

oware Game instructions / game rules

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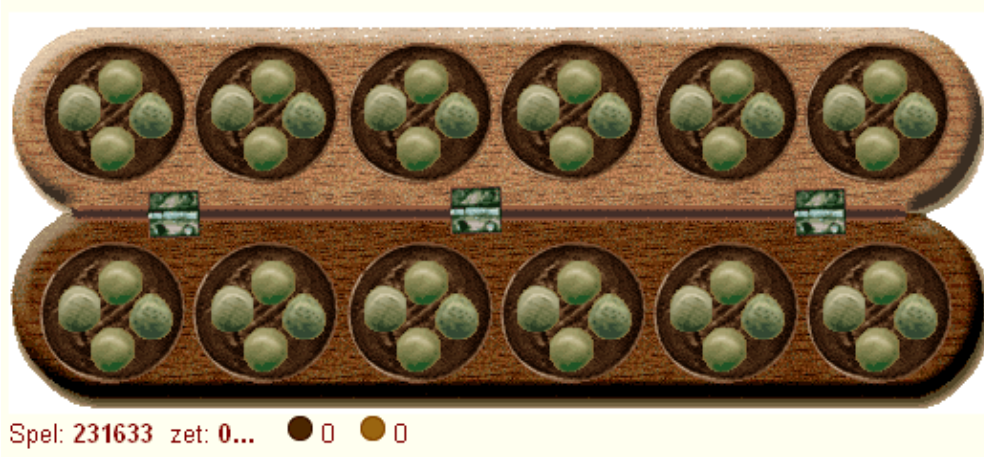
oware Spielregeln

Introduction and object of the board game

Oware is a Mancala variant (a so-called sowing game). Oware is being played (in different variants) in Africa, from Senegal to Gabon. At Brettspielnetz.de we use the rules for the abapa variation, considered to be the most appropriate for serious, adult play. The object of the board game is to capture more seeds than one's opponent. Since the game has only 48 seeds, capturing 25 is sufficient to accomplish this. Since there are an even number of seeds, it is possible for the game to end in a draw, where each player has captured 24.

Setup

At the beginning of the game four seeds are placed in each pit. See image below.



Sowing

Players take turns moving the seeds. On a turn, a player chooses one of the six pits under their control. The player removes all seeds from this pit, and distributes them in each pit counter-clockwise from this house, in a process called sowing. In the image below, at the first move, 4 seeds from the now empty pit have been sowed. If more than 11 seeds are being sowed, the originating pit is being passed over.



Capturing

After a turn, if the last seed was placed into an opponent's pit that brought its total to two or three, all the seeds in that house are captured and placed in the player's scoring pit. If the previous to last seed also brought an opponent's pit to two or three, these are captured as well, and so on. However, if a move would capture all an opponent's seeds, the seeds are not captured, and are instead left on the board, since this would prevent the opponent from continuing the game. The number of captured seeds is shown below the board. If in the figure below the lightbrown player sows the 4 seeds bottom left, the 2 single seeds are being captured. The result is shown in the image below.



Exception

The exception disallowing capture of all an opponent's seeds is related to a more general idea, that one ought to make a move that allows the opponent to continue playing. If an opponent's pits are all empty, the current player must make a move that gives the opponent seeds. If no such move is possible, the current player captures all seeds in their own territory, ending the board game.

End of the board game

If a player captures more than half of all seeds (25 or more), the opponent is not able to win anymore, so the board game ends. The game ends also when after a move of a player, the opponent has no seeds left to sow. The player that moved last, will get all seeds in his own pits added to his score. If an endless cycle of moves occurs (assumed when the same board happens again) and both players have at least 1 seed at their side, all the remaining seeds are split between the players. Each player gets the seeds, which are in his holes."

Source: Wikipedia