

Chapter 1

Rules

Hex is a two-player strategy game, in the same vein as Go or chess. In Hex, players compete to form a connection between opposing sides of the game board. Hex's most appealing aspects are its simple rules and its decisiveness—there are no ties or draws in Hex. Yet despite the simplicity of the rules, the game exhibits surprising strategic depth. This book explains the basics of Hex strategy.

The rules are very simple. The game of Hex is played on a diamond-shaped board of hexagonal tiles (“hexes”) shown in [Diagram 1](#). The board can be of any size. This book is primarily concerned with strategy on the 13×13 board, although I will occasionally use smaller boards in some examples. Two opposing sides (northwest and southeast) are marked black, and the other two (northeast and southwest) are marked white. The four corner tiles belong to both sides.

The players, Black and White, take turns placing stones on empty hexes, with Black playing first. These stones are never moved or captured. The object of the game is to connect your two opposing sides with an unbroken chain of adjacent stones. There are no restrictions on this chain; it may twist and turn. [Diagram 2](#) shows a winning connection for Black.