

Dieter Stein

Abande

Strategy game for 2 players aged 8 and up

Abande is a board game with the feel of a classic – simple rules and an abundance of tactical possibility.

The players try to occupy valuable positions, where it is impossible to lose the opponent's cooperation. At the end points are earned for owned pieces, but only with the help of the opponent.

Components

- six-sided game board composed of 37 tiles
- 2 sets of 18 pieces, black and white

Game Board

Abande is played on a six-sided board. Pieces are placed on the intersections of lines.

Playing Pieces

Each player selects a color and receives the 18 corresponding pieces. The pieces are laid out openly (these are the pieces "in the hand").

During the game these pieces are stacked up in different ways. A player owns a stack when the **topmost piece** belongs to him.

Goal of the Game

Players try to score as many points as possible. Each individual piece and each stack of pieces are scored at the end of play.

Playing the Game

In the beginning the board is empty. The player with the black pieces begins by placing one of his pieces on any space on the board. This turn is called "the initiative turn", in contrast to the usual turn.

Afterwards the players alternate turns. There are 3 different possible turn options:

- **Placing** one's piece on the board
- **Moving** an owned piece (or stack) already on the board on top of an adjacent opponent's piece (or stack)
- **Passing**, i.e. to do nothing, which is only allowed if the player has no more stones in hand. If both players pass consecutively, the game is over.

The "Chain"

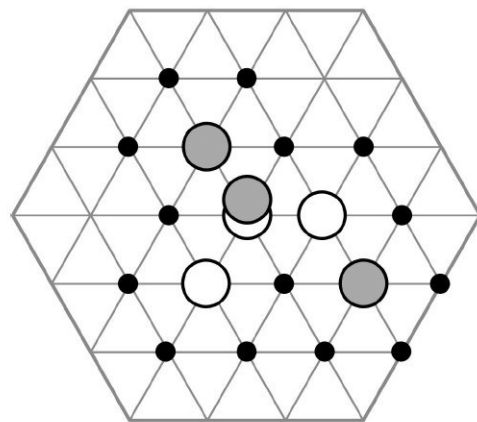
At all times **all** pieces (and stacks) must be connected to one another.

No individual piece and no group of pieces may be isolated (i.e. be without any pieces in any adjacent space).

Placing New Pieces

As long as a player has pieces in hand and is unable or unwilling to move a piece already on the board, he must place a piece on an empty space.

Newly-placed pieces must appear **always adjacent** to another (regardless of owner) piece (or stack).

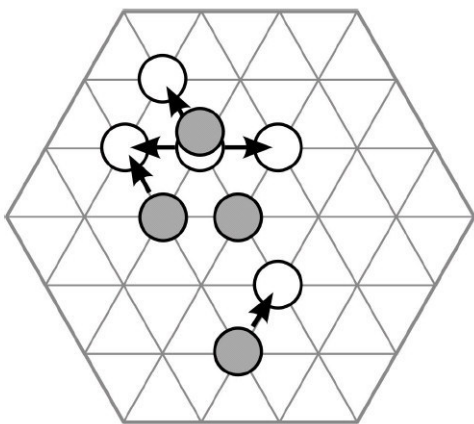


In this example there are 14 spaces where a new piece could be placed.

Moving Pieces

Instead of placing a new piece, a player can move one of his own pieces (or one of his **complete** stacks):

- Pieces (or stacks) may move 1 space in one of the 6 possible directions.
- Pieces (or stacks) in moving **must capture** an opposing piece or stack. They are placed **on top of** the opposing piece (or stack). They cannot be moved to a vacant space or on top of one's own piece (or stack).



Black to move. Besides being able to place a new piece, there are 5 different movement options. The piece in the very center of the board (d4) cannot move because this piece is bound; moving to either c4 or e4 would break the chain.

- Stacks may not grow to more than 3 in height.
- Stacks may never be divided.
- Moving is allowed only after Black has entered his second piece, i.e. Black cannot directly capture White's reply to the initiative turn.

Passing

If a player has no more pieces in hand, he is permitted to pass; the opponent receives a consecutive turn.

It is possible that a player must pass because there no regular turn is possible.

A player who has passed is allowed to take a regular turn again, in the following round.

End of the Game

If both players pass, one immediately after the other, the game ends.

Sleeping Pieces

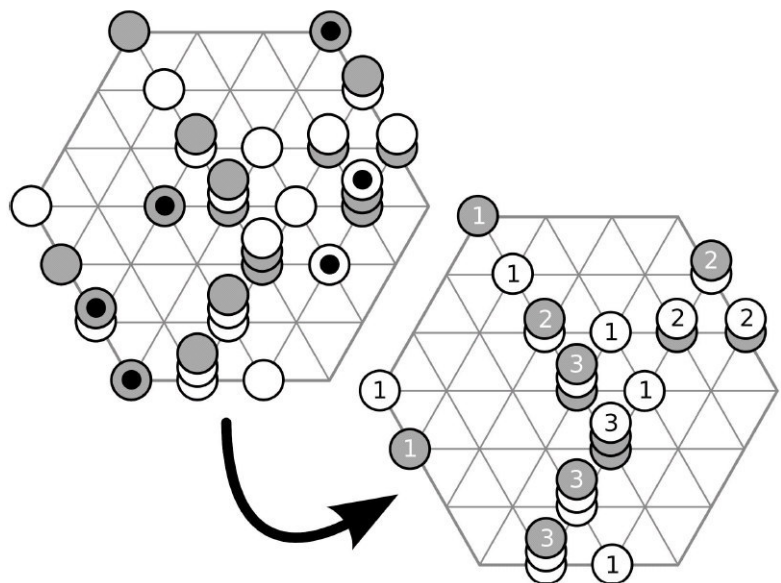
Before scoring, pieces (or stacks) which **are not adjacent** to an **opposing** piece (or stack) are removed from the board, i.e. do not count for scoring. Note that this does not apply to pieces within mixed stacks. Only the tops of the stacks are taken into account when deciding if they are asleep. It is possible that by removing these sleeping pieces that the chain is broken. This does not matter for purposes of scoring.

Scoring

Scoring is performed after the sleeping stones are removed.

Players receive:

- 1 point for each individual owned piece
- 2 points for each owned double stack
- 3 points for each owned triple stack



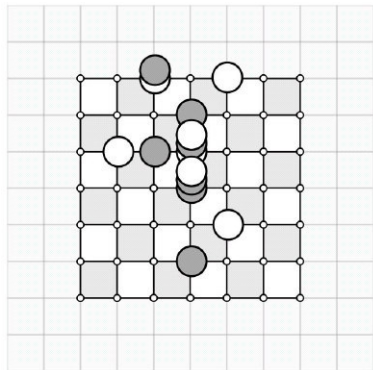
After the sleeping pieces are removed, all the stacks are scored. In this example the contest is a 12:15 victory for Black.

The player who earns more points wins the game. Should both players have the same point total, the result is a tie.

Variant

Abande can also be played on a square grid. Then it is tactical and even a bit more demanding.

The pieces are placed on the 49 (7x7) intersections between spaces in the middle of the board. Pieces also count as connected if they are adjacent along the **diagonal**. Thus there are at most 8 lines of connection for any one location. All other rules are as in the base game for a six-sided board.



Q&A

- *What about triple stacks?*
Careful attention to the rules shows that triple stacks may never be captured nor moved for the rest of the game.
- *Some moves cause the chain to be broken in one location, but everything is still connected elsewhere. Is this allowed?*

Yes, because all pieces are still always part of one chain. It's just that the connection path has been altered.

Notation

The coordinate system from *Accasta* (see page 4) is used for notation.

Sample Game

White	Black	White	Black
	d4	14. b3-a3	c2
1. d5	e4	15. b5 a4	
2. c3	b2	16. b5-c6	a4-a3
3. e3	c4	17. g2 a2	
4. b4	d3	18. c3-d3	c3
5. d2	d1	19. b1	c2-d3
6. f4	c5	20. c1	b4-c5
7. d5-d4	g4	21. c1-d1	b4
8. d4-c4	f2	22. c2	b2-b1
9. c6	d7	23. a1-b1	f3
10. a1	a3	24. e6	pass
11. f1	b5	25. b5	pass
12. b3	c5-c6	26. pass	
13. c5	b5-b4	White wins 14:13.	

Strategy Hints

- Keep the end of game scoring firmly in mind!
- Try to place near several opposing pieces (without vulnerability to being captured of course). This increases the chance that at the end your piece is connected to an opposing one and therefore earns points.
- Take care at the edges and in the corners of the board!
Things get tight there very quickly and it's not always possible to defend a position.
- Sometimes situations arise where one should sacrifice a piece (and lose 1 point), but cause the opponent to lose 2 or even more points.
- Often in the course of the play, there arise "bridges", i.e. pieces which create additional connections. When that happens, new movement possibilities can arise in a completely different part of the board – for the opponent, but also for yourself!

For More Information

Abande rules: Copyright © 2005 Dieter Stein
Abande together with the games **Accasta** and **Attangle** comprise the stacking game trilogy by Dieter Stein, invented between 1998 and 2006. More information is available on-line at <http://abande.com>