

Mancala

· Sowing game · 2 · 10–30 min

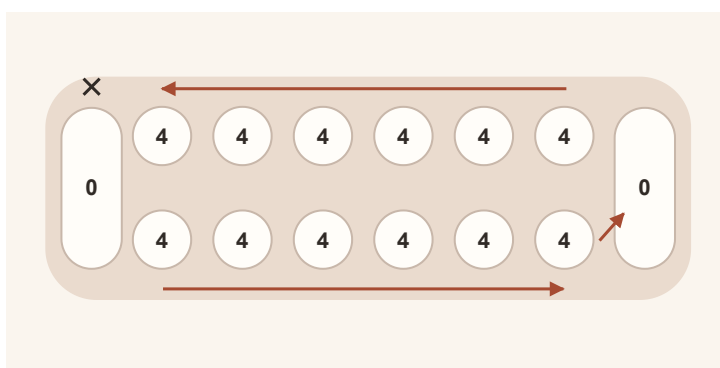
GOAL

When one side of the board empties, have more seeds in your store than your opponent.

YOUR TURN

Choose one of **your** pits that has seeds and take **all** of them. Then drop one seed into each following pit, going anticlockwise.

You **do** drop a seed into your own store. You **always skip** the opponent's store. Your store is on your right.



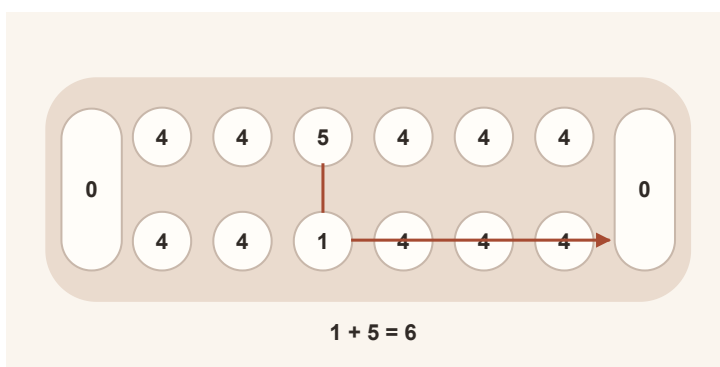
The bottom 6 pits and right store are yours. Sow right, through your store, then left along the top row; skip the left store.

Where the last seed lands

Everything depends on where your **last** seed lands.

In your store: you take another turn immediately.

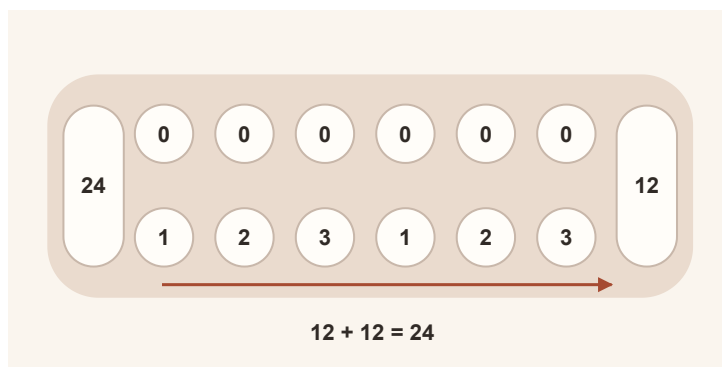
In an empty pit on your side: if the opposite pit contains seeds, capture the final seed and *all* opposite seeds into your store. If the opposite pit is empty, the final seed stays; the “empty capture” variant changes this.



The last seed lands in your empty pit. You take it and all those opposite.

A capture only works on **your** side, and only if the pit was **empty** before.

Ending. The game ends as soon as one side is empty. The other player sweeps all remaining seeds on their side into their own store. The most seeds wins.



As soon as one row is empty, play stops; the other row's remainder goes into its store.

Setup and other variants

The board has 12 pits, 6 per player, and 2 stores. To start, put **4 seeds** in each of the 12 pits; both stores start empty.

On the same 2x6 board you can also play **Oware**: the stores are not part of the circuit, and you capture backwards along the opponent's row when your last seed makes a pit of 2 or 3. **Congkak** (2x7) and **Bao** (4x8) need a different board.

Sources: [IG Game Center — Kalah](#) · [Mangala Games — Classic Mancala](#). Diagrams are original.

Details that matter

Mancala is a family of sowing games, rather than one ancient rulebook. Kalah is William Julius Champion's modern twentieth-century variant. This guide starts with four seeds per pit; six is an agreed, longer setup.

Here capture requires seeds in the opposite pit. The "empty capture" variant takes the final seed even when the opposite pit is empty. Oware also requires feeding the opponent and restricts captures that take all their seeds.

Further sources: [Kalah variants](#) · [Oware rules](#)