

Cathedral

· Territory · 2 · 20–30 min

GOAL

Get as many of your buildings onto the board as you can. The fewest unplaced squares wins.

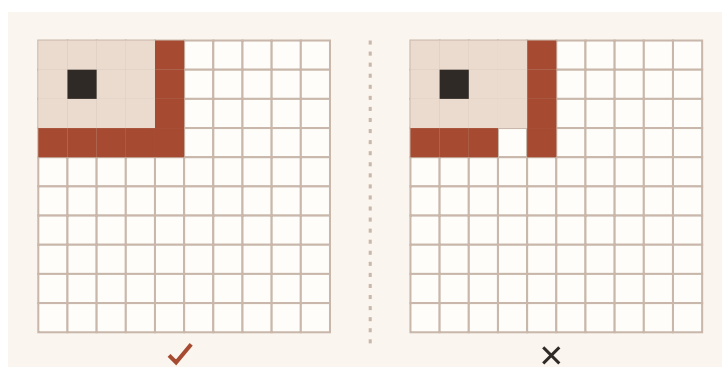
YOUR TURN

On your turn you **must** place one of your buildings. If no building fits, your opponent continues. Placed buildings are never moved.

The first player starts by placing the **Cathedral** anywhere on the empty board. Then the second player goes, and turns alternate.

Territory is everything

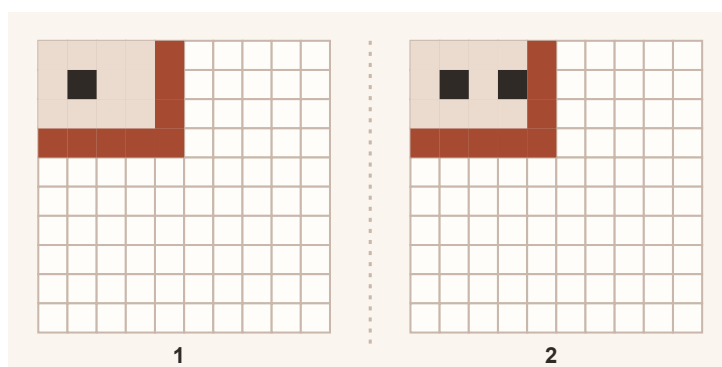
When your buildings, together with the board edge, **completely enclose** empty squares, those squares become **your territory**. The opponent can no longer build there. You still can.



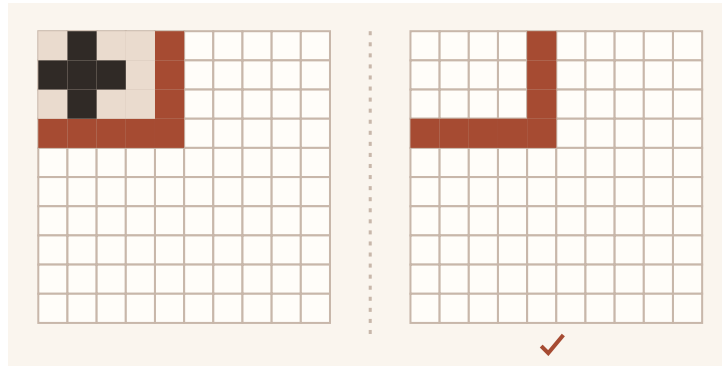
Left: an unbroken boundary encloses territory against the board edge. Right: a missing square leaves a gap. This schematic shows the boundary, not individual buildings.

Buildings must touch side to side, not just at the corners. Two buildings meeting at a corner do not close an area. You cannot claim territory with your **first** building, and the Cathedral does not count as part of your wall.

Capturing. If the area you just enclosed holds **exactly one** opposing building, remove it at once; the opponent may place it again later. If you enclose only the Cathedral, it does not come back. If two or more buildings are inside, you remove nothing and claim no territory.



Exactly one enemy building: remove it and claim. Two or more: remove nothing and claim nothing.

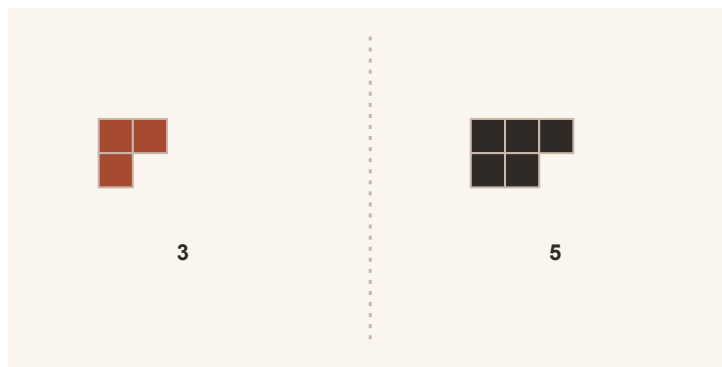


You may enclose and permanently remove the Cathedral by itself, but it cannot form part of your boundary.

End, scoring and the box

The game ends when neither player can place another building. Each player adds up the **squares** of the buildings they could not place; the lower total wins. If you placed everything, your total is 0.

In the box: a 10×10 board, 14 buildings per player and the neutral Cathedral (5 squares).



Count unit squares, not pieces. The smaller total area of unplaced buildings wins.

Source: [Cathedral official rules](#). Diagrams are original.

Details that matter

If you cannot place any building, your opponent continues until they also cannot play. Dark places the first player building after Light places the neutral Cathedral. Swap starting roles next game.

The official site also describes Tom Lehman's opening: the second player places the Cathedral together with their first building. Agree on this before play.

Further sources: [Cathedral rules and opening variant](#)