



BACKGAMMON

VARIANT LIBRARY

Five thousand years of race, risk, and probability

8

VARIANTS

2

PLAYERS

8+

AGE

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VARIANT LIBRARY

Backgammon is one of the oldest board games in the world, with origins traced to ancient Mesopotamia approximately 5,000 years ago. The family — known historically as Tables games — combines racing, blocking, and probability in a game where dice introduce randomness but deep skill determines long-term results. The doubling cube, introduced in the 1920s, added a betting layer that transformed competitive play.

This library includes 8 playable variants from the Backgammon family.

STANDARD RULES

- ♦ [Standard Backgammon](#) — Classic rules: 15 pieces per side, hit and bar, doubling cube, bear-off to win

REGIONAL FORMS

- ♦ [Nardi](#) — Caucasian and Russian variant: no hitting, pieces travel the same direction, no doubling cube
- ♦ [Plakoto](#) — Greek: pin instead of hit — one piece traps an opponent piece rather than sending it to the bar
- ♦ [Fevga](#) — Greek: single-file blocking, pieces advance in one direction, no blots allowed

AMERICAN FORMS

- ♦ [Acey-Deucey](#) — US military tradition: rolling 1-2 grants any doublet free; pieces enter one at a time

SHORT FORMS

- ♦ [Hypergammon](#) — 3 pieces per side on the last three points; fast tactical game used in tournaments
- ♦ [Nackgammon](#) — 2 extra blots on the 23-point; slower opening, more complex middle game

MULTIPLAYER

- ♦ [Chouette](#) — One player versus a consulting team; the box rotates on a win; doubling cube dynamics multiply



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BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 1 OF 8

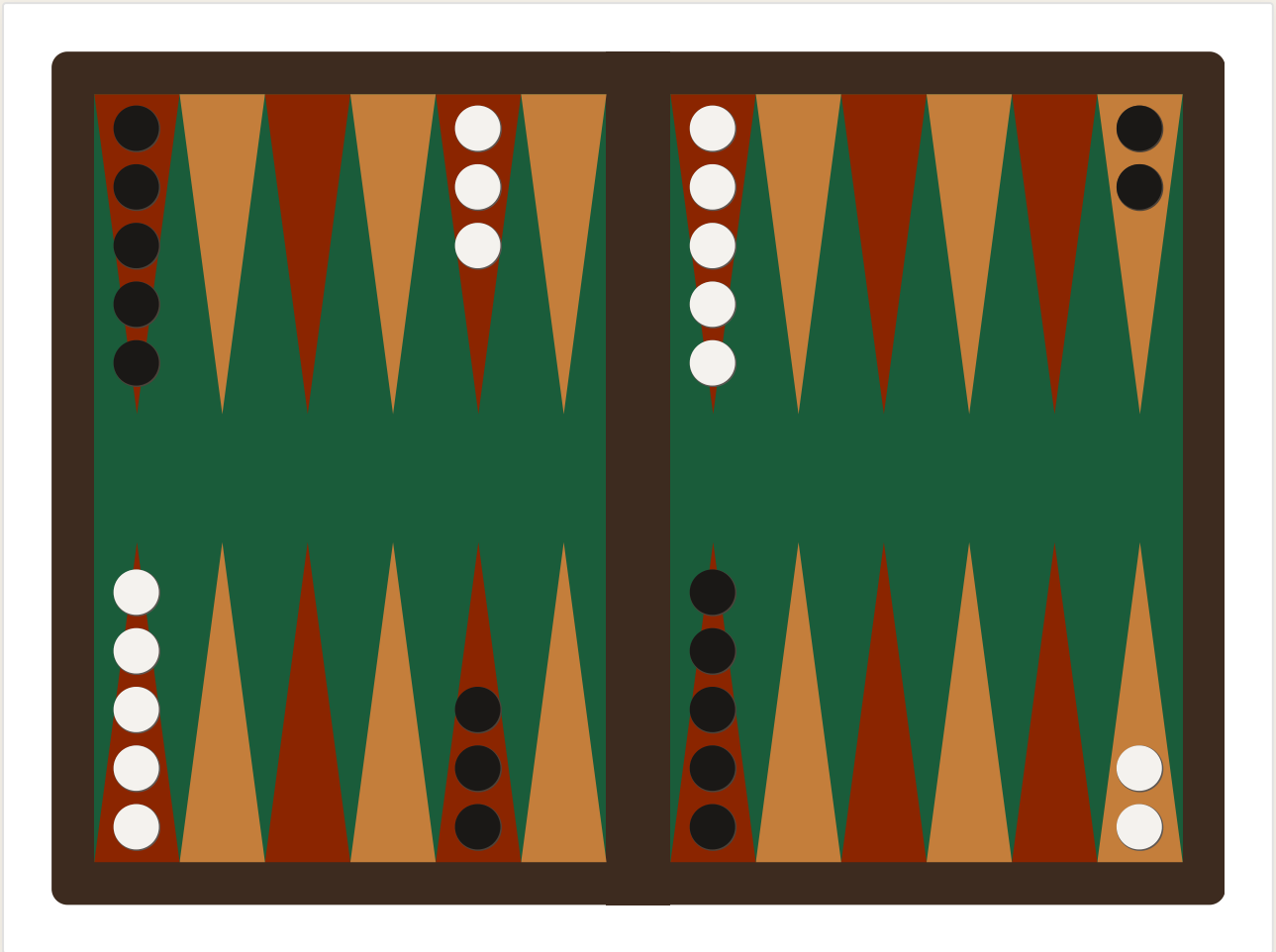
Standard Backgammon

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

STANDARD BACKGAMMON

The internationally recognised form of Backgammon, governed by the rules of the US Backgammon Federation and the World Backgammon Federation. Pieces race around a 24-point board in opposite directions. Hitting blots sends them to the bar; the doubling cube creates strategic depth around risk and commitment.



Standard Backgammon — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=standard>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24 points (triangles), bar in the centre, bear-off tray at each end
Checkers	30	15 per player in contrasting colours
Dice	4	2 per player
Doubling cube	1	Faces show 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64

SETUP

Starting position:

- ♦ 2 checkers on each player's 24-point
- ♦ 5 checkers on each player's 13-point
- ♦ 3 checkers on each player's 8-point
- ♦ 5 checkers on each player's 6-point

Points are numbered 1–24 from each player's perspective. Your 1-point is your home board near the bear-off tray; your 24-point is furthest away.

MOVEMENT

Both players roll one die each to determine who moves first; higher roll goes first (reroll on ties). The first player uses the two dice already rolled as their opening move.

On each turn, roll both dice and move checkers forward (toward your 1-point) by the number shown on each die. Doublets (both dice the same) give four moves of that number.

Legal moves:

- ♦ A checker may move to any open point (one not occupied by two or more opponent checkers).
- ♦ A point with exactly one opponent checker is a blot — you may land on it to hit.
- ♦ If no move is possible for a die, that die is forfeited. Forfeit as few dice as possible.

HITTING

Landing on a blot sends the opponent's checker to the bar. A player with checkers on the bar must re-enter them before any other move. Re-entry is onto the opponent's home board (points 19–24 from the entering player's perspective) by rolling the corresponding number. If re-entry is blocked, the player's turn is lost.

BEARING OFF

Once all 15 of your checkers are in your home board (points 1–6), you may bear them off. Roll and remove a checker from the matching point, or move a checker forward. If no checker is on the exact point rolled, you must move a checker from a higher-numbered point; if no higher checker exists, remove from the highest occupied point.

DOUBLING CUBE

At the start of a turn, before rolling, a player may offer to double the current stake. The opponent may accept (taking ownership of the cube) or refuse (conceding the game at the current stake). The cube shows the current multiplier. The owner of the cube may redouble at any later point.

WINNING

The first player to bear off all 15 checkers wins. If the opponent has not yet borne off any checkers, the winner scores a gammon (worth double). If the opponent still has checkers on the bar or in the winner's home board, the winner scores a backgammon (worth triple).

ATTRIBUTION

Standard Backgammon. Public domain rules. Source: US Backgammon Federation official rules; Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 2 OF 8

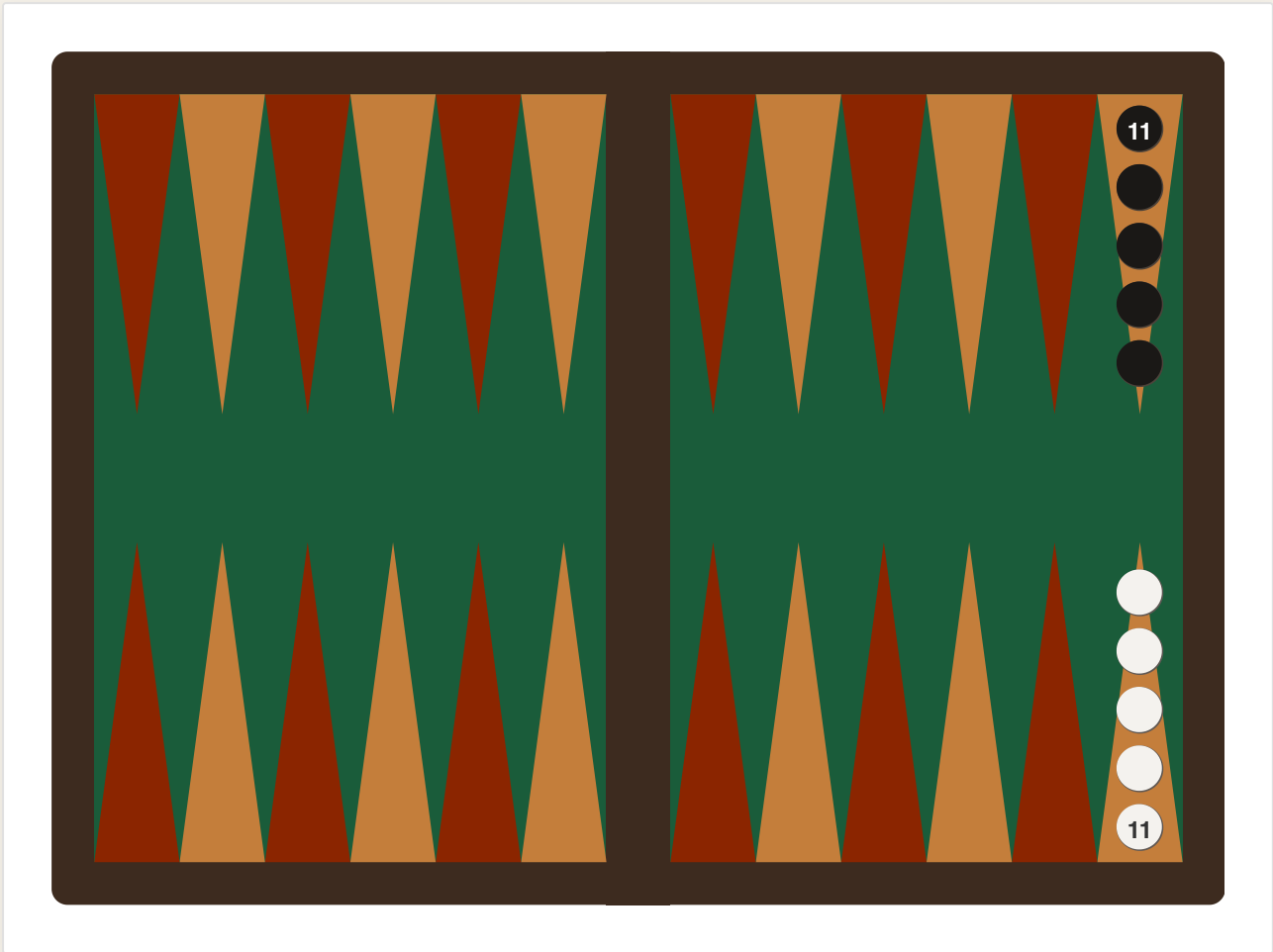
Nardi

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

NARDI

The dominant Backgammon variant in Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Also called Long Nardi to distinguish it from Short Nardi (which is closer to standard Backgammon). Without hitting, the game emphasises blocking and efficient racing over tactical aggression. Widely played in cafés and parks across the Caucasus.



Nardi — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=nardi>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player
Dice	4	2 per player

SETUP

Both players start with all 15 checkers on point 24 (from each player's perspective). Checkers move in the same direction: counter-clockwise, from point 24 to point 1 for both players.

This means both players enter the board at the same point and travel in the same direction, which creates blocking opportunities but eliminates hitting.

MOVEMENT

Both players roll one die to determine first player; higher roll goes first. On each turn, roll two dice and move forward by those amounts (one checker each, or one checker twice).

Key differences from standard Backgammon:

- ♦ **No hitting:** You may never land on a point occupied by any opponent checker. A point with 1 or more opponent checkers is closed to you.
- ♦ **Blocking:** You may stack your own checkers on a point to block the opponent, but you cannot move through a blocked point.
- ♦ **Mars rule (optional):** If you bear off all 15 pieces before the opponent bears off any, you score a mars (double win).

PRIME STRATEGY

Building a contiguous block of 6 points (a prime) is the primary strategic concept. A prime traps opponent checkers behind it — they cannot advance until the prime is broken.

BEARING OFF

Once all 15 of your checkers are in your home board (points 1–6 from your perspective), bear off as in standard Backgammon. If both dice can be used, you must use both.

WINNING

First player to bear off all 15 checkers wins. No doubling cube in standard Nardi.

ATTRIBUTION

Nardi (Long Nardi). Traditional game, Caucasus and Russia. Public domain. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 3 OF 8

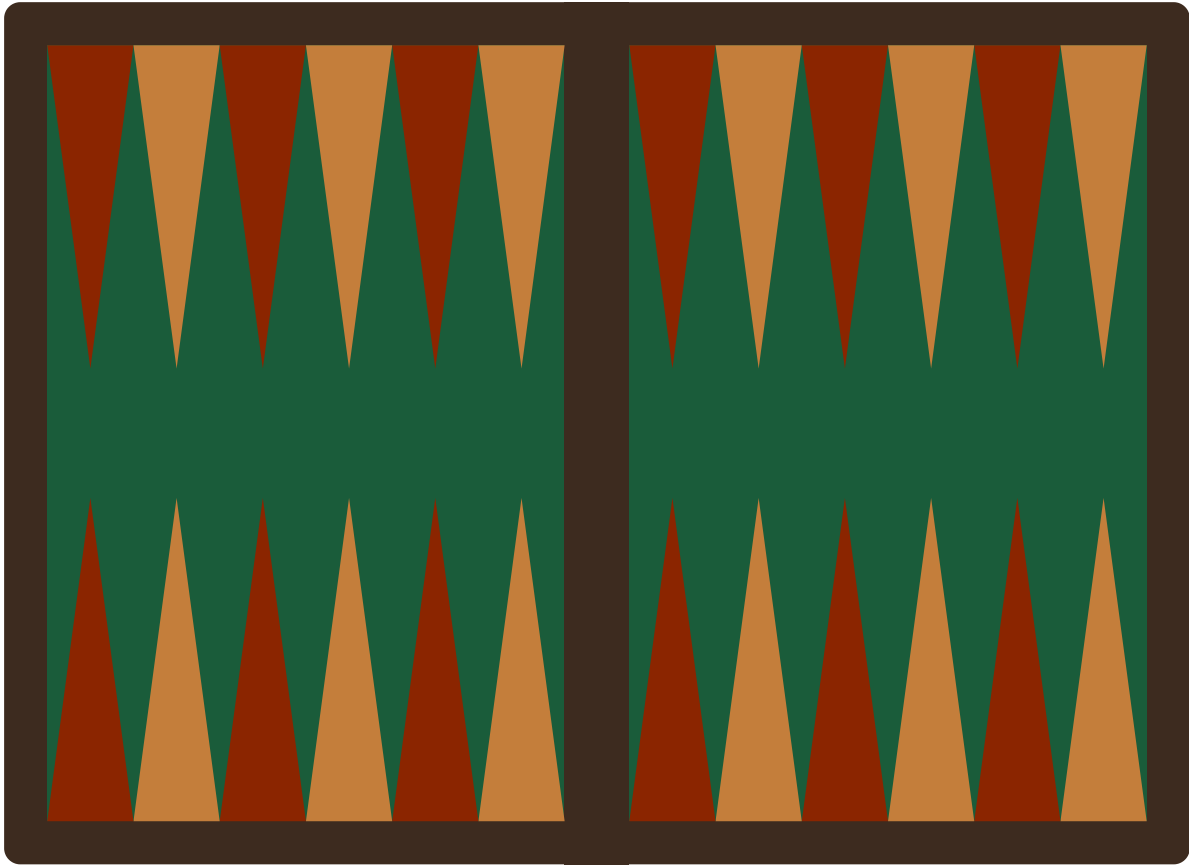
Acey-Deucey

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

ACEY-DEUCEY

A variant of Backgammon with roots in the United States military, popular in the Navy and Marines from the early 20th century. Acey-Deucey starts with all pieces off the board; each piece must enter individually. The defining rule is that rolling a 1-2 (acey-deucey) rewards the roller with any doublet of their choice played for free, plus an additional roll.



Acey-Deucey — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=acey-deucey>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player
Dice	4	2 per player

SETUP

All pieces begin off the board. Players must enter all pieces before they can move them around the board. Unlike standard Backgammon, no pieces start on the board.

ENTRY

On each turn, roll both dice. You must use the numbers rolled to enter pieces from off the board into the opponent's home board (points 19–24 from your perspective). You may enter one piece per die if both numbers are open, or one piece if only one is open. You cannot make any other move until all your pieces have entered.

If neither number allows entry (both points blocked), your turn is lost.

MOVEMENT

Once a piece has entered, it moves around the board in standard fashion toward your home board (points 1–6). Hitting blots is allowed — hit pieces return to off-board and must re-enter.

ACEY-DEUCEY ROLL

If you roll a 1 and a 2:

- 1 Play the 1-2 normally (move one piece 1, another piece 2, or one piece 3).
- 2 Announce any doublet (1-1 through 6-6) and play four moves of that number.
- 3 Take an additional roll and play it normally.

If any part of the acey-deucey bonus cannot be played, the unplayable portion is forfeited.

DOUBLETS

Doublets are played as four moves (as in standard Backgammon). Doublets do not grant an extra roll (only the acey-deucey roll does).

BEARING OFF

Once all 15 of your pieces are in your home board, bear off normally.

WINNING

First player to bear off all 15 pieces wins.

ATTRIBUTION

Acey-Deucey. US military tradition, early 20th century. Public domain. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 4 OF 8

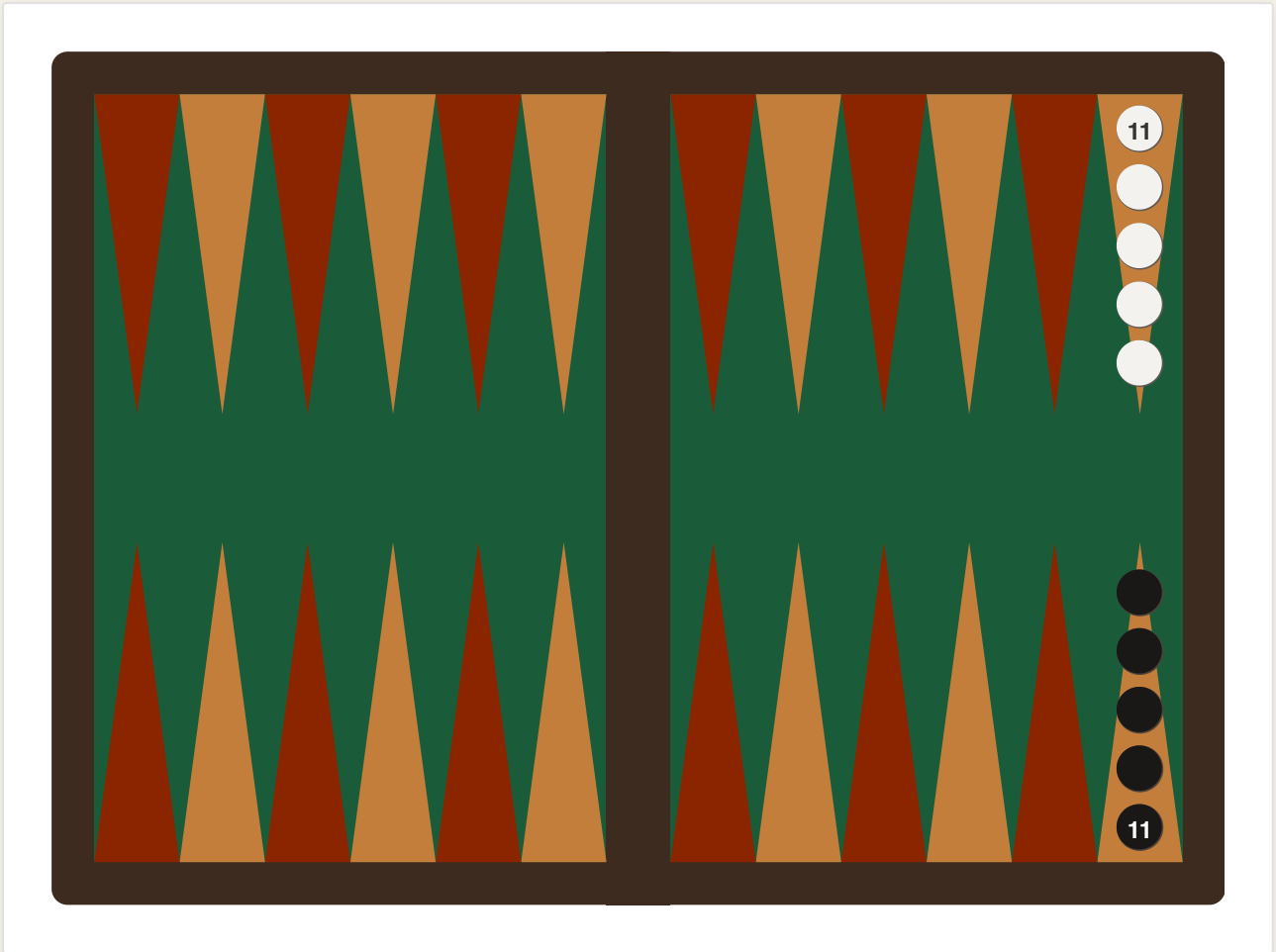
Plakoto

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

PLAKOTO

A Greek Backgammon variant in which landing on a lone opponent piece does not send it to the bar — instead, it pins it. A pinned piece cannot move until the piece pinning it moves away. Plakoto is one of the three Greek games (with Fevga and Portes) played together as Tavli, a set of three consecutive games scored together.



Plakoto — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=plakoto>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player
Dice	4	2 per player

SETUP

Both players start with all 15 checkers on point 24 (from each player’s perspective). Both players move in the same direction: counter-clockwise, from point 24 to point 1.

MOVEMENT

Movement is the same as standard Backgammon except for the pinning rule below. Roll two dice each turn and move forward.

PINNING

If you land on a point occupied by exactly one opponent checker, that checker is pinned beneath yours. The pinned piece cannot move for as long as your piece remains on that point.

- ♦ A pinned piece is still on the board but immobile.
- ♦ You may stack additional pieces on a pinned piece. The opponent's piece remains pinned until all of your pieces leave that point.
- ♦ You cannot pin a piece that is already occupied by two or more opponent pieces (that point is closed to you).

WINNING IMMEDIATELY

If you pin the opponent's last piece on their starting point (their 24-point), you win immediately without completing bear-off.

BLOCKING

A point with 2 or more of your checkers is closed. Opponent pieces cannot land on it. Pinning is only possible on points with exactly 1 opponent piece.

BEARING OFF

Once all 15 of your pieces are in your home board (points 1–6), bear off normally.

WINNING

First to bear off all 15 pieces wins. Winning while the opponent's last piece is pinned on their starting point is also a win.

ATTRIBUTION

Plakoto. Traditional game, Greece. Part of the Tavli family. Public domain. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 5 OF 8

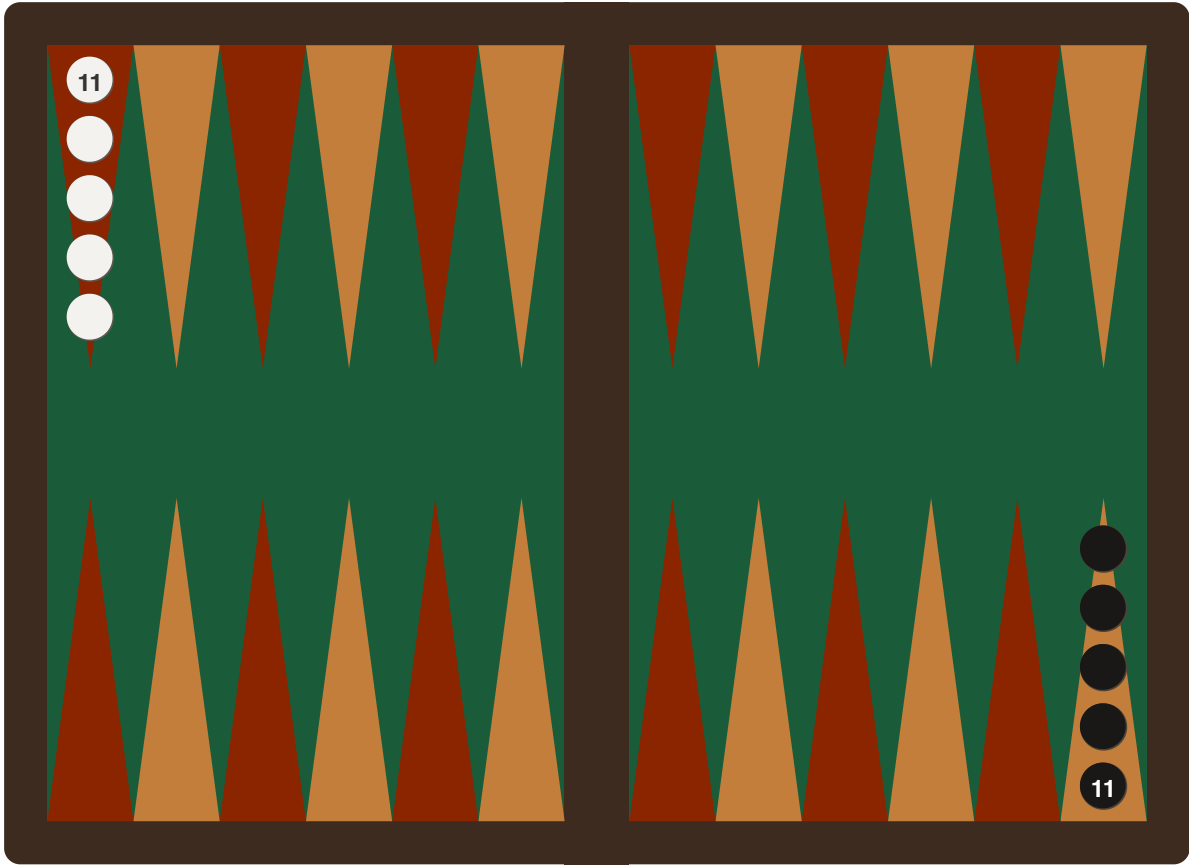
Fevga

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

FEVGA

A Greek Backgammon variant in which a point occupied by even a single piece is closed to the opponent — there is no such thing as a blot in Fevga. The result is a pure blocking and racing game. Fevga is the third game in the Greek Tavli set, played after Portes (standard Backgammon) and Plakoto.



Fevga — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=fevga>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player
Dice	4	2 per player

SETUP

Both players start with all 15 checkers on their own 24-point (opposite starting positions, same as standard Backgammon). Players move in opposite directions.

MOVEMENT

Roll two dice each turn and move forward (toward your 1-point).

No blots: Every point occupied by one or more of your pieces is immediately closed to the opponent. There is no concept of a blot — you cannot be hit and you cannot hit.

Blocking: Since any single piece closes a point, one-piece blockades are powerful from the start of the game.

First-piece restriction: You cannot move any checker until your first checker has cleared the opponent's starting point (their 24-point, which is your 1-point). In practice, you must get at least one checker past the opponent's home board before advancing others fully.

BEARING OFF

Once all 15 of your pieces are in your home board (points 1–6), bear off normally.

WINNING

First to bear off all 15 pieces wins.

ATTRIBUTION

Fevga. Traditional game, Greece. Part of the Tavli family. Public domain. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 6 OF 8

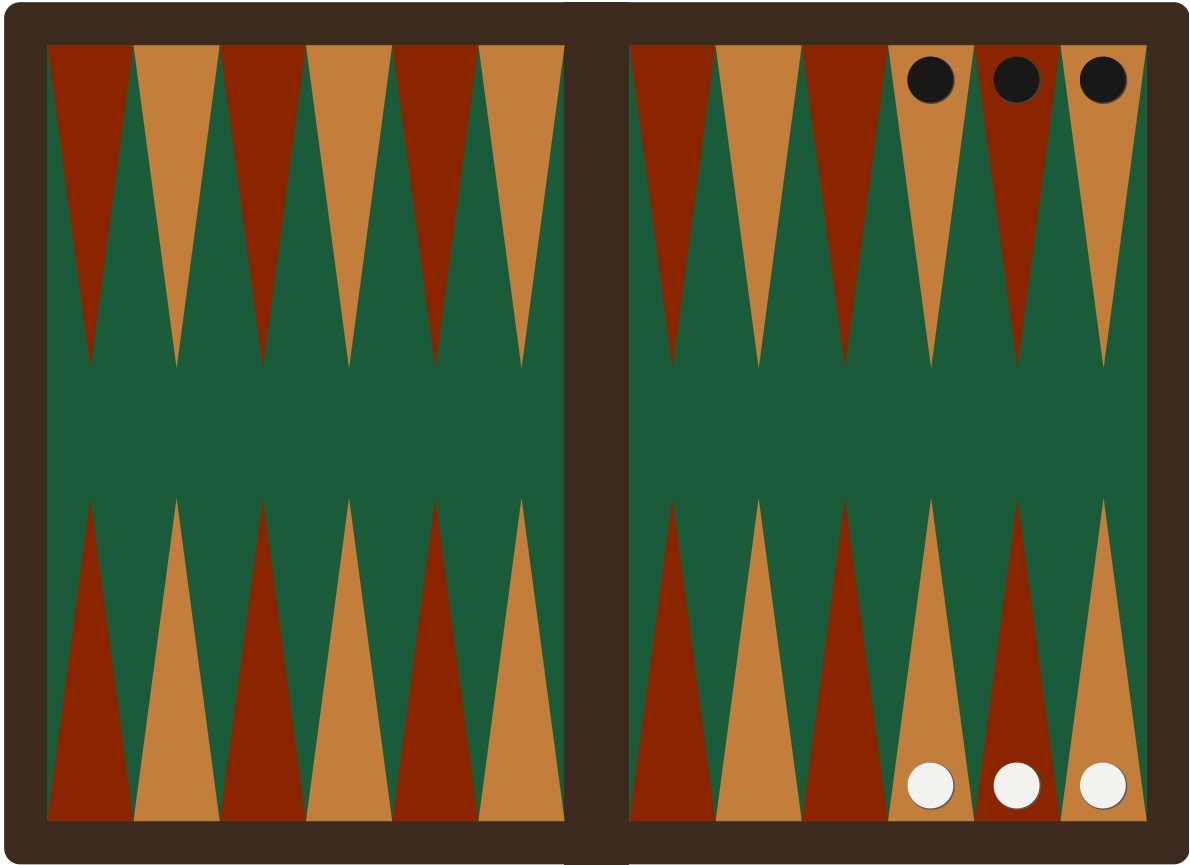
Hypergammon

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

HYPERGAMMON

A short-form Backgammon variant using only 3 pieces per side, placed on the last three points of the home board. Games are dramatically faster than standard Backgammon — often finishing in under 15 minutes — while retaining the full rules including hitting, the bar, and bearing off. Hypergammon is fully solved computationally: perfect play has been calculated for all positions. Used in speed tournaments and for teaching probability concepts.



Hypergammon — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=hypergammon>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	6	3 per player
Dice	4	2 per player
Doubling cube	1	Optional

SETUP

Each player places 3 checkers on their final three home board points:

- ♦ 1 checker on the 1-point
- ♦ 1 checker on the 2-point
- ♦ 1 checker on the 3-point

These pieces are already in the home board but must be borne off in the usual way — they cannot simply be removed immediately; each die must allow the bear-off.

RULES

All standard Backgammon rules apply:

- ♦ Roll two dice each turn and move pieces forward.
- ♦ Hitting a blot sends it to the bar; must re-enter in opponent's home board before any other move.
- ♦ Doubles give four moves.
- ♦ Doubling cube may be used (optional in casual play).

BEARING OFF

Since all pieces start in the home board, bearing off begins immediately. Roll and remove a piece from the matching point. If no piece is on the rolled point, move a piece from a higher point toward a lower point, or bear off from the highest occupied point when a higher number is rolled.

STRATEGIC NOTE

With only 3 pieces, single games are heavily influenced by dice, but across a match the skill gap is significant. The key decision points are when to hit, when to run, and when to double.

WINNING

First player to bear off all 3 pieces wins. Gammon and backgammon scores apply as in standard play.

ATTRIBUTION

Hypergammon. Modern tournament variant, origin unknown (popularised in the 1990s). Public domain rules. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 7 OF 8

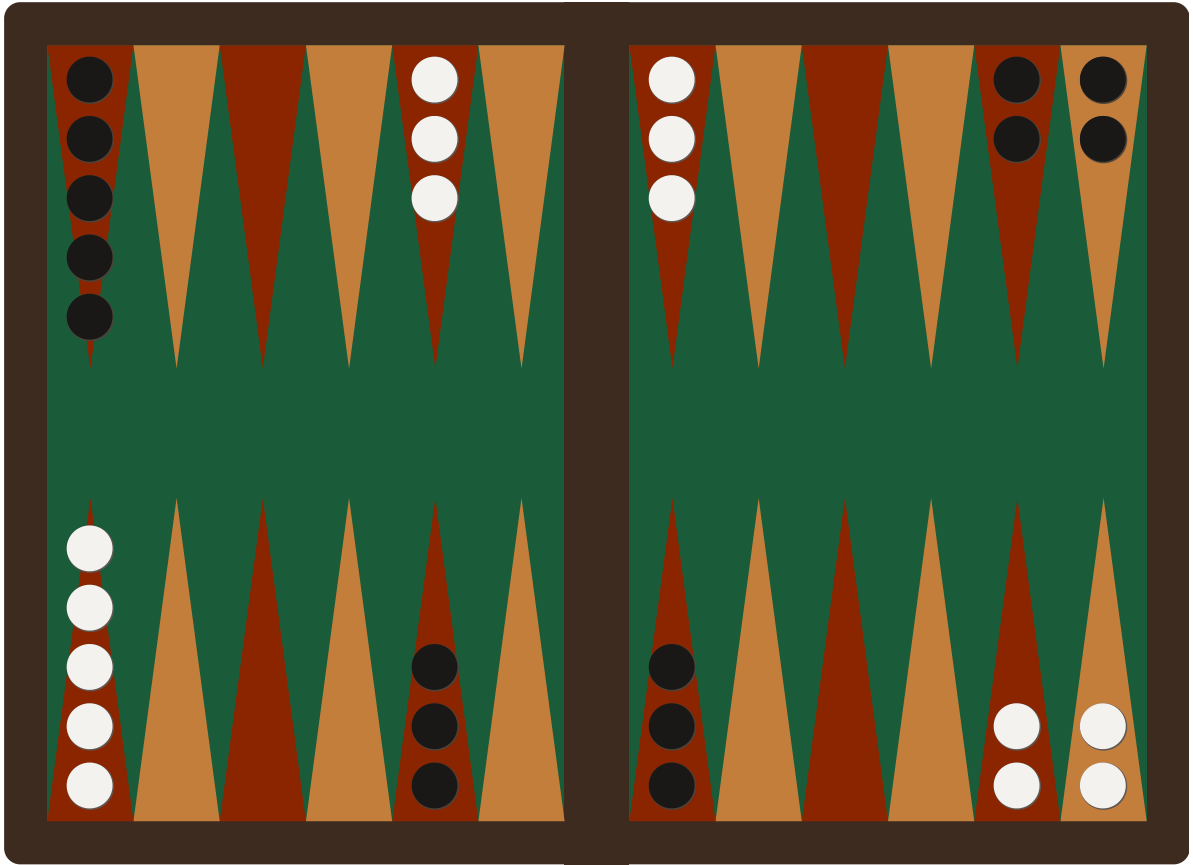
Nackgammon

24-point board
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

NACKGAMMON

A standard Backgammon variant designed by Nick Ballard in the 1990s. Two additional checkers are placed on each player’s 23-point (2-point from the opponent’s perspective), creating a starting position with more contact and a longer middlegame. The opening is significantly slower than standard Backgammon, producing richer strategic positions. Popular among experienced players who find the standard opening too tactical and too dependent on early dice.



Nackgammon — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=nackgammon>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player
Dice	4	2 per player
Doubling cube	1	Standard use

SETUP

Modified starting position:

- ♦ 2 checkers on each player's 24-point (same as standard)
- ♦ 2 checkers on each player's **23-point** (new — replaces 2 checkers from the 13-point)
- ♦ 3 checkers on each player's 8-point (same as standard)
- ♦ 5 checkers on each player's 6-point (same as standard)
- ♦ 3 checkers on each player's 13-point (reduced from 5 in standard)

The net effect: 2 checkers move from the midpoint (13-point) to the vulnerable 23-point, creating immediate contact at the start of the game.

RULES

All standard Backgammon rules apply. The only difference is the starting position. Hitting, the bar, re-entry, bearing off, and the doubling cube all function identically.

DIFFERENCES IN PLAY

The 23-point blots are immediately vulnerable to being hit by any opponent 1-die roll from the 24-point. Protecting these checkers or sacrificing them for tempo is the first strategic decision of the game.

The reduced midpoint (3 checkers instead of 5) makes building a strong prime more difficult in the early game.

WINNING

First player to bear off all 15 checkers wins. Gammon and backgammon scoring apply.

ATTRIBUTION

Nackgammon. Designed by Nick Ballard, USA, 1990s. Public domain rules. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).

BACKGAMMON · VARIANT 8 OF 8

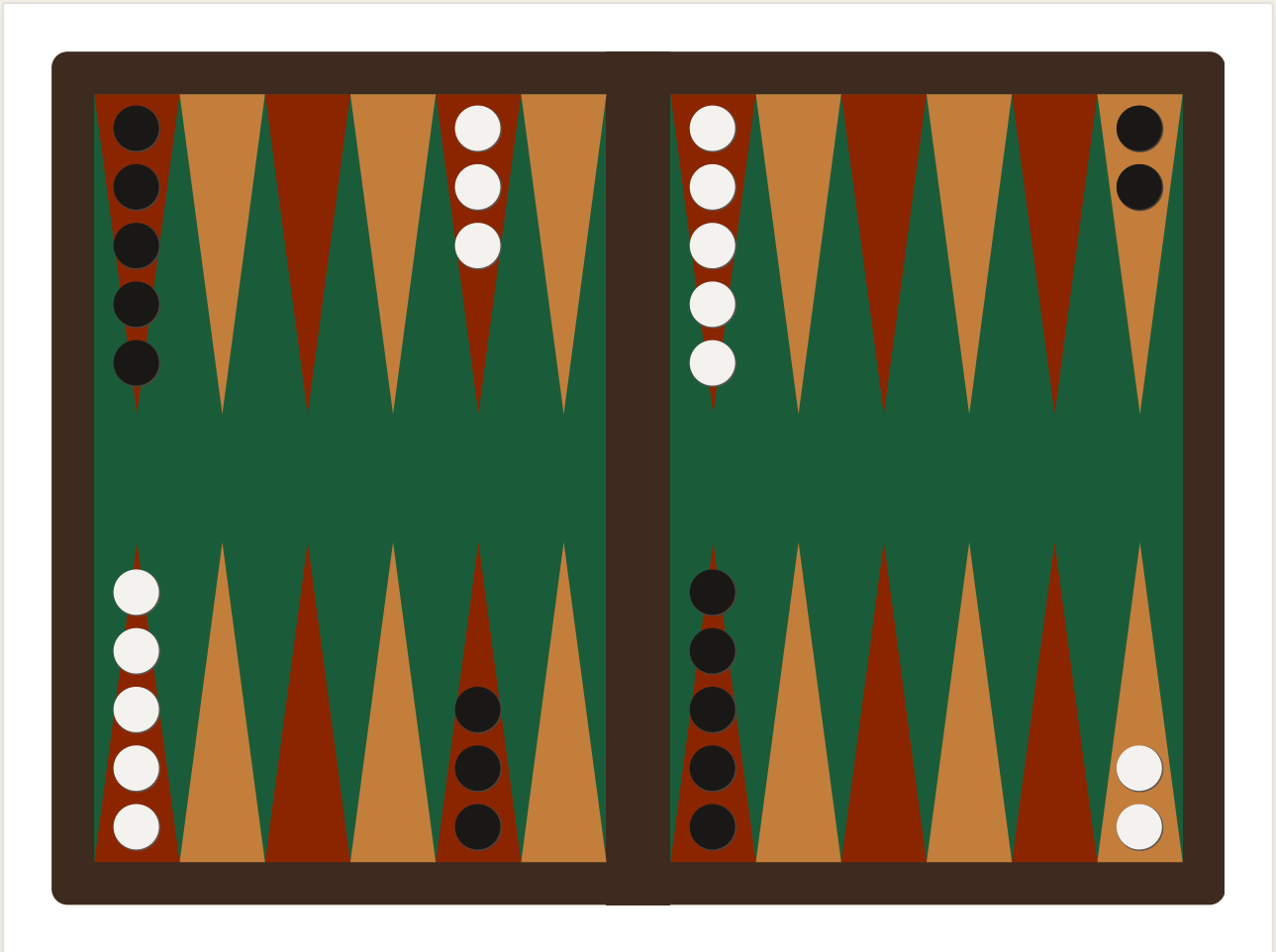
Chouette

24-point board
BOARD

3–6
PLAYERS

CHOUETTE

A Backgammon format for three or more players in which one player (the box) plays against a team of opponents. All team members consult and vote on moves, while the box plays alone. After the game, positions rotate. Chouette is the standard multiplayer format for casual and social Backgammon sessions, and the standard format at many clubs.



Chouette — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=backgammon&variant=chouette>

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	24-point board
Checkers	30	15 per player (standard)
Dice	4 + extra	Each player rolls to determine order
Doubling cube	1	Owned by the box initially

PLAYER ROLES

The box: One player who plays alone against the entire team. The box moves their own pieces and makes all decisions independently.

The captain: The team member at the top of the queue. The captain has final authority over team moves unless overruled by a majority (see consultation).

The team: All other players behind the captain in the queue. They advise the captain.

SETUP

All players roll one die. Highest roll becomes the first box. Second highest becomes the first captain. Remaining players queue in descending roll order.

PLAY

The game is played as standard Backgammon between the box and the team (the team shares one set of pieces). The captain rolls for the team, moves team pieces according to team discussion, and makes final move decisions.

CONSULTATION RULES (STANDARD)

The team may discuss moves openly. The captain has final say on moves, but may be overruled by a majority of the team on any given move. If the team cannot agree, the captain decides.

Alternatively, many clubs use **no-consultation rules**: team members must advise silently (written notes or whispers to the captain only). The box may call for silence.

DOUBLING CUBE

The box owns the initial cube. The box may double the entire team simultaneously. Each team member independently decides whether to accept or drop. Players who drop are out of the current game.

Team members who remain in the game may also redouble individually — each team member's cube is tracked separately if the format allows. In many casual formats, a single cube is used and a team majority decides acceptance.

ROTATION

When the box loses a game, they go to the bottom of the queue. The captain becomes the new box. The next player in queue becomes the new captain.

When the box wins, everyone rotates one position in the queue without the box changing: the captain goes to the bottom.

SCORING

Each player tracks their individual result against the box (wins and losses at the current cube value). A separate ledger is kept for each player pair, or a running score is tracked per player.

ATTRIBUTION

Chouette. Traditional multiplayer Backgammon format. Public domain. Source: Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA); Bray, Chris — *Backgammon to Win* (rules sections).