

*backgammon*



studios  
about this game

This is the "bronze" version of Backgammon, in English. It is a traditional European game with Indian origins and the rules, as well as this design by Ocastudios, are in Public Domain. This game is distributed as a PDF so anyone can download, print and play it. For more information, visit [www.ocastudios.com/rights](http://www.ocastudios.com/rights)

Printing instructions:

- don't print pages 1 and 2,
- print on both sides of the paper (even pages are the backs of odd pages).



Backgammon has a long history of continuous change and improvement, going back at least 5000 years. It is believed the game was created in Persian territory from where it spread (it's also believed it may have Indian influences). It is related to the Egyptian game Senet and the Mesopotamian Royal Game of Ur. It reached China and then Japan, where it became known as ban-suguroku.

It was the Romans, though, that spread the game across Europe – it was then a variant game called Tabula, with the same principles but with a different board and number of dice. Backgammon still uses its Roman name in some parts, such as 'Tavli' in Greek and 'Tavla' in Turkish.

The game, still named Tabula, but already much similar to the modern variant, continued to expand throughout the Middle Ages reaching Northern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula, and became a very popular way of gambling. Around the 17th century the game was renamed backgammon in England.

The game crossed the Atlantic and reached the US where it would reach the present form in the 1920s with the addition of the doubling cube (and the 'Chouette' variant, that enjoyed great popularity in the early 20th century). This simple addition not only made the game more interesting for gambling but also added a whole new layer of strategy.

A story associated to the birth of backgammon tells us that the Indian king Dewisarm sent an emissary to the Persian king Khosrow I with a set of the newly created game of chess, and challenged the Persian king to decipher the game. By the third day a Persian Minister named Wuzurgmihr solves the problem and explains its logic. He then invents the backgammon to challenge back the Indian king, who didn't succeed in deciphering it.

Two players will take turns rolling the dice, which will determine how far his men can move. Each player will try to move his men while blocking the opponent's in order to be the first to remove his men from the board. A game of backgammon can earn a player points depending on its results and bets, and multiple games are usually played in succession until the winning player reaches a predetermined score.

### Understanding the Board

There are 24 markings called the points. When multiple men (pieces) occupy the same point, they are placed in a line. Backgammon is, basically, a racing game in which the men will move through the board trying to reach and ultimately leave your home board. The direction and path the men take when moving is represented on the image.

The game is divided in four quadrants called boards, each composed of six points. Each player has his own home board (we've added dots under these to keep score), and there are two outer boards.

### Setting Up

Each player places one man on each mark of the board, as shown in the image. The doubling cube (the one with numbers) is placed in the middle of the gray bar, marking '64'. In this position it is worth '1'. The cup is designed to hold the dice.

Each player rolls one die and whoever rolls highest goes first. They roll again if they got the same result.

### Moving Pieces

In his turn a player must roll two dice (the pipped ones, not the doubling cube), to determine his movements. The exception is that on the first turn, the beginning player must use the results rolled to determine the players' order.

For each die, the player must move forward any man he chooses a number of points equal to the result. He may move the same man twice but each time is regarded as a separate move.

If the player rolls a double (the two dice have the same result), then he has four moves to play instead of two, each one consisting of the number shown in the dice.

Moving is mandatory. If a player may only move the result of one die but not both, he must do so. If he can only use either one or the other, but not both, he must use the highest result (but if any move would make the other possible, then he must move both). If he can't move neither, then he passes his turn.

A player may move a man to a point if it is empty or if it is occupied by men of his own. He can also do it if the point is occupied by a single opposing man, what is called a 'hitting a blot'. The blot (the opposing piece) is then removed from the point and placed on the gray bar that divides the board.

A man on the bar may re-enter the game through the opponent's side of the board on a regular roll, so a roll of 1 could take him to the first point and a 2 to the second point from the end of the board. But there's a catch: if a player has men on the bar, he must move them into the game first and may not move any other men until then.

When all of a player's men are in his home board, then he may start 'bearing them off', which means removing them from the game by moving them to exactly one space beyond the final point. To do it you must roll the exact number necessary to take a man to the last point +1.

Alternatively a player may bear off the man farthest from the goal by rolling any number greater than his men need to bear off. For example, if only two men remain, one 2 points and the other 3 points away from the end, and the player rolls '5-1', he can use his 5 to bear off the man 3 points away.

When a player bears off all his men, he collects his points, the game is reset and a new play begins.

### Winning the game

Backgammon is usually played for a target score agreed by the players (we recommend 13). When a player wins a game, he scores the number of points marked by the doubling cube (but remember it is worth only 1 if in its initial position, on the gray bar).

While the cube is "centered on 1" (which means, on the gray bar), any player about to roll may raise the current stakes. The opponent must then 'take' the new stakes or 'drop' the game. If he 'takes' it then he receives the double cube and places it at the right of the gray bar, marking 2. This means the game is now worth 2 points and only he can double the stakes again.

If he does raise the stakes and the opponent takes it, the cube will be placed at his opponent's right side of the board, now marking 4. The stakes may be doubled indefinitely, even if the cube only marks up to 64.

If a player 'drops' a raise in stakes, the game is reset and his opponent receives the previous score marked

by the cube (if he had raised it to 8, for example, and the opponent dropped, he would earn 4).

In this version, the dots on the board are used to keep the score of each player, using the pyramid pins. With each point a player may move his pin one dot to the right.

### Gammon and backgammon

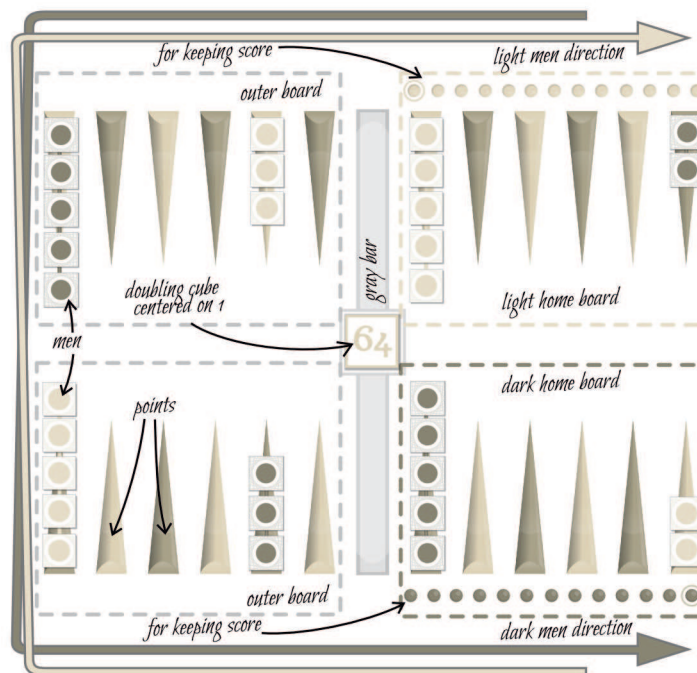
If a player bears off all of his men before the opponent manages to bear any one of his, he has won a 'gammon', which means he earns twice the score marked by the doubling cube. If he wins a gammon while the opponent has men on the bar, it is a 'backgammon' and is worth three times the value on the cube.

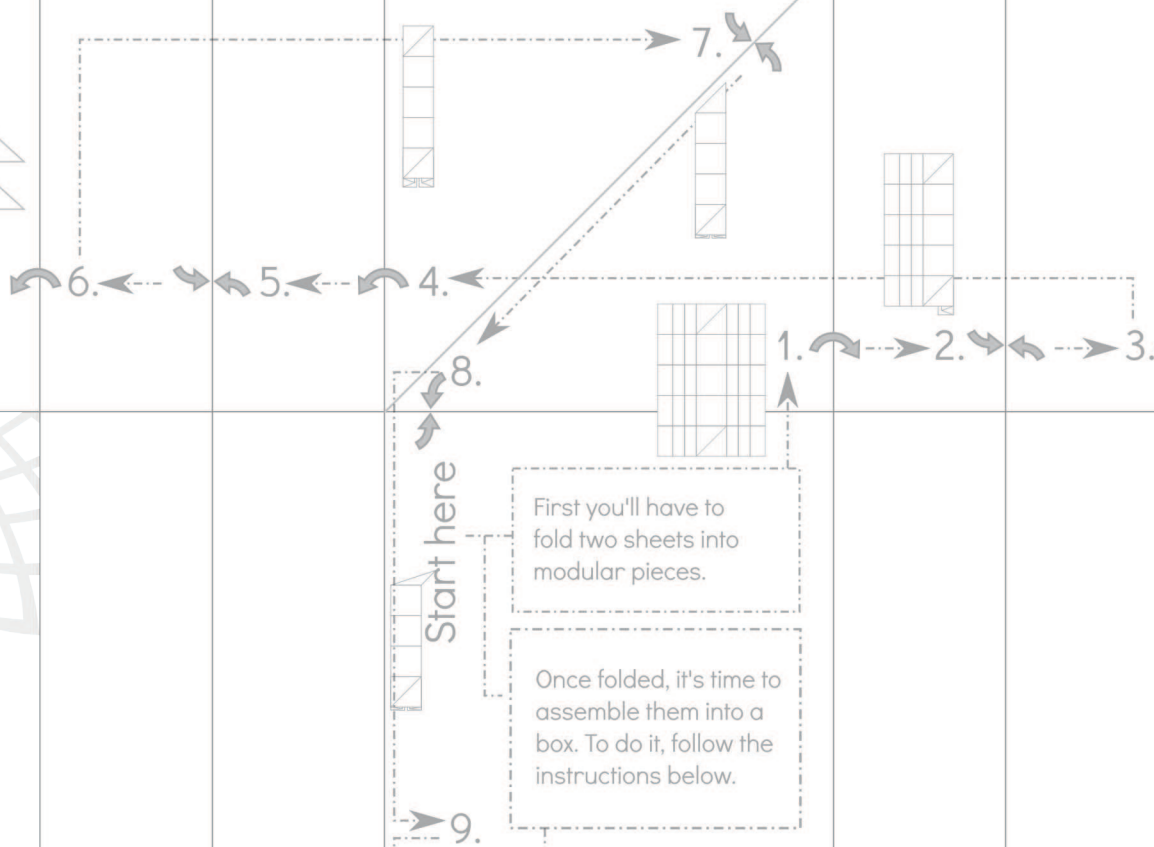
### Common Optional Rules

If players roll double on the first roll, the stakes are automatically doubled.

If a player doubles the stakes, the opponent may choose to 'beaver', which means doubling it again while still keeping the cube.

Gammons and Backgammons only count if the stakes have been doubled at least once – which is called the 'Jacoby rule'.





visit  
ocastudios.com



want to share your opinion?  
write to  
oca@ocastudios.com  
we appreciate your feedback

Instructions for  
assembling the box

I. Place the sheets as an X.



II. Fold up two sides next  
to each other.



10.

III. Lock a tab into  
the pocket of the  
tab to its left.



IV. Fold up the  
remaining sides,  
locking them as  
per above.



Warning! The box is very resistant, so  
open it gently as not to tear the paper.

11.

12.



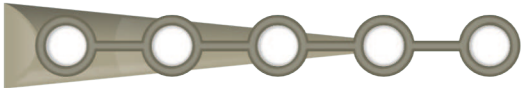
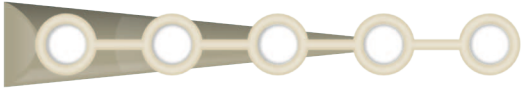
number of players	2	ages	8+
duration of a match*	30'	duration of assembly	10'

\*It takes 30' to learn the game. Durations may vary.

ludos classicus

This game is part of a series of classics in  
public domain. It is designed by ocastudios, but  
the rules are kept as unaltered as possible.

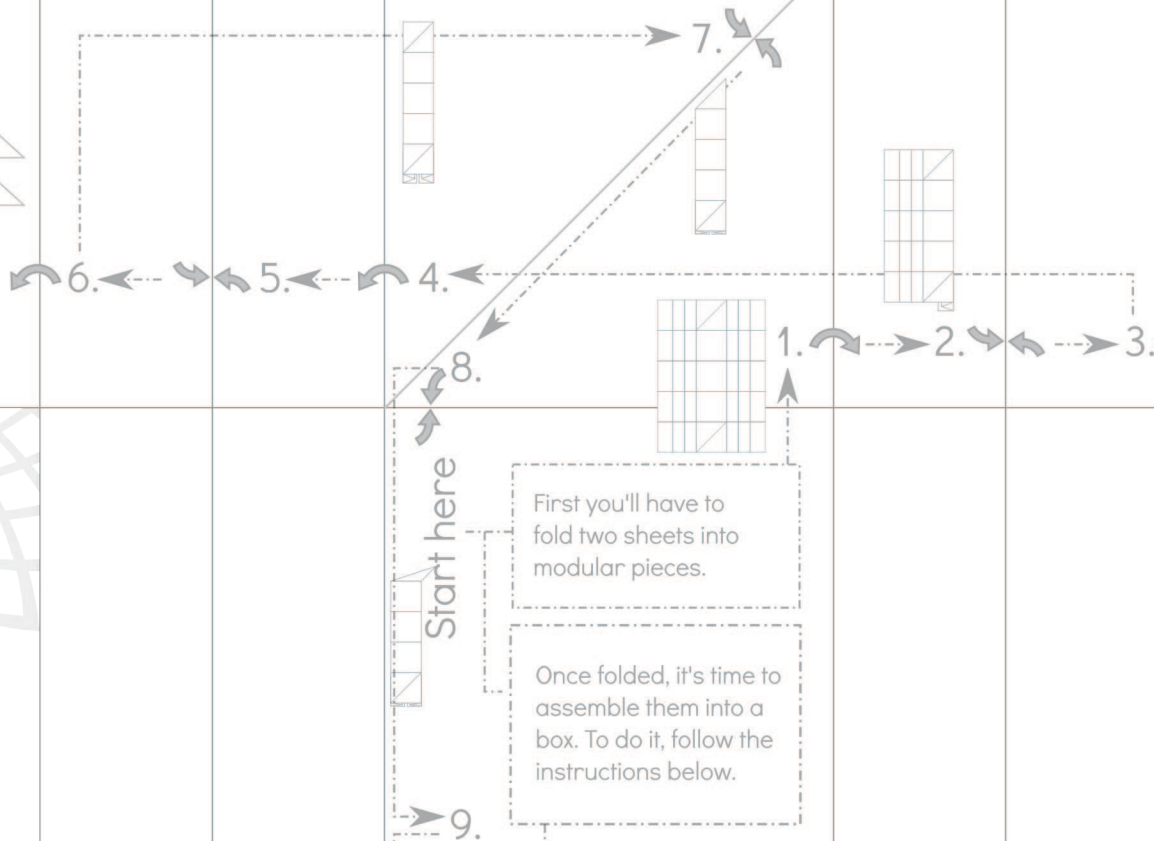




backgammon







visit  
ocastudios.com

First you'll have to fold two sheets into modular pieces.

Once folded, it's time to assemble them into a box. To do it, follow the instructions below.

Start here

Instructions for assembling the box

I. Place the sheets as an X.



II. Fold up two sides next to each other.



10.

III. Lock a tab into the pocket of the tab to its left.



IV. Fold up the remaining sides, locking them as per above.



Warning! The box is very resistant, so open it gently as not to tear the paper.

11.

12.



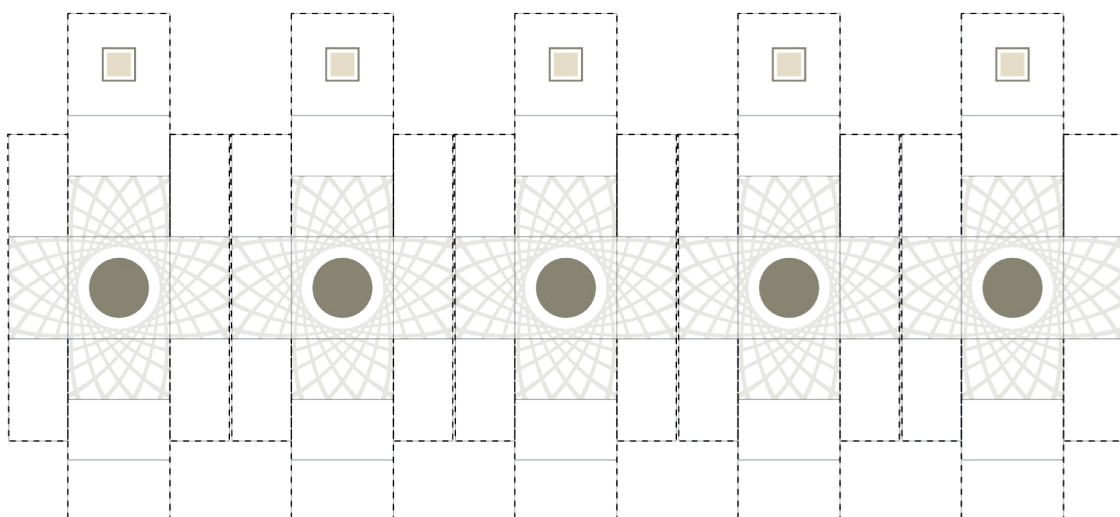
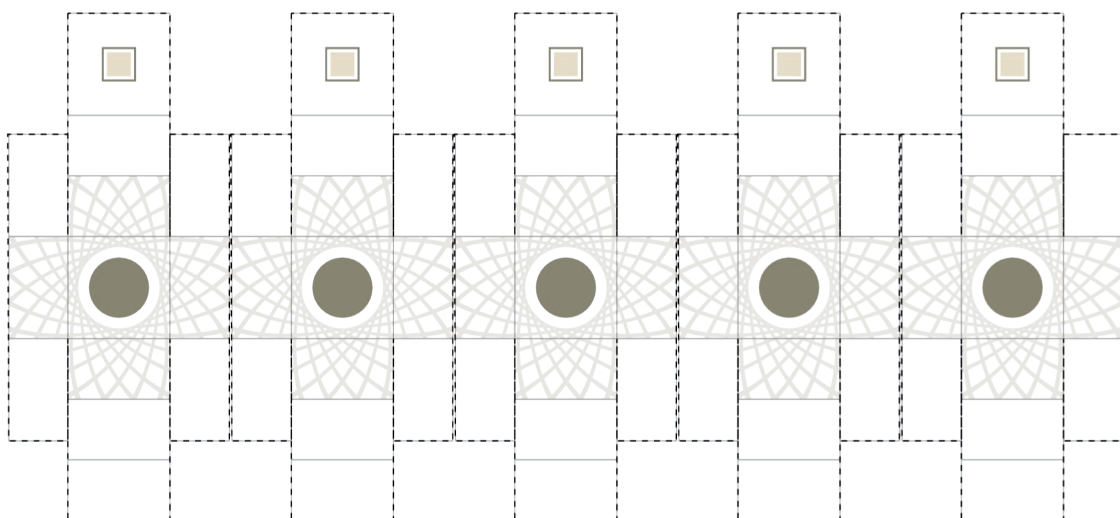
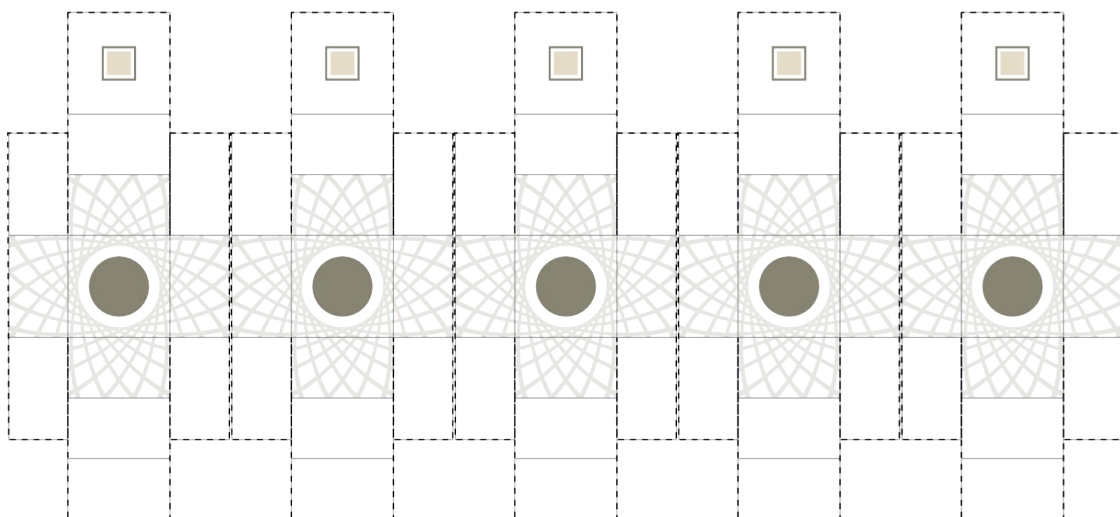
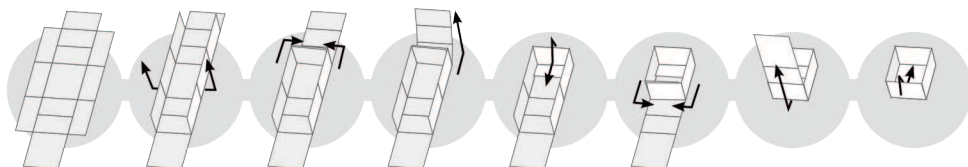
number of players	2	ages	8+
duration of a match*	30'	duration of assembly	10'

\*It takes 30' to learn the game. Durations may vary.

ludos classics

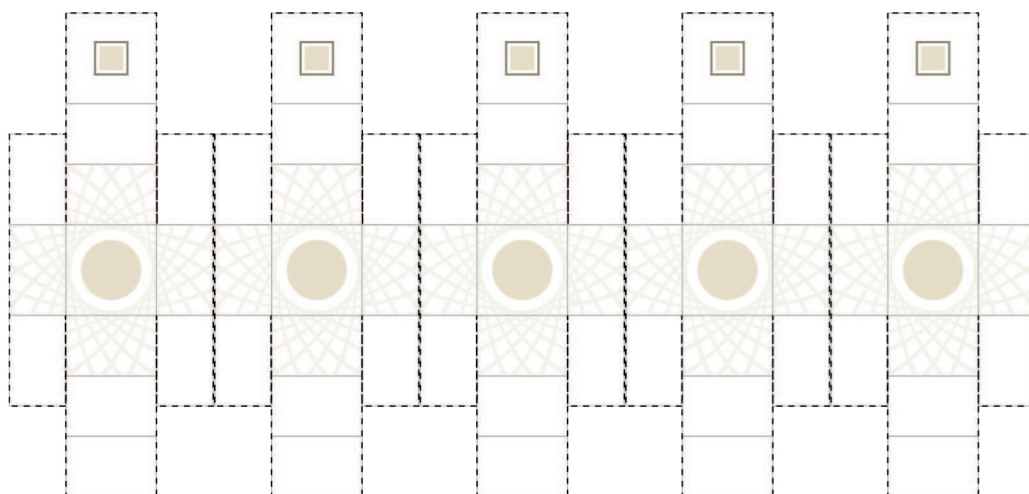
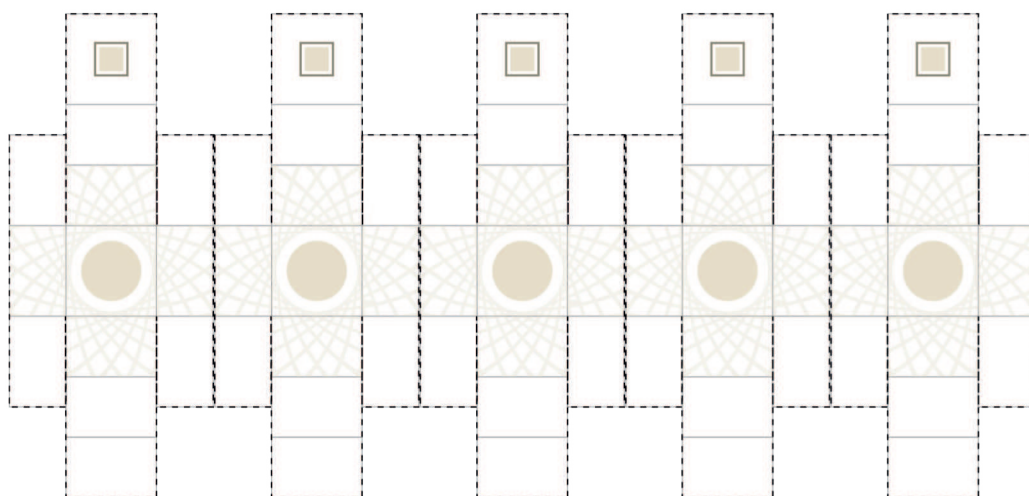
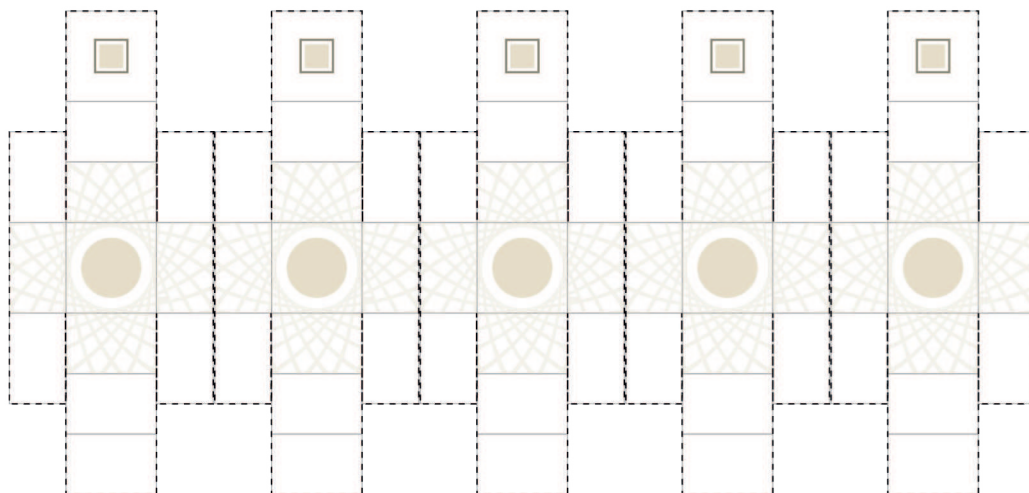
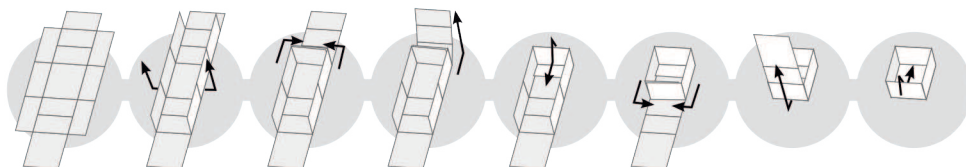
This game is part of a series of classics in public domain. It is designed by ocastudios, but the rules are kept as unaltered as possible.



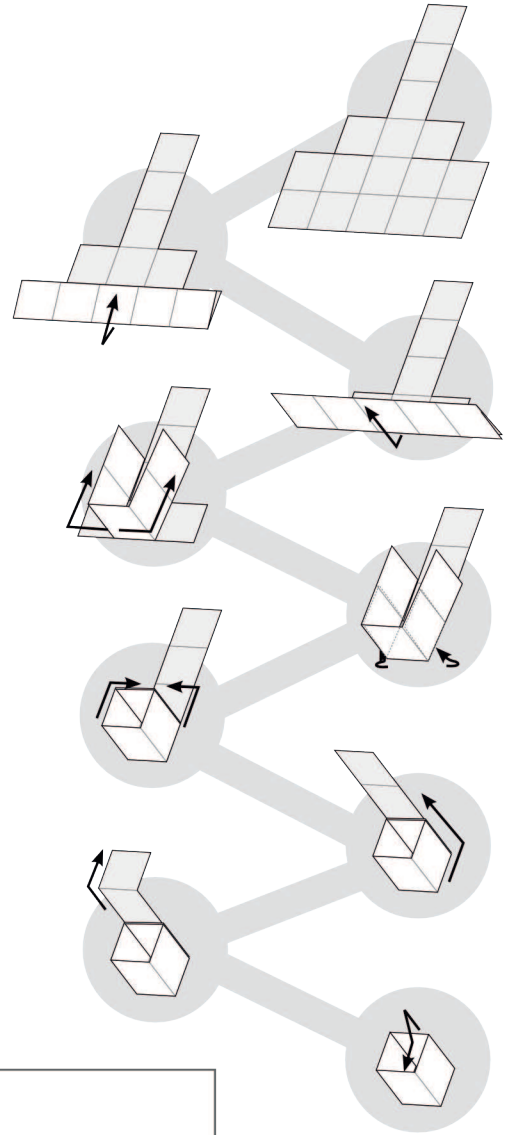




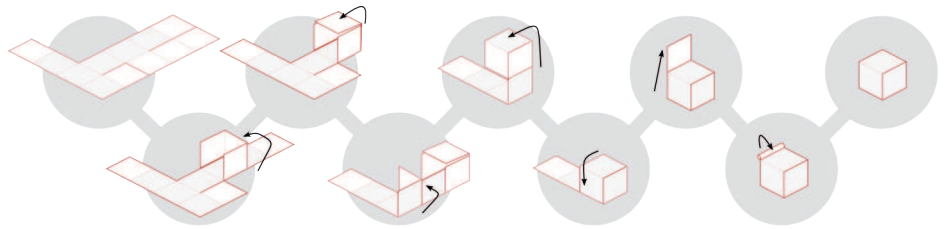












64	4		
16	16		
2	32		
8	8		
2	4	64	32

