

TRADITIONAL BOARD GAME SERIES

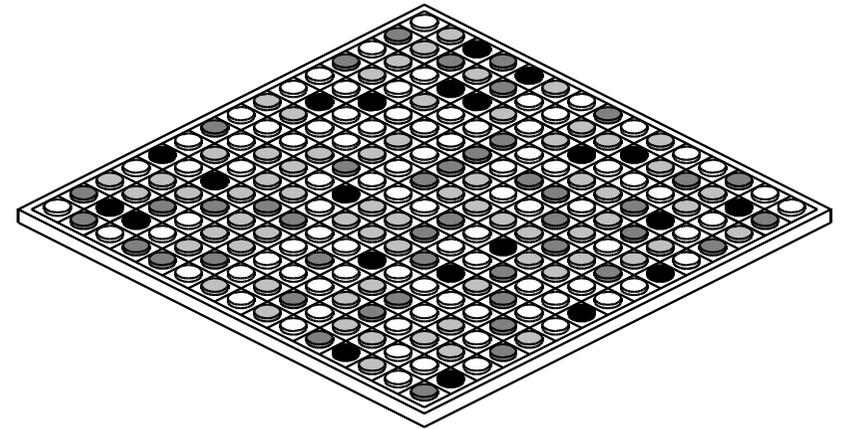
The Traditional Board Game Series is a collection of leaflets about games that have amused the world over thousands of years. Leaflet #15 contains a list of games covered in the first fifteen leaflets, and here is presented a list of the next fifteen.

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|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 16. Xiang Qi | 24. Brandub |
| 17. Other Morris Games | 25. Agon |
| 18. Alquerque Variants | 26. Fanorona |
| 19. Seega | 27. Kerala |
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LEAPFROG

by Damian Walker



INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

Leapfrog is one of those games about whose origins we know very little. It was invented some time before 1898, as the game historian H. J. R. Murray invented his own variation on it in that year.

It is an unusual game in that any number of people can play, almost without limit. This makes it an excellent game for large parties, without the need to form teams or exclude anybody from play.

HOW TO PLAY

Here is described both versions of the game, the old version described by Murray and the new version invented by him.

Starting the Game

1. The game is played on a large square board, itself split into squares. Various sizes are possible, but the board is usually between 15 and 18 squares on a side.

2. In the old version of the game, each square is filled with a piece, all pieces being undifferentiated, as shown in Illustration 1.

3. In the new version of the game, each square is filled at random with a coloured piece. The colours of the pieces are 1 green for every 2 red, for every 3 yellow, for every 4

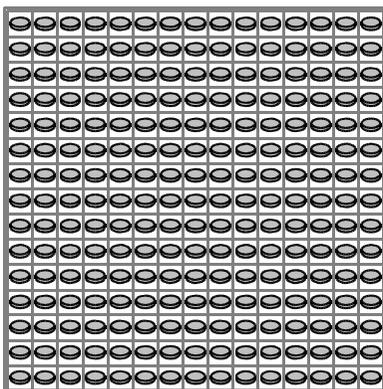


Illustration 1: the old version of leapfrog.

white. Thus a 15×15 board would have 22 green, 45 red, 68 yellow and 90 white pieces.

4. At the start of the game, each player captures a piece from the board by simply removing it.

Movement and Capture

5. Players then take turns to move a piece.

6. A piece moves by jumping over an adjacent piece, in any of the 4 horizontal or vertical directions, into an empty space beyond. The piece over which the jump was made is captured by the player.

7. If possible, the player may make further jumps with the same piece, capturing further pieces as in

draughts.

Ending the Game

8. The game is finished when no more jumps are possible.

9. In the old game, the winner is the player who has captured the most pieces.

10. In the new game, the pieces are valued at 1 for white, 2 for yellow, 3 for red and 4 for green. The winner is the player who has cap-

tured the pieces of most value.

An Alternative Method of Play

Murray in his account of the game does not specify that the moves of the pieces are limited to the horizontal and vertical directions. This is implied by the game's resemblance to peg solitaire. The adventurous reader might like to experiment with the addition of diagonal jumps to the game.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained about this game from the following:

Murray, H. J. R. *A History of Board-Games Other Than Chess*, pp. 93-94. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952.

Parlett, D. *The Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 156. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

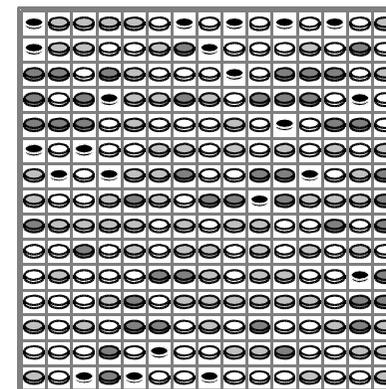


Illustration 2: Murray's version of leapfrog.