

BACKGAMMON RULES



HISTORY OF BACKGAMMON

Though the history of backgammon is incomplete, we do know that it is definitely one of the oldest games known to man. The oldest known source of backgammon dates back some five thousand years, however it is believed that the present form of the game evolved in the tenth century. In 1743 the famous Edmund Hoyle codified the rules and strategy and since then the only change recorded has been the addition of the doubling cube which has added to the challenge and stakes of the game.

Backgammon has remained alive throughout these many years probably because of its continual intrigue and challenge. Even when defeat seems certain the tide can change and the underdog may win. It is said that you can learn the fundamentals of the game in thirty minutes, but it is a life's work to learn the secrets of the strategy of backgammon. We wish you good luck!

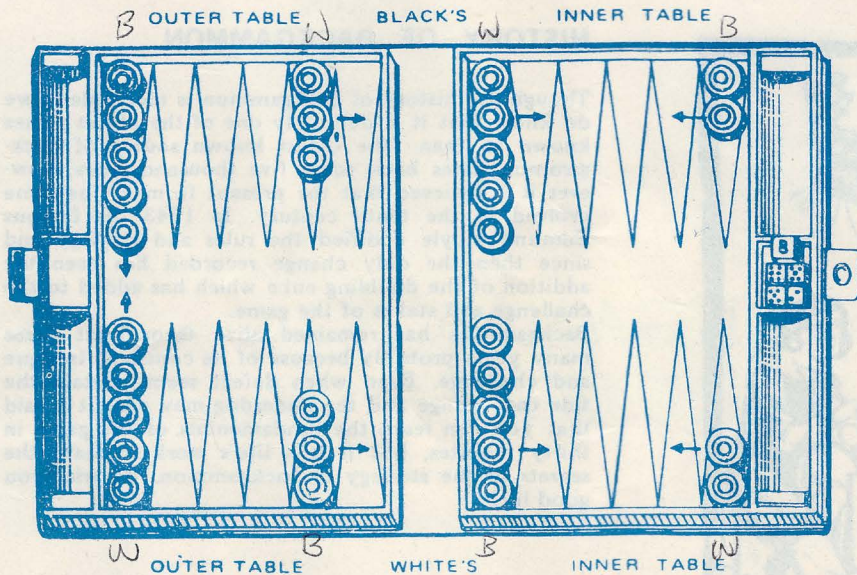


DIAGRAM "A"

PLAYER'S
INNER
TABLES

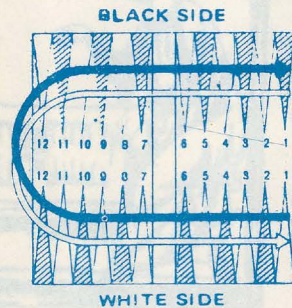


DIAGRAM "B"

BEARING OFF

Bearing Off means removing your men from the playing board by the roll of the dice. You cannot start bearing off until ALL 15 of your men are in your inner table. You may then either bear off men from points corresponding to die thrown or you may move your men within your inner table according to the numbers shown on the dice. You must use your entire roll, if possible. This means that if you roll a six, but have no men on your six point, you must take a man off the highest point which you do have men. The same rule applies if you roll doubles. However, you cannot bear off a man if the point indicated on the die is vacant and there are any men on a higher counting point. If while bearing off, a man in your inner table is "hit", that man goes to the bar and must reenter as described earlier. You cannot continue to bear off until you have managed to get this man who was "hit" back into your inner table.

DOUBLING

The doubling cube is used to double the betting stakes. Before the game begins the doubling cube is placed on the "bar", with the number 64 on top and not facing either player. If there is an automatic double the number 2 is placed face up, again not facing either player. If there is a second automatic double the number 4 is placed face up, and so on. Automatic doubling occurs on each tie in the opening throw. Voluntary doubling means that a player offers to double the stakes, when it is his turn to play and before he has thrown the dice. A double may be accepted or declined, but the player declining loses whatever the stakes were before the double was offered. Thereafter, doubling alternates between players.

SCORING

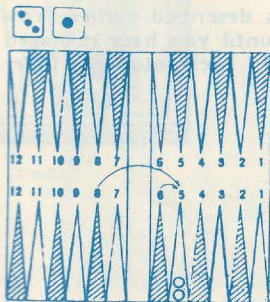
A game is won when either player bears off all of his men first. A gammon (double game) is won if your opponent has not borne off any of his men. A backgammon (triple game) is won if your opponent has not borne off any of his men and has one or more men in the winner's inner table or on the bar.

CHOUETTE

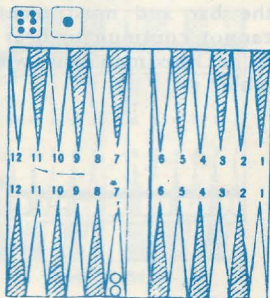
Chouette allows for the inclusion of up to but not more than five players in the game. All players roll a die to determine who will be the "man in the box." This honor goes to the player rolling the highest number while the player rolling the second highest number is the "captain". All other players are the captain's partner and rank below the captain according to their roll of the die. The man in the box and the captain play a two-handed game, but the captain's partners give advice for play. If the man in the box loses he then becomes the lowest ranking partner to the new captain. The winning captain becomes the man in the box. If the man in the box wins, then the captain becomes the lowest ranking partner and the previously highest ranking partner becomes the captain.

HOW TO ESTABLISH YOUR 5 & BAR POINTS

Strategically, your 5 & bar points are the most important to establish (block) as quickly as possible. Here are some examples of the best moves.



Establish your 5 point



Establish your bar point

EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO PLAY

- Two Players
- A Backgammon Board
- Thirty Men or Checkers (sometimes called stones or counters)
- A Pair of Dice (preferably two pair)
- Dice Box
- A Doubling Cube

SETTING UP THE GAME BOARD

Diagram "A" shows the proper position of the men for the start of play. Diagram "B" shows the direction of movement of both the dark and light colored men. It is suggested that you set up your board before reading further.

The game board is divided into four parts with each player having both an "inner table" and an "outer table". Each table is divided into six "points" with alternate colors, three each. Note also that the points of opposing tables are of contrasting color.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Each player must move his men according to the numbers shown on the throw of two dice. He moves his men from his opponent's inner table, along the

playing board, across to his outer table, and finally into his own inner table. The dark and light pieces move in opposite directions, as shown on diagram "B"

THE PLAY

The laws of backgammon say that each player throws one die in order to determine who goes first. If both players roll the same number they must throw again until one player has rolled the highest number. That player then goes first, using the numbers shown on the two dice—his own and his opponent's.

The players then throw in turn using their own dice. A player moves his men according to the numbers shown on the dice. Cocked dice means that one of the dice has not landed completely flat on the playing board. When this happens the player must throw again.

The numbers shown on the dice are considered individually and not in sum total. Thus, a player may move one man the whole throw as long as the points designated by EACH die are open, or he may move each of the two numbers with different men. A player MUST use both numbers of each roll whenever possible. If he can use only one number, he must, if possible, use the larger. If he cannot move at all play passes to his opponent.

DOUBLETS

Doublets merely means rolling doubles, the same number thrown on both dice. When this occurs you move the number shown on one die four times. You can move the same man all four moves, or any other combination of men you choose.

BLOCKED POINT

Any point on the playing board on which two or more men of the same player sit. The opposing player's men may not land on a blocked point, however they may move over the blocked point. Once a player has landed two men on any one point he is said to have "made the Point". There is no limit to the number of men one player may have on a point.

BLOT

Any point on which a player has only one man. Since men of opposite colors cannot occupy the same point, when an opponent lands on a blot he removes the man that was there and replaces it with his own. This is then called a "hit". The removed man is placed on the bar. See diagram 1

BAR

The bar is the middle strip that separates the inner and outer tables. Once one of your men has been placed on the bar you must throw the dice, when your turn occurs, and you must "enter" into your opponent's inner table BEFORE you may move any of your other men. Entering is accomplished by moving the man on the bar to the point indicated on either one of the die thrown as long as that point is not blocked. If you cannot enter because both points indicated are blocked, the turn then passes to your opponent. See diagram 2. A SHUTOUT or CLOSED BOARD occurs when your opponent's inner table is completely closed (each point is covered by at least two men).



DIAGRAM 1

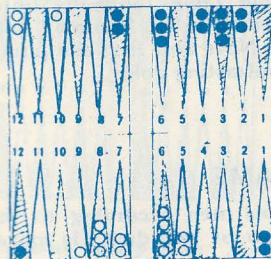
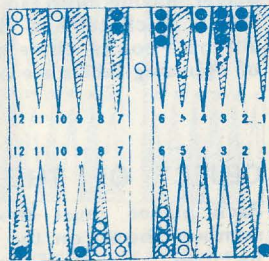
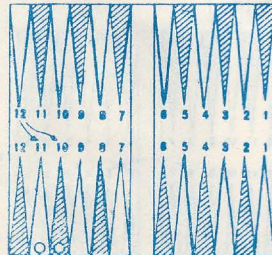
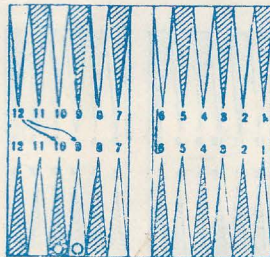
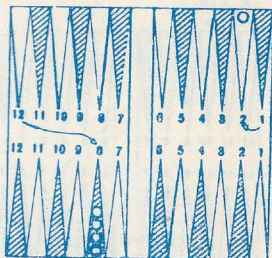
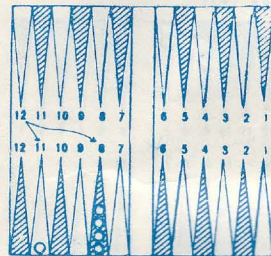
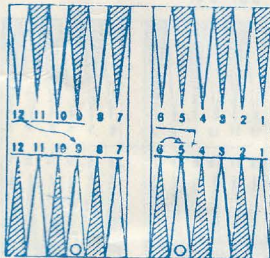
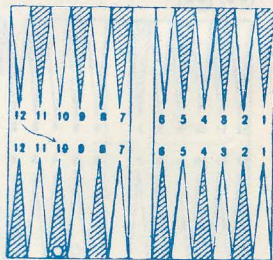


DIAGRAM 2



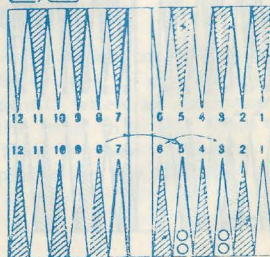
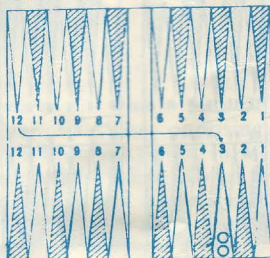
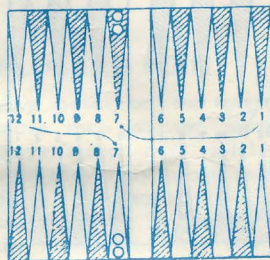
OPENING MOVES

The following are examples of the least advantageous moves. The diagrams show your best choice of moves.

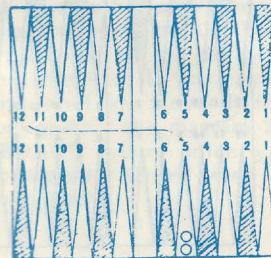
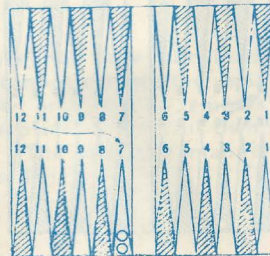


DOUBLETS

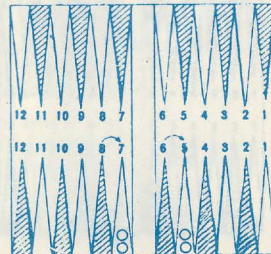
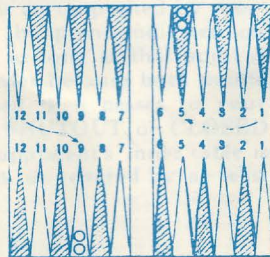
These diagrams show the best opening moves when you throw doubles. The ones marked by an asterisk



OR



OR



BAR

OPENING MOVES

are the best opening moves, and you should offer a double immediately if your opponent has a poor start.