

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about ming mang can be obtained from the following books.

Bell, R. C. *Discovering Old Board Games*, pp. 37-39. Aylesbury: Shire Publications Ltd., 1980.

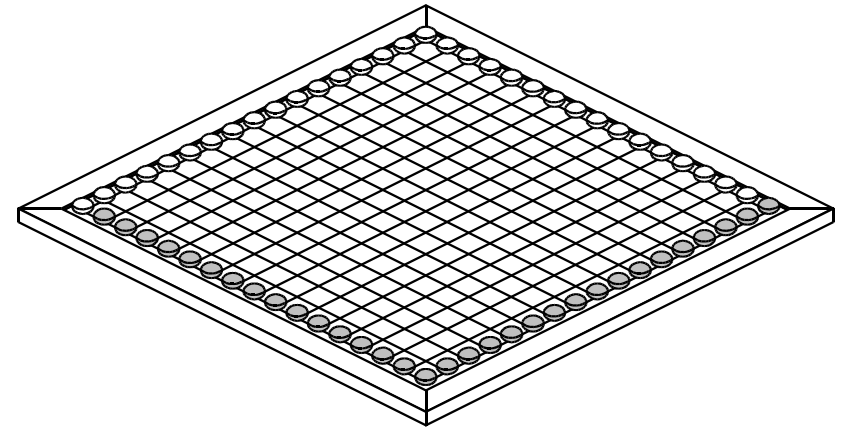
Bell, R. C. *Games to Play*, p. 42. London: Michael Joseph Limited, 1988.

Parlett, D. *The Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 180. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

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MING MANG

by Damian Walker



INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

Ming mang is a traditional board game from Tibet. It was popular with Tibetan monks before they were driven out by the Chinese invasion in 1959. As the monks have taken refuge in other places around the world, they have taken the game with them and from there it has since gained wider appeal.

The game's capture rule is very similar to the more well known game of *reversi*, or *Othello*. Rows of pieces are captured by sandwiching them, and when captured, pieces change ownership and colour. It is

therefore possible that *ming mang* was an inspiration for *reversi*.

Ming mang is played on a board looking a bit like a *go* board, and pieces are placed on the lines in the same way. Traditionally, it was played on a board of 17x17 points, but the size is variable. *Ming mang* boards are uncommon outside Tibet, so the game is sometimes played with the pieces and board for the more widespread game of *go*. It can also be played on a standard draughts board with 28 pieces each side.

HOW TO PLAY

The game is played by two players on a square board marked with a grid of lines. For the purpose of this leaflet the traditional board of 17 by 17 points will be used. Each player will need 64 pieces, 32 of which start on the board and 32 are kept in store.

Beginning the Game

1. At the start of the game, each player has half his

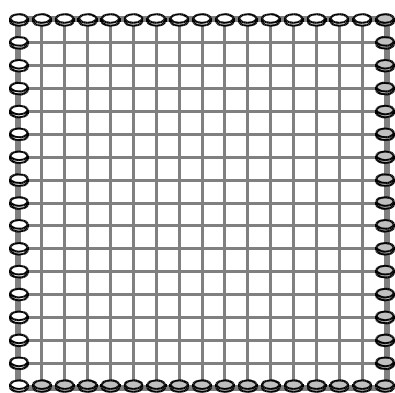


Illustration 1: the traditional 17x17 *ming mang* board, with pieces set out ready for play.

pieces filling two adjacent edges of the board, as shown in Illustration 1.

Moving the Pieces

2. Black takes the first move.

3. Each turn a player moves a single piece along a marked line as far as he pleases (see Illustration 2).

4. A piece may not jump over another.

5. A piece

must come to rest on an empty point.

Capturing Enemies

6. A player may capture a row of enemy pieces by placing two of his own around it, one at each end of the row (see Illustration 2).

7. Such rows of pieces must be horizontal or vertical. It is not possible to capture diagonal rows.

8. When captured, enemy pieces are replaced by pieces of the capturing player's own colour. There are always, therefore, 64

pieces on the board.

Ending the Game

9. The game is over when one player cannot move. This can be for one of the following reasons:

(i). the player has no pieces left, or

(ii). the player has pieces but they are trapped and unable to move.

10. The player who cannot move loses the game and his opponent is declared the winner.

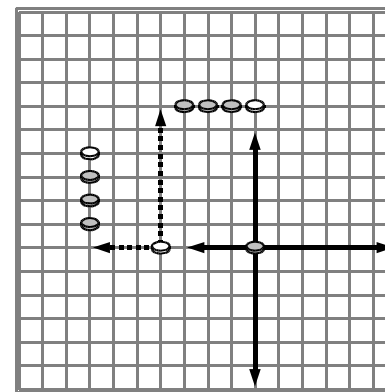


Illustration 2: some available moves. The black piece can move any distance along the solid lines indicated. If the white piece moves to either of the squares at the end of the dotted lines, a row three black pieces will be captured.