An Introduction to GO

Rules and Strategies for the Ancient Oriental Game

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AN INTRODUCTION TO GO

by
James Davies
and
Richard Bozulich

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PREFACE

This book is based on the booklet, "The Rules and Elements of Go" and the pamphlet "The Rules of Go", both written by Jim Davies and published by the Ishi Press in 1977 and 1983 respectively. In those two publications the rules were presented as modifications of the Chinese and Japanese rules.

This book is based on the Japanese rules. The first five chapters were revised from the two above mentioned books by one of the two authors, Richard Bozulich. The remainder of the book, from Chapter Six on, was written by Bozulich.

The aim of this book is to present the rules of go in a simple, clear and concise manner so that the beginning go player can learn the fundamentals in the shortest possible time and get on with playing games of go. I have also included information at the back of the book that should be helpful in guiding the beginning player into the 'world of go': how to improve, what books to read and a list of organizations that can put go players in contact with other go players.

For completeness, I have inserted some of the Nihon Ki-in 'precedents' covering some special situations that are ambiguous and sometimes hard to resolve by actual play. Since most of these situations rarely occur, I felt that it would be best to put them at the end of the book so as not to clutter up the reader's mind with some rather difficult and, for all practical purposes, irrelevant rules. I have played go for more than 25 years and, with the exception of 'bent four in the corner', have never had one of these positions occur in any of my games. Neither do I know any go player who has.

April 1984

Richard Bozulich

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Some four thousand years ago in China a board game was invented that so superbly combined beauty of form with depth of strategy that it thrives essentially unchanged today. It reached Korea and Japan long ago, and during this century has spread throughout the world. Despite having been played professionally for over 350 years, there are no signs that the possibilities of the game have been exhausted. Openings are not set and one relies more on logical principles and intuition than on memorized variations. We know this game by its Japanese name — go.

Go is played on a square ruled board with a set of lens-shaped black and white discs called stones. The full-sized board has nineteen vertical and horizontal lines, but beginners are encouraged to start with a nine-by-nine board, on which a game can be finished in about ten minutes, then to try 13 x 13. The rules of play are unaffected by the size of the board.

The object of go is to gain control of territory, so in many ways it resembles land warfare. There are border clashes and invasions; enemy forces can be surrounded and captured; groups of stones can be cut off, pursued, and cornered; there are feints, probes, and ambushes. At the same time, go has an architectural quality. The player tries to build well-designed, efficient, strong positions, and good players tend to arrange their stones in visually appealing shapes. Overall, go is more of a constructive than a destructive game.

Although the rules of go are basically simple, there are minor differences from country to country. The rules presented in this book are a slightly modified version of the Japanese rules and use the Japanese method of counting the score.
CHAPTER TWO: THE RULES

RULES

1. The board is empty at the outset of the game.

2. Black makes the first move, after which he and White alternate.

3. A move consists of placing one stone of one's own color on an empty intersection on the board. Diagrams 1 to 3 show a typical opening on a $9 \times 9$ board. Once played, the stones stay where they are.

4. A player may pass his turn at any time. Passing usually occurs in only two situations:
are (unless removed by capture); they cannot be moved to other points. It is legal to play on the edge. Except for minor exceptions caused by rule 6, the move is unrestricted — you may play anywhere.

(1) near the end of the game; (2) at the beginning of a handicap game (see page 17).
RULE

5. A stone or a solidly connected group of stones of one color is captured and removed from the board when all the intersections directly adjacent to it are occupied by the enemy.

EXPLANATION

Dia. 1. White stones occupy three of the four points directly adjacent to the black stone, i.e. three of its four liberties. The black stone is said to be in atari.

Dia. 2. White captures the black stone by occupying its last liberty and removes it from the board.

Dia. 3. This is the result. Captured stones are kept separately (customarily in the container lids).

The next three diagrams illustrate capture on the edge and in the corner.

Atari

Capture

Result

The diagrams at the top of the next page show a solidly connected group of two stones being captured.
A solidly connected group of five stones is being captured in the next example.

It is not possible to capture one's own stones. In the diagram below White 1, taking his own last liberty, is illegal.

Capture of the enemy takes precedence over self-capture. When White 1 is played in the center diagram below, for example, neither it nor the two black stones to its right have any liberties, but it is the black stones, rather than White 1, that are captured.
RULE

6. No former board position may be recreated.

EXPLANATION

In other words, every move must create a new position. The main effect of rule 6 is to prevent endless cycles of capture and recapture in so-called ko positions like the one below

Dia. 1. Suppose it is White’s turn.

Dia. 2. He can capture a black stone by playing 1.

Dia. 3. This is the result.

Dia. 4. If Black now illegally recaptures with 2 –

Dia. 5. The result is the same board position as in Dia. 1. By rule 6, this is not allowed, so Black must play 2 somewhere else.

Dia. 6. For example, he could play 2 here. That gives White the chance to connect at 3 if he wishes.

Dia. 7. (next page) In this example a ko fight is about to take place around black ▲, which is in atari.
Dia. 8. White captures with 1. Black cannot immediately recapture because that would repeat Dia. 7, so he plays elsewhere. Black 2 is called a ko threat.

Dia. 9. If White answers the threat at 3, Black can now recapture at 4, because the 2–3 exchange makes this board position different from Dia. 7.

Dia. 10. Next it is White’s turn to have to make a ko threat at 5. Black could ignore White 5 and capture three stones at ‘a’, but let’s suppose he answers 5 at 6. Now White can recapture at 7. Then Black must make another ko threat with 8. Perhaps White will ignore this threat and capture four stones with 9, ending the ko. Black gets some compensation with 10.

Dia. 11. A ko fight can also take place in the corner. Black must make a ko threat like 2 before recapturing at 4.
RULES

7. Two consecutive passes end the game. (Or a player may resign.)

8. At the end of the game, any stones that cannot avoid being captured are removed as prisoners without actually being captured.

9. A player's score is the number of vacant points he has surrounded minus the number of prisoners he has lost. High score wins.

Dia. 1. This is the ending of a hypothetical game in which Black has lost 7 prisoners and White 3. (Prisoners are kept separately.) Black 5 and White 6 pass.

Dia. 2. The triangulated stone in Dia. 1 is dead: it cannot avoid being captured. Therefore, it is removed from the board as a prisoner.

Dia. 3. Black has surrounded the vacant points marked 'x'. Surrounded points are called territory.

Dia. 4. White's territory.

Dia. 5. To subtract prisoners from territory, the prisoners are replaced on the board inside Black's and White's territory. The result is 6 points for White and 5 for Black. White wins by one point.

These are all the rules you need to know to play go. There are a few special positions and kos in which 'precedents' were set, adjudicating the results. They are known as "Nihon Ki-in Precedents". Most of them rarely occur in actual games. For completeness, however, we have included them in the appendix at the end of the book.
EXPLANATIONS

Dia. 1

Dia. 2

Dia. 3

Dia. 4

Dia. 5

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CHAPTER THREE: EXAMPLE GAMES

6 x 6 Example Game

The following game illustrates perfect play on a 6 x 6 board, the smallest size on which go is interesting.

Dia. 1. This might be called the opening. Black goes for control of the right side with 1 and 3, and White for control of the left side with 2 and 4. Black bends around White with 5 and 7, and White resists with 6 and 8.

Dia. 2. Black presses his advantage by cutting in at 9. This puts the two stones marked △ into atari, black stones occupying five of their six liberties. Note that the △'s are not directly connected to the other two white stones.

Dia. 3. White saves himself by connecting at 10, and now Black △ is in atari. Black ignores this, however, and plays 11, putting the white stone between △ and 11 into atari.

Dia. 4. (next page) White draws out of atari with 12 and Black connects at 13, to keep White from cutting there. Black △, which is still in atari, cannot escape, so without bothering actually to capture it, White cuts at 14, putting another black stone into atari.
Dia. 5. Black gives a counter-atari at 15 and White captures with 16. By now only non-surroundable no-man’s-land remains to be taken, at the point between 16 and 17 and in the lower left corner.

Dia. 6. White takes the first of these neutral points with 18, and Black prepares to take the second by connecting at 19. If he played 19 immediately at 21, he would put himself into atari and lose two stones, as shown in Dia. 6a below. Similarly, White cannot play 20 at 21 without putting himself into atari (Dia. 6b), so Black gets 21.

Dia. 7. White and Black pass and the game ends.

Questions and Answers

*Question.* Why did White pass in Dia. 7 of the example game? Why didn’t he try to invade Black’s territory with, for instance, 1 in Dia. 1. below?

![Dia. 1](image1)

![Dia. 2](image2)

![Dia. 3](image3)

*Answer.* There is no rule to keep White from trying to invade. He just realized that it would be futile. Black would reply with 2 in Dia. 2, putting 1 into atari, and with 6 White would lose his whole invading force.

An unsuccessful invasion like this does not alter the score, however, so it costs White nothing to try.

*Question.* If White keeps on invading, can’t he eventually occupy all points within Black’s group and capture it?

*Answer.* He is welcome to keep trying, as in Dia. 3, but he won’t succeed. Black 12 captures White 7 and 9, and Black 14 captures White 11 and 13, and in the end White runs out of room to invade. The position now looks like Dia. 4 on the next page. White can come in again at ‘a’, but Black will capture him immediately with ‘b’.

What makes Black’s entire group uncatchable in Dia. 4 are the various holes, or eyes, it possesses. White can play only one stone at a time, so he can never fill all those eyes simultaneously, as he would have to do to capture it.
**Question.** How many eyes does a group need to be safe?

**Answer.** Two. Dia. 5 shows some more examples. The two black groups are alive with two eyes apiece, in fact,

![Dia. 4](image1)

![Dia. 5](image2)

![Dia. 6](image3)

White does not have a legal move attacking either. White, with two large eyes, is also alive. Black can play inside White’s group, but White can easily capture any invaders.

**Question.** Do the eyes have to be separate?

**Answer.** Yes. The black group in the lower left of Dia. 6, for example, is not alive but dead. It cannot avoid being captured.

Another thing to beware of is false eyes, like the one the black group in the upper right of Dia. 6 has. It too is dead.

**Question.** I don’t see how the black groups in Dia. 6 can be captured.

**Answer.** White 1 in the lower left of Dia. 7 puts Black into atari. Black can capture 1 with 2, but White just replays at 1 and captures all five black stones. In the upper right, White 1 captures the three stones marked ▲ and puts the other two into atari.
Question. Does a group always need to be able to make two eyes to be alive?

Answer. Usually, but there are exceptions. In Dia. 8, for example, the black group marked ▲ and the white one marked △ have no eyes but share two liberties between them. Neither side can attack the other without putting itself into atari, so neither side should move and both groups are alive. This type of local impass is called a seki. The vacant points between the triangled stones are not territory for either side.

There is another seki in Dia. 8 in the lower left. Black’s three-stone group and the white group surrounding it each have one eye, and neither side can occupy the point between them without putting itself into atari. (This point also is not territory.)

9 x 9 Example Game

Dia. 1. The opening. Good strategy dictates that most opening moves be made on or above the third line away from the edge, as in this case.
Dia. 2. Black 11 gives atari to White △, so White connects at 12. Having built one live group on the right side, White invades the left side with 14 and starts to build another.

![Dia. 3 (17 – 23)](image1)

Dia. 3. White defends his left-side group with 18 and 20 and his right-side group with 22. Black jumps into the right side with 23 and the endgame begins. One-space jumps like Black 19 and 23 are usually good moves.

Dia. 4. White halts Black with 24 and 26, and play begins to focus on the edges.

![Dia. 4 (24 – 34)](image2)

Dia. 5 (35 – 43)

Dia. 5. The endgame continues. White 40 gives atari to Black △.

Dia. 6. (next page) White 50 is a sacrifice that later forces Black to connect at 55. At the end of the game,
White has lost one prisoner (50) and Black 53 is dead.

Dia. 6 (44 – 57)
57 connects at 50.
58 and 59 pass.

Dia. 7. The white prisoner is replaced inside White's territory, and the dead black stone is removed and replaced inside Black's territory.

Dia. 8. It is customary to rearrange the territories during counting to make easily recognizable multiples of 10. In this game Black has 11 points of territory and White has 13, so White wins by two points.
CHAPTER FOUR:
ELEMENTARY TACTICS AND STRATEGY

To become a strong go player there are two abilities that one must develop: the ability to read ahead move by move and foresee the outcome of local encounters; and the ability to grasp intuitively what is happening on the board as a whole. The approximately equal balance between analytical and intuitive qualities accounts for much of the attraction of go. In the opening, when the board consists mostly of empty space, it is intuition, backed up by some general knowledge, that plays the dominant role.

The Opening

Especially on a medium- or full-sized board it is difficult to take secure territory right at the beginning, so the game usually starts with the players spacing their stones out to form large, open frameworks inside which they can fight at an advantage later on. Dia. 1 and Dia. 2 on the next page show a typical opening on a full-sized board.

Dia. 1 (moves 1 – 5) (next page)

It is usually easiest to obtain bases in the corners. One or two stones per corner is sufficient.
Dia. 1a (moves 6 – 12)

Approaching a corner with White 6 where the enemy has only one stone is also good. This often provokes fighting, such as the short skirmish which follows.

In the sequence from 7 through 12 Black secures the corner while White builds a position on the right side. These moves are one of many standard patterns.

Dia. 1b (moves 13 – 17)

Black 13 is another corner approach.

White 14 forms a loose framework by extending from 2. The third or fourth line is best for extensions like this. Note also White 12 on the third line and Black 17 on the fourth.

Black develops a framework on the upper side with 15 and 17.
Dia. 1a (6 – 12)

Dia. 1b (13 – 17)
Extensions may be called the basic moves of the opening. Dias. 2 to 4 show some typical examples on a 13 x 13 board.

Dia. 2. Black extends from his corner and approaches White's. White defends by sliding away in the other direction.

Dia. 3. White extends to establish a base on the side. This type of extension is extremely important, for if White omits it—

Dia. 4. Black catches him in a pincer attack with 1. Now White can only develop by extending into the center, where it is harder to form territory than along the sides.

In extending toward an enemy stone, it is usually best not to play right next to it, but to keep at least one space away, as in the above diagrams. The reason is that contact plays tend to help the enemy strengthen himself.

The next pages show a few common corner patterns, or josekis.
Approaching a Stone on the 3–3 Point

Dia. 5. White approaches from the side to build a framework in conjunction with his position in the upper left corner.

Dia. 6. White attacks at the 'shoulder' of Black's stone to prevent him from forming a similar framework.

Approaching a Stone on the 4–4 Point

Dia. 7. White approaches from the side to build a framework on the upper side.
Dia. 8. White invades Black’s framework by entering at the 3–3 point.

Dia. 8

Approaching a Stone on the 3–4 Point

Dia. 9. Knight’s move approach. Backed up by \( \triangle \), White meets it with the pincer attack at 2.

Dia. 10. With a black stone in the upper right corner, White chooses the diagonal extension at 2.
Elementary Tactics: Pushing and Bending

Dia. 1. What is the best move for White in this position? For Black?

Dia. 2. White should bend around the head of Black’s line with 1. If Black answers with 2, White 3 threatens a double atari at a.

Dia. 3. If Black defends with 4 and 6, White keeps pushing with 5 and 7. Natural, strong pushing moves like these play a large role in the game.

Dia. 4. If it is Black’s turn, he would like to play 1, but he would be in some danger if White cut at 2.

Dia. 5. So he should just extend with 1.

Dia. 6. If White pushes now, Black gladly keeps extending, confining White to a small second-line territory.
Cutting and Connecting

_Dia. 1._ What is the correct move for Black in this position? For White?

_Dia. 2._ Black should connect at 1. The two white stones in the lower left corner are now very weak.

_Dia. 3._ If White gets to play first, he should cut at 1. Black ▲ is now left dead inside a large, secure white territory.

_Dia. 4._ Another example. If Black cuts here, he can be sure of capturing either the two white stones on the upper side or the two on the right side.

_Dia. 5._ Now White’s group is connected and strong, and it is very likely that one of Black’s two isolated stones will die.
Dia. 6. White’s fate depends directly on connection and disconnection in this position. How should he play?

Dia. 7. He should link himself together with 1. This gives him one sure eye above and a second below, so with two eyes he is alive.

Dia. 8. Black 1 cuts White into two isolated groups. Neither will be able to make more than one eye, so both will die.

Dia. 9. On a more open scale, how should White and Black play in this position?

Dia. 10. White should separate the two black stones by jumping to 1, attacking both of them.

Dia. 11. Black should link his stones together with 1. Now they are strong and White △ is weak.
Ladders

Dia. 1. Black ▲ is cutting White in two, so he would like to capture it. Can he?

Dia. 2. He starts by giving atari at 1.

Dia. 3. If Black tries to escape, White keeps giving atari with 3, 5, and 7 and captures him on the next move. This type of sequence, in which the enemy is kept in atari, is called a ladder.

Dia. 4. One soon learns to visualize such sequences in one's head—black, white, black, white, etc.—and avoids playing out moves like Black 2, 4, and 6 in Dia. 3 that do not work.

Dia. 5. This is a ladder on a larger board.
Containment

Dia. 1. Once again White wants to capture the cutting stone ▲.

Dia. 2. But a ladder would strike the black stone in the upper left corner and fail. A player who tries an unsuccessful ladder like this invariably suffers a large loss because he is left with cutting points like 'a', 'b' and 'c'. White must play differently.

Dia. 3. Fortunately here he has an alternative way to capture Black — he can contain him with 1. Black cannot escape; the letters visualize him trying and failing.

Dia. 4. A similar example. White captures Black’s cutting stone by giving atari with 1, then containing it with 3.
Sacrifices

Dia. 1. Go abounds in sacrifice tactics that lead to the enemy's capture. Here, for example, Black can capture the four white stones at bottom right.

Dia. 2. He starts by sacrificing a stone at 1.

Dia. 3. Next Black 3 puts the four white stones in atari. If White makes the mistake of connecting at 4, Black 5 puts nine stones in atari and captures them.

Dia. 4. Without the initial sacrifice, however, Black's tactics would fail.

Dia. 5. Another example. White has a way to capture the two black stones that stand between his corner and center groups.
Dia. 6. White begins by sacrificing a stone at 1. Black 2 captures it, but now Black’s three stones have only one liberty.

Dia. 7. White captures them by replaying at 3. This pattern is called a snapback.

**Life and Death: False Eyes**

Dia. 1. This black group, which has one real eye and one false one, is dead. If Black refuses to concede it at the end of the game, White can demonstrate that it is dead by playing the sequence in Dia. 2.

Dia. 2. At the end of the game White will be able to capture Black with 1 to 5. Experienced players would not play out these moves; they would recognize that Black is dead.

Dia. 3. This black group is not yet dead, but White can kill it. How?

Dia. 4. (next page) White 1 makes Black’s second eye false. If Black captures 1, he has essentially Dia. 1.
Dia. 5. To make two eyes, Black must connect at 1.

See if you can understand the following positions on your own. The caption under each diagram indicates the status of the black group.
Eye Space and Shape

When a group surrounds a single open space comprising several points, the question is whether the space is large enough and the right shape to ensure two eyes.

Dia. 1. In this case Black's status is unsettled.

Dia. 2. If Black plays 1, he is alive.

Dia. 3. But if White plays 1, Black is dead.

Dia. 4. The moves to White 9 prove the group is dead. White simply fills in its liberties as shown. Black has no defense.

7 at 5. 9 captures.
2, 4 & 8 pass
The following are a number of similar examples.

Alive

Alive

Alive

Dead

2 & 4 pass

Dead

Unsettled

Dead

Alive

Question: if required actually to capture Black in the middle diagram of the third row above, how should White play? (Answer on your own.)
If required actually to capture Black in the middle diagram of the example above, White can put him in atari by occupying the points marked X. Black is helpless after White 1 because he has no chance of getting two separate eyes.
Alive

Dead

2, 4, 6 & 8 pass

Dead

Unsettled

Dead

Alive (seki)
Sente and Gote

At all stages of the game, but especially in the endgame, moves which the opponent has to answer tend to be more valuable than ones which he can ignore.

Dia. 1. Black to play and win. Only two border disputes, on the upper and lower sides, remain to be settled.

Dia. 2. First suppose that Black begins on the upper side. After 3 the initiative passes to White. He descends at 4 and the game is a win for White, 10 points to 9. Count the score and verify this.

A move like Black 3 that loses the initiative is called a gote move.

Dia. 3. Black’s winning move is 1. White has to answer at 2, and now Black is free to take the play on the upper side as well. His territory extends one point farther on the lower edge than in Dia. 2 and the score will turn out to be 9 to 7.

Dia. 4. If White ignores Black 1, Black 3 captures a stone and White loses by even more.

A move that keeps the initiative, like Black 1 in Dias. 3 and 4, is called a sente move.
Forcing Moves

One particular kind of sente move is called a forcing move.

*Dia. 1.* Black to play. He is attacking White’s corner and wants to connect at a, to keep White from cutting there and capturing ▲.

![Dia. 1](image1)

*Dia. 2.* But if he just connects, White can easily escape into the center with 2.

*Dia. 3.* Black should begin by forcing White with 1. White has to connect at 2, and now when Black defends at 3 he has White much better confined. Black 1 is doing useful work while White 2 just fills dead space.

![Dia. 3](image2)
Dia. 4. Force before defending is a general rule. Here White has to defend his corner (else Black a, White b, Black c kills it), but first—

Dia. 4

Dia. 5. He peeps at 1 and 3. Black is forced to connect where White could not have cut anyway. Next White has to defend at 5, but 1 and 3 are left in potentially useful positions, while Black 2 and 4 are useless.

Dia. 6. Here Black wants to make the diagonal move at 1, but then White will slide in to 2, getting territory and comfortable eye space.

Dia. 6

Dia. 7. So Black forces White with the contact play at 1. If White failed to respond, Black 2 would be devastating. After Black 3 White’s position is smaller and more cramped than in Dia. 6.
CHAPTER FIVE:
19 X 19 EXAMPLE GAME

This game was played in 1940 between two outstanding professionals: Minoru Kitani (black) and Go Seigen (white). The location was Enkakuji, a Buddhist temple in Kamakura, Japan.

Dia. 1. The opening. Black builds a large framework on the left side with 3 to 9, while White builds a similar framework in the lower right. Fighting then takes place in the upper right, leaving White with weak stones at 12 and 20 which he must do something about next.

Dia. 1 (1 – 21)
Dia. 2. Rather than try to escape with 12 and 20 (the stones marked △), White probes at 22 and lives in the upper right corner. It is often better to abandon weak stones this way than to get dragged into difficulties by trying to save them.

Next White invades the left side at 30, and Black runs out at 31. White counters by leaning against the adjacent black positions, first with 32 and 34, then with 36 to 42. This leaning attack not only helps Black to solidify his frameworks on the left and upper sides but also catches the pair of black stones including 31 in the jaws of a giant trap. Pushing against one enemy group in order to attack another like this is one of the standard strategies of go.

White 44 keeps Black from dodging into the corner; his pair of stones is in serious trouble.
Dia. 3. So he sacrifices them by playing 45 to 49. White 50 captures them, but 45 to 49 have reduced the area involved, and at the same time enlarged Black’s framework in the lower left.

Next Black sets to work to reduce the upper left corner with 51 to 55, but White ignores him to play 56. This is a narrow but extremely valuable extension, since it both reduces Black’s framework to the left and expands White’s to the right. Kitani commented afterward that he wished he had played 56 himself instead of 51.

After taking some profit at 57 and 59 in sente (if White fails to answer at 60, his corner dies), Black makes what he expects to be another sente move at 61, but White ignores it to block at 62. When Black crawls in at 63, White 64 and 66 capture 53 and 55.
Dia. 4. Black compensates for the loss of the ▲'s by giving atari at 67, cutting at 69, and capturing the pair of white stones marked ▲ on a large scale with 73. White continues to take profit on the upper side with 74, which promises 84 and 86 in sente next.

Black 75 is a key point, expanding Black’s framework to the left and reducing White’s to the right, just as White 56 was in Dia. 3. When White defends at 76, Black starts reducing the white framework in earnest, first invading at 77, then shifting to come in from the top at 79. If White answered 79 at ‘a’, Black would shift back and develop 77 into a live group on the lower edge.

White, however, after some intervening moves, starts a fight with the contact play at 88. Black uses 79 and 89 as a sacrifice to drive in with 91 to 99.
Dia. 5. The game is now in its most difficult phase. White cuts at 2 and jumps to 4 and for the moment has the black ▲'s trapped within his framework. Black fights back with the cross-cut at 5 and 7.

After Black 9 it would be most natural for White to connect at 'a', but then Black would extend at 'b' and it would become a battle to see whether White could capture 5, 9, and the ▲'s before Black captured 2, 4, and 8 or vice versa. Go Seigen decided that he would lose this battle, so he dodged away on another course with 10, letting Black take off two of his stones with 11 and 13, but loosely capturing three black ones in return with 12 to 16.

Black 17 threatened the white group to the left, so White had to defend it with 18 to 22 and Black got to make the very large move at 23.
Dia. 6. By now the major fighting is over and the endgame is under way. White forces Black with 24 before defending the right side with 26 and 28. Black picks up two more stones in the center with 33.

Black 43 is a clever reply to White’s cut at 42. If White tries to link 42 to the upper right corner with 1 in the reference diagram, Black wedges in at 2, then gives atari with 6 and 8. White cannot connect at ‘a’, so he has to fight the ko at ‘b’, but the risk is too high – if he ignores Black ‘a’, his corner dies.
Dia. 7. White plays 52 to 58 in sente, then connects at 60. Since this connection leaves the black group to the right without much eye space, Black forestalls an attack on it by linking to the center with 61 and 63, trapping two white stones in the process. Even without 67, they cannot get away.

White 70 and 72, reducing Black's territory, and Black 75, rescuing two stones, are the same size.

This has been an eventful game, full of fighting and exchanges and unmarred by any blunders. The territory in the center has changed hands several times. Now one last flare-up remains to occur on the right edge.
Dia. 8 (176 – 200)
88 takes ko at 82. 91 takes ko at 85. 94 ko.
97 ko. 100 ko.

Dia. 8. Black 81 looks like a clever move. White cannot cut Black off at 83 (can you see why?), so Black gets into White’s territory. In fact, however, Black 81 is a slight overplay, and White, who is a bit behind, sees one last chance to complicate the game by starting a ko fight with 82. What makes 82 possible is that White 84 defends against both Black 83 and 85. Whereas before White could not have fought this ko without risking the loss of the five stones above 84, which would be put in atari every time Black took the ko, now he can play 84 in exchange for 83 and proceed with the ko with no real risk at all.

White 86, 92, and 98 and Black 89 and 95 are ko threats.
Dia. 9 (201 – 256)

6 ko. 9 ko. 12 ko. 15 ko. 18 ko. 21 ko.
24 ko. 27 ko. 30 ko. 33 ko. 36 ko. 39 ko.
41 at 34. 42 ko. 45 ko. 48 ko. 51 ko.
53 connects.

Dia. 9. The ko fight continues, Black and White answering each other’s ko threats and taking and retaking at 3 and \( \triangle \), until White plays 52. Black decides that he can afford to ignore this ko threat and connects with 53 at \( \triangle \). White 54 is then the start of a second ko. White 56 threatens a snapback play at ‘a’.

By this time only very small moves remain to be made. One of the biggest is in the lower left corner, where White can capture with 22, decreasing Black’s territory by five points.
Dia. 10 (257 – 310)

60 ko. 75 ko. 78 ko. 81 ko. 84 ko. 87 ko.
90 ko. 98 connects at 57.
100 connects beside 62. 103 at 82.

Dia. 10. Black cannot win the ko at 57, so he has to defend against the snapback at 61 and White captures at 62. Among the rest of the moves we might point out Black 67 – why can’t White answer it at 69? – and White 70 – what happens if Black ignores it? White connects the ko with 98 and takes the last point of no-man’s-land at 110. The players now concede the stones marked with triangles and the game ends.
Dia. 11 (determining the final score). Both Black and White have captured 25 stones each in the course of the game. In addition there are the six black and eight white stones marked by triangles in Dia. 10. These stones are removed from the board and added to the 25 prisoners each side has. Thus, Black has 33 white prisoners in total and White has 31 black prisoners in total. Next Black places his 33 white prisoners inside White's territory and White places his 31 black prisoners inside Black's territory. Finally the territories are arranged in neat groups to facilitate counting as in Dia. 11.

The final score:  Black – 28 points.
               White – 23 points.

Black wins by 5 points.
CHAPTER SIX: HANDICAP GO

Go has an excellent handicap system, under which players of different strengths can play games that are fair and interesting to both. The weaker player takes black. White is required to pass his first turn, or two turns, or three turns, etc., depending on the size of the handicap. Thus in a two-stone handicap game Black begins by placing two stones on the star-points (sometimes called the handicap points) as in Dia. 1, and then White plays the first move. After that the game continues normally. The placement of the stones for a three-stone handicap to a nine-stone handicap is shown in Dias. 2 to 8.

Against an experienced player a beginner will usually play with a nine-stone handicap. When the beginner progresses to the point where he starts winning on that handicap, he decreases the handicap to eight stones, and so on.

One way to use the handicap system is to adjust the handicap after one player wins three games in a row. For example, if two players are playing with a five-stone handicap and white wins three games in a row, then the handicap increases to six stones. On the other hand, if Black wins three games in a row at a five-stone handicap, then the handicap decreases to four stones.
Dia. 1
Placement for a 2-stone handicap

Dia. 2
Placement for a 3-stone handicap
Dia. 3
Placement for a 4-stone handicap

Dia. 4
Placement for a 5-stone handicap
Dia. 5
Placement for a 6-stone handicap

Dia. 6
Placement for a 7-stone handicap
Dia. 7
Placement for an 8-stone handicap

Dia. 8
Placement for a 9-stone handicap
As a beginner, most of the games you will be playing for the first few months of your go career will be handicap games. Therefore, it is a good idea for you to study handicap go strategy right away. Moreover, handicap go is a good way to learn the fundamentals of good go strategy.

9-stone Handicap

Dia. 1 (1 – 17). The sequence to Black 4 is the beginning of the attach-and-extend joseki. White 5 at 6 is the usual move. Ref. Dia. 1 shows the standard pattern. Black gets a solid position and a large profit at the top. White establishes a base for his stones on the right.

![Dia. 1 (1 – 17)](image)

White 5 is a variation of the pattern shown in Ref. Dia. 1. Black takes the vital point of 6, forcing White to defend at 7, then extends to 8. White pushes again at 9 and Black again extends to 10.
Black is quite happy to continue extending like this all the way across the board. With each move Black is increasing his power and potential profit at the top. White's stones, on the other hand, are inhibited from developing down the right side because of the presence of the black triangled stone.

We cannot say that White's moves here are bad. Because of Black's initial 9-stone advantage, White must be prepared to give Black some profit while he establishes a base of operations.

White plays 11 to give his stones breathing space and also to attack the black triangled stone. Black 12 is a solid and safe response.

White 13 is played as a probe. It threatens to make a living group at the top or to link up with White's stones below as shown in Ref. Dia. 2. Black 14 is a strong response. It dares White to try to make a living group at the top. Because of Black's stones at 4, 8 and 10, White would be hard put to make a group with two eyes here. But later, depending on how the game develops, White might be able to bring 13 to life.

After exchanging 15 for 16 White starts activities at the top left with 17.
Dia. 2 (18 – 34). For the second time Black plays the attach-and-extend joseki with 18 and 20. White 21 is another variation of this joseki. After exchanging 22 for 23, Black must make an important strategic decision: defend the corner or play on the outside with 24 and 26.

In a handicap game it is usually better to play for outside influence. In this case, with the triangled stones in place, Black is able to make a huge box-shaped territory by playing 24 and 26. These are large-scale strategic moves. Even though White gets the corner territory with the sequence to 33, his stones are isolated and they have no influence on the board as a whole. This is Black’s best strategy for handicap go: give White small territory in the corners or on the sides, but go for the big strategic points on the outside.

Black 34 makes Black’s territory at the top right almost impregnable.
Dia. 3 (35 – 46). Exchanging 36 for 37 and then jumping to 38 are powerful moves when ▲ is in place. The ideal extension for White from his two stones, 35 and 37, would be to play on that point himself. But since Black already occupies it, the only extensions White has are to 44, 'a' or 'b'; they are all too narrow. No matter how White plays, his stones will come under attack.

If Black neglects to play 36 and immediately jumps to 38 instead, White will slide to 2 in Ref. Dia. 3 and make a safe group with 4. Black will not be able to launch a very severe attack in this case.        

Ref. Dia. 3

In answer to 39, Black attacks with 40, 42 and 44. White turns at 45, letting Black cut his stones into two groups with 46. He plans to start a complicated fight involving all the stones in this sector of the board.
Dia. 4 (47 – 58). White 47 forces Black 48. Do you see why? Next White plays atari at 49 and proceeds to make a base for his group at the bottom with 53 and 55.

Black 56 is a strong move. If Black neglects to play here and instead exchanges 1 for 2 in Ref. Dia. 4, after Black 3 White will extend to 4 and play the sequence to 10. Although the white stones are dead, they are a potential source of trouble.

After 56, White 57 is necessary or the white stones at the bottom will die. Finally Black jumps to 58, leading his four stones at the bottom to safety while at the same time blocking off the escape route of the four triangled white stones. If Black plays well these stones should die.
Questions and Answers

Question. Why didn't White try to live in the corner after he played 13 in Dia. 1?

Answer. He could try, but Black would easily kill him. If White slides to 3 in Dia. 1a, Black confines him with 4 and 6, then robs him of his eye-shape with 8 and 10. White cannot get a second eye. To do so he must play at both 'a' and 'b'. But if White takes one of these points, Black will take the other.

If White tries to live with 3 in Dia. 1b, Black comes in at 4 and drives White into his stones below with 8 and 10. This should help you realize how valuable the moves 8 and 10 were in Dia. 1 of the game. Even though they are removed a bit from the corner, they still have an effect on the ability of White to form a living group there.

Question. It was said on page 55 in commenting on White 13 that "depending on how the game develops, White might be able to bring 13 to life." Could you give an example?
**Answer.** Certainly. Suppose White were able to play the triangled stone in Dia. 2a during the course of the game. White could then play 1, threatening to link up to his stones at the bottom by playing at ‘a’. If Black tries to block this connection by playing at either 2 or ‘a’, White lives with the moves 3 to 7. Therefore, in response to White 1, it would be better for Black to block at 2 in Dia. 2b and let White link up with 3 and 5. The sequence comes to its natural conclusion with White taking the corner with 7 and 9. You should note that moves like these are best played in the later stages of the game.

![Diagram 2a](image)

**Dia. 2a**

![Diagram 2b](image)

**Dia. 2b**

**Question.** Taking the corner with 2 in Dia. 3a looks pretty big to me. What’s wrong with this move?

**Answer.** If you are going to take the corner, Black ‘a’ is the safest way to do it. In any case, White will push out with 3 and 5. Now Black no longer has the possibility of making a large territorial framework. Furthermore, he still has to worry about the corner.

Later White can aim at 1 in Dia. 3b. The peaceful way is for White to link up to his stones on the right with 3 and 5. (Do you understand now why it is better for Black to play at ‘a’ instead of 2 in Dia. 3a?). However, since
this is a 9-stone game, White would probably take a chance and try to live on the left side by playing at 'a' instead of 3.

In conclusion, not only are Black 24 and 26 in Dia. 2 bigger, they are also safer and will lead to a game that is less complicated.

**Question.** On page 58 it was said that taking the white stone with Black 56 was a strong move. But then it was said that the five white stones that tried to escape in Ref. Dia. 4 were still dead. If Black can capture these stones no matter what White does, wouldn’t it be better to use this move to play somewhere else? What is the ‘potential source of trouble’?

**Answer.** Although the five white stones in Ref. Dia. 4 are dead, it takes Black four moves to kill them. Consider the hypothetical position in Dia. 4a on the next page. White has managed to escape into the center with his stones at the bottom. White peeps at 1, forcing Black to respond with 2. This sets up a capturing race with the sequence to Black 10. It is now White’s move and
he can easily live by attaching at ‘a’. In addition, White has now established a base from which he can invade Black’s large framework of potential territory above.

By way of comparison, once Black has settled his position by taking the white stone in the lower left corner, it is hard for White to find any effective moves to save his four stranded stones. If White invades at 1 in Dia. 4b, Black 2 and 4 are strong moves that define a huge territory above and destroy White’s chances of forming two eyes for his group.
7-stone Handicap: The Capping Strategy

Dia. 1 (1 – 7). After playing moves moves like 1 and 5, the capping move of 7 is a strategy often used by White in high handicap games. White 7 can deliver a psychological shock to Black, especially if he lacks confidence: it seems as if White is intent on taking the whole right side. This is not necessarily his intention, however. White’s real aim is to lure Black into a complicated fight which will spill over into other parts of the board.

Black’s best strategy, although not the simplest, is to lead his triangulated stone resolutely out into the center of the board. This is a fundamental principle of handicap go: never allow your stones to become confined and isolated; make sure that they can gain access to the center of the board.

*Dia. 1 (1 – 7)*
Dia. 2 (8 – 14). Bumping into the white stone with 8 is a good move which facilitates Black’s escape into the center. If White plays at 10 or thereabouts, Black will jump to ‘a’ and easily get out. If White plays at 9 or ‘b’, Black moves out in the other direction. After White 9, Black exchanges 10 for 11 and then plays 12. Black is now threatening to play at 13 which would just about finish off the two white triangle stones. Therefore, White must play there himself and escape into the center.

Black 14 ensures that the black stones will have no problems linking up to the center.

Dia. 3 (15 – 20). It is now White who must escape into the center with 15. Black fills the gap in his position with 16 and his central stones are solidly connected to the center, but White still has to look after his stones. 17 and 19 give White’s stones some breathing room, but at the
expense of helping Black to solidify his top right corner with 18. 18 also gives Black a foundation to play a peep at ‘a’, which makes 19 essential.

Surveying the board, we see that none of Black’s groups is in danger, while White’s groups above and below are vulnerable to attack. Besides, it is Black’s move and he can now start to take his profit by attacking White.

Dia. 4 (20 – 24). Black 20 is a very big move. It takes the territory in the corner and White’s group can no longer make two eyes on the right side. He is forced to move out into the center with 21.

Black 22 compels White to play 23, after which Black returns to the bottom, taking territory with 24 and 26, while White is forced to escape with 25. But White is getting no territory; he is only running away.
The important point to grasp in this game is that by moving out into the center with moves 8 to 16, Black splits White into two weak groups. After that territory comes naturally to Black: his territory-forming moves are attacking moves against White’s weak groups.

Questions and Answers

**Question.** Isn’t it dangerous for Black to leave a gap at ‘c’ in Dia. 2 on page 64? Couldn’t White push through and give Black problems?

**Answer.** There is absolutely no danger. In fact, Black would be very happy if White pushed through and cut with 1 and 3 in Dia. 1a. After Black connects at 6, White’s three triangled stones are in danger, so he has to escape by playing at 7. The sequence to 12 could be expected, where Black’s stones dominate the center.

*Dia. 1a*
Question. But what do I do if White tries to run away by playing at ‘a’ in Dia. 1a?

Answer. White 1 in Dia. 2a would be a bad move. Black can squeeze White with 2 and 4 and then play 6. Black 6 defends the cutting point at ‘a’ and also threatens to attack White’s stones at the top with ‘b’. In addition, Black’s stones in the center work well with his handicap stones on the left side. If White defends at the top, Black can attack White’s stones in the lower part of the board.

![Dia. 2a 5: connects](attachment:image.png)

Question. How does White 19 in Dia. 3 defend against the peep at ‘a’? It seems to me that Black can still peep and successfully cut through White’s position.
Answer. Indeed Black can peep and capture a stone with the sequence to 9 in Dia. 3a, but his gain is small and he ends in gote. White, on the other hand, builds a solid position up to 8 facing towards Black’s handicap stones on the left. Since it is still White’s move, he can now take the time to stabilize his stones in the lower right sector.

Dia. 3a

Question. Could you give an example of how White can stabilize his stones?

Answer. When White has a stone at △ in Dia. 4a, attaching at 1 is the standard move. The sequence to Black 6 is one possibility. Although White’s stones are still vulnerable, they are safer than they were after Black played 20 in Dia. 4 on page 65.

Question. Why is White ‘compelled’ to answer 22 with 23 in Dia. 4?

Answer. Because of Black 1 in Dia. 5a. This move hits White on the vital point, depriving him of eye shape. White must run away and make his eyes elsewhere on the board.
5-stone Handicap

Dia. 1 (1 – 5). The sequence to White 5 is a common opening pattern in 4- and 5-stone handicap games. Black's handicap stone in the upper left corner is under a double attack and White will confine this stone by playing at 'a' next if Black doesn't do something. The thickness that White would get by restricting Black to the corner would have a strategic influence throughout the whole board. Black must never let this happen. He must move out into the center and keep White's two stones, 3 and 5, separated.

Dia. 1 (1 – 5)

Dia. 2 (6 – 17). The right way to move out into the center, in this case, is to attach at 6, and, when White plays 7, to draw back with 8. The idea is for Black to make a wall facing his triangled stone when White invades at 9.

With the sequence to 16, Black makes a powerful posi-
tion enveloping the lone white stone at the top. This position has a strong influence throughout the whole top of the board.

Next, White plays 17.

Dia. 3 (17 – 24). White 17 is a calm move, but Black attacks White’s thin position on the right with 18 to 22. While White is defending, Black is building an enormous framework of potential territory at the top. Again we see this fundamental principle in action: build territory and influence by attacking weak stones. In a handicap game, since Black starts with an advantage, White will always have weak stones somewhere on the board. Playing handicap games is good practice for learning how to spot weak groups and to develop techniques for attacking them.
Dia. 4 (25 – 30). 25 is the deepest White can safely invade. Of course, in such a position most white players would take a chance and make a deeper invasion, but with good play on Black’s part White’s invading stones would die.

Black harasses White with 26 and 28, then closes off a large portion of his framework with 30, making it almost impregnable.

Dia. 5 (17 – 25). Let’s go back and consider a variation of Dia. 3. Instead of 17 there, consider the capping move of 17 in this diagram. White’s plan here is to reduce the size of Black’s potential territory as much as possible before playing in another part of the board.

The sequence to White 25 is a standard pattern.
Dia. 6 (26 – 30). After Black connects at 26, White extends to 27, expecting perhaps to set up an attack on the black stones to the left. But it is White who is weak and Black must waste no time in attacking. Whenever White enters a black sphere of influence like this, there is always a way for Black to launch an effective attack.

Black 28 hits White’s position on the vital point, preventing him from making eye-shape. White defends the cutting point of ‘a’ with 29, but then Black launches a powerful attack on the whole white group with 30.
Dia. 7 (31 – 36). White deftly tries to get his stones out into the center to safety with the sequence to 35. Black 36 keeps up the pressure, denying White access to the right side. In fact, this move stakes out the right side for Black.

Dia. 8 (37 – 44). With 39 and 41, White ensures that his large group at the top cannot be separated and 43 leads it out into the center to safety. But after 44, the whole upper right area seems to have fallen under the control of Black.

Black is so strong in the upper right that it is hard for White to find an effective move in this area. For example,
if White invades the corner with 1 in Ref. Dia. 1, the hypothetical sequence to 15 leaves White’s group in the corner dead as it stands. (You should verify this for yourself as an exercise.) White could probably make a living group on the right side by playing at ‘a’, but this would provoke Black ‘b’ and the large white group in the center would come under attack again.

Ref. Dia. 1

The strategic concepts in the example games in this section may be a bit hard for you to understand at first, especially if you are just beginning to play go. But as you gain more experience, keep coming back to them and focus on the main principles that we have emphasized. Namely:

- Play for outside influence. Let White take small territory on the sides and in the corners, but confine him to those areas. The outside influence you get will work synergistically with the other handicap stones that you already have on the board.
- Try to get your handicap stones connected out into the center, while keeping White’s stones separated into weak groups.
- Make territory and influence by attacking weak
white groups. Learn how to identify these weak groups and develop your technique in attacking them.

You will probably lose a lot of games using these principles, but in the long run, when you have gained experience and have developed your technique, you will become a strong player if you play like this. There are safer styles of play that will allow you to win more games at high handicaps, but the 'safer' styles you learn will become ingrained and when you start playing on even terms your progress will come to a halt.
CHAPTER SEVEN: HOW TO IMPROVE AT GO

The quickest and most painless way to familiarize yourself with the rules of go is to start playing games on a 9 x 9 board. By playing on a small board you can concentrate on simple, but important, tactical ideas, learn what constitutes a live group, and learn how to count the final score. After a number of games on a 9 x 9 board, you can graduate to a 13 x 13 board where elementary strategy comes into play. Finally, when you feel ready, go to the full-size 19 x 19 board.

Starting off on the full-size board can be bewildering to the beginning player. With so many points to play on, it is almost impossible for the novice to know why one point is better than another. It also takes a long time to finish a game on a 19 x 19 board, but you can play a game on a 9 x 9 board in ten minutes or so.

When you finally start playing on a 19 x 19 board, begin with a 9-stone handicap against a stronger player. An excellent elementary book which will give you all the handicap josekis you need is *Basic Techniques of Go* (see the suggested reading list following this chapter). Another good book is *Handicap Go*, but it is a bit more advanced.

Go has many phases, from the opening to the endgame. The opening stage, the fuseki, lasts for about 30 moves, sometimes more, sometimes less. In this stage, both players lay out their prospective territories and play out josekis in the corners.

There are many kinds of fuseki patterns. One way to get strong at the fuseki is to concentrate on one pattern in all your games until you master that pattern; then go on to study another pattern. There is a series of articles in the magazine *Go World* from issues number 5 to number
16, entitled *How to Improve at Fuseki*, emphasizing this approach.

With regard to josekis, learn just a few basic ones. The book *38 Basic Joseki* will give you all the josekis you need to know until you reach 1-dan. At that point you can start to specialize in various joseki patterns that you feel you must learn.

The most difficult part of the game is the middle game. Here positional judgement and analytical ability all come into play. In order to improve your tactical ability you must study tesuji (skillful tactical moves) problems as well as life and death (tsume-go) problems.

For positional judgement the book *Attack and Defense* is the standard elementary book on this subject. But the study of the games of the great masters of go, both past and present, will aid you immeasurably in developing your positional sense.

The endgame is completely analytical. You must learn the value of the basic endgame sequences and also study the various tesujis that occur in the endgame. To this end, solving endgame tesuji problems will be of great benefit.

But your own games will be of greatest value in improving your go. Play many games, but not mindless games. Write some of them down and study them later, with a strong player if possible. In this way you will be able to pinpoint your blind spots and weak points, thereby taking steps to remedy them.
Suggested Reading

Elementary books are marked with a single asterisk, intermediate with a double asterisk, and advanced with a triple asterisk. All these books are in English and are available from Ishi Press International. A free catalog of go books and equipment is available on request.

Beginners

*G41 The Magic of Go

An unique introduction to go by Cho Chikun, Honinbo and World Go Champion. A step by step approach takes the reader from the basic rules to playing his or her own games. Fundamentals are covered in detail. The reader will also find short essays introducing the world of go — history, tournaments, computer go, playing equipment and more.

*G31 The Second Book of Go

This useful book introduces a reader who knows the rules and rudiments of strategy to the ideas required to get to 12 kyu. Includes opening fundamentals, distinctions between real, false and big eyes, capturing techniques, good shape, life and death, what is a tesuji, why do you make a ko, what is a joseki, how to play with a handicap, and basic endgame sequences at a level that can be grasped by the novice.

Openings (Fuseki)

*G10 In the Beginning

Required reading for all beginning players. Covers the fundamental ideas of the fuseki.

*G2 Basic Techniques of Go

The first chapters of this book presents an introduction to fuseki theory. The last two chapters are about tesujis and the endgame

**G32 The Power of the Star Point

Sanren-sei consists of occupying the three star points on a side. It is the most powerful and dynamic of fuseki patterns, yet it is the easiest

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to master. In this book, the key concepts and how to use the sanren-sei to secure center influence and build large moyos are explained. This strategy is easy to grasp and there are few josekis to memorize.

**G33 The Chinese Opening**

The Chinese opening is the newest and one of the most popular of the standard fuseki patterns. It combines the virtues of both influence-oriented and territory-oriented strategy. Statistics show that ‘high’ version of the Chinese opening has the best winning percentage in professional play of all the opening patterns.

**G44 The 3-3 Point, Modern Opening Strategy**

Today in professional go, openings are being played that emphasize tight territorial control. For this purpose, the 3–3 point is crucial, whether played to secure or destroy territory. This book shows you 3–3 josekis in relation to the whole board, then delves into parallel and diagonal fusekis. A chapter of problems will challenge your understanding of the concepts discussed. Examples are drawn from approximately 100 of Cho Chikun’s own games.

**G26 The Direction of Play**

Advanced fuseki theory as expounded by Kajiwara Takeo 9-dan, the famous modern fuseki theoretician.

Joseki

**G11 38 Basic Joseki**

The ideal introduction to josekis. All the josekis that you need to know while you are a kyu-player.

**G21–G23 Dictionary of Basic Joseki, Vols. 1–3**

The standard reference book in English on josekis from the point of view of even games.

**G24 Enclosure Josekis**

Josekis that occur in the middle game with emphasis on the ones that involve attacking and defending corner enclosures.
The Middle Game

*G34 All About Thickness

Two-color diagrams make the concepts of thickness and influence instantly clear. How to build thickness and how to use it to attack or to make territory. An excellent book for everyone from novice to dan-level player. (Also available in hardcover)

**G45 Positional Judgment

An accurate assessment of the board position during the middle game is key to deciding your strategy. To become an expert go player, you must develop positional judgment. In this book, the author provides the first comprehensive treatment of this subject in English.

**G14 Attack and Defense

The basic book on the middle game. Covers the fundamentals of positional judgment as well as other topics.

**G6 Strategic Concepts of Go

Some of the fundamental concepts of go and the middle game are analyzed with a large number of problems that utilize these concepts.

**G27 Kato’s Attack and Kill

How to attack and kill your opponent’s stones.

*G28 Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go

A chatty and entertaining book about the fundamental ideas of go. Highly recommended for the kyu-player.

Tesuji

*G12 Tesuji

The basics of tesuji with over 300 examples and problems.

*G2 Basic Techniques of Go

Chapter 5 of this book gives a survey of the various types of tesuji. Many examples and problems.
Life and Death

*G13 Life and Death

The fundamentals of life and death with over 200 examples and problems.

Problem Books

*Graded Go Problems for Beginners, Vols. 1 to 4

These are excercise books with hundreds of life-and-death problems and tesujis arranged in order of progressive difficulty. Written to accompany the theory presented in more advanced go books.

*G18 Test Your Go Strength

A collection of 50 problems covering the opening, middle game and the endgame.

Endgame

*G2 Basic Techniques of Go

The last chapter of this book contains an elementary introduction to the endgame with numerous problems.

**G15 The Endgame

The standard book in English on the endgame. Lots of examples and problems.

Handicap Go

*G2 Basic Techniques of Go

Chapter 2 to Chapter 4 present handicap strategies for 9-stone to 4-stone handicaps as well as many handicap go josekis.

*G16 Handicap Go

The fundamental principles of handicap go are presented with a problem section and example games.

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*G17 Kage's Secret Chronicles of Handicap Go
Detailed analysis by Kageyama Toshiro 7-dan of 2- to 5-stone handicap games, illustrating the right way to play handicap go.

*G19 The Breakthrough to Shodan
Step-by-step analysis of low-handicap go. Shows you how to attack, how to handle the corner and how to keep the game simple.

Games

*G25 Appreciating Famous Games
Famous games of some of the great masters of the past. Written for kyu-level players.

**Invincible: The Games of Shusaku
160 games with detailed commentaries by modern professionals of the greatest go genius who ever lived. A panorama of late Edo period go, the golden age of go. The finest go book ever written.

Go World

The in-depth quarterly magazine for players who seriously want to improve their game, published continuously since 1977, each issue has 64 pages of information. You will find articles on playing strategies, background and history of the game, and detailed analyses of professional games. Go World is your passport to the world of go. Subscribe for 1, 2 or 3 years. Back copies of most issues are available. Go World also available on disk for IBM PC and Macintosh.

General

G40 The World of Go
A reference book on just about everything having to do with go. There is history and philosophy, a who's who of current and historical players, a complete glossary of go terms, a directory of go tournaments, computer go, the rules (Japanese, Chinese, as well as others), information on playing equipment and more.
GO ASSOCIATIONS

The following is a list of national go associations throughout the world. If you have trouble locating other go players in your community, your local go organization may be able to help you.

ARGENTINA
Argentina Go Association
c/o Mr. Frederico Lasaignes,
Washington 2810 3D,
1430-Capital Federal
Tel. 541-3527

AUSTRALIA
Australian Go Association,
c/o Bill Leveritt, "Denmora",
20 Cowshaw St.,
Bowen Hills, QLD, 4006

AUSTRIA
Oesterreichischer Go-Verband,
c/o Dr. Alfred Kriegler,
1030 Wien,
Rechte Bahngasse 28/2,
Tel. 7238335

BRAZIL
Brazil Ki-in,
c/o Mr. Tokio Arikawa,
Rua Sao Paulo 68, Ap. 51,
Capital Sao Paulo,
Tel. 278-7686

CANADA
Canadian Go Association,
c/o Mr. Tibor Bognar,
8982 St. Hubert,
Montreal, Quebec H2M 1Y6
Tel. 387-1646

CHINA
China Weiqi Association,
Ti-yu-guan Lu 9,
Peking, Tel. 753110

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Czechoslovak Go Association,
c/o Dr. Dusan Prokop,
Laubova 8,
130-00 Praha 3, CSSR
Tel. 276565

DENMARK
Denmark Go Association,
c/o Mr. Mogens Aalund,
Osterbrogade 68, 2.
2100 Copenhagen,
Tel. 01-267801

FINLAND
Finland Go Association,
c/o Mr. Keijo Alho,
Kuusitie 8 A 14,
00270 Helsinki 27,
Tel. 90-483401

FRANCE
Federation Francaise de Go,
B. P. 9506,
75262 Paris Cedex 06

F. R. GERMANY
Deutscher Go Bund,
c/o Mr. Gunther Peter,
Koenigstr. 32,
D-5307 Wachtberg,
Tel. 0228-348941

HONG KONG
Hong Kong Go Club,
458 Nathan Road,
8th Floor, B Flat,
Kowloon,
Tel. 3-857728
HUNGARY
Hungary Go Association,
c/o Dr. Karoly Vekey,
Nevtelen utca 13,
Budapest XXII,
Tel. 686-000

ITALY
Italian Go Association,
c/o Mr. Marvin Wolfthal,
20129 Milano,
Via C. Goldini II,
Tel. 796679

JAPAN
Nihon Ki-in,
7-2 Gobancho,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102,
Tel. 03-262-6161

KOREA
Korea Baduk Association,
13-4. Kwanchul-Dong,
Chongro-gu, Seoul,
Tel. 723-0150

MEXICO
Mexican Go Association,
c/o Mr. Noboru Sato,
Adolfo Prieto, 1374-402,
Col del Valle,
Delegacion Benito Juarez 03100
Tel. 575-4643

NETHERLANDS
Dutch Go Association,
c/o Mr. J. H. van Frankenhuyzen,
J. Verhulststraat 125,
1071 NA Amsterdam
Tel. 020-739232

NEW ZEALAND
New Zealand Go Society
c/o Mr. Conrad Jackson,
12 Newport St.,
Christchurch 6,
Tel. 883-735

NORWAY
Norwegian Go Association,
c/o Mr. Morten Skogen,
Kzempeveien 13E,
N-4600 Kristiansand Syd,
Tel. 42-91373

POLAND
Warsaw Go Club,
c/o Mr. Krzysztof Grabowski,
ul. Dunikowskiego 3/40,
02-784 Warszawa

SINGAPORE
Singapore Go Association,
c/o Mr. Gin Hor Chan,
Dept. of Mathematics,
National University of Singapore
Kent Ridge, Singapore 0511,
Tel. 7756666, Ext. 2083

SPAIN
Spanish Go Association,
c/o Mr. Masaru Mikami,
Villavieja 4,
Madrid 11. n

SWEDEN
The Swedish Go Association,
c/o Mr. Per-Inge Olsson,
Safergangen 24,
S-13 549 Tyreso,
Tel. 08-770-0927

SWITZERLAND
Swiss Go Federation,
c/o Mr. Tamotsu Takase,
Ch. Adrien Jeandin 22-8083,
1226 Thonex, Geneve,
Tel. 48 95 41

UNITED KINGDOM
British Go Association,
c/o Mr. Norman R. Tobin,
10 West Common Road,
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1NZ,
Tel. 0895-30511
USA
American Go Association
P. O. Box 397,
Old Chelsea Station,
New York, N. Y. 10011

YUGOSLAVIA
Go Savez Jugoslavije,
c/o Mr. Peter Gaspari,
Aleseva 3, 61210 Ljubljana --
Sentvid. Tel. (061) 52-111
APPENDIX: RULES FOR SPECIAL POSITIONS

The following ‘rules’ are known as the “Nihon Ki-in Precedents”.

Rule 10. A bent four in the corner is independently dead, regardless of the situation on the rest of the board.

Dia. 10a  Dia. 10b  Dia. 10c

If any of the corner positions from Dias. 10a, 10b or 10c arise in a game, Black is dead and his stones can be removed from the board at the end of the game without further play.

Rule 11. The three-points-without-capturing positions shown in Dias. 11a, 11b or 11c are to be resolved by actual play. If neither side captures, neither receives any territory.

Dia. 11a  Dia. 11b  Dia. 11c
Rule 12. In a thousand-year ko, if neither side is willing to start the ko, the player who is able by capturing and connecting to make the position seki shall do so.

In Dias. 12a or 12b, if neither player has begun the ko by the end of the game, White must capture at ‘a’ and connect, making a seki.

Rule 13. Defensive moves inside territory. All questions concerning the need for defense inside territory are to be resolved by actual play, with a pass regarded as one move.

The question of whether White need capture at ‘a’ or not in Dias. 13a or 13b is to be resolved by actual play.
Rule 14. If a triple, quadruple, quintuple, etc. ko, a round-robin ko, an eternal life, or other abnormal pattern arises and the same board position is made repeatedly with neither side willing to give in, the game ends without result.

Dias. 14a through 14g are examples of these positions.

Dia. 14a
Triple ko

Dia. 14b
Triple ko

Dia. 14c
Triple ko

Dia. 14d
Round-robin kos

Dia. 14e

Dia. 14f
Eternal life

Dia. 14g
Rule 15. Prisoners in seki. If there are enemy stones inside an eye possessed by a group that is alive in a seki, the player may capture them, force his opponent to play as many additional stones as necessary, and capture them also, adding them to his prisoners, as long as this does not destroy the seki pattern.

In Dias. 15a through 15c, Black may capture three white stones as shown.

![Dia. 15a](image1)
![Dia. 15b](image2)
![Dia. 15c](image3)

Dia. 15a  Dia. 15b  Dia. 15c

The following three diagrams show three special double kos and their results.

![Dia. 16a](image4)  ![Dia. 16b](image5)  ![Dia. 16c](image6)

Dia. 16a  Dia. 16b  Dia. 16c

Seki  Black dead  Black wins

In Dia. 16b the black stones are taken from the board at the end of the game without further play. In Dia. 16c the white stones are taken from the board at the end of the game without further play.
For a more thorough discussion of these special positions, we refer the interested reader to the booklet, “World Amateur Go Championship Rules”, published by the Nihon Ki-in. This booklet is available from the Ishi Press for ¥500 including postage.

GLOSSARY

The following are some commonly used Japanese go terms including some that have not appeared in the text.

ATARI: An immediate threat to capture.
DAME: A neutral point which is not territory for either player.
DAN: A rank given to strong players.
FUSEKI: The opening maneuvers of the game.
GOTE: A move which loses the initiative. The opposite of sente.
JOSEKI: A standard pattern of good play in the corner.
KO: A situation involving continuous capture and recapture.
KOMI: Points subtracted from Black’s territory at the end of a tournament game to compensate for his having moved first.
KYU: A rank given to weaker players.
NIHON KI-IN: The Japan Go Association.
SEKI: An impasse situation in which groups can live without having two eyes.
SENTE: A move which keeps the initiative by forcing the opponent to answer.
SHICHO: A ladder as explained on page 26.
SHODAN: The lowest dan rank: first dan.
TESUJI: The most skillful move which gives an advantage in a local situation.
About the Authors

JAMES DAVIES
was born in 1945 in Philadelphia. He studied mathematics at Oberlin College and the University of Washington, but in 1970 the game of go drew him to Japan, where he has lived since. An amateur (5-dan) player but a semi-professional writer, he has turned out numerous books and countless magazine articles on go.

RICHARD BOZULICH
was born in 1936 in Los Angeles. He studied philosophy and mathematics at the University of California at Los Angeles and Berkeley, but came to Japan in 1967 to study go, and has lived there ever since. In 1968 he founded the Ishi Press for the purpose of spreading go throughout the western world.

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An Introduction to GO

Some four thousand years ago in China a board game was invented that so superbly combined beauty of form with depth of strategy that it thrives essentially unchanged today. It has been played professionally in Japan for over 350 years, but there are no signs that the possibilities of the game have been exhausted. Openings are not set and the player relies more on logical principles and intuition than on memorized variations. We know this game by its Japanese name—Go.

This book presents the rules of Go in a simple, clear and concise manner so that the beginning Go player can start playing games in the shortest possible time. In addition, elementary tactics and strategy, as well as the fundamentals of the life and death of groups are covered. Example games give the reader a feel of the flow of a game of Go. The final chapter deals with "handicap Go" to show the reader what kind of strategies to adopt when he starts to play his first games of Go.