

NINE MEN'S MORRIS · VARIANT 3 OF 7

Nine Men's Morris

Three concentric squares (24 intersections)

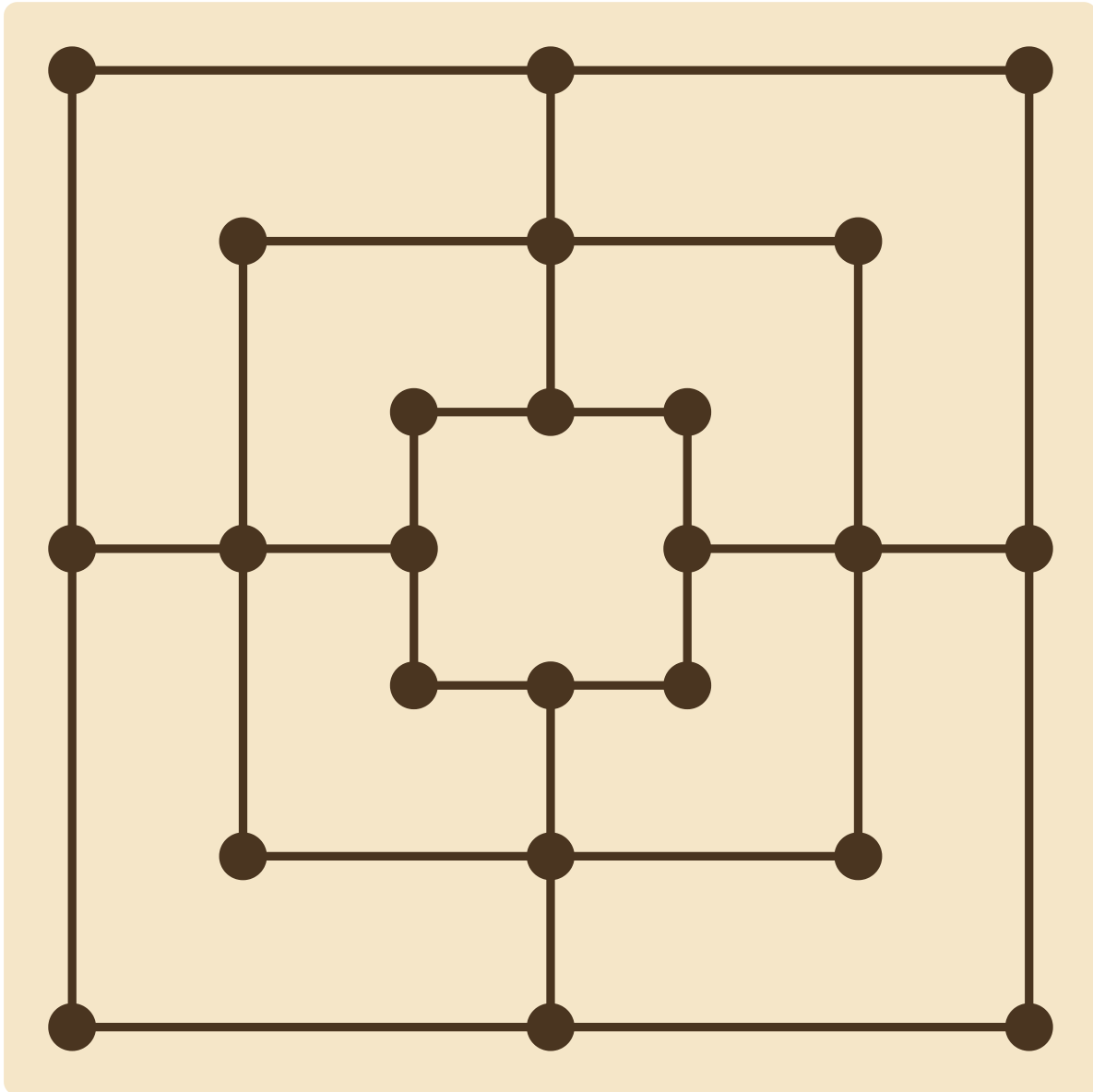
BOARD

2

PLAYERS

NINE MEN'S MORRIS

The definitive and most widely played form of the Mill game family. Nine Men's Morris uses three concentric squares joined at the midpoints of each side, creating 24 intersection points. The game has been found scratched into Roman stone at Cursor Hill and carved into medieval cathedral pews — it was ubiquitous across Europe for over 1,000 years. Today it remains popular as a pub and family game, particularly in Germany (Mühle) and Eastern Europe.



Nine Men's Morris — board layout

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=morris&variant=nine-mens-morris>

COMPONENTS

ITEM	QTY	NOTES
Board	1	Three concentric squares joined at midpoints; 24 intersections
Pieces	18	9 per player in contrasting colours

BOARD

Three squares — outer, middle, inner — each with 8 intersection points (4 corners + 4 midpoints). The midpoint of each side of each square is connected to the adjacent squares' midpoints. Total: 24 points. Each side of each square forms one possible mill (3 points), giving 16 possible mills total.

PHASE 1 — PLACEMENT

Players alternate placing one piece per turn onto any empty intersection until each has placed all 9 pieces. Higher skill level: Black places first.

Mill formation during placement: Completing a mill lets you remove one opponent piece not currently in a mill. An opponent piece in a mill may only be removed if no non-mill pieces remain.

Double mills: A piece at a corner or junction can be part of two mills simultaneously. This is legal and very strong positionally.

PHASE 2 — MOVEMENT

Players alternate moving one piece to an adjacent empty intersection (along a line). No jumping or diagonal movement.

Mill and removal: Completing a mill during a move triggers removal of one opponent piece (same mill protection rules as placement).

Reopening a mill: Moving a piece out of a mill and back on subsequent turns reforms the mill and triggers another removal. This is the key middlegame tactic.

FLYING

When a player is reduced to exactly 3 pieces, they may move any piece to any empty intersection on the board — not just adjacent ones. This “flying” rule gives the weaker player a chance to escape losing positions.

WINNING

A player wins when the opponent is reduced to 2 pieces (too few to form a mill) or when the opponent has no legal move.

DRAWS

The game is a draw when both players agree, or when a position repeats three times with the same player to move.

ATTRIBUTION

Nine Men's Morris. Traditional game, Roman origin, medieval Europe. Public domain. Source: Murray, H.J.R. — *A History of Board-Games Other Than Chess* (1952, Oxford University Press); Wikipedia (CC-BY-SA).