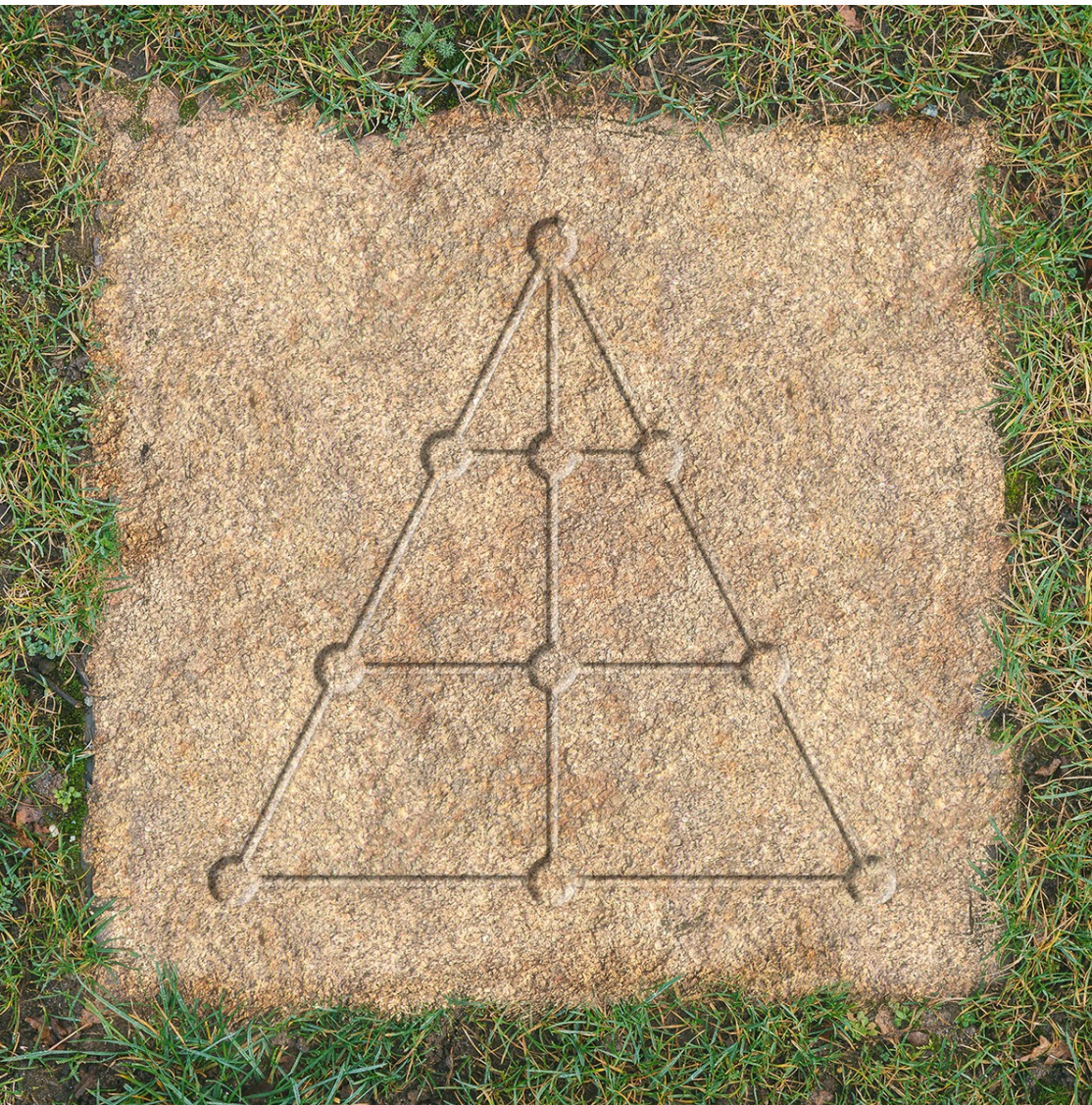3. A player wins by capturing all opponent's pieces.

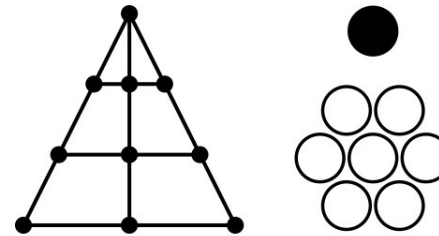Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

HAT DIVIYAN KELIYA

Hat Diviyan Keliya is a *hunt game,* of a type called "tiger games", that is popular throughout South and Southeast Asia. Graffiti boards have been found at the 14th–15th century city of Vijayanagara in India. These rules are from early 20th century Sri Lanka.

Rules

1. One player has one *tiger* piece and the other player has seven *leopard* pieces.
2. Players take turns adding one of their pieces to an empty hole.
3. When a player has placed all of their pieces, they move a piece to an adjacent empty hole.
4. The *tiger* can capture an adjacent *leopard* by hopping over it. Multiple hops are allowed.
5. The *tiger* wins by capturing all *leopards*. The *leopards* win by blocking the *tiger* from moving.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
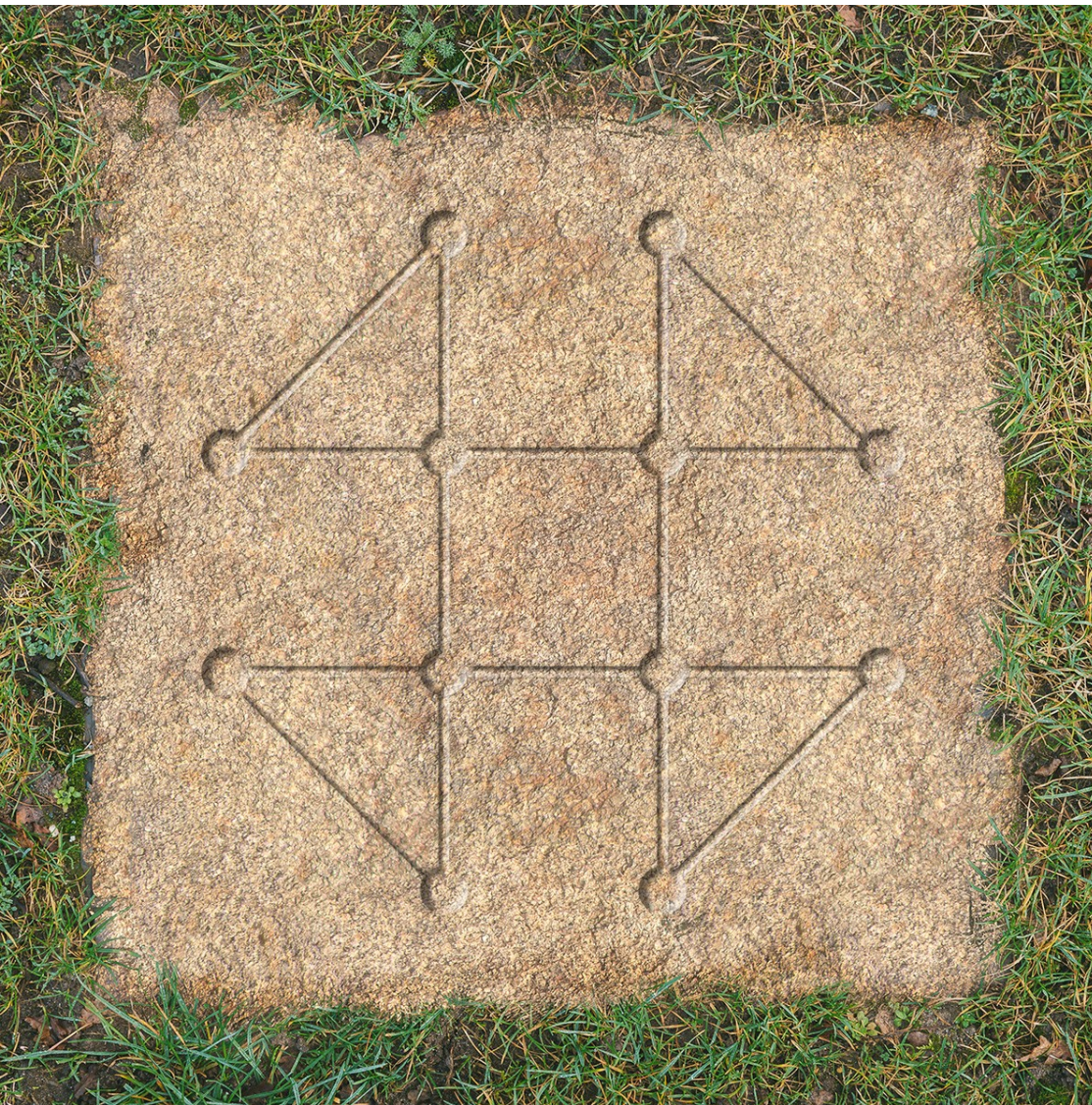Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

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SYMBOL S.2

This design, catalogued as symbol **S.2** in Bell and Roueche's survey of historical pavement symbols, has been found scratched into walls and pavements in countries including Egypt, Turkey and Ceylon. It is found as a design element in other games, including tradtional games from India, but there is no evidence of it ever being used as a game board in its own right.
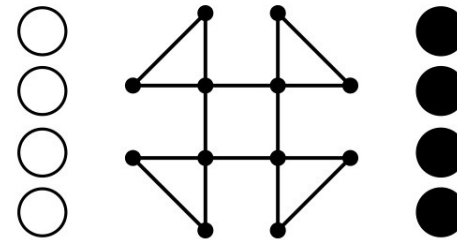
Exercise

Can you design an interesting game for this board?

Small games like this tend to involve two players. Four (or fewer) pieces each would make sense. Movement might involve moving to adjacent empty holes, and capturing enemy pieces by stepping onto, hopping over, flanking/surrounding them, etc.

What rule set(s) can you devise that make the most of this unusual design?

Experiment with designs using the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**

HARETAVL

Haretavl (or "hare board") belongs to the class of *hunt games* known as "hare & hounds" games, which have been played throughout Europe for centuries. The design shown here is a Danish version of the game whose exact rules are not known, but they are likely to be similar to the standard hare & hounds rules (shown below).
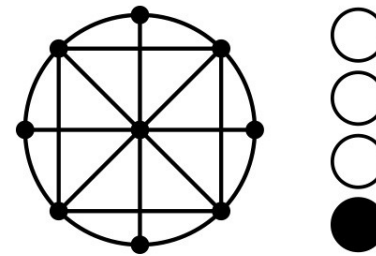
Rules

1. One player has three *hound* pieces (white) and the other player has a single *hare* piece (black).

2. Players take turns adding one of their pieces to an empty hole (the *hare* gets a single placement).

3. When all pieces are placed, players then take turns moving a piece of theirs to an adjacent empty hole.

4. The *hounds* win by surrounding the *hare* so that it cannot move.

Play this game on the **Ludii** game system.
Free for download at: **http://ludii.games**