

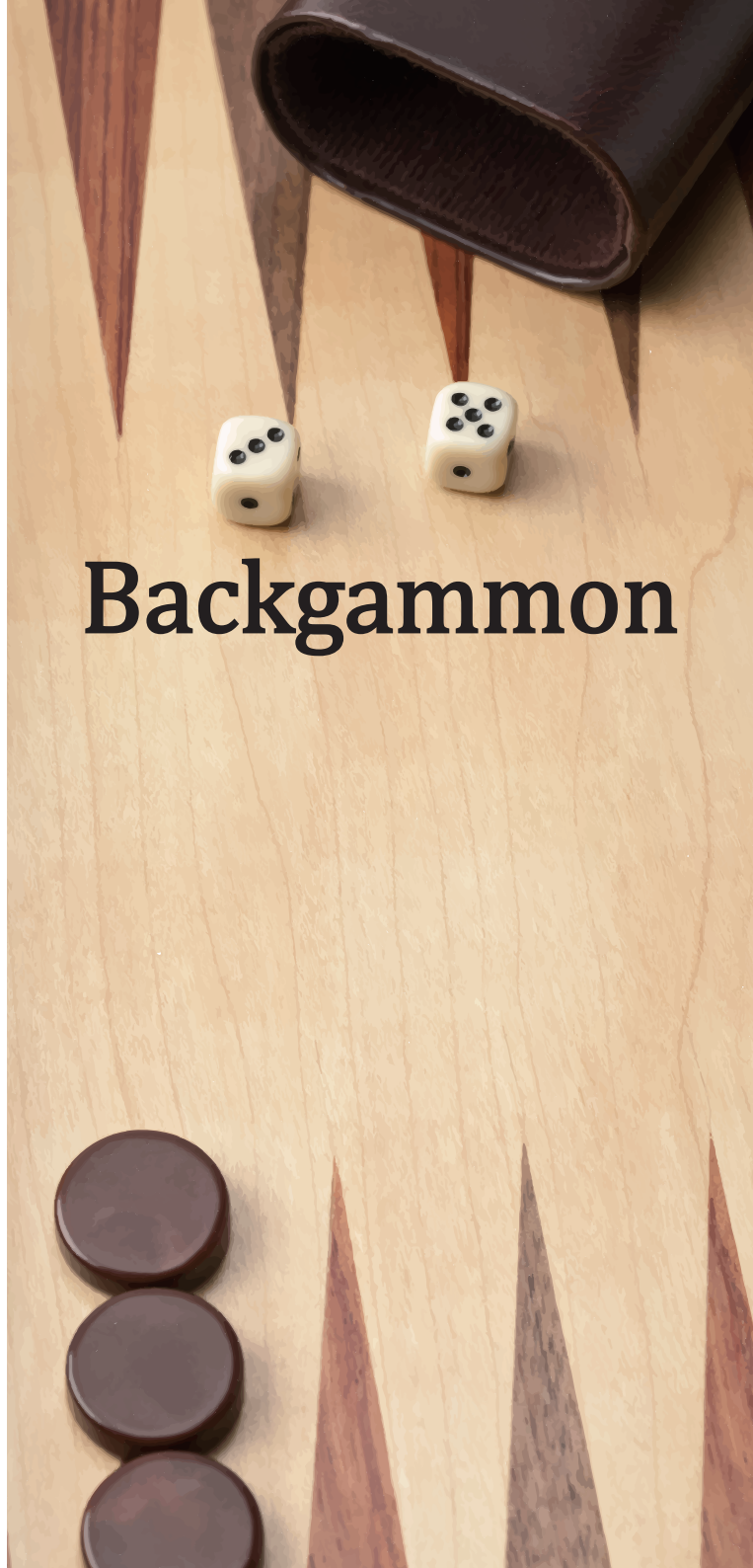


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Backgammon



Backgammon

Backgammon is one of the oldest board games, with origins dating as far back as 3000 BC. It is a game of luck and strategy, popular around the world. Easy to learn and fun to play, it is no wonder that it has withstood the test of time and is played by so many people.

Equipment

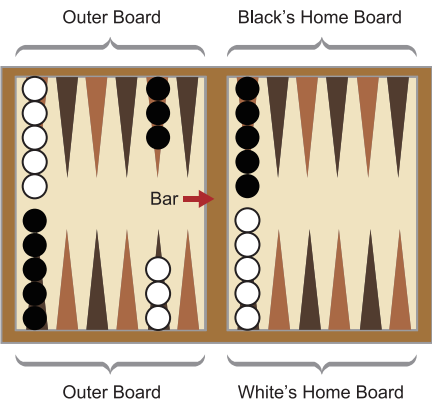
The game is played by two players, each with fifteen **checkers** of their own color.

Each player also has their own pair of dice and a dice cup.

A doubling cube with the numbers 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, and 64 is used to track the current stake of the game.

The starting positions of the pieces are arranged as shown below. The four quadrants are the player's **home board** and **outer board**, and the opponent's home board and outer board. The home boards and outer boards are separated by a divider down the middle called the **bar**.

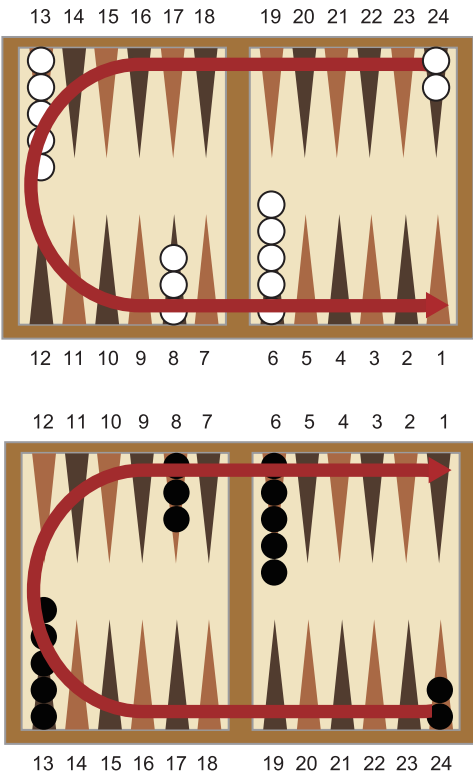
The starting positions of the checkers are arranged as shown below.



The points are numbered starting at 24 in the opponent's home board and ending at 1 in the player's own home board.

Your Goal

The objective of the game is to move all of your checkers into your home board and then remove them from the board. This removal is called bearing off. The players move their checkers in opposite directions, following the horseshoe paths shown below.



Gameplay

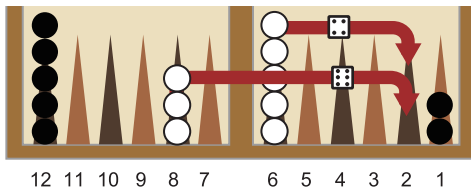
To start the game, each player rolls a single die and the player with the higher number moves first using both numbers rolled. If both players roll the same number, the dice are rolled again until they roll different numbers. The players then alternate turns, rolling two dice at the beginning of each turn. The dice must always be rolled together and land flat on the right-hand side of the game board. If either die lands outside the board or on a checker, both dice must be rolled again.

Moving

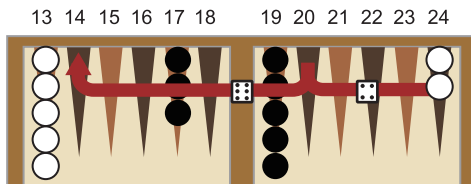
- Each die shows how many points a checker may move. This movement distance is also called a pip count. Checkers always move forward along the horseshoe path toward the player's home board.

- A checker may land only on an open point. An open point is a point that is empty, occupied by your own checker or checkers, or occupied by exactly one opposing checker. A checker may not land on a point occupied by two or more opposing checkers.

- The two dice are played as two separate moves. For example, if a player rolls a 6 and a 4, they may move one checker 6 points and another checker 4 points.



The player may also use both dice to move the same checker in two separate moves, as long as each separate move lands on an open point.



- When doubles are rolled, the rolled number is played four times. For example, if a player rolls two fives, they may make four moves of 5 points each, using any legal combination of checkers.

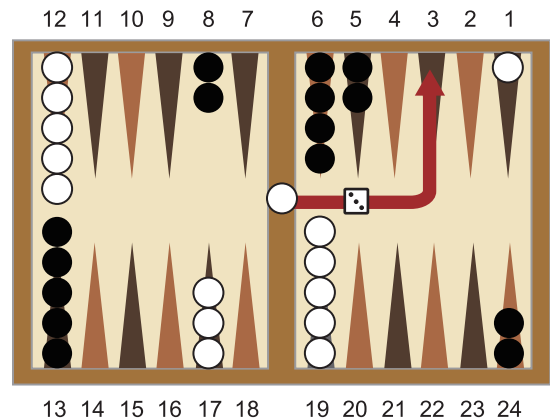
- A player must use both numbers rolled if possible, or all four numbers if doubles are rolled. If only one number can be played, the player must play that number. If either number can be played but not both, the larger number must be played. If no number can be played, the player loses their turn. If a player cannot play all four moves from a double, the player must play as many moves as possible.

Hitting

A point occupied by exactly one opposing checker is called a blot. When a checker is moved onto a blot, the opposing checker is hit and placed on the bar.

When a player has one or more checkers on the bar, they must re-enter those checkers into the opponent's home board before moving any other checker.

A checker enters by using one die number to move from the bar to the matching entry point in the opponent's home board. A roll of 1 enters on the first point, a roll of 2 enters on the second point, and so on through 6. The entry point must be open.



If the checker or checkers on the bar cannot enter onto an open point, the player loses their turn and the checker or checkers remain on the bar. If the player enters all checkers from the bar and has an unused die number, that number must be played if possible. If the player enters some, but not all, checkers from the bar and no further legal entry is possible, the turn ends.

Bearing Off

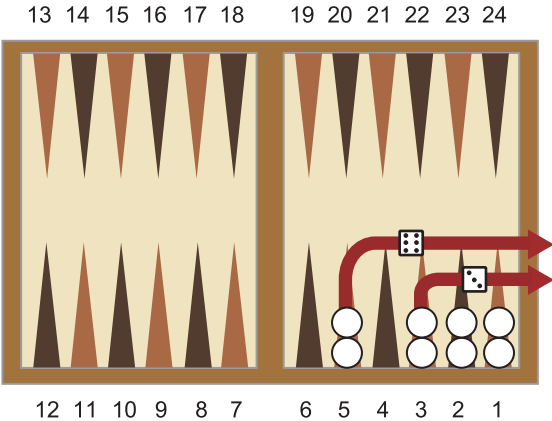
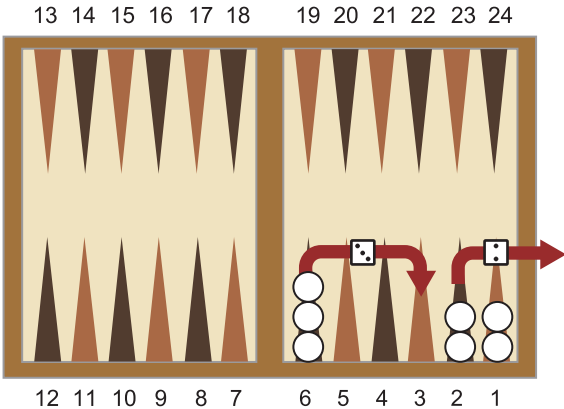
When all of a player's checkers are in their home board, they may begin removing them from the board. This is called bearing off.

A player may bear off a checker by rolling the number that matches the point on which that checker sits. For example, a roll of 5 may bear off a checker from the 5-point.

If there is no checker on the point matching the number rolled, the player must make a legal move with a checker from a higher-numbered point, if possible.

If the number rolled is higher than any occupied point, the player must bear off a checker from the highest occupied point.

If a checker is hit during bearing off, that checker must re-enter from the bar and return to the player's own home board before the player may continue bearing off.



Doubling

A doubling cube is used to increase the stake of the current game. At the start of the game, the doubling cube is placed in the center, usually on the bar, with 64 facing upward to show that neither player owns it.

Before rolling on their turn, a player may offer to double the current stake. The opponent may accept the double, called taking, or refuse it, called dropping. If the opponent drops, they lose the current game at the current stake.

If the opponent takes, the cube is turned to 2 and the opponent becomes the owner of the cube. From then on, only the cube owner may offer the next double, called a redouble. If a redouble is taken, ownership passes to the player who accepted it, and the cube is turned to the next value: 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64.

For casual play, players should agree before the game whether cube values higher than 64 are allowed.

Gammon and Backgammon

At the end of the game, if a player has borne off all fifteen of their checkers and the opponent has borne off at least one checker, the player wins the current stake.

If the opponent has not borne off any checkers, the opponent loses a gammon, which is worth double the current stake.

If the opponent has not borne off any checkers and still has one or more checkers on the bar or in the winner's home board, the opponent loses a backgammon, which is worth triple the current stake.

