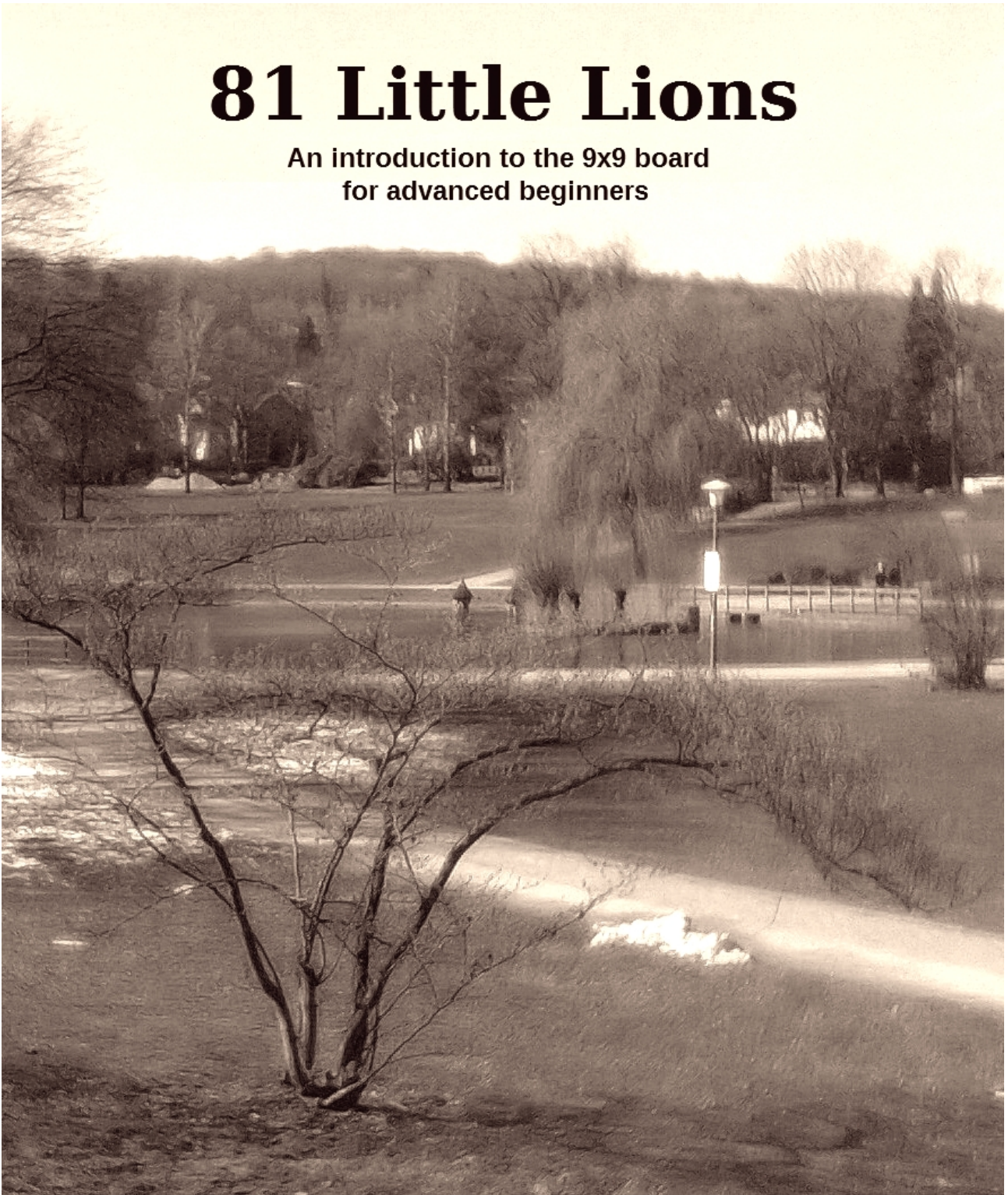


# 81 Little Lions

An introduction to the 9x9 board  
for advanced beginners



*by Immanuel Devillers, M.D.*



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for advanced beginners



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English Version 0.91 - 09. November 2022.

*for Jon*

*who introduced me to 9x9*

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# Welcome to 9x9

Dear Reader,

you will likely have picked this short book because you have found little information about the 9x9 board. That was the same reason why I wrote this little guidebook. There is plenty of resources for the 19x19 board, but none on the 9x9. I am trying to take a first step to change that.

This book is meant as an introduction to the world of 9x9 play. It is far from giving a complete overview or perfect information about the subject.

I'm a passionate 9x9 player, and a good friend of me who is 3 Dan considers my rank to be around 1 Dan for the 9x9 board. My overall rank on other board types is around 3 - 5 Kyu.

Now why does an Amateur like me decides to write a book about Go, while I am nothing more then an advanced beginner myself? I spend most of my free time doing Tsumego and playing 9x9 games and I love Go. If I can make at least one player in the world stronger, or share my love for 9x9 after reading this book, I consider it a success.

Countless hours of my lifetime went into finding and working on strategies and tactics for the smaller boards. Obviously, there are many players on the world who are more experienced then me, and who might have a different view on some of the topics in this book.

Still, I invite you to read through my experiences and learn from them. (Or judge over them as trash, that's up to you!) The major part of this book is stuff that I found out by myself, and I found it a good idea to share it. Feel free to contact me and discuss your own thoughts.

I recommend this book to players of ~ 15 Kyu and stronger. You should know the basic Go terms like Atari, Komi and the concepts of Sente and Gote.

If you look for a place to play 9x9 more seriously, I recommend the [Online Go Server](#) (OGS). It has by far the greatest bulk of serious players on that board type, and you will find a game on any strength within a minute 24/7.

I wish you an enjoyable read and hope you learn something new from this book.

Yours truly,  
Immanuel Devillers, M.D.



*"After channeling these waters, Yu divided up the newly drained land (still afloat on water confluent with the surrounding oceans) into nine great square sections bordered by rivers.*

*On the grid of a go board, especially the 9x9 board that beginners learn on today (conceivably the original size of those used in prehistoric times), it seems not implausible that the first go players would have beheld, like Chikamatsu's Immortals, not a map of the Sky, but a map of China.*

*[...]*

*There were a number of motifs in the story-telling of Mongolia and Tibet that functioned like those of water in the Tale of the Nisan Shamaness. Although go is not mentioned in The Secret History of the Mongols, important events in Genghis Khan's life were marked off by the appearance of the number '9.'*

*In this fashion, in some versions of the longest folk tale in the world, the semi-mythical early Tibetan frontier war-lord Gesar, (cf. the Byzantine word 'Caesar'), played a divinatory go game before making important decisions."*

*[ Peter Shotwell; 'The Game of Go: Speculations on its Origins and Symbolism in Ancient China', 1994-2008, p. 33, p. 44 - [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/originsofgo.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/originsofgo.pdf) ]*

## The Basics

*"Believe it or not, I've never played 9x9 before".*

That's a quote I have heard some time ago, while I was chatting with a Dan player. He was not interested in it for quite some time, but as his rank grew stronger, he wanted to try it out and asked me for a game.

Be aware that you can always be a 9x9 beginner, even when you are 9 Kyu or stronger. Since 9x9 needs a different approach in strategy, picking it up for the first time can be confusing.

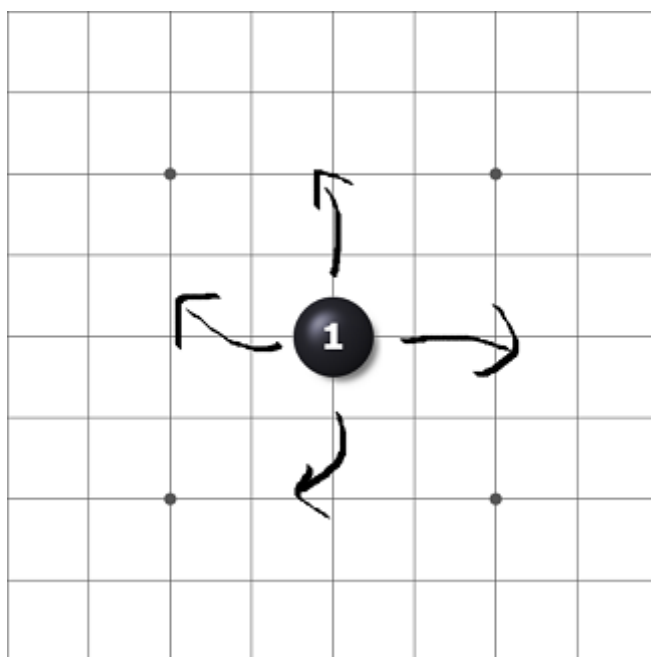
Most things that you know and learn on a 19x19 board do not apply for the 9x9 board. But let us look at the major differences together:

### Openings

The middle of the board (5-5, Tengen) is a very good opening.

Usually, you wouldn't start in the middle on a 19x19 board, but on the 9x9 board, it is a perfectly possible option. Many Pro players start on the Tengen. The reason for it's popularity is the large number of options that Black gets.

It creates influence over all sides of the board, and whatever White does, Black can choose his next move carefully. It is also the favorite opening in Pro games.



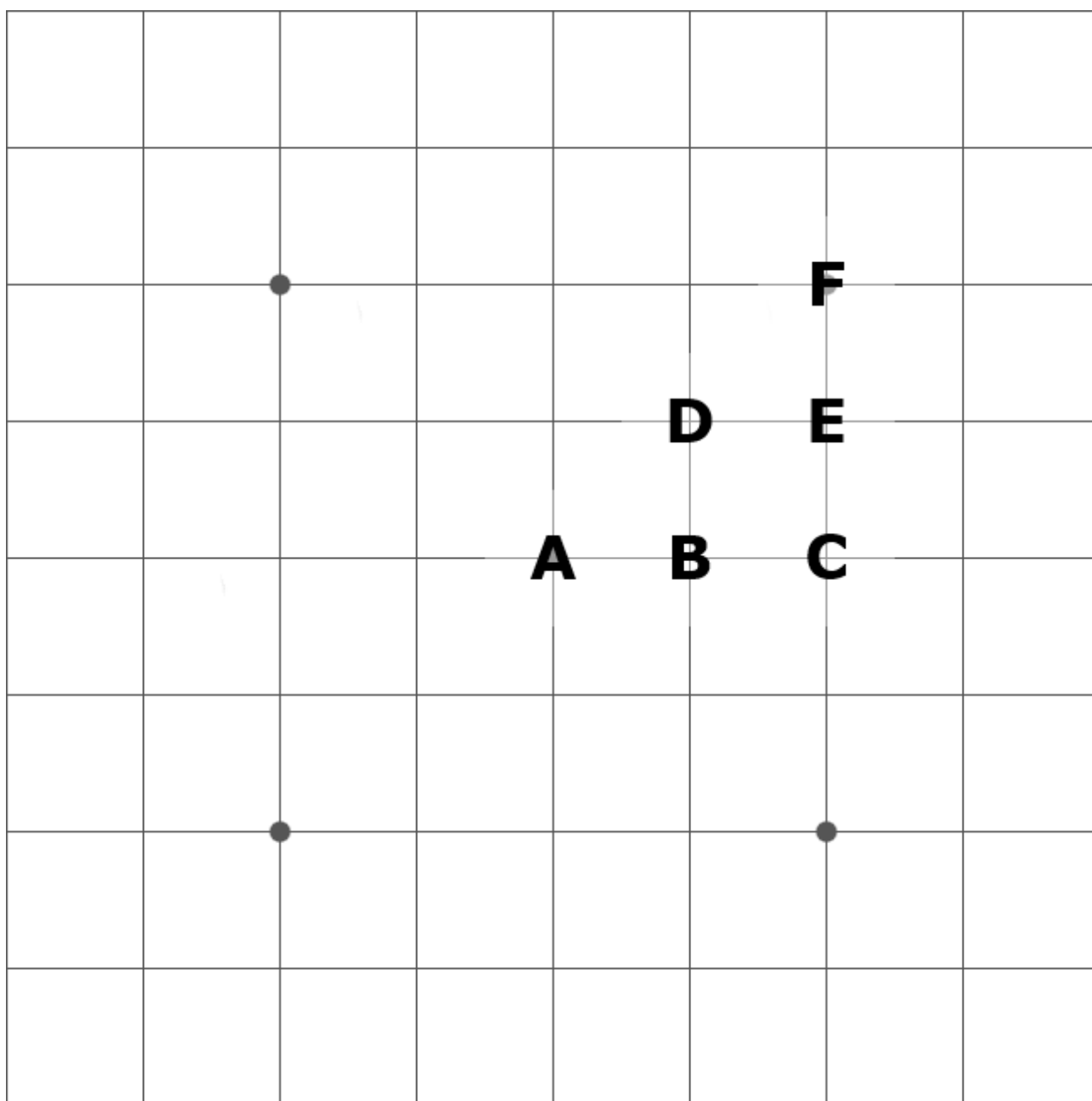
(Diagram 1)

The total number of good moves to start on the 9x9 board is six. Since the board is so small, any of these opening moves has a different character from the others.

If you play an advanced player, it is important to know, what your opponent is scheming with his opening move.

Now that we have looked at Tengen, let's take a look at the other points. The following pages do only feature some examples. There is a more detailed Joseki section later in the book.

All examples are taken from Pro Games.

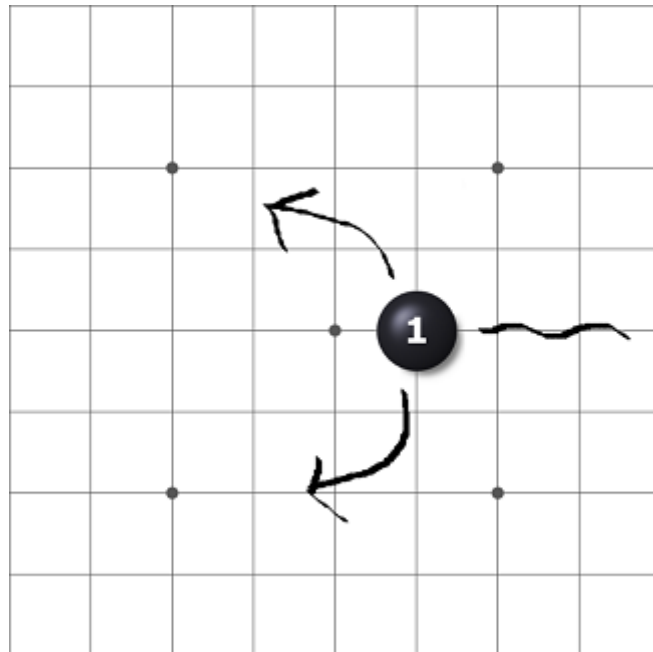


(Diagram 2)



## Takamoku (5-4 point)

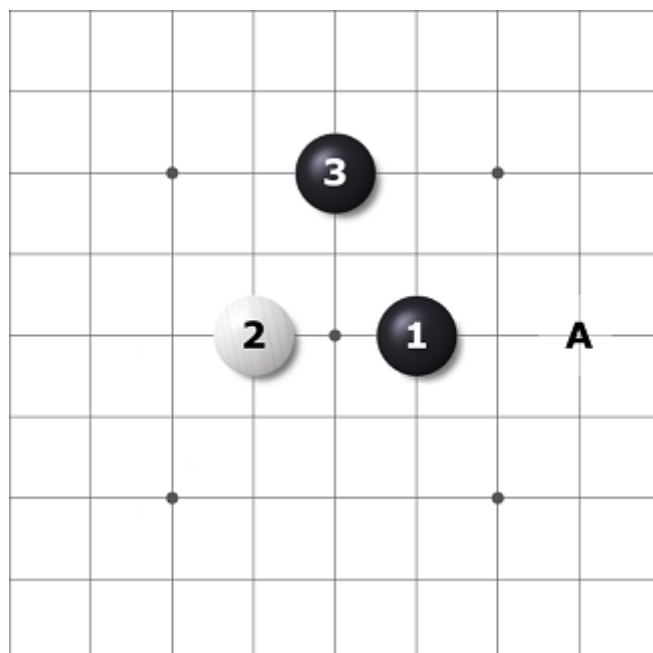
When a player starts on the Takamoku, the character of the 9x9 game changes into a fighting game. It creates a subtle influence over the shorter edge of the board, and aims into the opposite direction. In Pro games, this is the second favorite opening together with the Komoku.



(Diagram 3)

### *Example:*

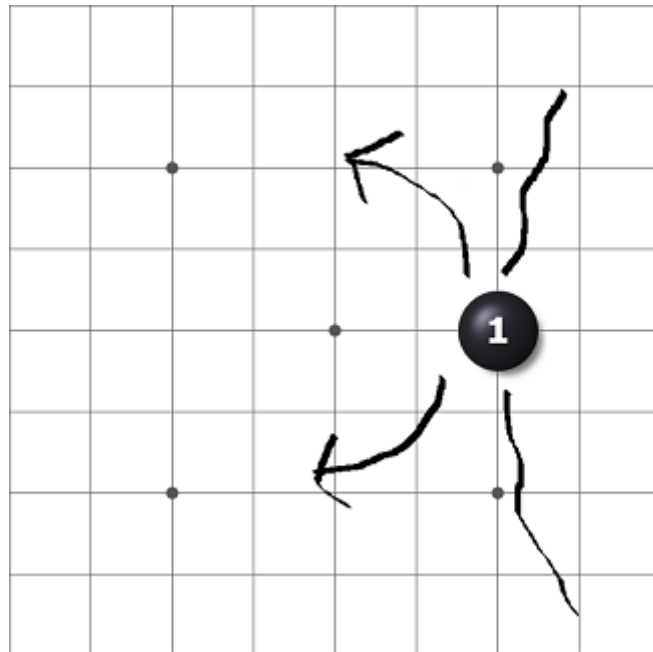
White responds with taking the other Takamoku, and a fight will likely occur. Black 3 takes big influence over the upper right corner, and invites White to invade on A.



(Diagram 4)

## Mokuhazushi (5-3 point)

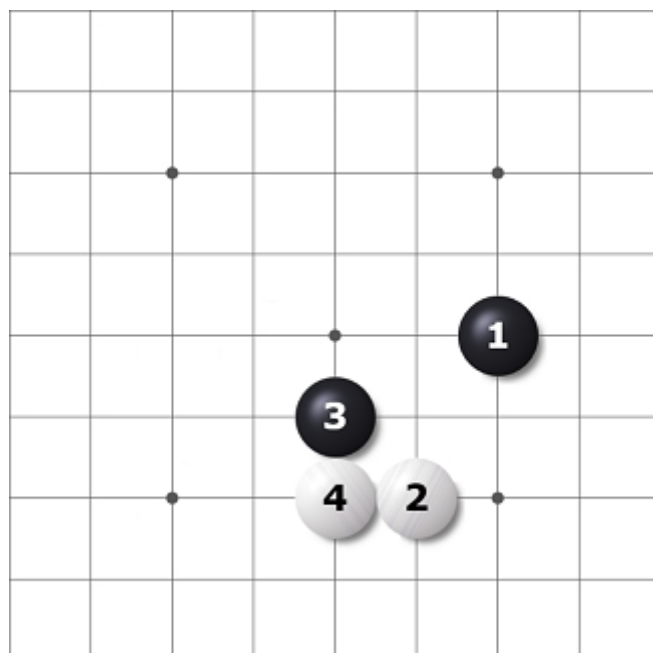
Aiming to make territory on the side, the Mokuhazushi is a more territorial opening. Which side to take is not determined yet, and Black will act according to where White plays first. Because of its slow and passive character, Mokuhazushi is rarely played in Pro games.



(Diagram 5)

### *Example:*

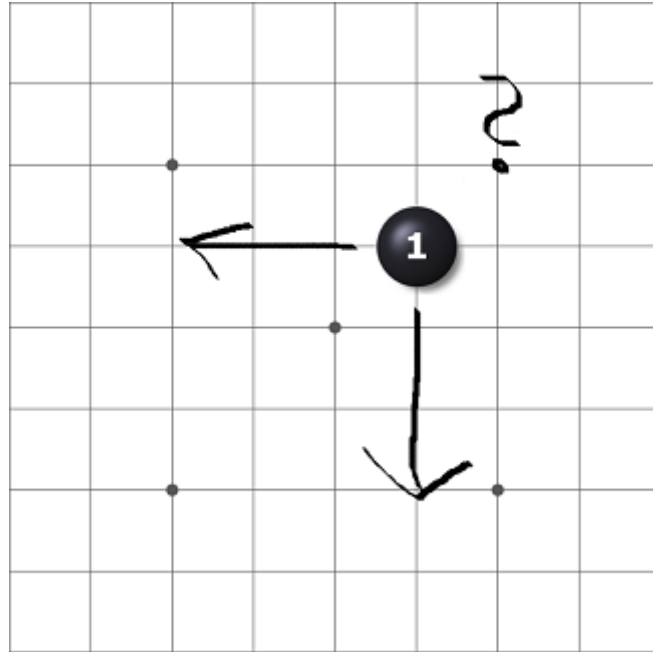
If White takes a close corner, Black can immediately attack the White stone from the safe base that he has made on the right side of the board. But it also strengthens the White group on the lower part of the board.



(Diagram 6)

## Hoshi (4-4 point)

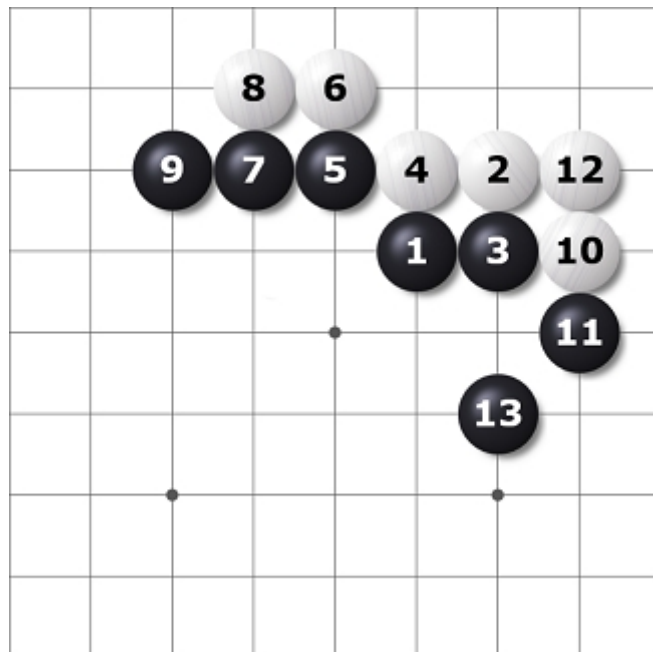
Being the third favorite opening in Pro games, the Hoshi is a very influence-oriented move. Black aims to take big parts of the corner, if the opponents lets him, but Black's true intentions are a fight over the whole board.



(Diagram 7)

### *Example:*

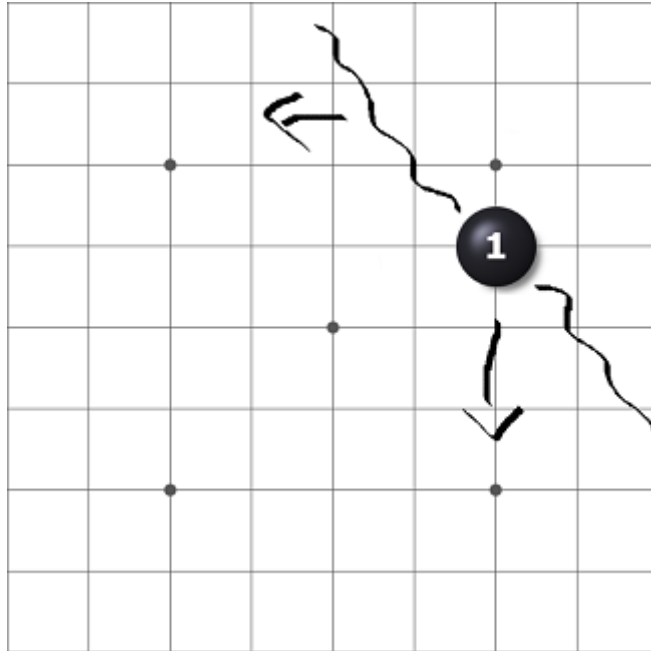
If White remembers the 3-3 invasion Joseki from the 19x19 board and plays it here, he will have a bad awakening. After the Joseki, Black is in a superior position and has influence over a huge framework.



(Diagram 8)

## Komoku (3-4 point)

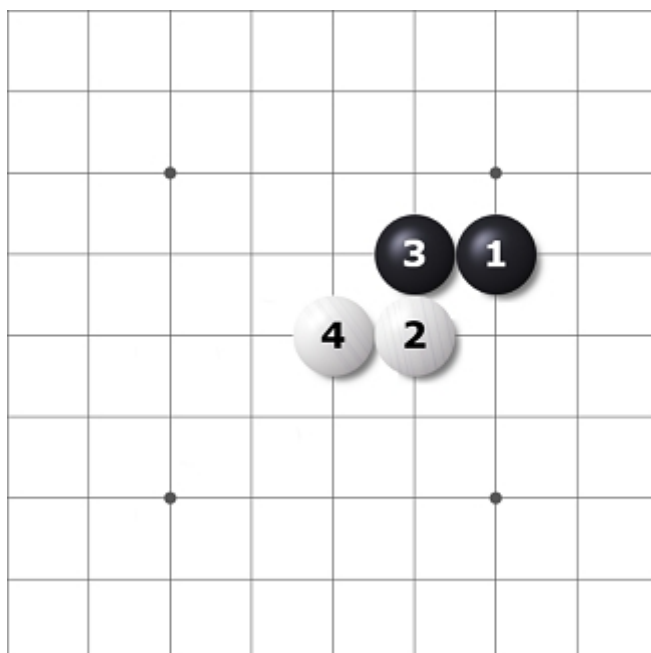
The Komoku shares rank two, together with the Takamoku in Pro game popularity. It is a very calm and solid move, but not as passive as the Moku hazushi or the Sansan. It takes a good share of the corner and Black keeps his ability to extend into either direction.



(Diagram 9)

### *Example:*

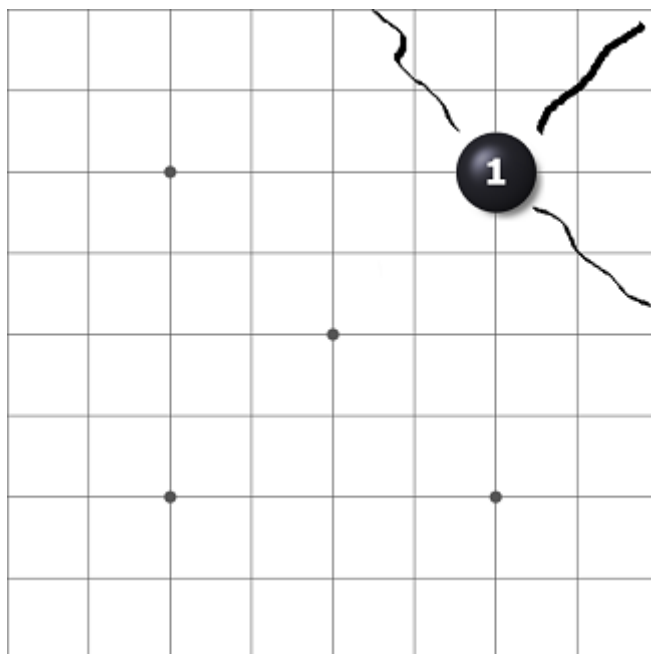
If White 2 decides to attack the safe corner of Black, the extension with Black 3 is a calm response. White 4 gets influence over the middle as compensation.



(Diagram 10)

## Sansan (3-3 point)

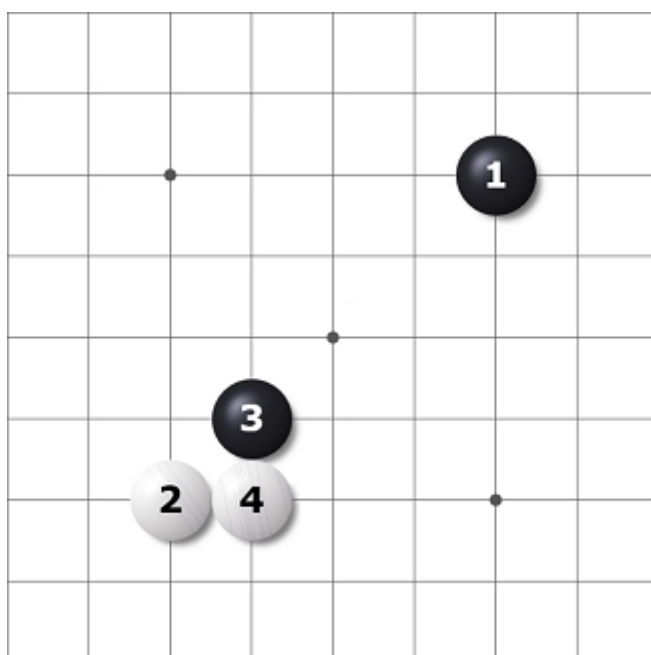
The Sansan is a playable opening, but it is only very rarely played by professionals. While it takes solid territory for Black, it is also very passive. In my experience, this is the favorite move of Beginners, mainly for being afraid of losing a group. Put away that fear and experiment with other openings!



(Diagram 11)

### *Example:*

White will not wait, and take a corner himself as a follow-up, because of the Komi. Black has no choice and has to attack heavily with Black 3. White can strengthen his corner with White 4.



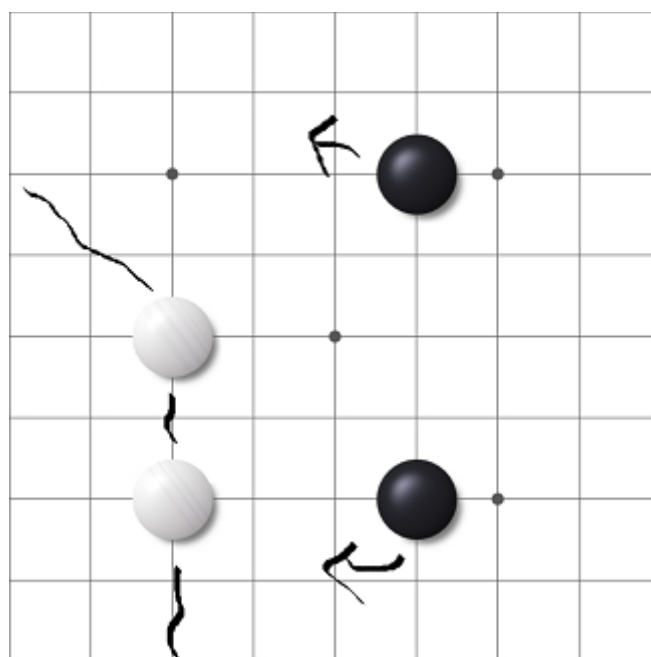
(Diagram 12)

## Influence is subtle, Control is everything

If you compare the diagram below, you will notice that White has a very solid territory in the lower left corner, while Black has influential stones on the fourth line.

On a larger board, influence-oriented play, where you create a large framework, is much easier.

On the small space of the 9x9, White can now invade the Black framework and take away all those potential points.



(Diagram 13)

I recommend to you that you play for control only until you have a good, basic understanding on how influence works on the 9x9 board. But what does control mean?

Control means that your main goal is playing for territory. Yet, playing for territory only is too passive on the 9x9 board. Instead, you have to find moves that make solid territory but still have as much influence as possible! It is the same reason that Tengen is the most popular opening: An outpost in the center of the board, able to make territory into any direction.

You need to understand, that playing for control is the main goal on 9x9! Influence is very subtle, and not as important for the advanced beginner.

Once you have a better grasp of the overall play, you can still come back and experiment with influence strategies.

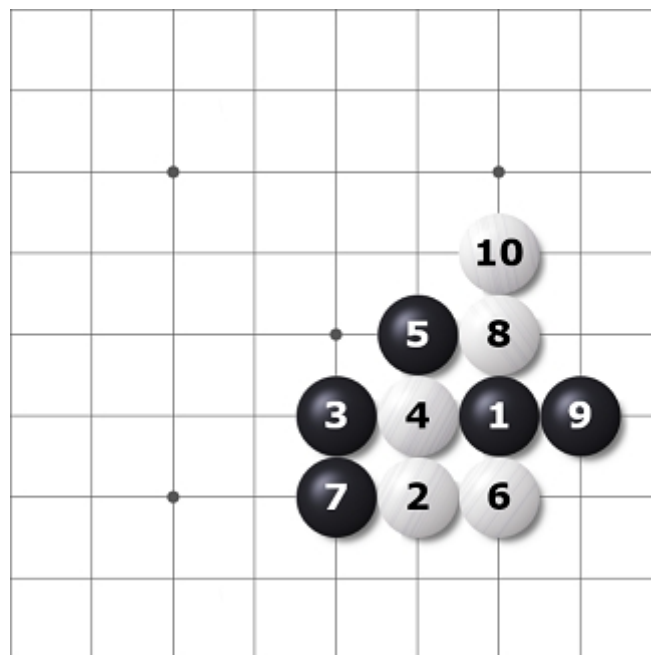
## A mistake is always lethal

On the 19x19 board, you can make a few major mistakes and still win the game. The 9x9 board is much more unforgiving about your mistakes. More often than not, losing a group of a few stones will decide the game in your opponents favor.

The conclusion from this problem is, that you need to take more time to think about your moves. Getting stronger on this board type is directly related to your own will of time investment into it. If you stop seeing the 9x9 board as the small joyful brother of the "true" big board, you will already improve in rank.

## Instant Tsumego

Does this look like the start of a Tsumego (Go puzzle) to you?



(Diagram 14)

One of the major advantages of this board format, are the fast paced games with a lot of fights.

After the opening moves, you face instant Tsumego. It is not a coincidence, that Tsumego make you a lot stronger on the 9x9 board.

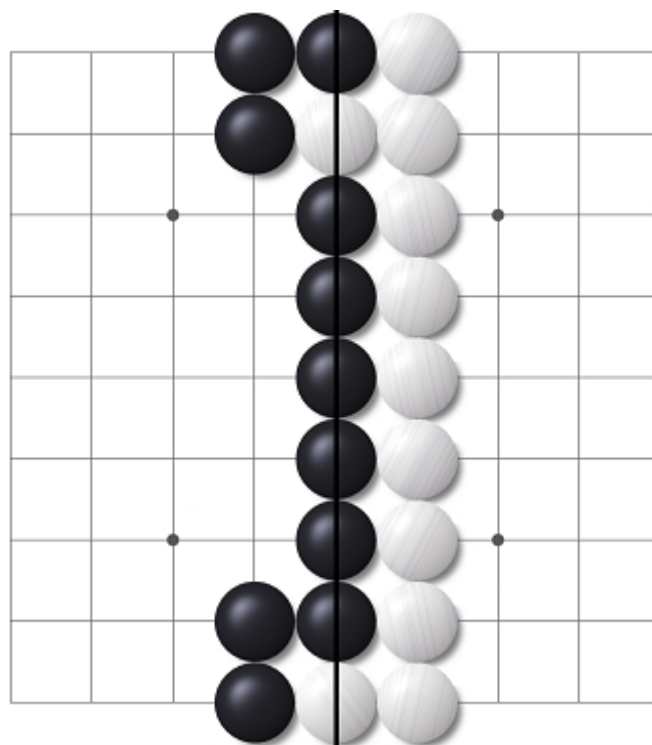
If you like a more playful approach to 9x9 games, start to see them as your daily Tsumego practice.

## Komi is a bitch

I chose this polemic title, because I've often cursed Komi when I was starting to play 9x9 games. It is 5.5 points or 6.5 points for White most of the time, depending on the ruleset.

If you take a look at the following diagram, who do you think wins? I have marked the middle for you, and you can see that Black's territory is 5 points bigger than the White one.

Those five points are a huge area on the 9x9 board. Yet, White wins with 0.5 points - Because of the Komi.



(Diagram 15)

The Komi also takes a large part in the psychology of your gameplay. While Black needs to take a more aggressive approach to the game, to make up for the Komi, White can choose more solid moves.

Even after White sacrifices five of his stones, and the game ends with equal points of territory, White will win with 0.5 points.

Do not let this discourage you from playing on 9x9 boards. As a beginner, you might find it unfair that Komi looks so huge for White. However, as you progress and start to have a good understanding of the openings, you will notice that the first Black move is worth much more than 5.5 points.



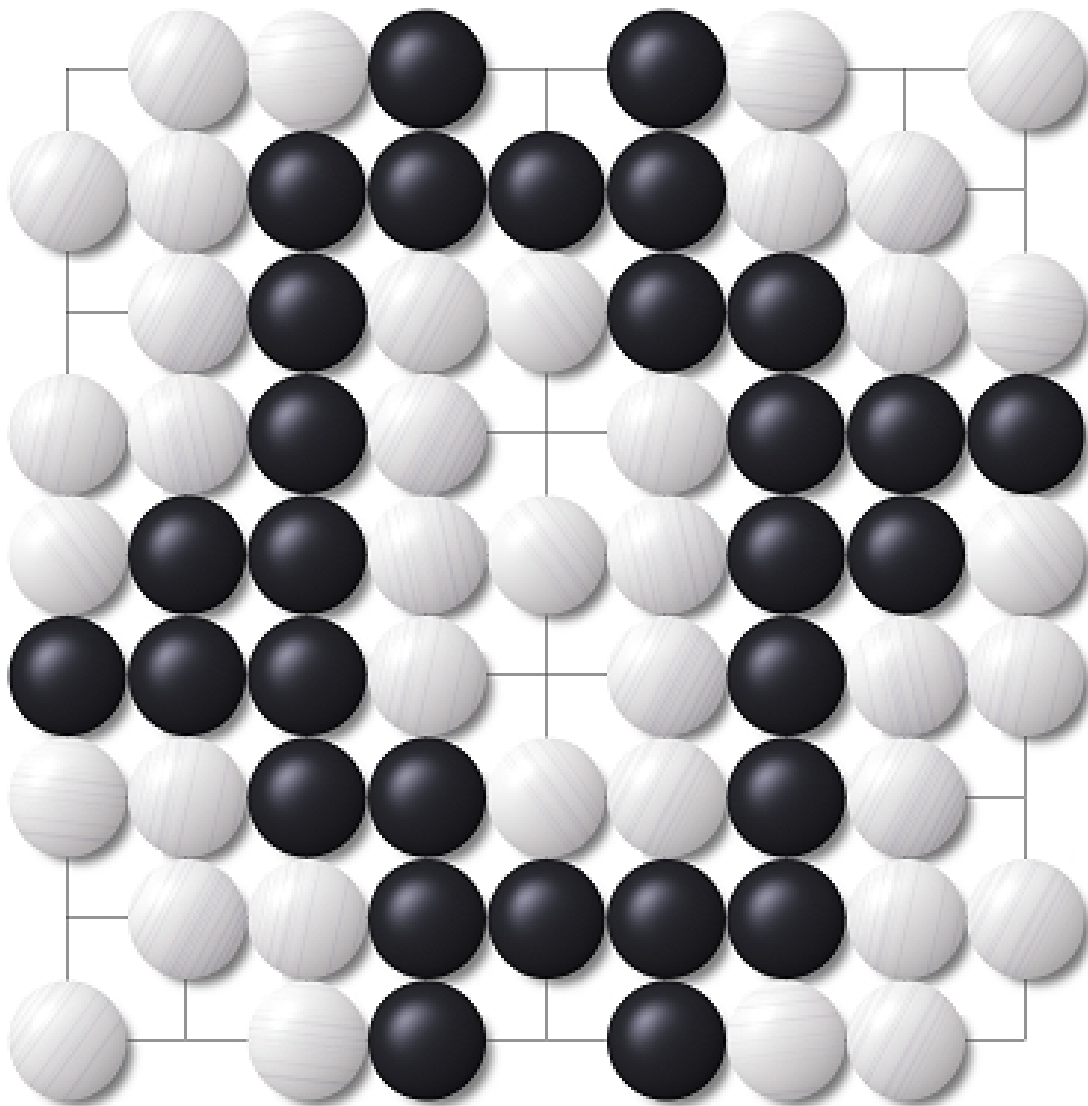


## Two groups are enough

There is a popular proverb for the 19x19 board which goes "Five groups might live, but the sixth will die". If you transport this proverb to the 9x9 board, it will most likely go "Two groups can live, but the third will likely die".

Of course you can make three living groups on the 9x9 board in some rare circumstances, but this is nothing that you want to aim for. It is not a successful tactic on the 9x9 board to play for three groups, so avoid it.

You can also use this knowledge to your advantage: If your opponent overplays a lot, you can always rely on knowing that only two of his groups will become alive in the end and stop responding to every overplay.



(Diagram 17)

# Tsumego

Probably the most important part of getting better at the 9x9 board is studying Tsumego, also known as Go puzzles.

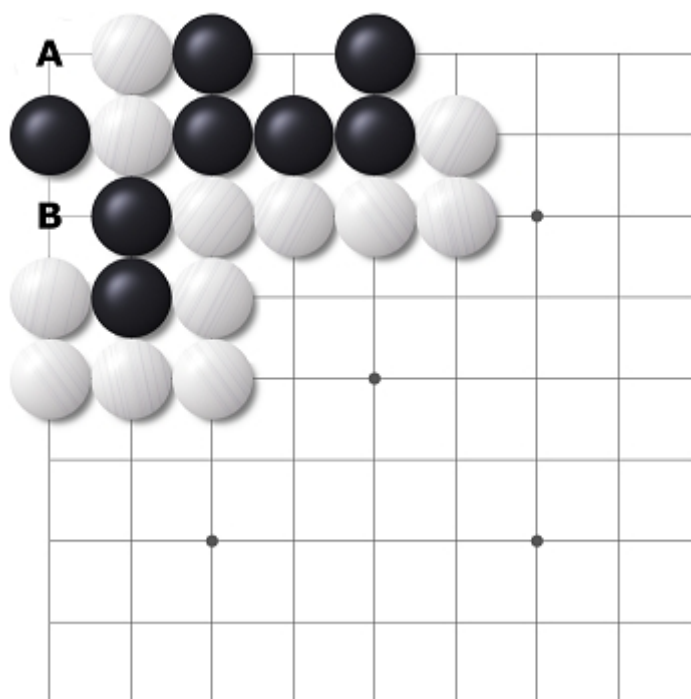
While some players enjoy them, others find them tiresome and boring. If you are that kind of person, it is no problem at all. You will need to invest more time into playing though, and your overall progress is slower compared to others.

*"But what's the benefit of them?"* All of us that play Go, are learning to recognize patterns on the board. After we have seen a pattern in play many times, we need only a few seconds to recognize it. From our previous experience with it, we often know a good response to it.

There are some patterns that are very complex though, and in normal play we might overlook them. Tsumego aim at those complex patterns, by giving you a finished board state, and asking you to "solve this!".

This increases the learning speed for these special occasions incredibly fast. Sometimes, the opponent will try to trick you. Especially when a situation is unknown to you, you will fall for his trap.

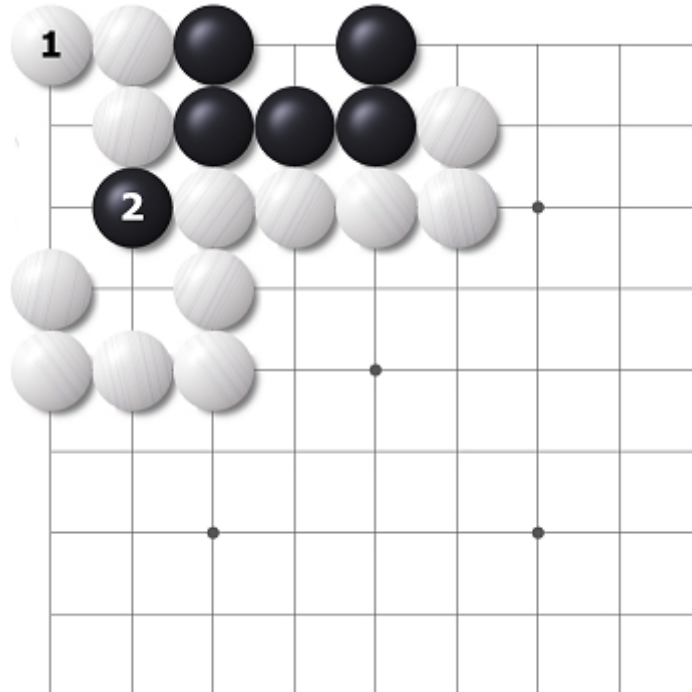
Let's take this Tsumego as an example. Would you rather play A or B? Try to answer within 5 seconds, and explain to yourself why. It is Black's Turn.



(Diagram 18)

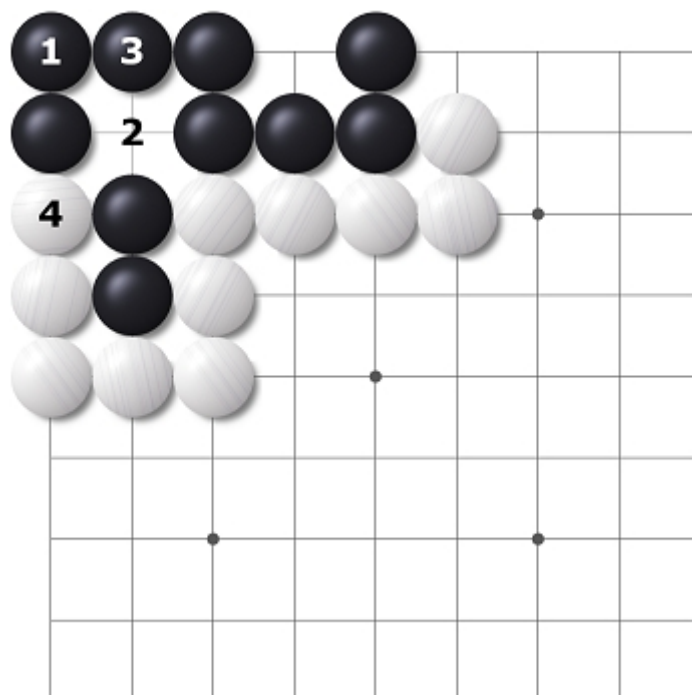
If you have already invested some time into Tsumego study, or your rank is advanced enough to read through the situation, you will have answered B, which is correct.

Only by sacrificing the 4 stones, Black can achieve life.



(Diagram 19)

The more natural response at A is wrong, as White will take away Black's eyespace with a throw-in.



(Diagram 20)

If the answer of the above Tsumego took you more than 5 seconds, then you have the answer to the "Why do them?" at your hand: For improvement!

And if you took less: Good job, do harder ones! Many Tsumego teach you that your first intuitive reaction is wrong, and correct your mistake quickly. The more time you spend with doing Tsumego, the less time you will need in an actual game. And most of the time, falling for tricks is a thing of the past!

*"But how do I study them?"* is also an important question to ask. Here are my recommendations on how to study Tsumego:

Pick a pre-defined number of Tsumego and stick to them until you have mastered them.

There is less benefit when you switch your Tsumego collection each day. Pick a set of 100-200 puzzles and stick with them until you have mastered them all. Only then, switch to the next collection.

Do not cheat! Hand's off your mouse!

If you are doing Tsumego on a piece of paper with a pen, this is not important. However, on many websites that offer Tsumego, you can just randomly click through the puzzle and go back to the start, when it's wrong.

Do not do this! Solve the Tsumego in your head only and only use your mouse when you are 110% certain you got it right!

Never look at the solution.

If you can't find out the solution of a Tsumego, either spend more time, or switch to one that you can solve. If you solve a Tsumego yourself, the positive effect on your memory is huge. There is zero benefit, if you cheat yourself.

Take your time. Then repeat, and improve your time.

If you solve a Tsumego for the first time, take your time. The solution might take you 20 minutes, but who cares? Once you solve it, the joy will be overwhelming, and you will never forget it again. Revise it after a week, and see if you can solve it quicker this time. The goal is, to solve it under 5 seconds.

Do at least 1 Tsumego per day.

Had a long day at work? No time for anything? That's no problem, but I still suggest that you do at least 1 puzzle per day.

Print out a page to look at while you're watching TV or laying in bed. If you have a mobile phone, download one of the many available Tsumego Apps and do one while brushing your teeth.

It takes a minute to do a Tsumego. Do it! Now!

Optimal number of Tsumego per day is 10-20.

It's totally efficient if you do 10-20 puzzles per day. You can do 200, if you have the free time, but the memory benefit decreases quickly after those first 10 ones. Quality is the key to success when doing Tsumego, not quantity.

Where can I find Tsumego?

If you are reading this book, you will probably have downloaded it from [www.online-go.com](http://www.online-go.com). I invite you to go to that website and click on "Puzzles". You will find a large library full of hundreds of Tsumego. It is also one of the best communities to play Go online, so try it out!

For Beginners, I recommend the "**Encyclopedia of life and death**" by Cho Chikun. It features 900 Tsumego on all beginner aspects and is the best beginner collection out there.

Doing all 900 of them, together with the provided guide above, will guide you to a stable 6 Kyu rank within a few months.

*You might notice, that the printable version has no solutions attached. This is intended, so you can not cheat! You can verify your solutions in the online version.*

You can find a printable version here: <http://tsumego.tasuki.org/books/cho-1-elementary.pdf>

You can find an online version on OGS: <https://online-go.com/puzzle/5>

## Learn Joseki

"But learning Joseki is bad! Don't do it until you are <enter random rank here>".

This is one of the standard sentences, that any Go player has heard at least once in his lifetime. Some players preach it like a mantra, some will throw it at your face without even understanding what it means. If you ask any of them why they say that sentence, it's mostly because they heard it from someone else, or because they tell you "*I don't want to play moves that I don't understand.*" I feel that this common approach is wrong.

There is a consensus that memorizing Joseki is wrong, if you do not understand the reason behind it. However, Joseki moves are also considered the best moves in a certain, local situation. Most of us are Amateur players, and of course we won't understand everything about a Joseki. But, by neglecting them totally until you hit a pre-defined rank, you are only hindering yourself.

When I was a Beginner (~19k), I was often obliterated in the corner on a 19x19 board. A 3-3 corner invasion would totally kill my stones. One player then recommended me to learn and study the according Joseki, which I did for a week. Obviously, I could not understand these moves at my rank, back then. Afterwards, knowing the best moves and spending time with them, I was never tricked again when playing people of my own rank; and I climbed a few ranks quickly.

So instead of completely ignoring Joseki and then telling other people what to do, follow a different approach:

- Pick up three of your favorite openings and study one or two Joseki for each.
- Play out the moves on a board and think about every move for at least a minute.
- Try to understand why this move is the best move.
- And try to think about responses that differ from the Joseki.
- How will you react to them, and why?
- Write down where you are uncertain. And revise it after some time to see if you found out.

→ A lot of questions will arise. Write them down and show them to a stronger player!

Studying your favorite Joseki is one of the first steps to becoming stronger.

I am certain, that the opening on a 9x9 board is the most important part of the game. By picking up your three favorite openings and studying one or two Joseki for each, you will already be 2-3 ranks stronger within a week. Don't have a favorite opening? How about the Tengen (5-5) opening?

### **My favorite Joseki**

Listing all possible Joseki variations for the 9x9 board is a huge task. You can find a very good learning resource on the internet under <https://online-go.com/puzzle/132>, where I have put together a larger collection of them.

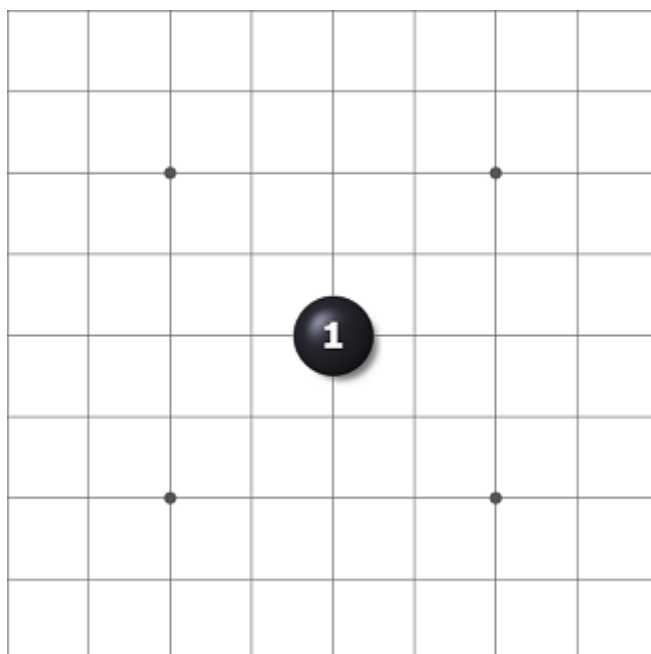
I can also recommend the Opening Explorer by mark5000: (<https://online-go.com/puzzle/181>)

For this book, I will introduce my two favorite Tengen variants to you.

#### The Tengen (5-5) Opening:

The Tengen is the most popular opening in Pro games.

I recommend that you study the Tengen openings first.

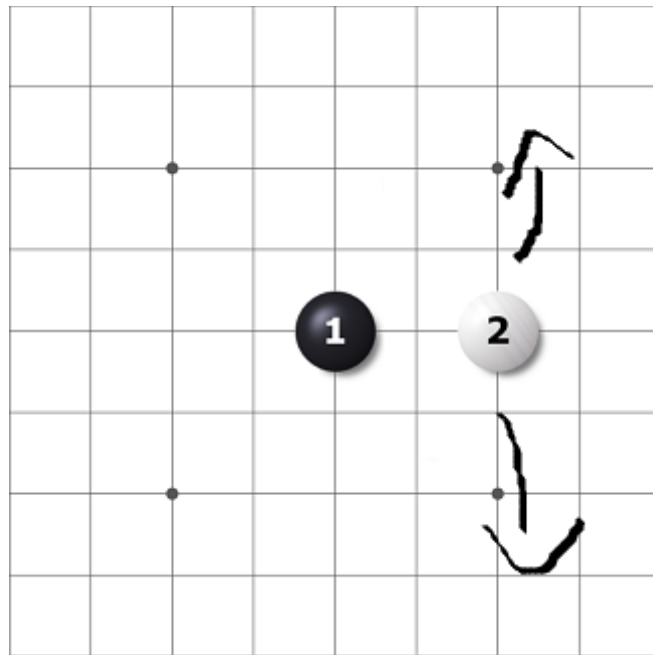


(Diagram 21)



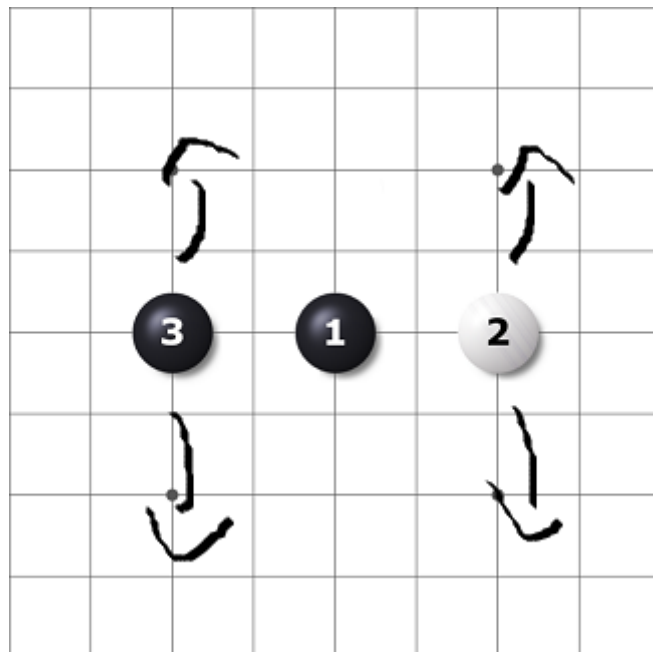
5-5, Variation 1:

White 2 is a common response to the Tengen opening. White does not yet decide which corner to take and leaves that decision to Black.



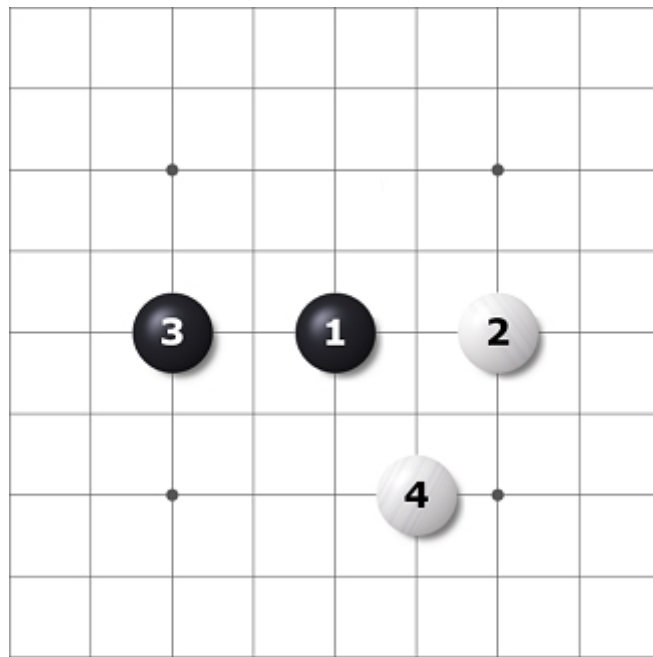
(Diagram 22)

A good and common response is Black 3. It might look too passive, but it is very good for Black to not decide over a direction yet. Black does also gain a good influence over the left part of the board.



(Diagram 23)

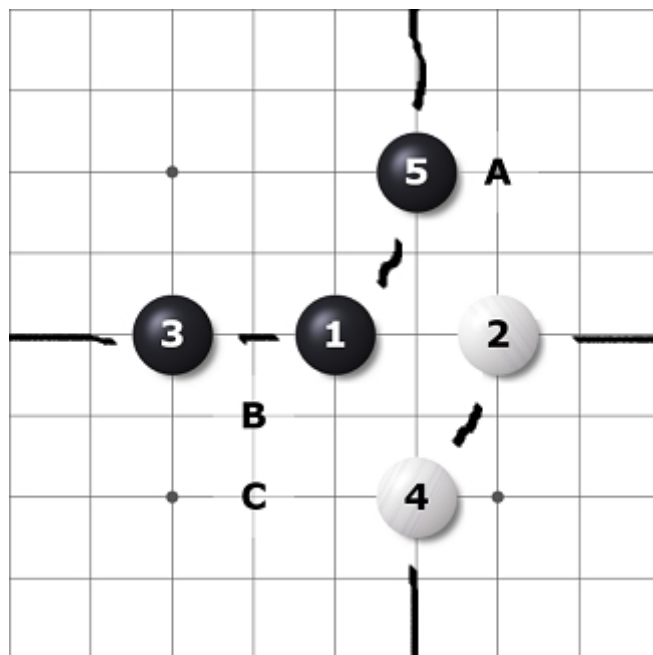
White 4 makes solid territory and finally decides for a corner.



(Diagram 24)

Black 5 is one of the standard responses and the Joseki ends at this position. As White has 5.5 points of Komi, the positions are about equal in points.

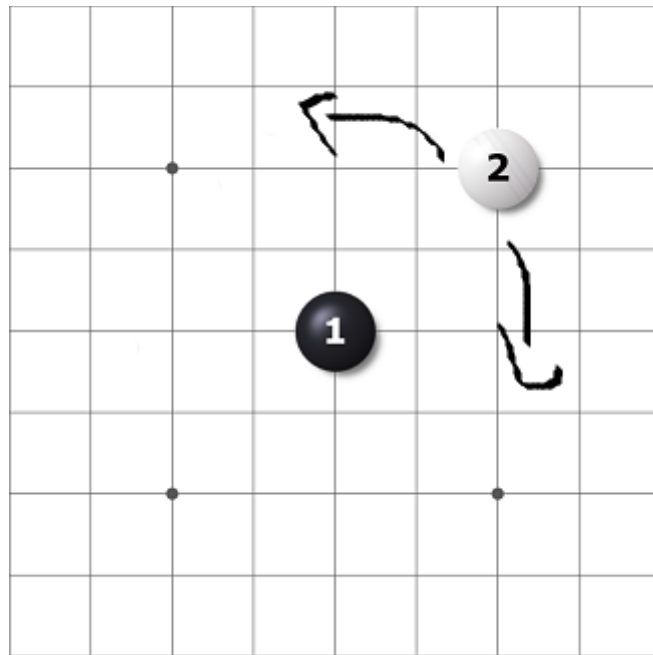
White has the possibilities to play A, B, or C next.



(Diagram 25)

### 5-5, Variation 2:

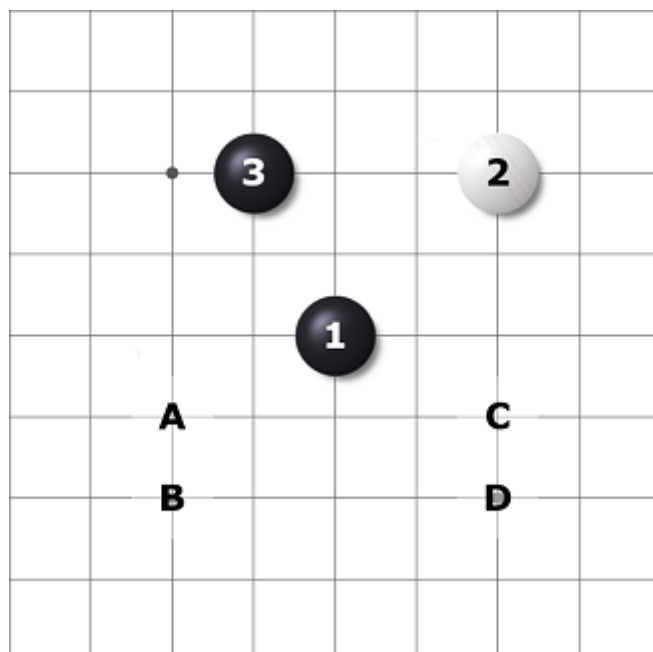
Another common Tengen opening is White 2. It makes a solid corner territory and extensions into either direction are possible.



(Diagram 26)

Black can not safely attack White 2 directly. A good response is Black 3, as it threatens to take big corner territory and creates a large influence over the left side of the board.

White has several good options for his next move. A and B are invasions into Black's influence and a fight will start. C is a solid and territorial move, and D invites Black for an attack in between the two White stones.



(Diagram 27)

## Furikawari

*"You exchange a potential territory for the territory of your opponent, and vice-versa."*

Simple as it sounds, this Japanese term stands for an "exchange of potential territory". Open space or framework is being switched between the two players and made territory in the process.

Of course, when doing play that ends in Furikawari, you want to get the best result for yourself, and not help the opponent!

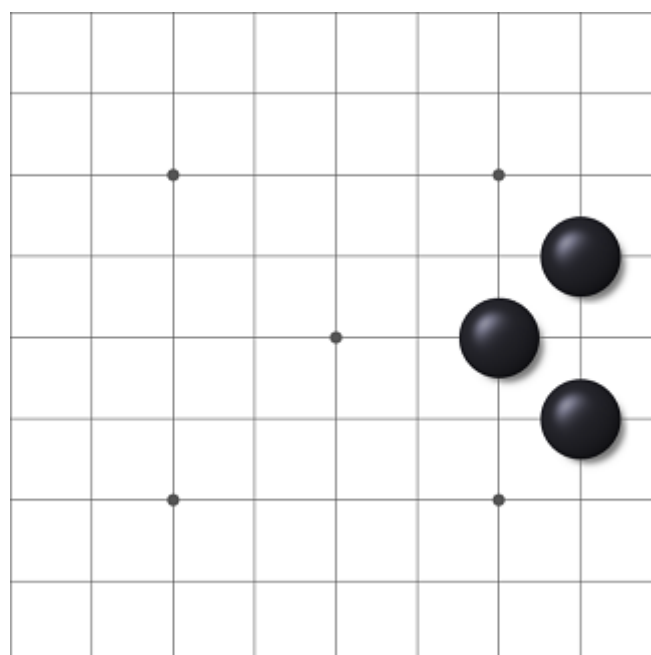
When I learned about it, I found it to be a rather vague topic that had no practical use for me. And when it happened in my games, there were no specific beginner techniques attached, and I was having a hard time.

I will try to make this road easier for you! In this in the two upcoming examples, I will (hopefully) give you a better understanding on how to use Furikawari in your own 9x9 games.

Imagine yourself as the White player in the following diagrams:

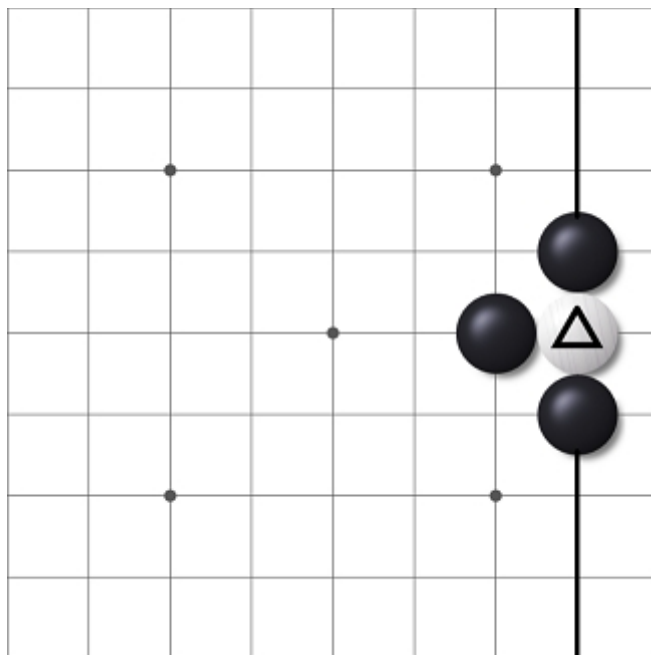
### The Chapel Technique

These three Black stones form the chapel. It's one of the basic capturing techniques in Go: The Chapel.



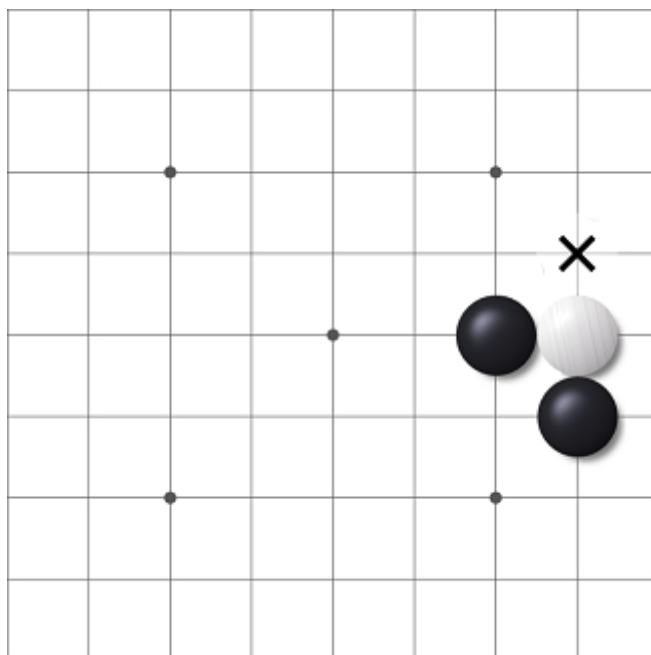
(Diagram 28)

The chapel only works on the second line of the board! The three Black stones surround the single White stone, facing the edge. The White stone can not be saved and is dead.



(Diagram 29)

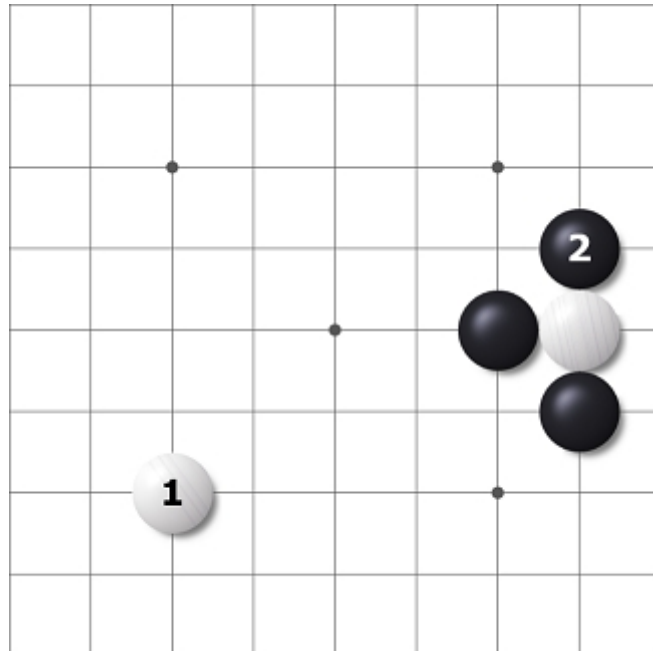
When two Black stones are placed around the White stone, they are "*threatening a chapel*".



(Diagram 30)

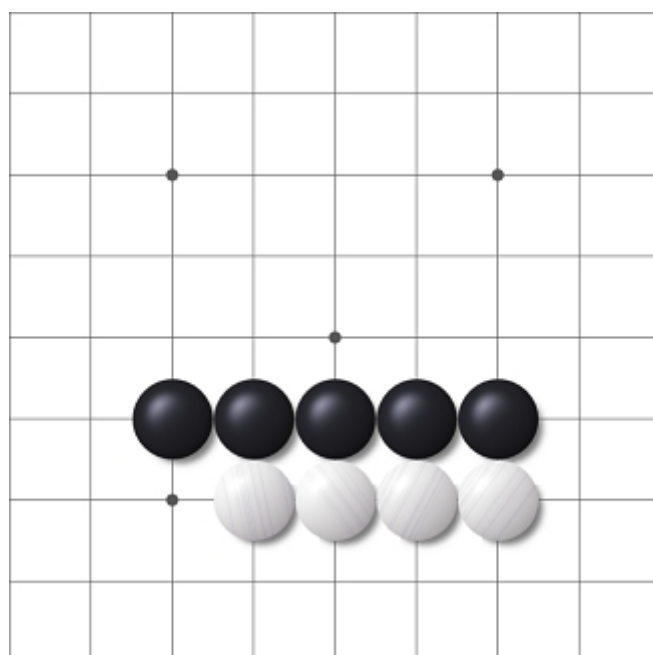
If White ignores the chapel and plays elsewhere, Black 2 can capture White in a chapel.

*(Please notice that Black 2 is an endgame move! Playing it this early is a mistake because White has a free move elsewhere on the board now.)*



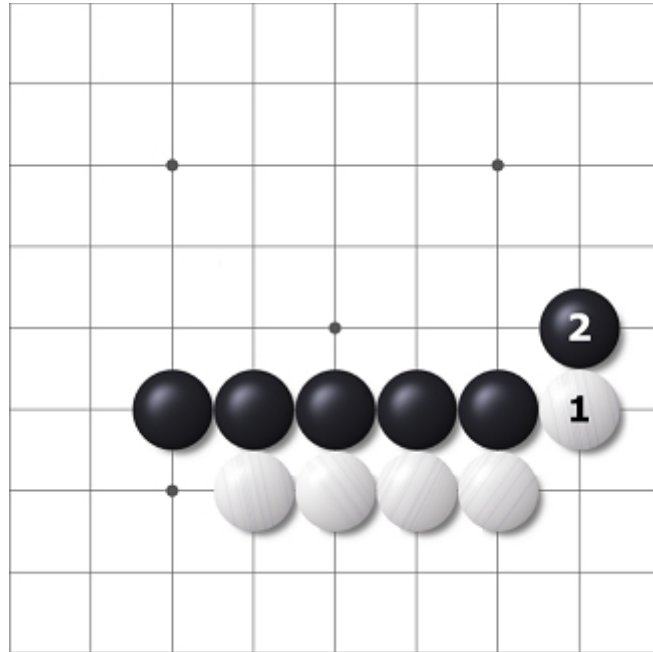
(Diagram 31)

You can use the chapel as a technique for Furikawari. Let's look at this common board position: Black has big influence over the top of the board, and White has a small group on the lower side.



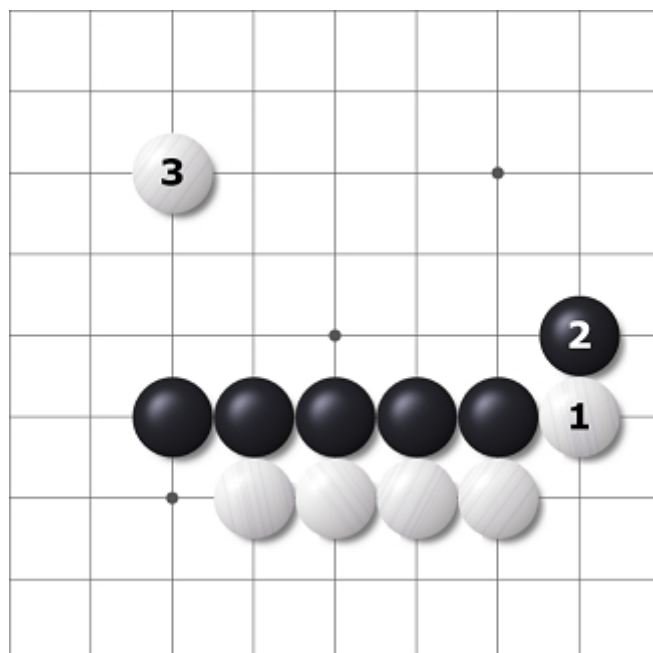
(Diagram 32)

White can now bend around the Black group with White 1. A common response by Black is to "*threaten a chapel*" with Black 2. This is exactly, what White wants.



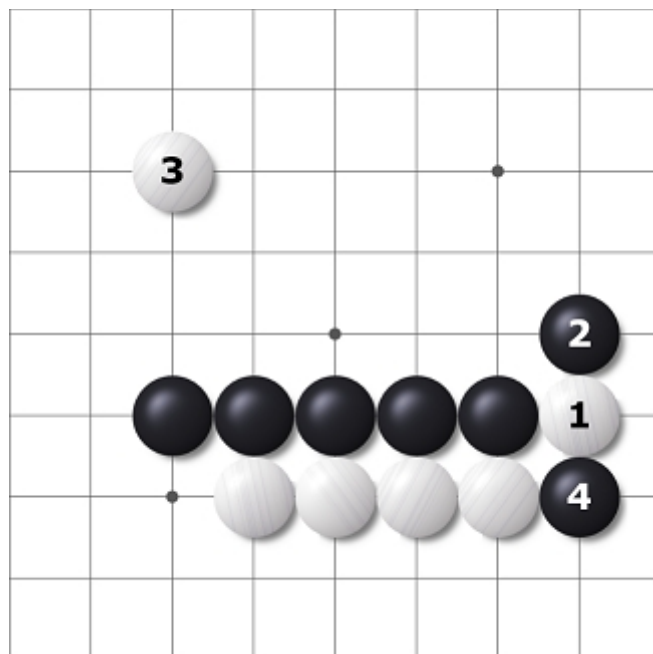
(Diagram 33)

White can now take a big point elsewhere on the board and ignore the chapel threat. This is only an example on how the Chapel-Technique can be used to gain a Sente move elsewhere on the board. One can argue if White 3 is the best choice, but that's not overly important here. The correct play for Black is to play in the upper left corner and react to White 3.



(Diagram 34)

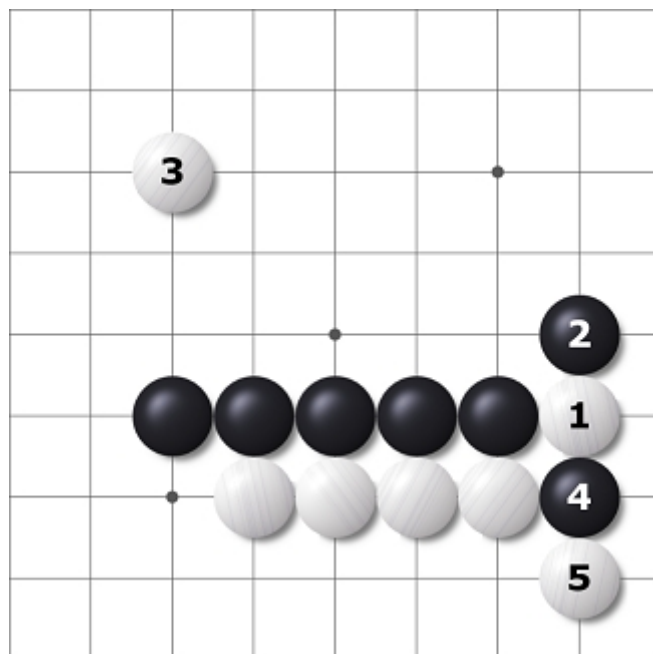
However, a lot of times, Black will fall for the "trap" and and play the chapel next.



(Diagram 35)

White will react by putting Black 4 into Atari. If Black decides to play elsewhere now, Black 4 is captured by White. If Black captures White 1, White gets a free move elsewhere. This is a big dilemma for Black.

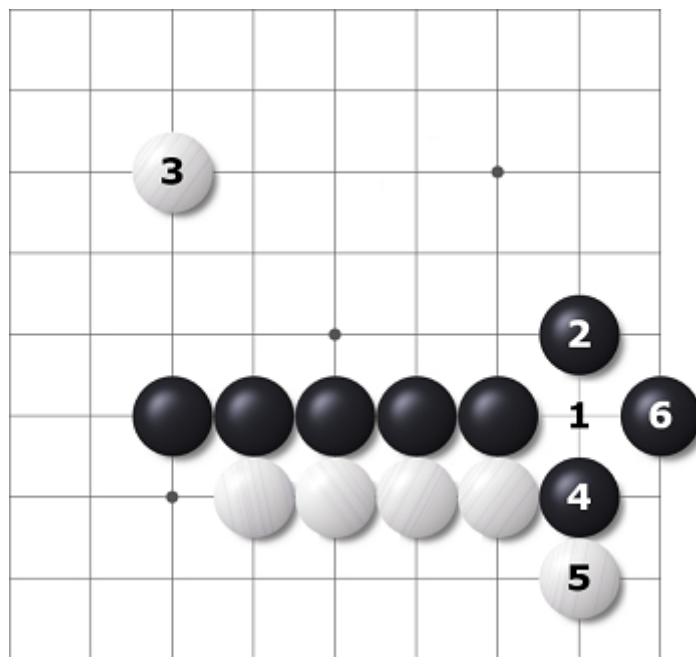
White can be happy with the result, no matter what happens next.



(Diagram 36)

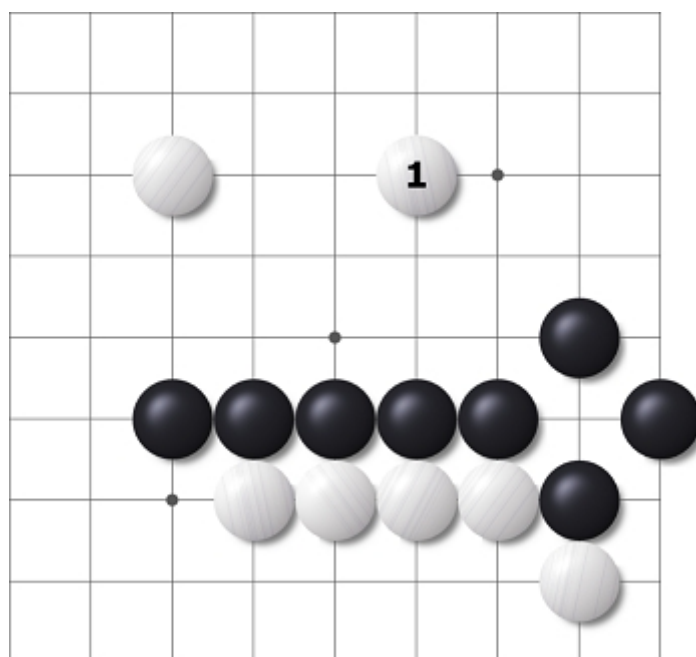


Most of the time, the Black player will capture the White stone with Black 6.



(Diagram 37)

White has sacrificed a tiny bit of territory in the corner but gains a free move elsewhere. This is huge for White, and Black can think about resigning.



(Diagram 38)

This is just one example where Furikawari is used as a technique to win on a 9x9 board. Sometimes, exchanges will be very subtle, and only experience and counting will tell if it's worth to play.

One could also argue that it is generally a better play for White to connect his stones after Black 2 in Diagram 33. This is often true for 19x19 boards, but on 9x9 boards it is only in some cases.

Knowing and using the Chapel-Technique is a must-have for any advanced 9x9 player, especially since the result is a lot better than on bigger boards.

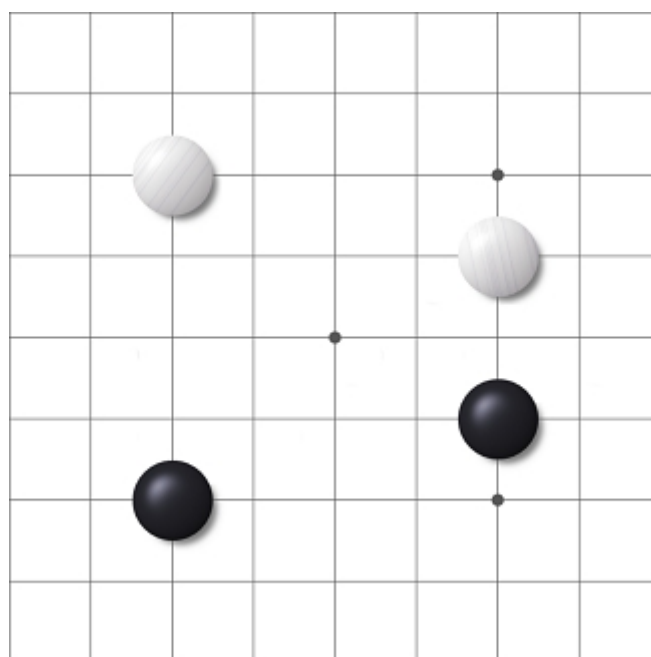
The main benefit of the Chapel-Technique is to get a free Sente move by sacrificing a stone.

I suggest that you experiment with the Chapel technique to get a good feeling for it.

### **The Attach-Crosscut Technique**

Another technique for a possible Furikawari is the Attach-Crosscut. It has many possible outcomes, and I will try to address the most common ones. To be uniform with the chapel chapter, I switched the colors and White plays first in this example.

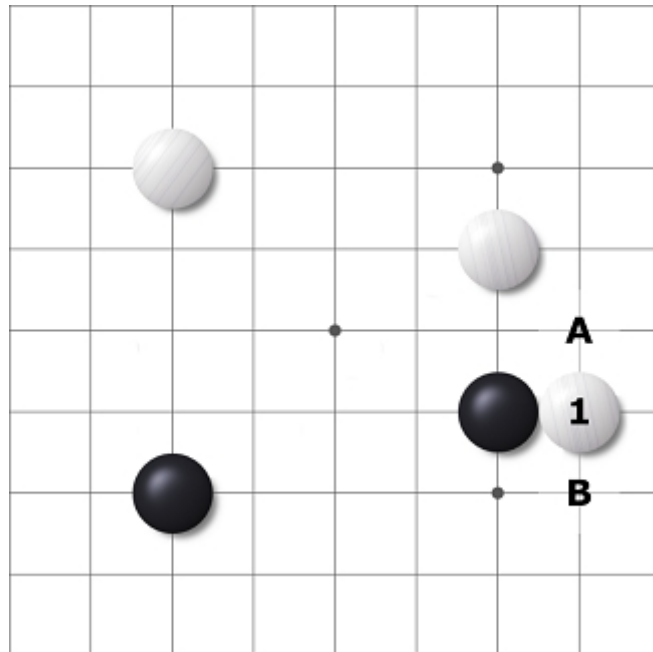
Where can White play to do Furikawari?



(Diagram 39)

This is the move to start an exchange of potential territory. While it looks counter-intuitive to attach this close to the edge of the board, it is a possible play!

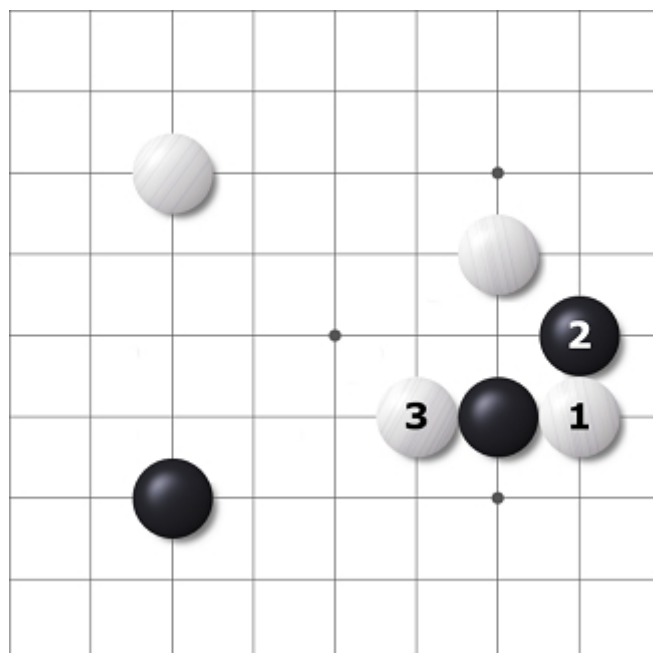
Black will probably play A or B now. If Black decides to play elsewhere instead, White is already satisfied with the result.



(Diagram 40)

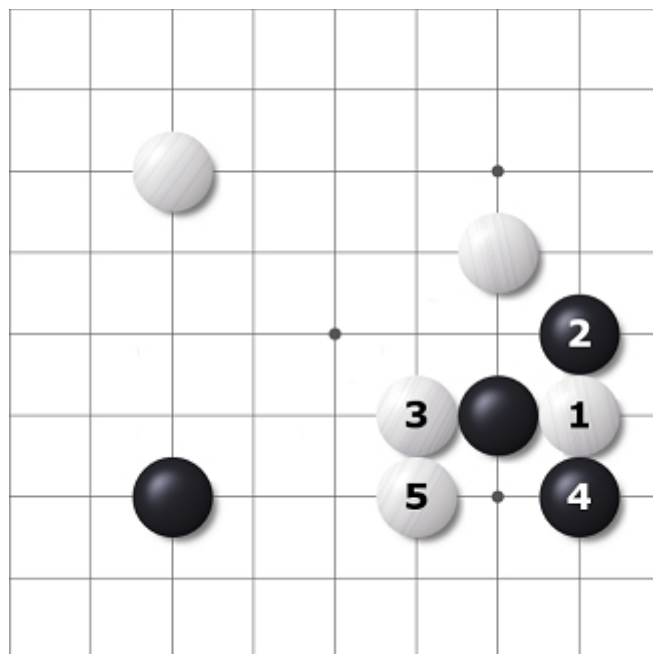
Option A, Variation 1:

After a Black play at A, White can do different variations that are good for him. One possibility is the clamp at White 3.



(Diagram 41)

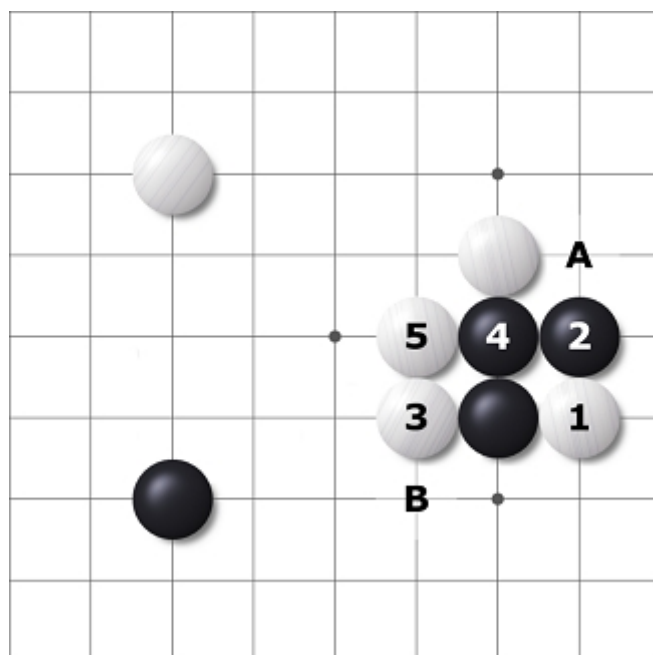
If Black captures White 1 in a chapel, White can safely extend with White 5 and be happy that he invaded Black's territory successfully.



(Diagram 42)

Option A, Variation 2:

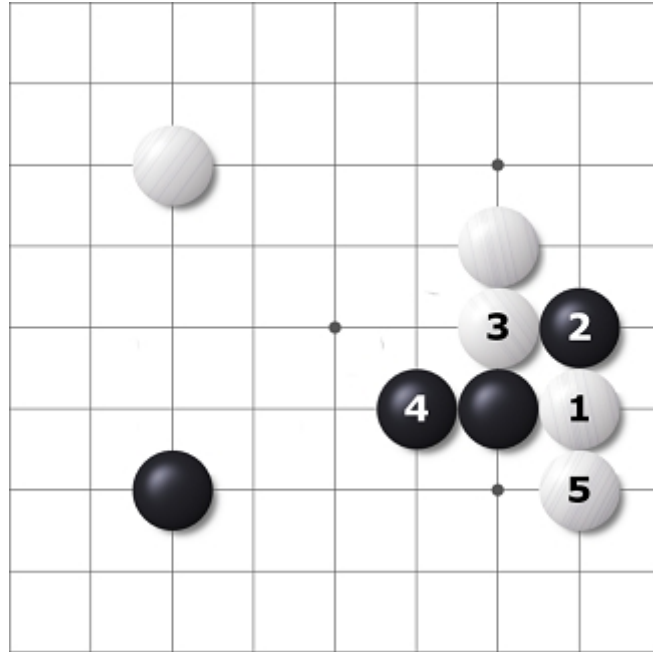
If Black decides to connect his stones at Black 4 instead, White 5 closes the border to his territory. A and B are possible continuations for both players: If Black takes B, White could play A, and vice-versa.



(Diagram 43)

Option A, Variation 3:

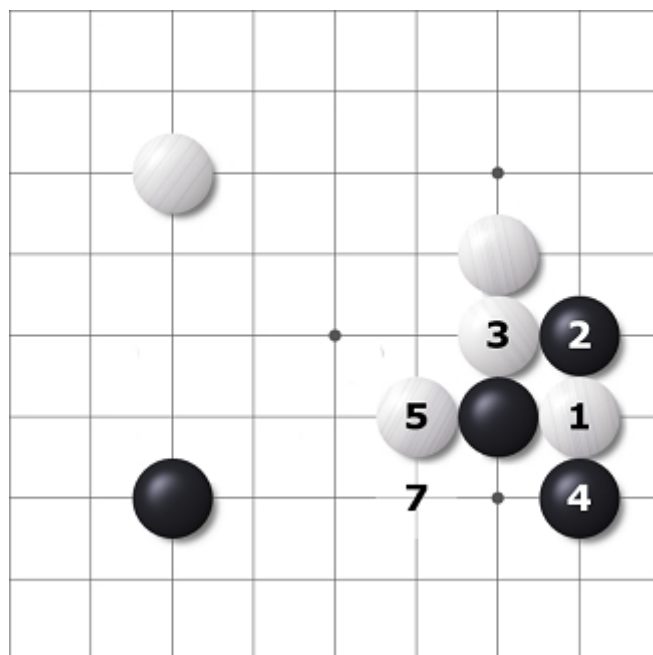
After taking option A earlier, this variation is also a possibility for White. If Black extends into the middle with Black 4, White 5 invades deeply into Black's territory.



(Diagram 44)

Option A, Variation 4:

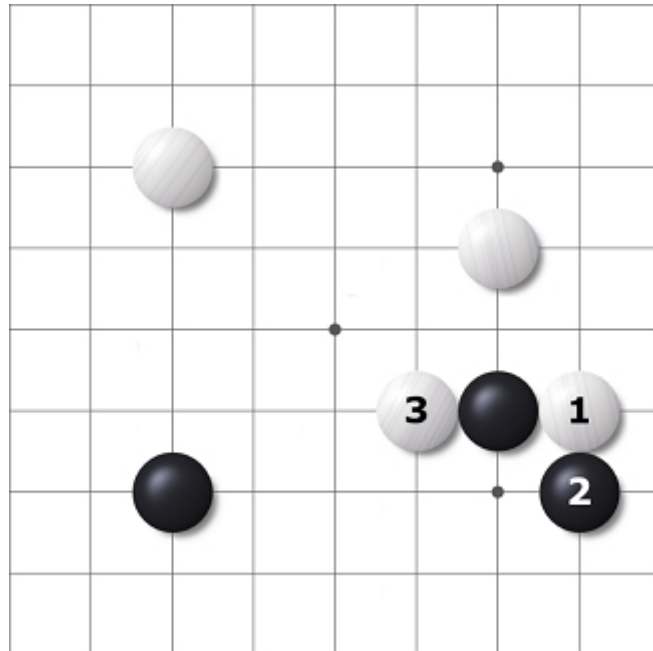
If Black plays the chapel with Black 4, White 5 will Atari on the opposing side. Black can now capture White 1, or connect his stones. White can be happy about either choice and play move 7.



(Diagram 45)

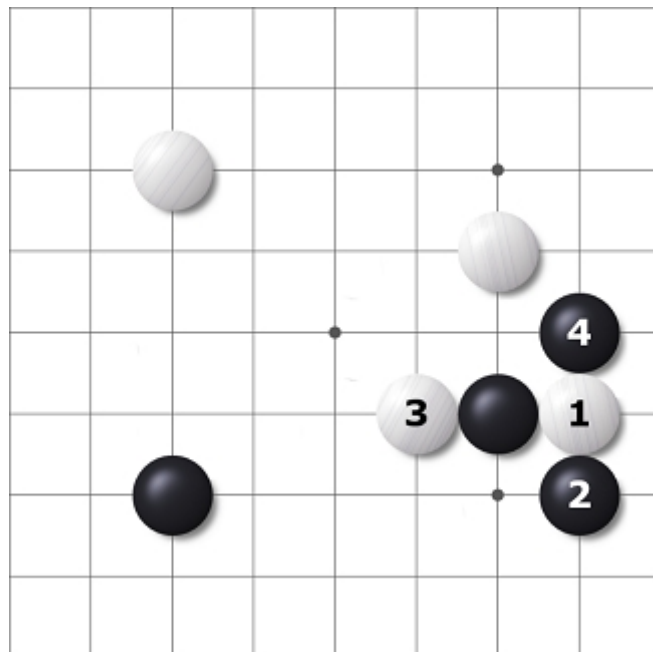
Option B, Variation 1:

After the initial moves, Black can also decide to block White 1 on the different side of the board. As in the previous examples, the wedge at 3 is playable for White.



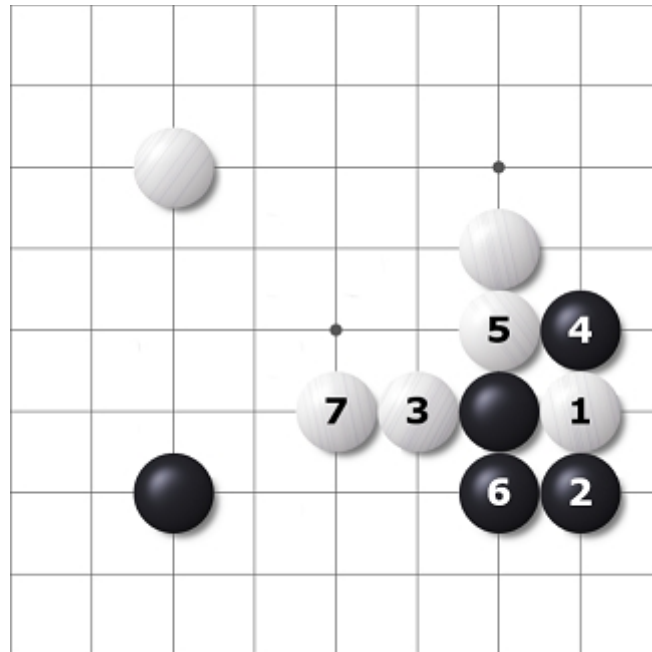
(Diagram 46)

If Black is greedy, he might play the chapel at Black 4. This is a horrible for Black, as you will see in the next diagram.



(Diagram 47)

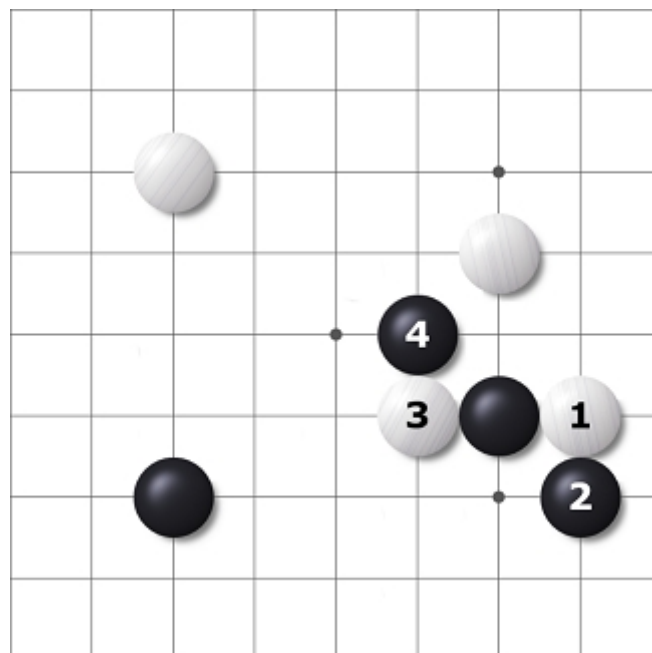
White will waste no time and Atari the Black stone with White 5. Black has to obey and connect his stones, or his territory is lost. As a result, White can strengthen his big territory. White 7 is a good and solid possibility.



(Diagram 48)

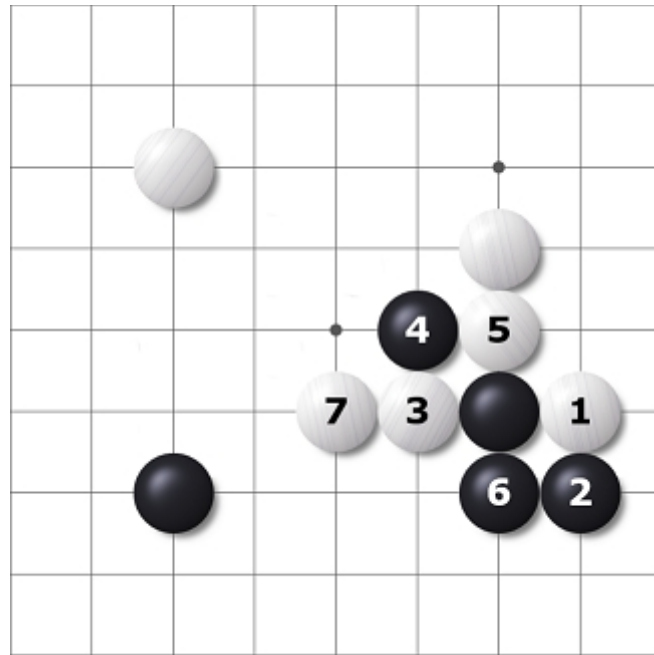
Option B, Variation 2:

Black might try to push through the White formation with Black 4, but this variation is not a good choice for him.



(Diagram 49)

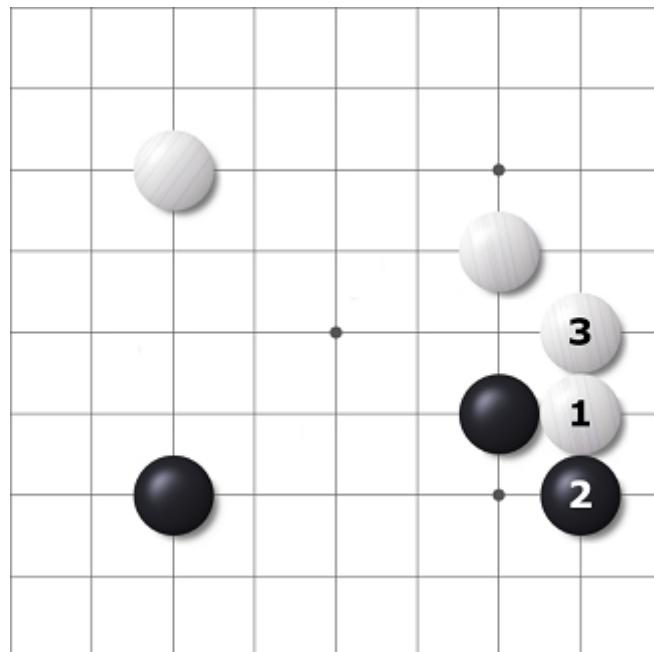
White can simply react with White 5, forcing Black to connect his stones. The extension at White 7 is good for White, and he can be satisfied with the result.



(Diagram 50)

Option B, Variation 3:

White 3 is a very defensive variation, and will probably not lead to an exchange of territory. It is playable though and reduces some of Black's territory.

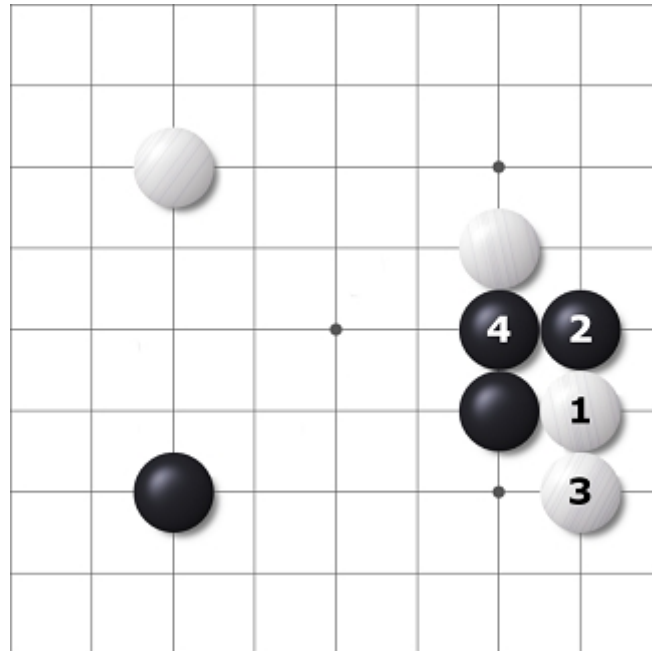


(Diagram 51)



Option B, Variation 4: (Mistake):

Do not mix up variation 3 and this one. If Black blocks on the other side, and White extends his initial stone, Black can connect his stones and is in a very strong position now!



(Diagram 52)

The success of the Attach-Crosscut technique depends a lot on the surrounding stones. So before you play it, take into consideration if the result of the exchange is good for you.

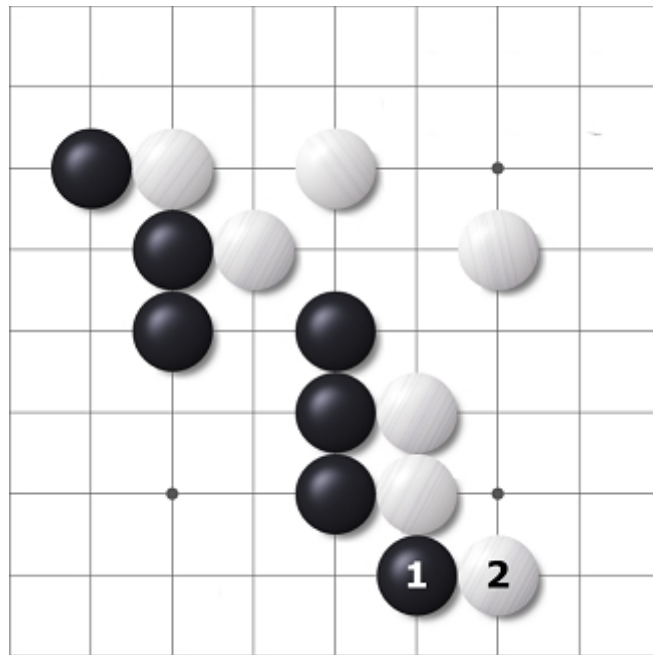
Of course, there are a lot more possibilities for Furikawari, but explaining all possible situations would be enough for a book on it's own. With these two simple mechanics, you will have a good start on how to exchange territory successfully.

Experiment with it, and do it in your games. If you fail, try to review and find out what went wrong. Understanding the basic concept behind Furikawari and how it's used on 9x9 will make you at least one rank stronger on the 9x9 board.

## A Pro Game Example

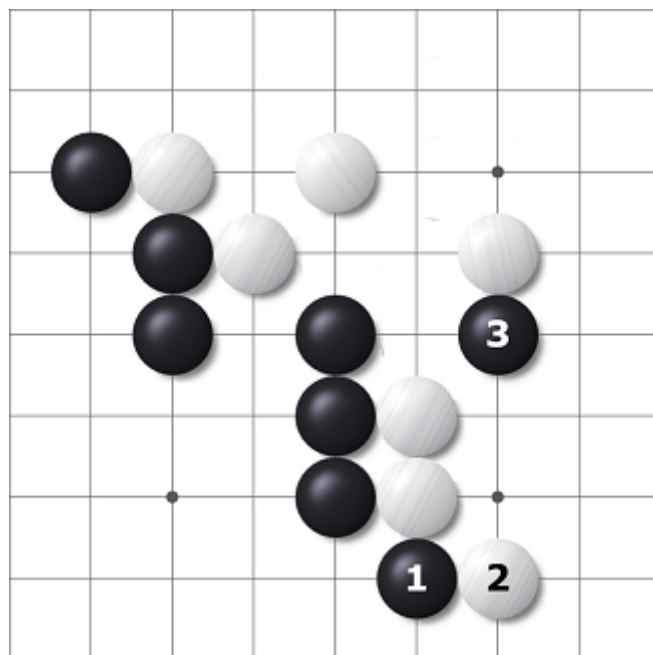
The following example is taken from game six, between Kudo Norio (9p) and Yamada Kimio (9p), where the chapel is used by Black to Furikawari.

At this stage of the game, White has a strong position over the top right and the game is highly in his favor. After White is bent by Black 1, threatens a chapel at White 2.



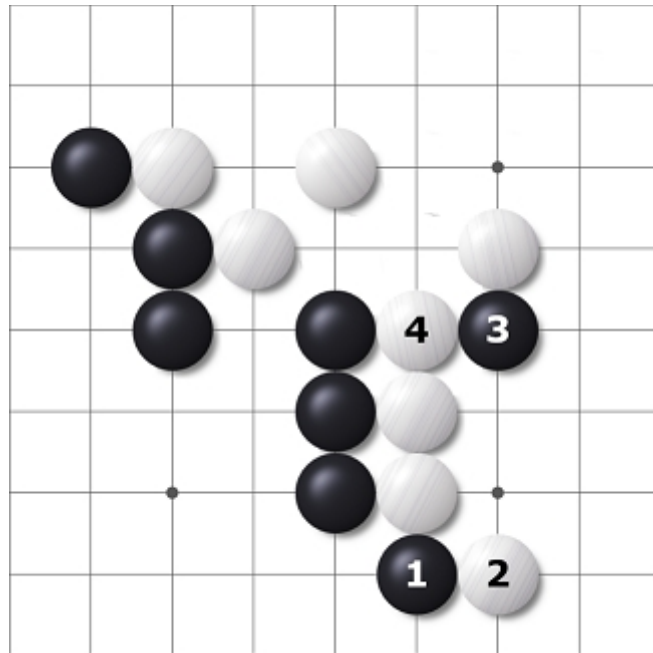
(Diagram 53)

Black 3 uses this to his advantage and ignores the threat by invading. White can not play the chapel but has to react to Black's play.



(Diagram 54)

White 4 cuts the Black stone off, and it looks like White is in a good position again. But Black has a plan!

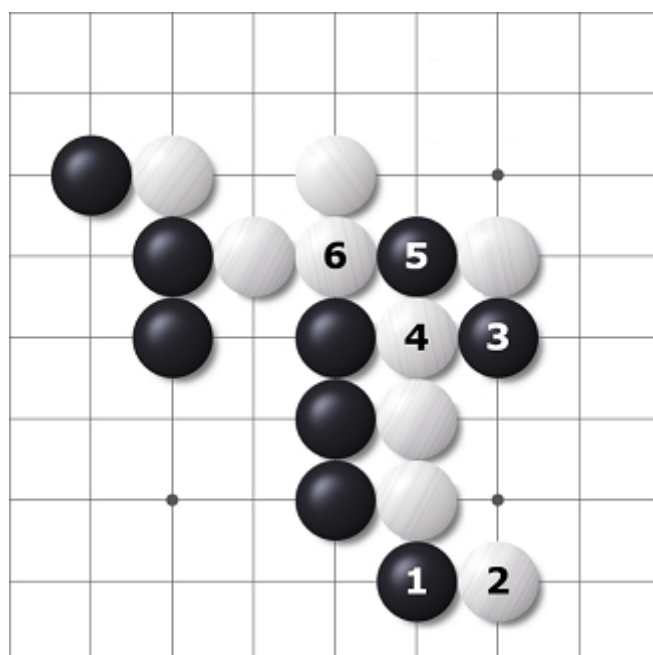


(Diagram 55)

Black 5 cuts off the White stones from each other, and White 6 does the same to the Black stones at 3 and 5. Note how Black 1 takes away a liberty from the White group. Without this, White 6 would have played Atari to Black 5 from the other direction.

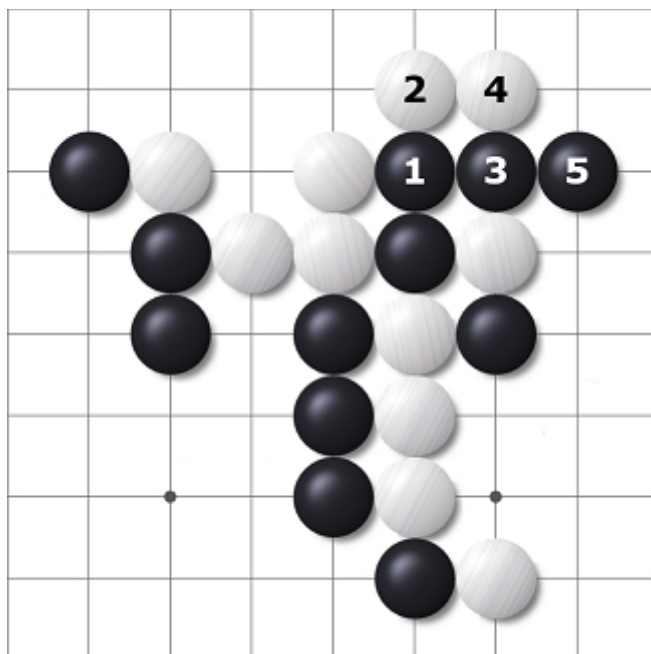
The chapel still hasn't been resolved, because of Black's furious attack.

Can you read out what will happen next?



(Diagram 56)

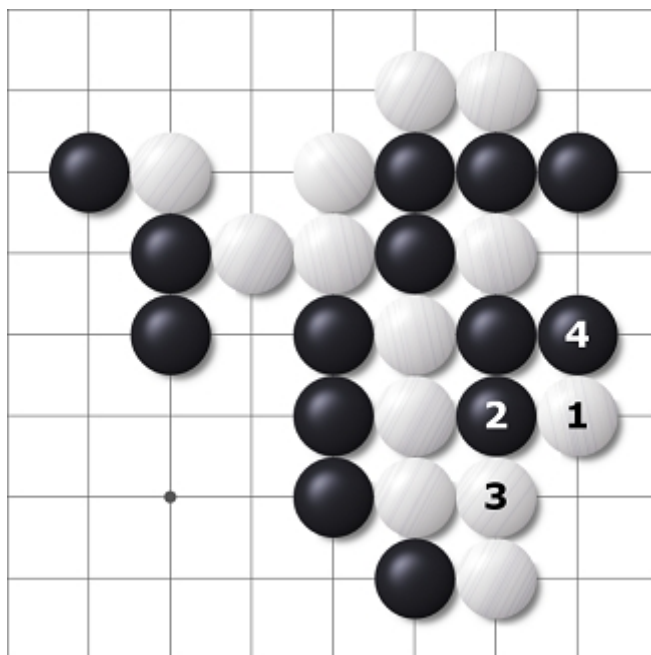
Black pulls his stone out of Atari with Black 1, and a small sequence follows where Black gets pushed to the edge of the board.



(Diagram 57)

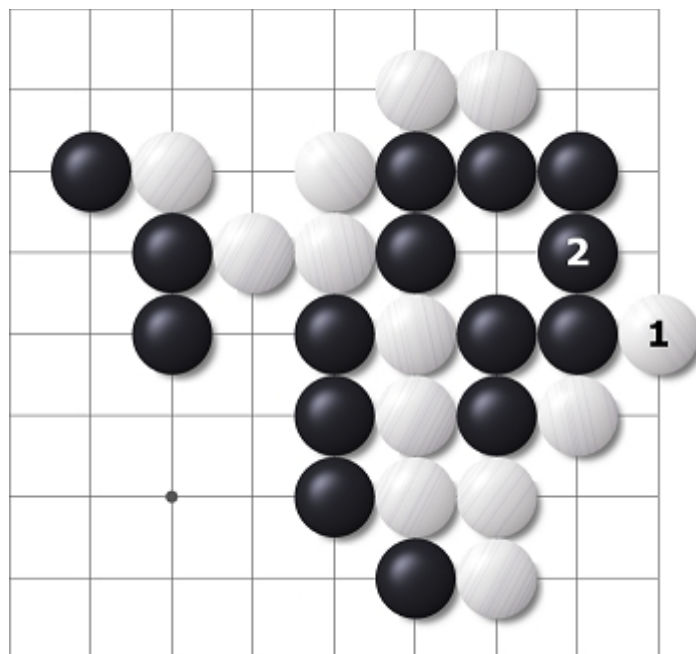
Black has surrounded a White stone in the process and is almost alive now. Black 2 is an Atari to the White group, and White 3 connects and saves it.

This invasion was only as successful, because Black used the Chapel-Technique initially.



(Diagram 58)

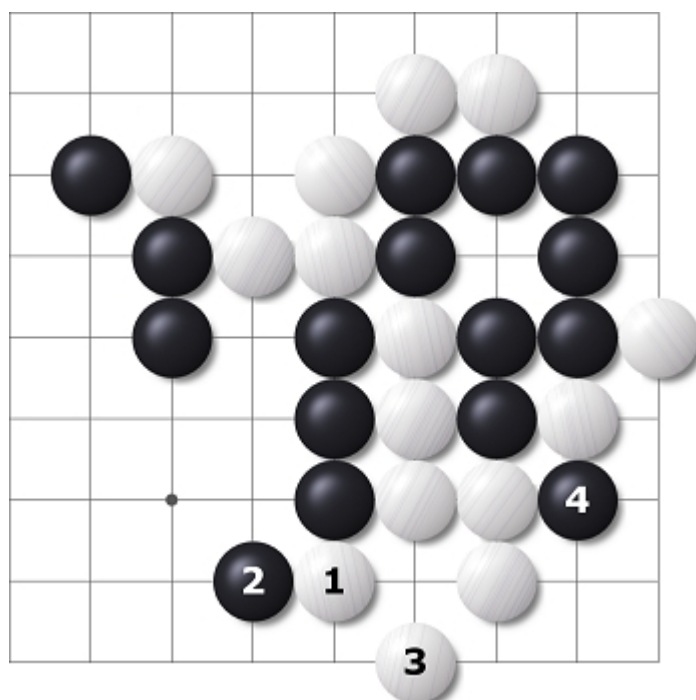
White 1 puts the three Black stones into Atari, and Black has to capture and connect with Black 2.



(Diagram 59)

Finally, the chapel is resolved with White 1 and Black 2. For his group to stay alive, White must capture at 3, and Black 4 does the same thing for his group on the right. If you go back to the initial diagram, would you have guessed this outcome?

Obviously, playing this good demands the highest level of skill in Go. It is a good example, how you can use the Chapel-Technique to gain an advantage.



(Diagram 60)

## On Jumps

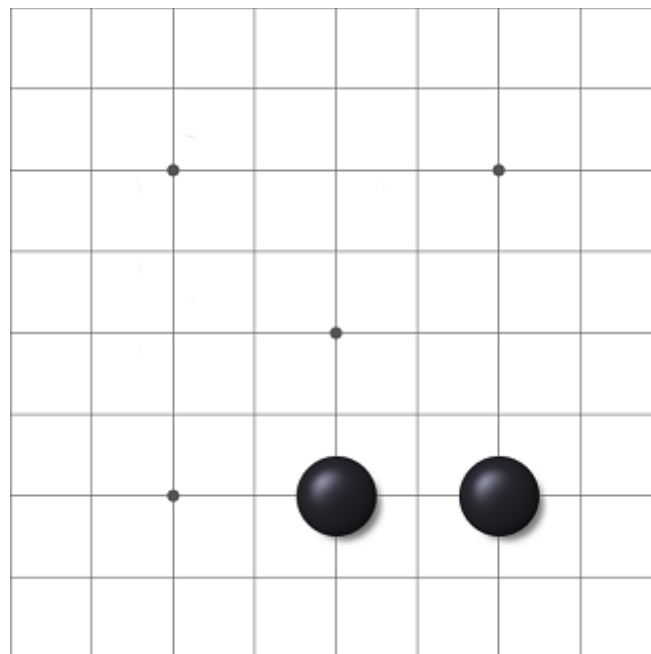
Extending from your own stones and groups are one of the most important parts of the 9x9 game. But it is also important not to extend blindly, but to think about what happens afterwards.

Jumps and extensions are a good way to gain control over the board, without creating too many weak spots for the opponent to exploit.

Here are a few things to remember:

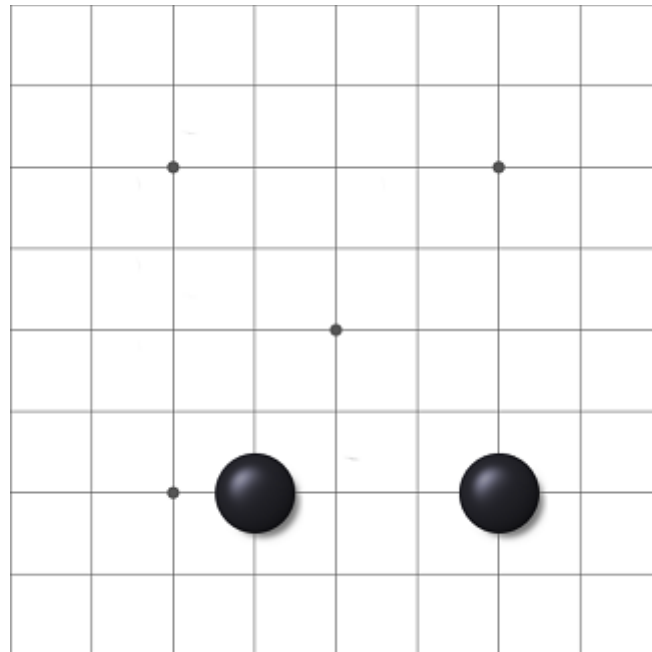
### Good

The one point jump is a very solid and good move to extend your control on the board, especially when being played on the third line! Before you extend, and stone or group, consider the one point jump first.



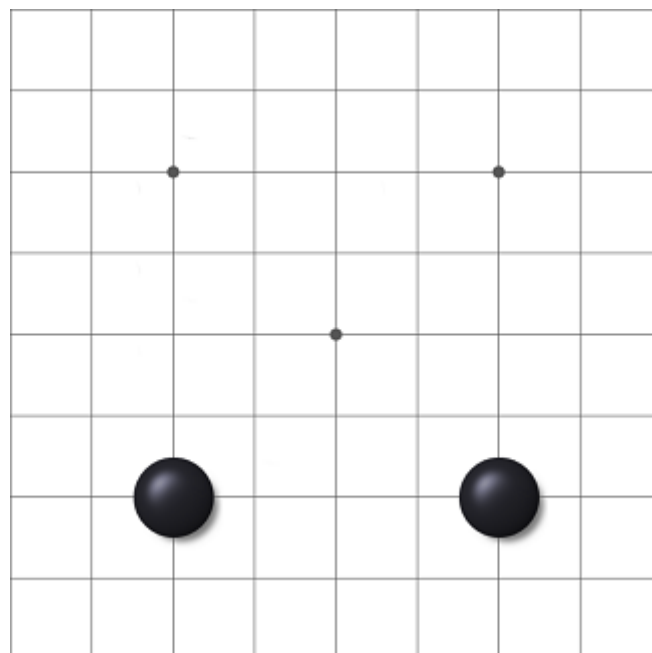
(Diagram 61)

The two point jump is another good extension to make a solid base on the side of the board. Before you play it, make sure there are no White stones around that could cut into your extension.



(Diagram 62)

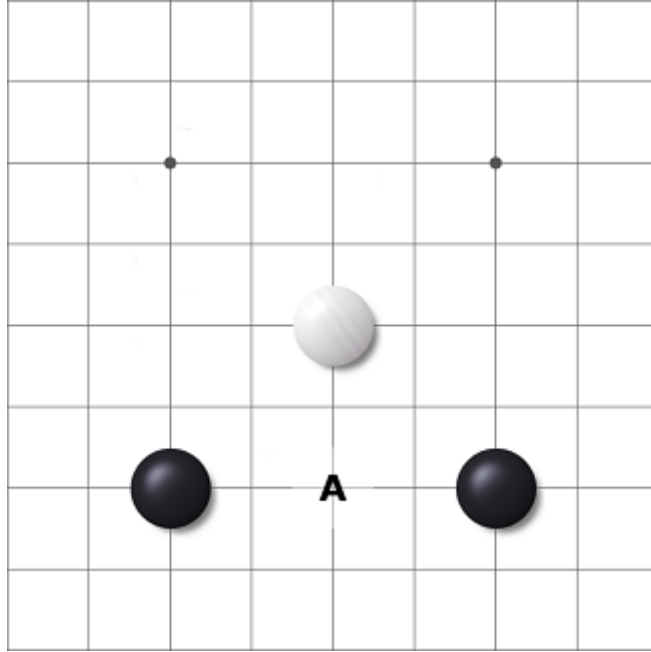
The same principles apply to the three point jump: If there are no White stones around yet, it is a playable option! If White decides to wedge in between, Black can extend to the open directions and live.



(Diagram 63)

## Bad

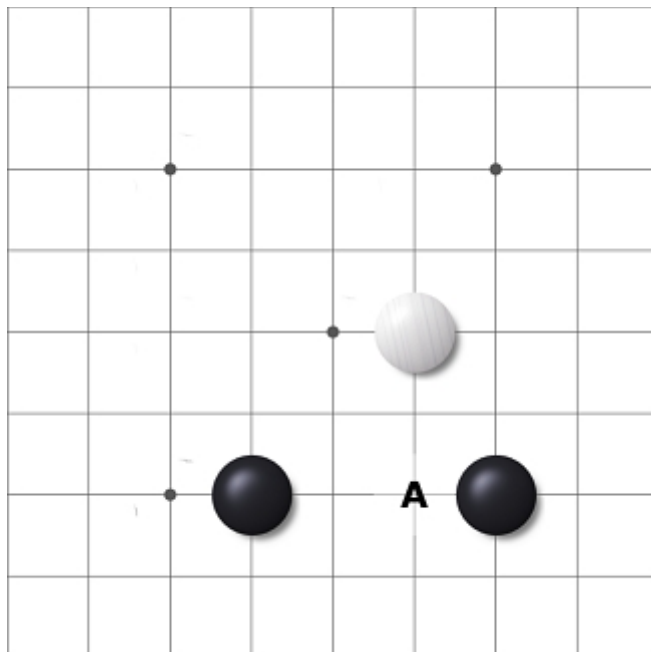
The three point jump is never a good extension if there is a White stone on the Tengen. After the extension, White will wedge at A and Black has to fight for his life on one side.



(Diagram 64)

## Depends

Black should consider carefully if he wants to play a two point jump, if the White stone is around. A wedge at A is not too painful yet, but it creates cutting points with Aji for later.



(Diagram 65)

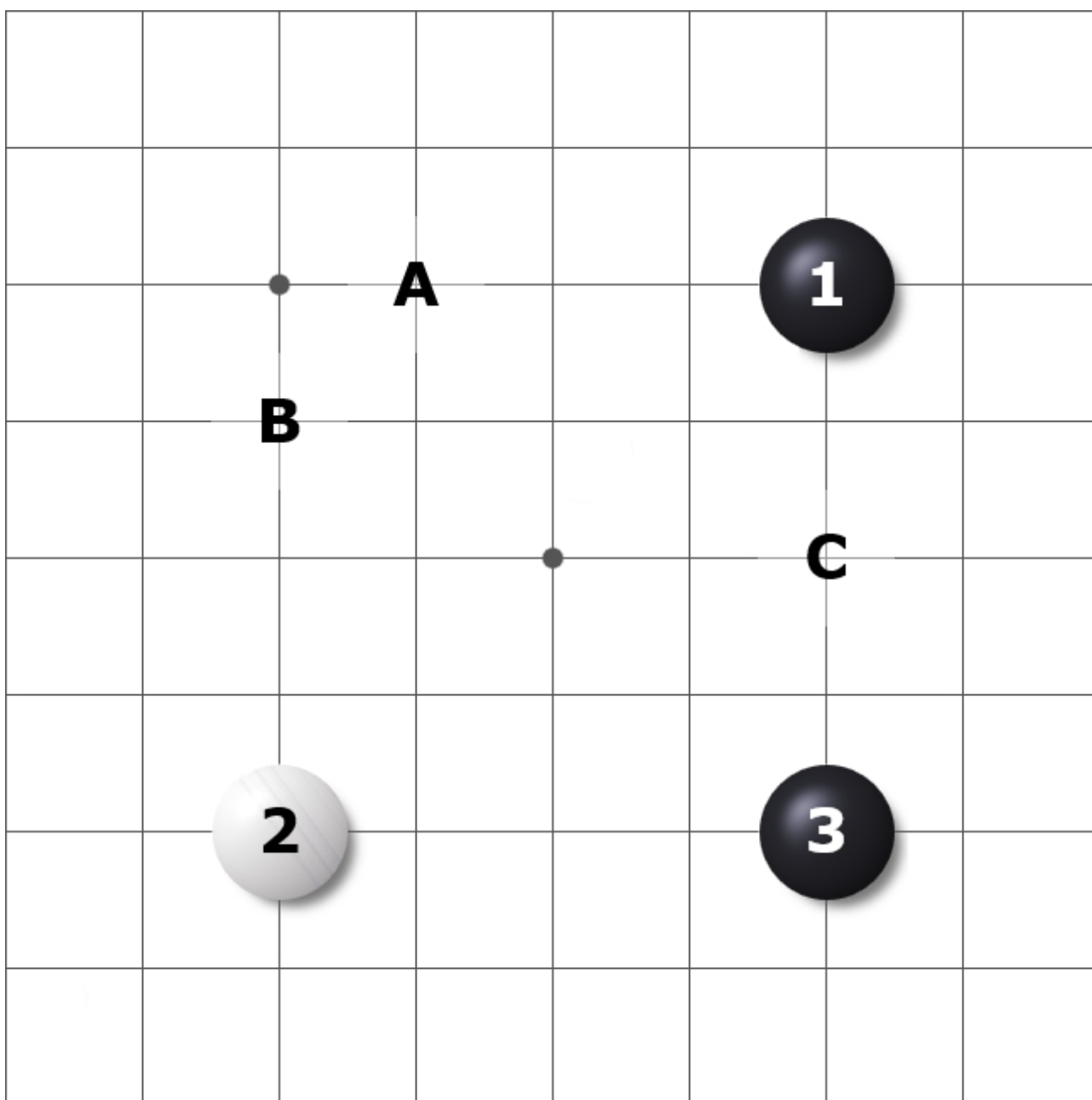


## Practical Training

I want to do a little practical training with you. In the following pages, I will show you a starting diagram with a few moves being played already. Those examples are taken from amateur games, and they show positions that can be seen very often. You will be given three choices, and it is up to you to find a good answer. Since there are no pro game records of these positions, I will try to give a detailed explanation from my point of view.

### Training 1

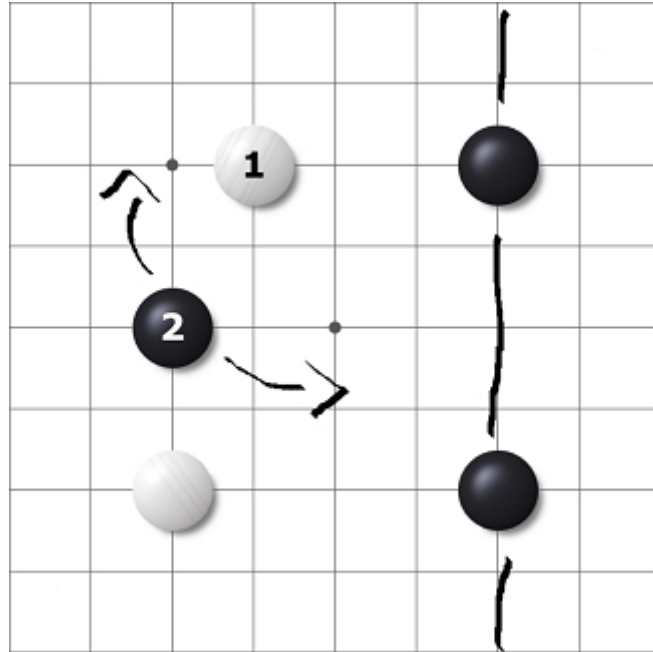
White to play. A, B or C?



(Diagram 66)

Option A:

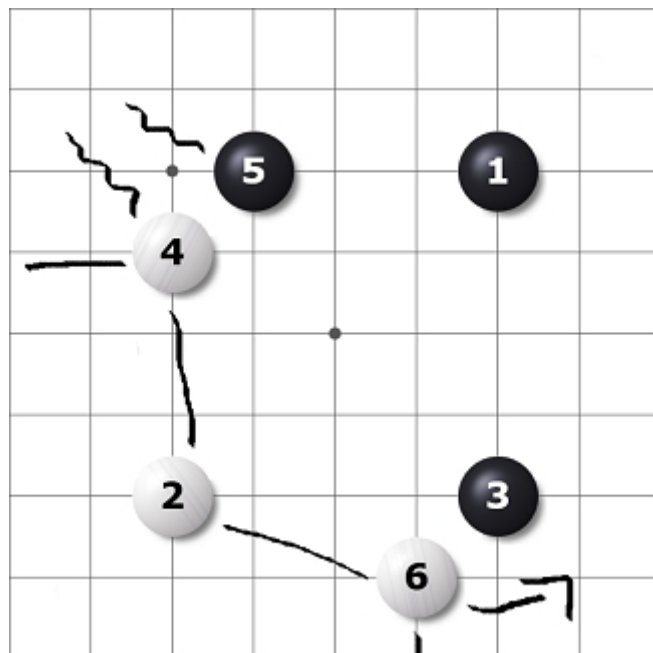
The move at A is a common beginner mistake. It is too greedy for White to create the open space. Black 2 will be an optimal invasion, and White will have a hard time.



(Diagram 67)

✓ Option B:

B is a solid and good move. It looks very passive, but White makes good territory with it. If Black 5 takes away the corner, do not forget, that White has 5.5 Komi to compensate! White 6 is a good and calm response.

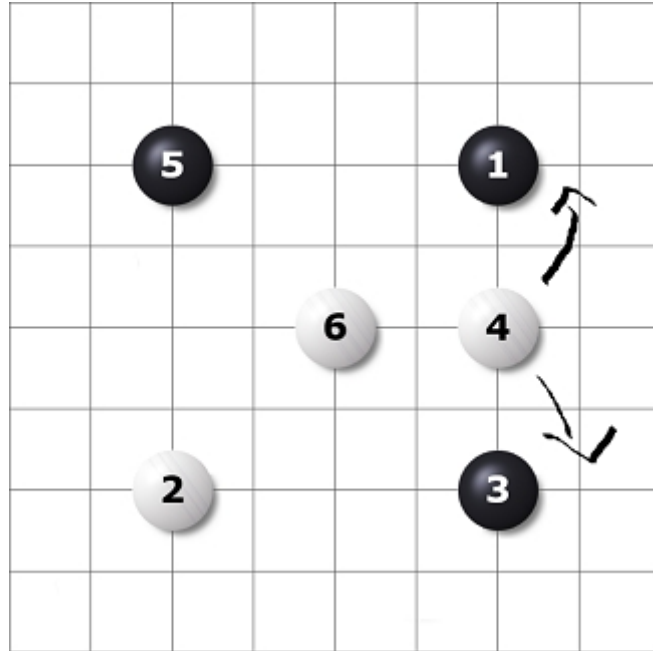


(Diagram 68)

Option C:

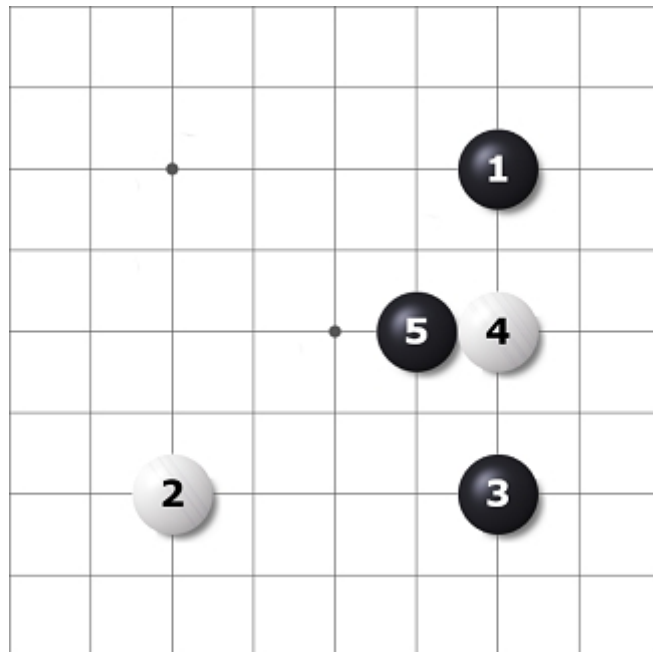
C is also a playable choice, and Black 5 will not wait to take another corner.

White 6 can safely extend to Tengen in return, and a fight over the whole board will start. If White manages to split the Black groups into three later, he will be able to kill one of them.



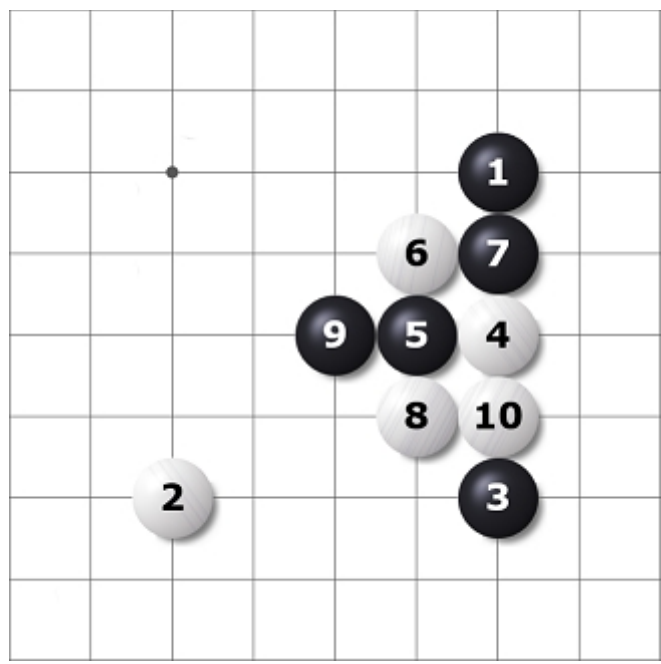
(Diagram 69)

Some Beginners will make the mistake of answering White 4 with a contact move at Black 5. This is very good for White, as he can exploit the cutting points while running away. (See next diagram)



(Diagram 70)

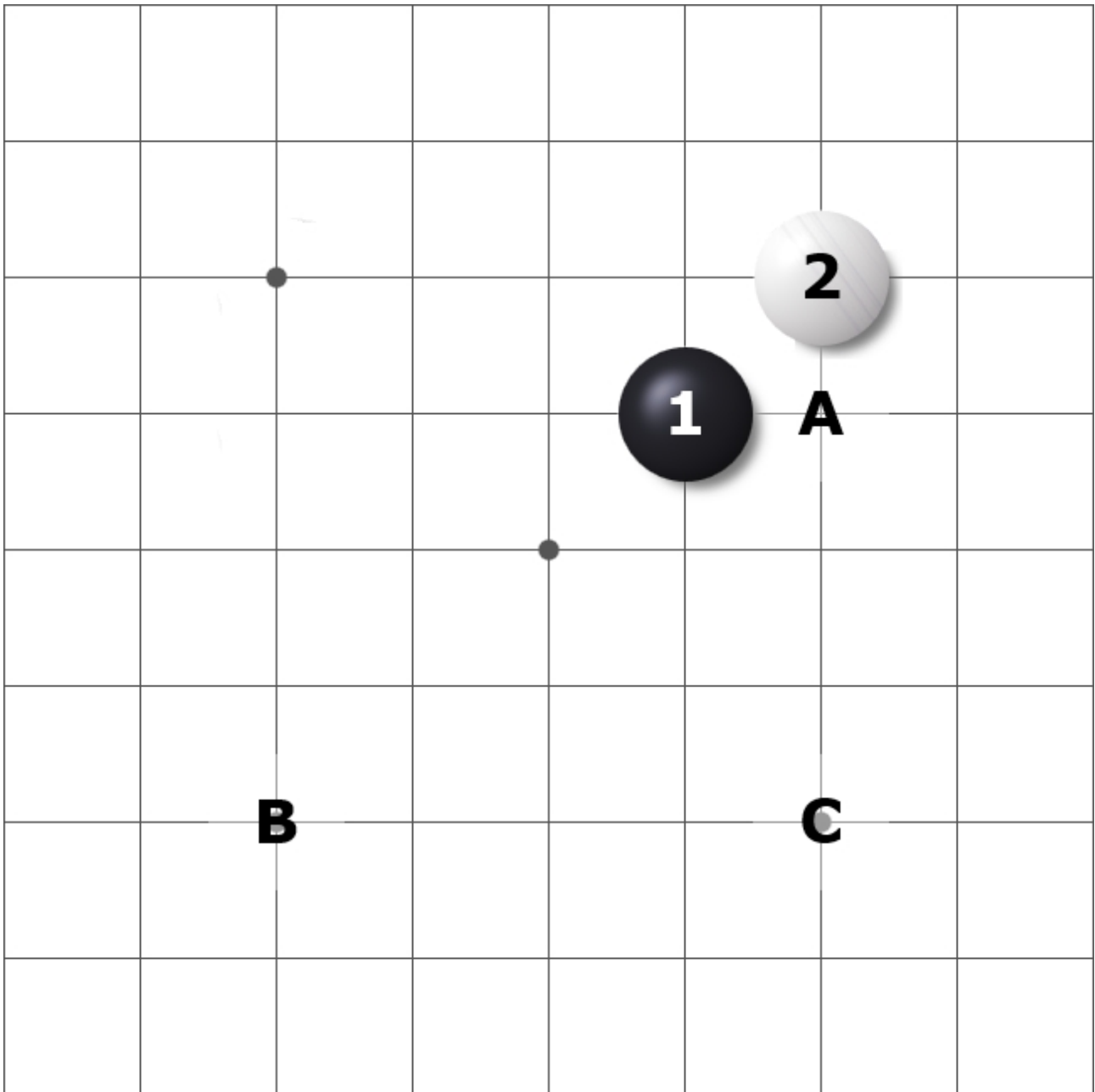
Even though this situation looks complicated, the overall result is a lot better for White, as he gets the lower right corner and Black's groups are separated until Black captures White 6.



(Diagram 71)

## Training 2

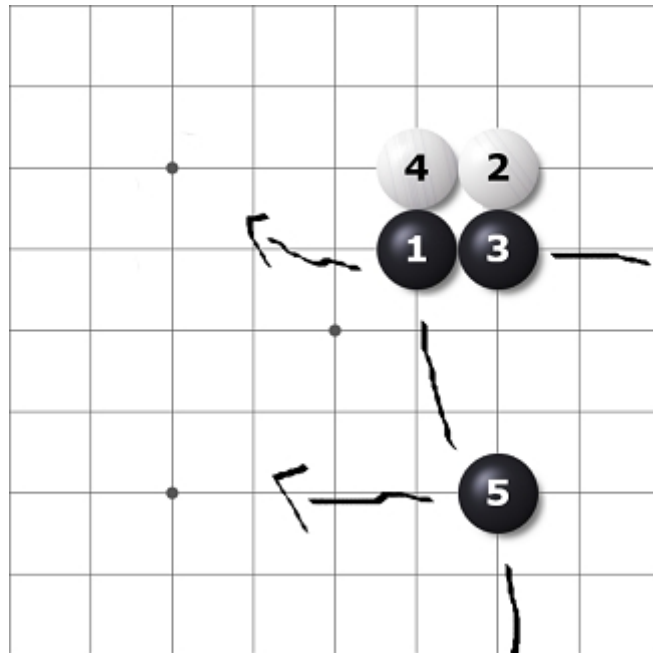
Black to play. A, B or C?



(Diagram 72)

✓ Option A:

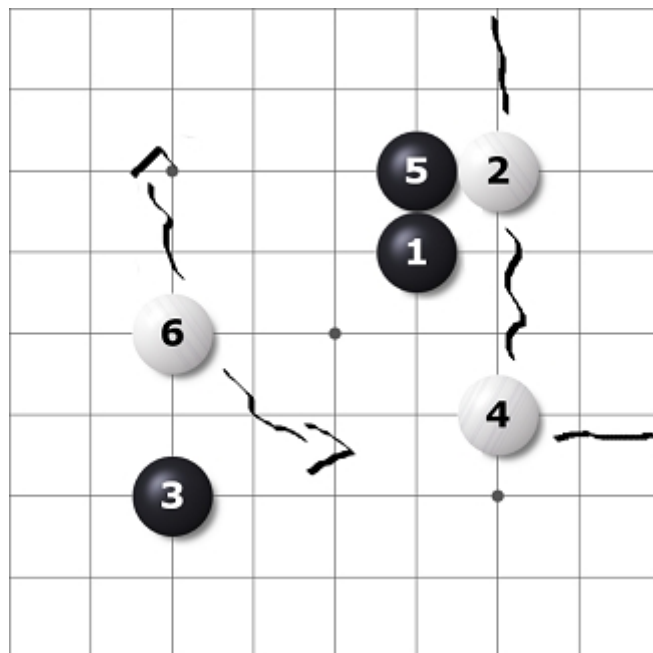
Black 3 is the best answer to punish White's overplay in the opening. White needs to extend with 4, or lose the corner. This makes his initial move inefficient. Black 5 takes a huge chunk of the board.



(Diagram 73)

Option B:

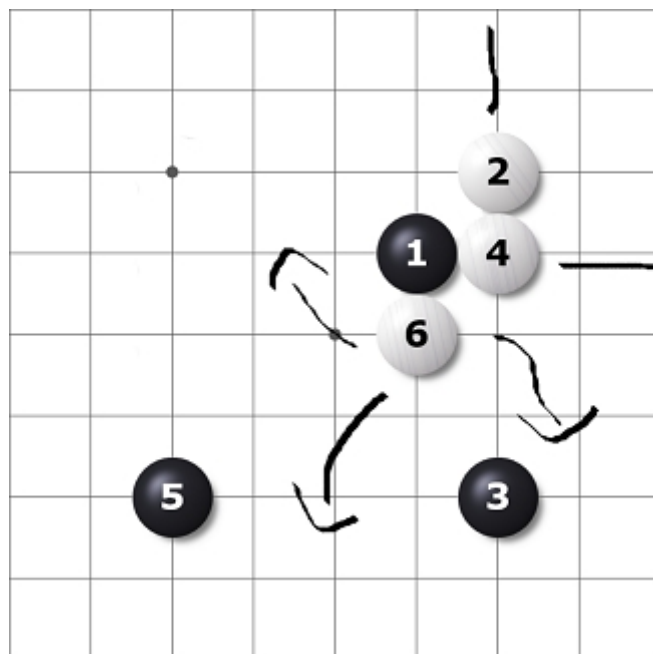
Ignoring White 2, Black can take the opposite corner. This is not a good move, because White will extend with White 4. If Black blocks (either side) with 5, White will sacrifice his initial stone and start a whole-board fight.



(Diagram 74)

Option C:

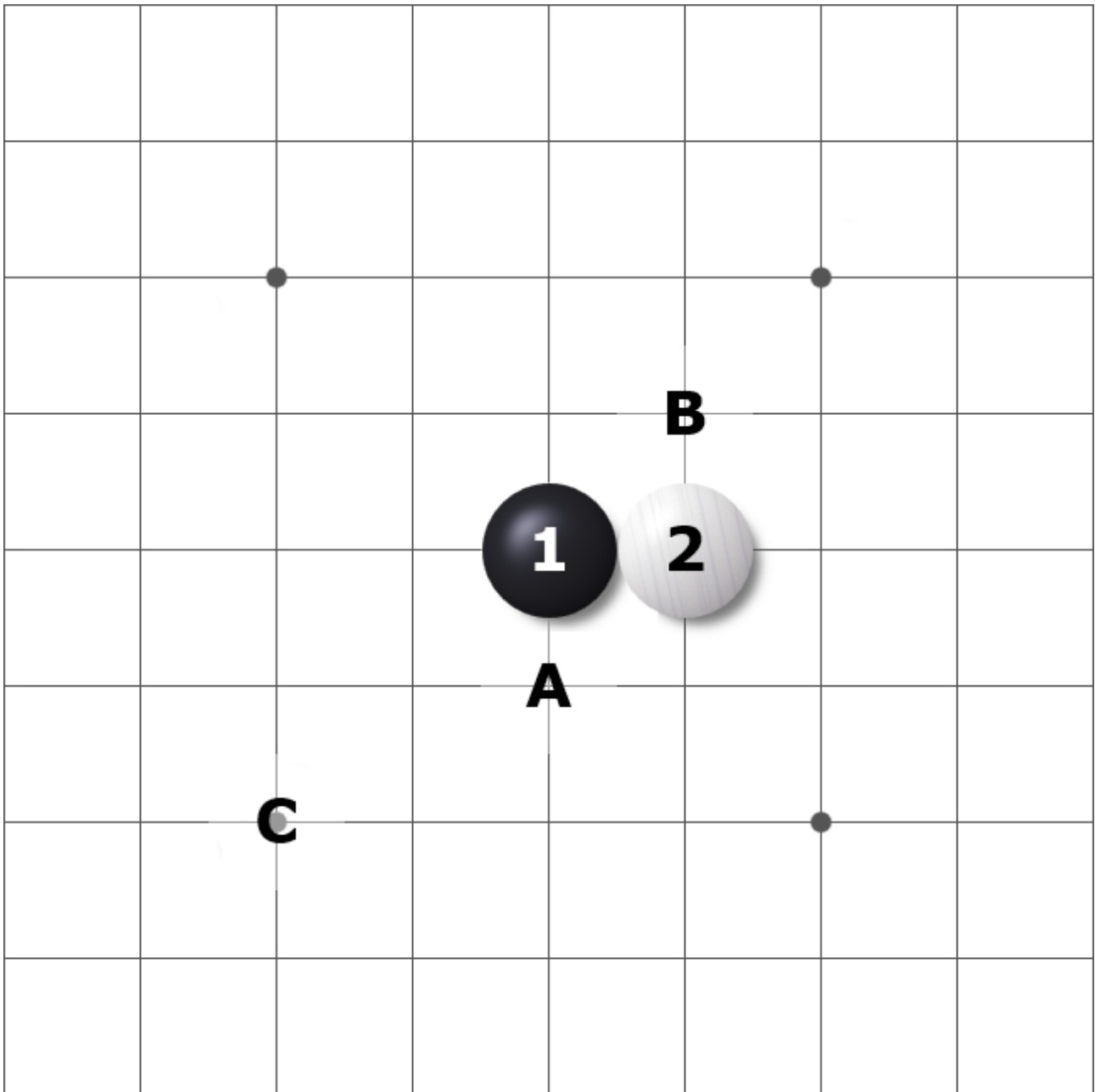
C is the worst option, as White will play move 3 to make a solid corner. Black has no choice and needs to take a second corner as compensation with Black 5. White 6 can then start an invasion from a safe base.



(Diagram 75)

### Training 3

Black to play. A, B or C?

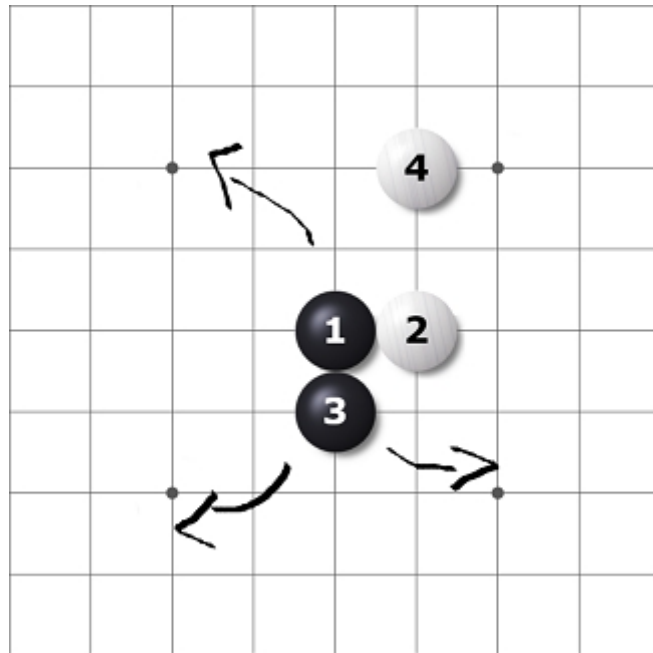


(Diagram 76)



✓ Option A:

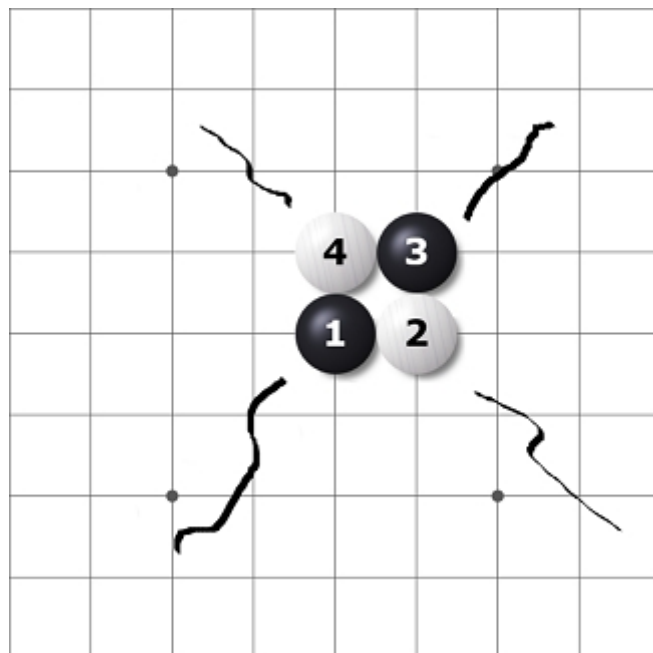
The solid extension at A is the correct move to punish White's overplay. If White wants to make safe territory with White 4, Black can carefully plan his next move, and possibly invade.



(Diagram 77)

Option B:

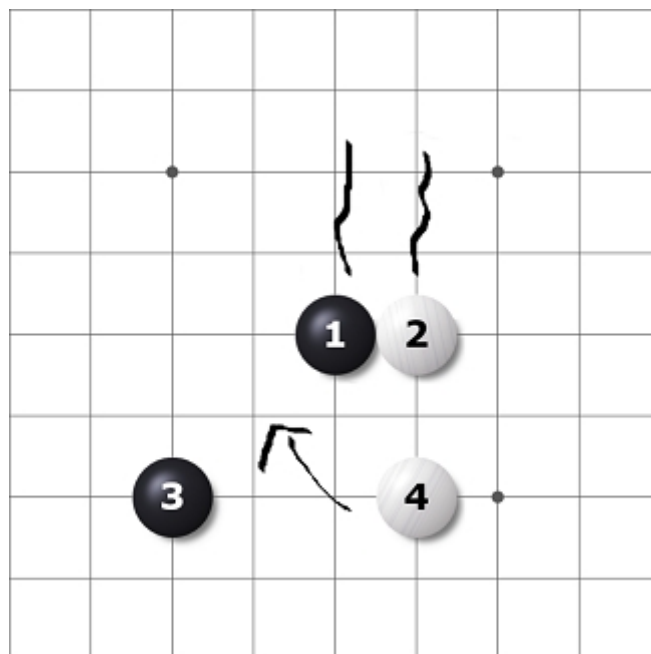
If Black decides to cut, White can do the same and start a Semeai over the whole board. Black has to carefully think if he wants this outcome, before playing the move at B.



(Diagram 78)

Option C:

White will be thankful for the passive move at Black 3 and extend his control over the board with White 4. The open space between Black 1 and 3 is bad for Black, as White can invade later.



(Diagram 79)

## The End?

Yes, the book is already at its end, and I hope you learned something new from my introduction to the 9x9 board. Of course I could only give you a basic understanding of this special board size, and there is much more to learn and discover! If you lose a lot on the 9x9 board, do not let that discourage you! As the popular saying goes: "The master has failed more than the student has even tried."

I want to give a special thanks to [mark5000](#), who gave me great input on many parts of the book! (And who is an excellent 9x9 player himself!)

Also a thanks to those who helped me getting stronger, read over the book, and those who are my good friends. ♥

Feel free to contact me via [immanuel.devillers@gmail.com](mailto:immanuel.devillers@gmail.com) or send a message to "[Françisa](#)" on the Online-Go Server (OGS).

### Link List

Online Go Server: <https://www.online-go.com>

Françisa's 9x9 Joseki Collection: <https://online-go.com/puzzle/132>

mark5000's 9x9 Opening Explorer: <https://online-go.com/puzzle/181>

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