

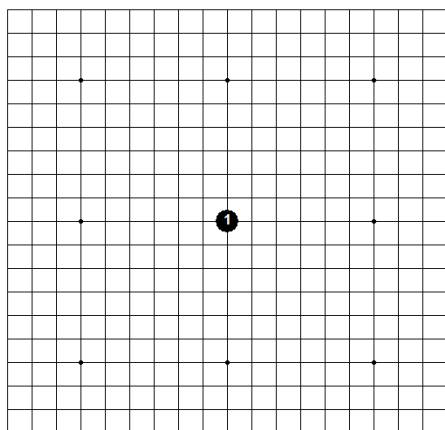
Chapter Seven Miscellaneous Basic Tactics

6000 Basics

In this part of this text book, we discuss the basic tactics which is worth learning before you start actual games. However, please remember that these chapters are giving you information which is reliable perhaps 90%. In actual games, there are exceptions. Even though they are not 100% correct, they are reliable as basic information.

6010 Freedom of a moves

When you are to start a game, the board is empty. Where should you make the first move? This is a question strong experienced players are still unable to answer. Basically Go is a game in which there is a vast freedom of moves. You are permitted to make a move almost at any spot on the board. As you have learned in the chapter of Go Rules, there are only two cases where moves are restricted. This freedom is a charm of the game Go. In actual games, there are good moves as well as poor moves. Often strong players can criticize poor moves of weak players but in most cases it is difficult to determine the best move or even how bad, if a move is poor.



The very first move made at the center

6100 Corner, Side and Center of the Board

Since a go board is in the shape of a square, there are four corner positions on the board. Most commonly, moves to place stones near the corner are wise moves at the very start of a game. Why? Because it is more efficient to form a territory at a corner than at a side or at the center of the board. Fig. 1 shows territories of the size $3 \times 4 = 12$ points and you will recognize that you need less stones to form it at the edge than at the

center and the same is true at the corner than at the edge.

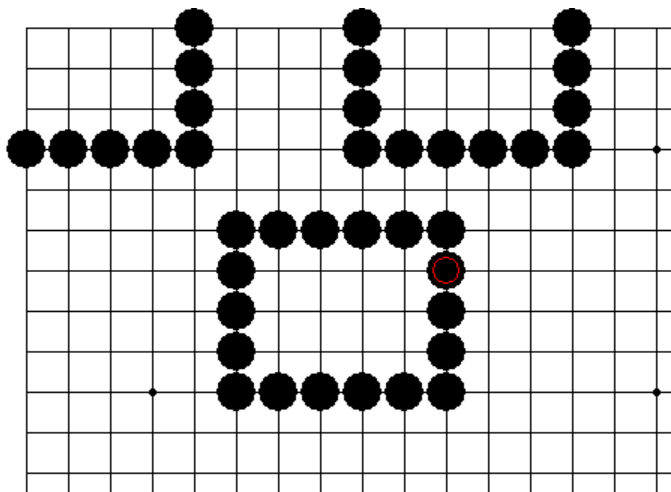


Fig. 1

You will be able to recognize that this comes from the fact that you do not need to form a fence at the edge of the board to form a territory. We interpret that if there is a cliff, you do not need a fence.

Fig.1 is a good example to show the difference of efficiency to form a territory at the corner, at the edge or near the center of the board. Fig. 2 is also showing the same thing in demonstrating the size of the territory formed with 14 stones at different positions of the board.

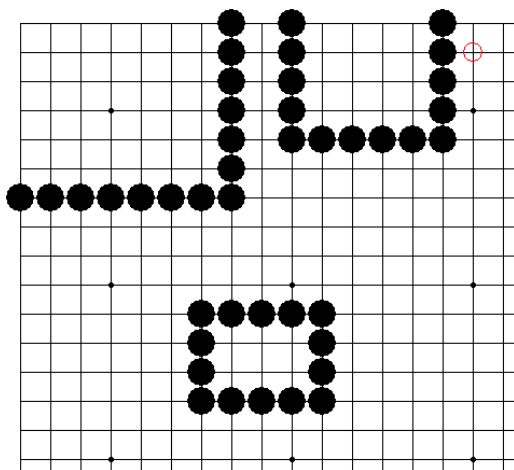


Fig. 2

As you can see, you succeeded in forming a $6 \times 7 = 42$ point territory with 14 stones at the corner. But you can only form a $4 \times 5 = 20$ point territory with 14 stones at the edge. At the center of the board, you can form a $2 \times 3 = 6$ point territory only with the same number of stones. This is another good model to show you that the difference of efficiency in forming a territory at a corner, at the edge or at the center.

At this point, we will mention a puzzling statement. "You need to place stones of your

color on the board to form your territory. But where you place your stones shall not become the part of the territory. (This interpretation is apparent in Japanese rules.)

Doesn't this statement sound contradictory? It certainly does.

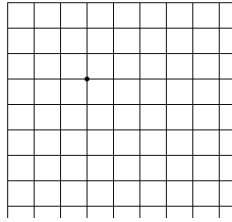


Fig. 3 The empty space is no one's territory.

Suppose a corner of the board is completely vacant with no stones there, the open space cannot be regarded neither the black's territory nor the white's territory. See Fig.3

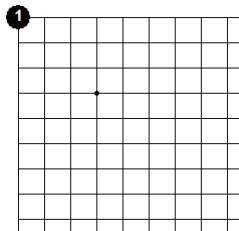


Fig. 4 The black's move (1) can not form a territory at the corner.

Suppose the black placed a stone at the very corner as shown in Fig.4, it is difficult to form a territory there.

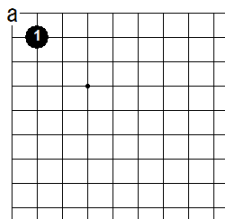


Fig. 5 The territory formed by (1) is too small

Now let us assume the black placed a stone at 2-2 position of the corner as shown in Fig. 5, will it be good?

The answer is that the territory formed by (1) in Fig. 5 is too small. At worst, it forms only one point territory at "a". That is too small to guarantee survival.

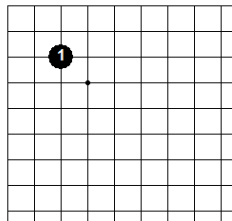


Fig. 6 The territory formed by (1) is not too large

Look at the Fig. 6 in which the black placed a stone at 3-3 position. This stone is saying the black is forming a territory at the corner. The territory formed by (1) is not very large but (1) was actually played by many professionals as the first move near an empty corner.

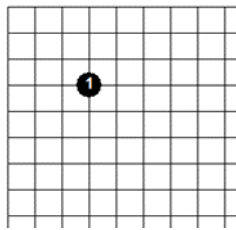


Fig. 7

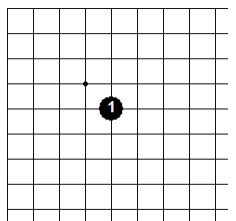


Fig. 8

The move of (1) in Chart 7 is quite common today and the move of (1) in Chart 8 was actually played by some professionals in the past. As you compare moves of (1) from Chart 4 to Chart 8, you will recognize that the farther the stone goes away from the very corner, the larger the territory you may be able to expect to form. But is it truly so? This is a very delicate question to answer.

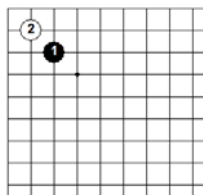


Fig. 9

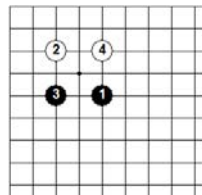


Fig. 10

For example, as the black played (1) of Fig. 6, if the white tries to play (2) of Fig. 9, it will be possible for the black to capture white's (2) without difficulty since the territory formed by (2) at the corner is too small to secure two eyes in order to be sure to survive. But, as the black played (1) in Fig. 8, if the white plays (2) shown in Fig. 10, it is difficult for the black to capture white's (2). For example, if the black plays (3) after the white's (2), the white can respond at (4) and this group of white stones is too strong to capture since the white will have no difficulty in forming two eyes there.

As you can see from these examples, you must recognize these facts.

<1> If the first move at a corner is too close to the very corner of the board, the territory formed would be too small. In the worst case, you may fail to form two separate eyes.

<2> If the first move at a corner is too far from the very corner of the board, the space is large but there remains the room for the opponent to make a move inside the territory which the first player has intended to secure. If the opponent's stones survive, the corner territory would be occupied by the opponent's group of stones.

6110 Common corner moves

For these reasons, the place of the first move at an empty corner is rather limited.

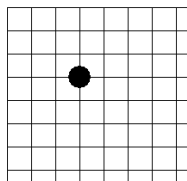


Fig. 1

The black's first move at a corner indicated in Fig. 1 at the position 4-4 is called "star position". In case of a normal board, there is a mark of a large dot indicated at that point. This mark is called "a star". The first move at a corner at the star position is pretty common since 1900.

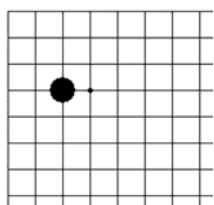


Fig. 2

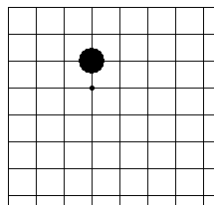


Fig. 3

The black's move indicated in Fig. 2 and Fig. 3 at position 3-4 are named "little star position". Before 1900, this was the most common first move at a corner. It is a very popular move even today.

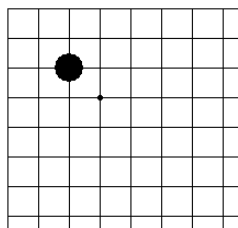


Fig. 4

The black's move at the position of 3-3 shown in Fig. 4 was often played at one time.

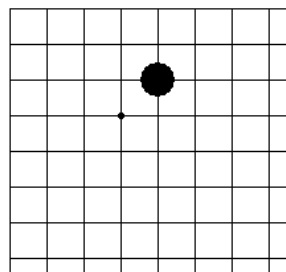


Fig. 5

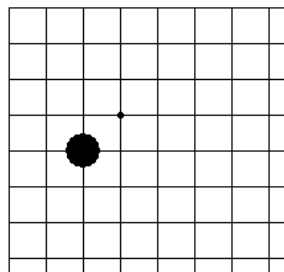


Fig. 6

Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 show you a move at position 3-5 is called "off-star position". This move was pretty common before 1900 and often used today.

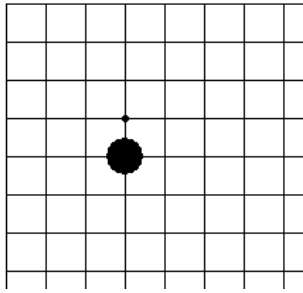


Fig. 7

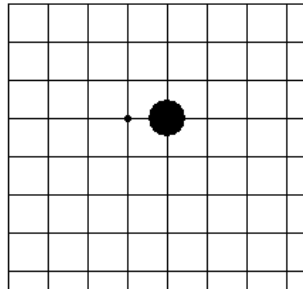


Fig. 8

Fig. 7 and Fig. 8 show you a move at position 4-5 which is called “high star position”.

Which of these moves mentioned so far would you recommend? Nobody can answer that difficult question.

6120 Common Opponent’s Move at a Corner

When a move is made at an empty corner as mentioned in above, what is the common opponent’s move which is made against such a move? In this section, we will show you some sample moves used by many players.

6121 A Stone at the Star Position

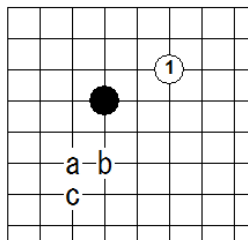


Fig. 1

For the black’s star move, the most common move of the white would be (1) shown in Fig. 1. This move has been popular for many years. To this white’s move of (1), the most common response of the black would be “a”, “b” or “c”. The move “a” is popular today. The move “b” has been quite common until recently. Relatively speaking “a” is more defensive and “b” is more offensive. The move “c” was popular before 1900.

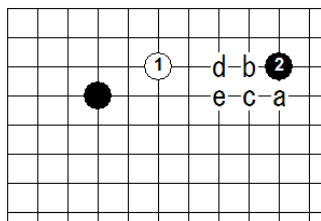


Fig. 2

The black can even choose to make a move like (2) indicated in Fig. 2 attacking (1) from behind. The moves at “a” to “e” are also as aggressive as the move (2). Which is the best? This is a question nobody can answer.

6122 A Stone at the Little Star Position

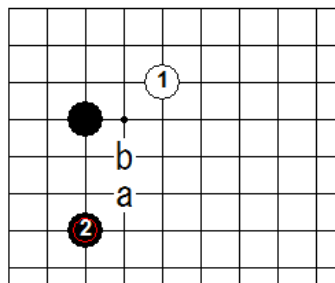


Fig. 3

The black's move at 3-4 called little star position has been popular for hundreds of years. White's move at (1) in Fig. 3 is very common. To this move black's response at (2) is defensive. Move at "a" is also defensive for (2) trying to secure a territory towards the left hand side of the board. However another common move at "b" is not necessarily defensive. The move "b" is ready to form a territory with another move on the left side but if the black interferes that strategy of the white, he would be happy to attack (1) instead.

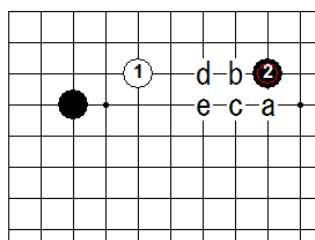


Fig. 4

Against white's (1), moves like black's (2) in Fig. 4 or moves such as "a" to "e" are more offensive to attack the stone (1) from behind.

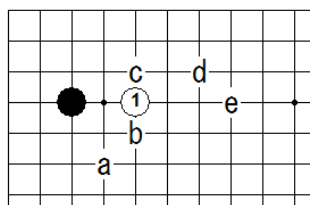


Fig. 5

Fig. 5 shows another white's move (1) which became quite popular today. When the white chooses (1), the black's common next move for (2) can be "a" to "e" of Fig. 5. The moves "c" and "a" are quite common. The move "b" is often chosen. The moves "d" and "e" are offensive.

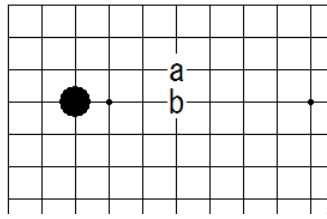


Fig. 6

Besides the move (1) of Chart 5, the white's move at "a" or "b" in Fig. 6 is sometimes used.

6123 A Stone at the 3-3 Position

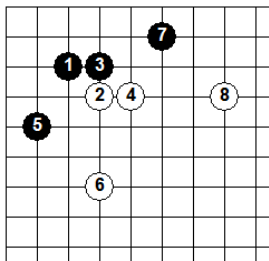


Fig. 7

After the first move of black's (1) at 3-3 position, a common white's move would be to play at (2) in Chart 7. If the black plays to the direction of (3), the white will respond at (4). If the black extend his territory towards (5), the white would be able to respond at (6) and if black plays (7) to extend his territory to that direction, the white would respond at (8). This result is well balanced as black secures a relatively small sized territory while the white prepares a group of several stones which is good at establishing a potential strength towards the center of the board.

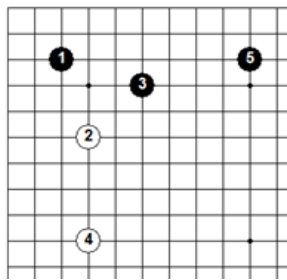


Fig. 8

Fig. 8 shows you another variation of sequence of possible moves after 3-3.

6124 A Stone at the Off-Star Position

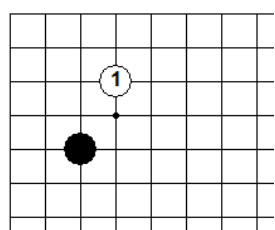


Fig. 9

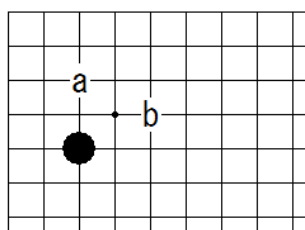


Fig. 10

For a Black's stone at the off-star position, the white's move (1) shown in Fig. 9 is very common. Besides, the move at "a" or "b" of Fig. 10 is often used.

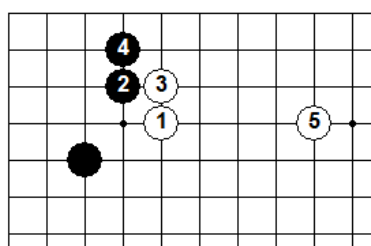


Fig. 11

The move at "a" in Fig. 10 is trying to secure a small territory at the corner while the move at "b" in Fig. 10 is to let black secure a territory of the corner and white trying to establish a territory on the upper side as shown in Fig. 11.

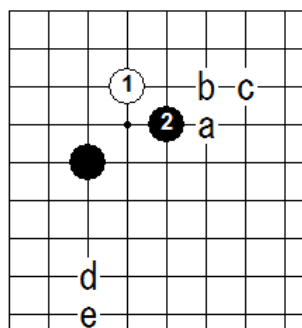


Fig. 12

For a move at (1) of Fig. 9, the black's next moves of (2), "a" to "e" shown in Fig. 12 are common. The moves (2), "a", "b" and "c" are offensive attacking (1) and moves "d" and "e" are defensive.

6125 A Stone at the High Star Position

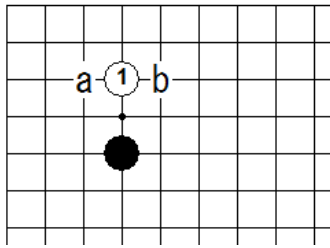


Fig. 13

For a Black's stone at the high star position, the white's (1) in Fig. 13 is common. Sometimes, a move at "a" or "b" is used. The purpose of a move at "a" is to be happy to secure a small territory at the corner if black makes the next move at "b". The purpose of a move at "b" is to be happy to have some territory on the upper side if the black makes the next move at "a". The move at (1) is balanced between the two.

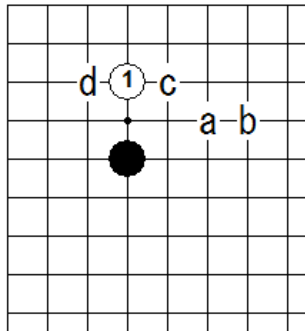


Fig. 14

When the white played (1) against the black's first stone at the high star position shown in Fig. 14, the black's next move for (2) may be at "a" or "b" the purpose of which is to let white be happy with a relatively small territory at the corner and try to establish a strong black wall towards the center. The black's (2) at "c" and "d" are aggressive and the white and black are to be both busy to make a few more moves there.

6130 Second Move of Your Own

When you make the first move at a corner, your opponent may have chance to make the next move at the same corner to have some exchange of moves there. However, at the same time, there is some chance that you are to make the second move at the same corner. In this chapter, we will show you some patterns of your second move.

6131 A move from the Star Position

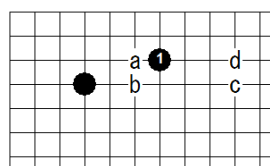


Fig. 1

From a stone at the Star Position of a corner, there is no very suitable move to follow when you are given to make another move there. (1) shown in Fig. 1 is a possibility. Moves at “a” or “b” is also possible. In case of the first stone at the Star Position, the second move of “c” or “d” is often preferred by many players.

6132 A move from the Little Star Position

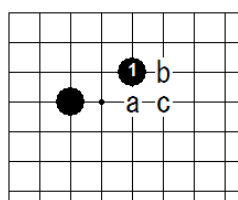


Fig. 2

From a stone at the little star position, the second move is always quite valuable. The move shown as (1) in Fig. 2 is very attractive. By the two moves, the corner territory is certain and the size is good. The second move of “a” is also as good as (1). Often, a move at “b” or a move at “c” is used.

6133 A Move from 3-3 Position

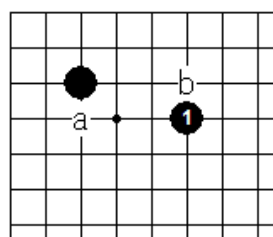


Fig. 3

From the original first stone at a corner at 3-3 position, the second move is not too attractive. If there is a chance, the move (1) shown in Fig. 3 is a possible move. If you are free to choose one of the combination of two moves of the 3-3 and (1) or “a” and “b”, many players would vote to the latter.

6134 A move from the Off-Star Position

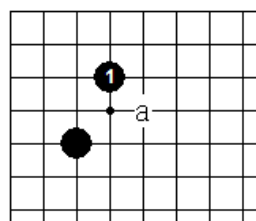
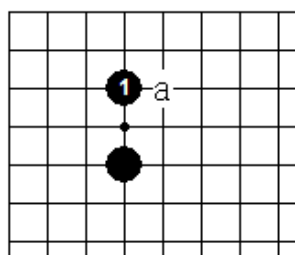


Fig. 4

If the first stone is at the off-star position, the most common second move would be (1) shown in Fig. 4. Sometimes a player may choose to make a move at “a” instead of (1). The combination of off-star position and “a” may look like securing a larger territory at the corner, but in that pattern, there is a room for the white to invade to the corner.

6135 A Move from the High Star Position



From the initial high star position stone, the move (1) is a desirable pattern. The second move at “a” is sometimes used but here again, the territory formed by the stone at the high star position and “a” appears larger, the security of the territory is not too certain.

6200 Common Moves at a Side of the Board

As explained already, corner is the place where it is efficient to form a territory. Next to the corner, side of the board is the place where it is relatively easy to form a territory. Center position of the board is the place where it is least efficient to form a territory.

6210 Two Step Leaping

At a side, two space leaping is the basic move to maintain a space to form a territory.

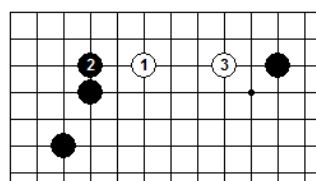


Fig. 1

The sequence of moves from (1) to (3) in Fig. 1 is a good example of two step leaping of the white.

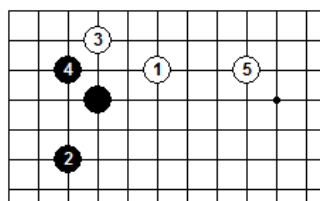


Fig. 2

The sequence of moves from (1) to (5) shown in Fig. 2 is very common. The last move of (5) is important to form two step leaping at the side.

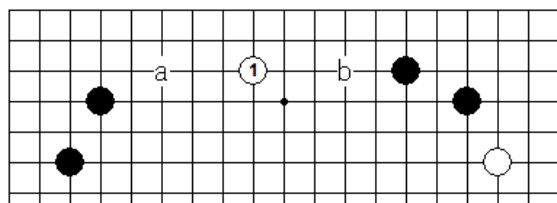


Fig. 3

Look at Fig. 3. The white's move (1) is interesting in that the white can make a move at "a" or "b". If the black plays at "a", white can respond at "b" and if the black plays at "b", white can respond at "a". The move like (1) from which two step leaping is guaranteed on one side is named "a split move".

6220 Three Step Leaping

When you make a move of three step leaping, you must be prepared to the opponent's move made at the center of three steps.

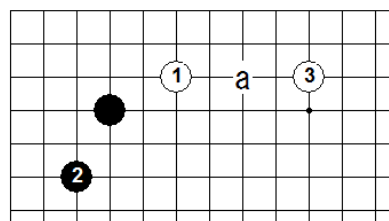


Fig. 4

The white's move at (3) in Fig. 4 is often used. The move (3) forms three step leaping and black may consider making an aggressive move at "a" sometime in the future if not immediately.

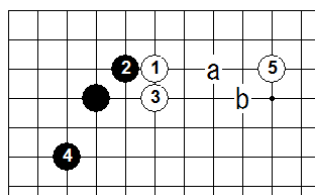


Fig. 5

If the sequence of moves were made from (1) to (5) of Fig. 5, the black's move at "a" is not a threat to the white at all. In this case, if black plays at "a", white can respond at "b" and capture the stone at "a". Why? Because of the existence of the white's stone at

(3). Thus there is a saying that you can play a move of three step leaping if there is a wall of two stones like (1) and (3).

For the same reason, another saying says that you are save to play a move of four step leaping if there is a wall of tree stones high.

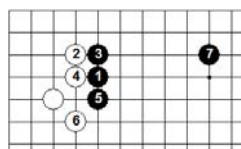


Fig. 6

The black's move (7) in Fig. 6 is following this saying.

6230 Other Moves at a Side

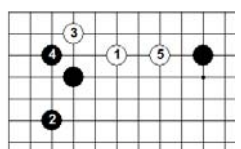


Fig. 7

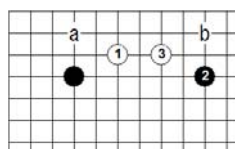


Fig. 8

The white's move (5) in Fig. 7 is one point leaping which is narrower than a common two step leaping, but it seems necessary to make a move here. The white's move (3) in Fig. 8 is similar. It is a narrow one step leaping, but the white can expect to be able to play "a" or "b" next.

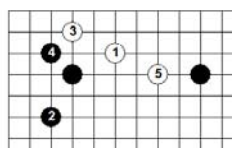


Fig. 9

Look at the sequence from (1) to (5) of Fig. 9. The white's move (5) is not one point leaping. It is called the knight move. Incidentally (3) is also a knight move.

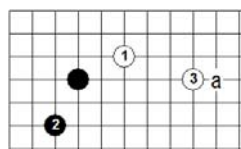


Fig. 10

The white's move (3) in Fig. 10 is slightly different from two point leaping. This move is called big knight move. It is quite common to make the move (3) one point still wider. It is called great big knight move.

6300 How High should a Fence be at the Side?

When we discussed appropriate corner stone positions, we concluded 1-1 or 2-2 is too

close to the corner. Then we learned 3-3 and 4-4 are considered good moves. 5-5 is possible but not too popular and perhaps 6-6 will be too far from the corner.

With a similar consideration, we have a saying that the height of fences we form at a side would be too low if it is formed along the second line from the side. In contrast, if you allow your opponent to form a fence along the fourth line, he will be quite happy. The wall along the third line is a happy medium.

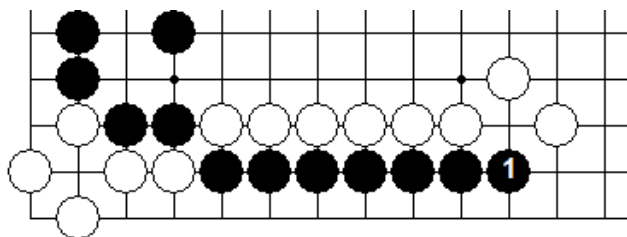


Fig. 1

In Fig. 1, the black is forming a fence two lines above the side or cliff. Generally speaking the territory formed by the black is considered inefficient. The white's wall towards the center of the board is considered favorable.

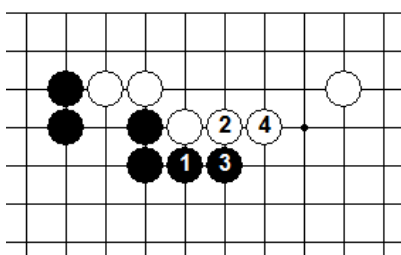


Fig. 2 The white is forming a fence at the fourth line

Fig. 2 shows moves from (1) to (4). By these moves, white formed a fence at the fourth line from the side or the cliff. This tall fence is satisfactory for the white. Black's wall against the center of the board is of relatively small value. Strong players will try to avoid moves such as (1) or (3).

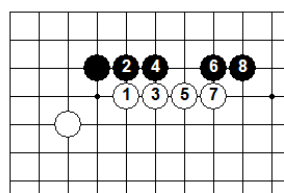


Fig. 3

In Fig. 3, the white is forming a wall against the center of the board along the fourth line and the black formed a fence along the third line from the side. This is a fair balance between the black's territory at the side and the white's wall towards the center.

6400 A Common Move towards the Center of the Board

As mentioned earlier, moves are generally made from the corners of the board to the ends or sides. Then from the ends or sides, moves will be made towards the center.

6410 One Step Jumping

From a stone at an end or side one step jumping towards the center of the board is considered as a standard move. See Fig. 1.

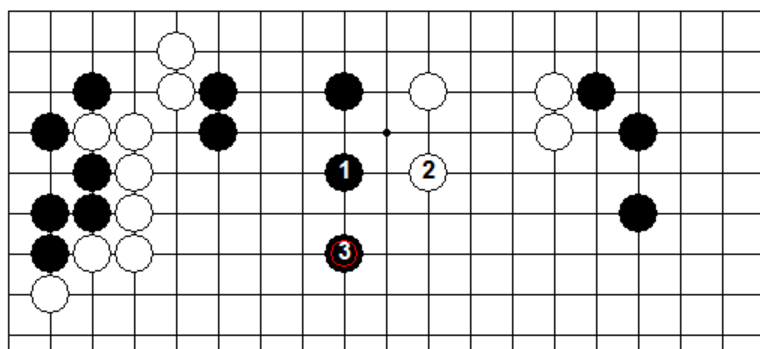


Fig. 1

In Fig. 1, the moves (1), (2) and (3) are typical good moves of one step jumping towards the center of the board.

6420 A knight Move Jumping

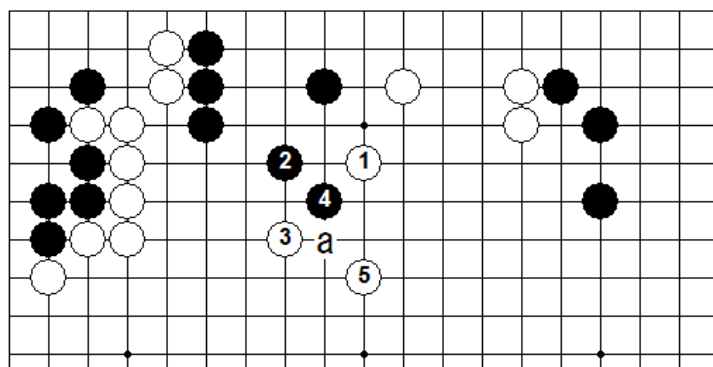


Fig. 2

One step jumping towards the center of the board is a well-balanced move of attack and defense. If your stones are relatively strong and your opponent's stones are relatively weak, it is possible to use a knight move jumping. In Fig. 2, (1) is a typical knight move jumping towards the center recognizing that the four black stones are not very strong and white's three stones can be strong after you play at (1). This (1) is more offensive than one step jumping. The black's move (2) is also a knight move jumping but this time it is defensive. At white's (3), he could play at "a" for another knight move jumping but in Fig. 2, white's move (3) was interesting, as the black tries

to step towards the center, white's (5) is another knight move jumping from the direction of (3). This move (5) is also offensive.

6430 Two Steps Jumping

As mentioned already, one step jumping is a standard move towards the center. But occasionally, two steps jumping is used.

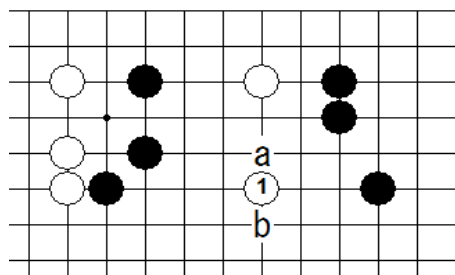


Fig. 3 two steps jumping

The move (1) in Fig. 3 is two steps jumping. In this case, if white chooses one step jumping at "a", the black may attack the white stones by playing at "b". In one sense, the move of two steps jumping of (1) is speedy to step towards the center of the board, although the connection between the original stone and (1) is not as sure as the case of one step leaping. Thus depending on the future moves, white may have to give up the original single stone. In that case the white will get something else by sacrificing that stone.

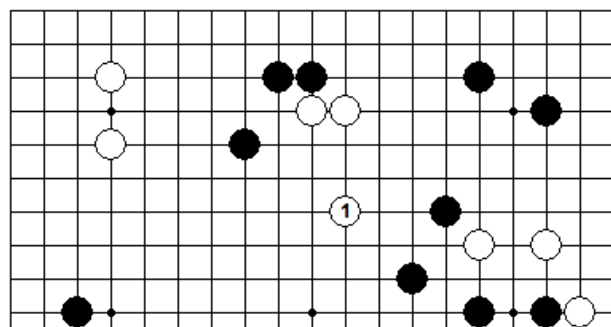


Fig. 4 (1) is a two steps jumping.

The move (1) in Fig. 4 is another example of two steps jumping. In this case there are two stones at the side and the two steps jumping is a move that looks well balanced.

6440 Big Knight Move Jumping

As a variation of knight move jumping, sometimes large knight jumping is used.

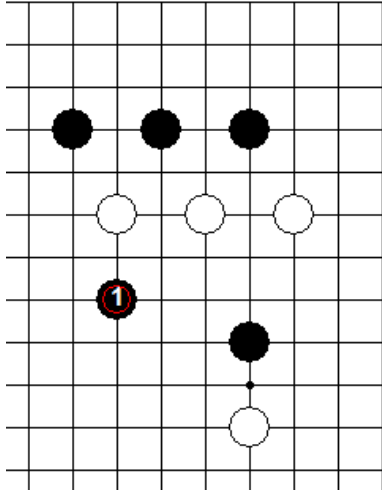


Fig. 5 Big Knight Jumping

The move (1) in Fig. 5 is big knight jumping. It may be aggressive than other jumping to give pressure to the three white stones.

6450 A Case Jumping is no good

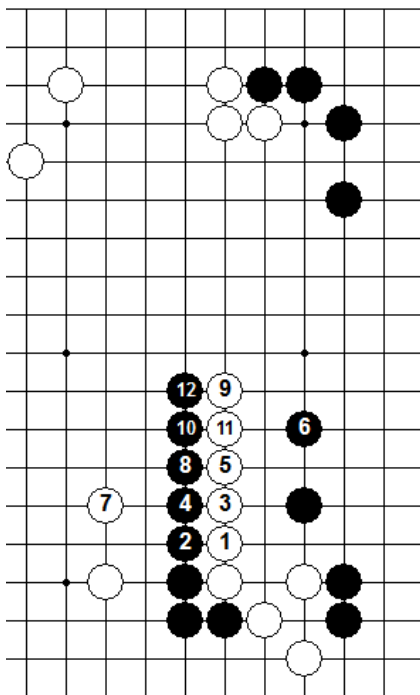


Fig. 6

In case your opponent's stones are too close to yours, say, touching your stone, for instance, it is unwise to make a jumping move towards the center of the board. In such a case, no jumping move is used and the players will confine themselves in

making step by step advancing moves. In Fig. 6, moves (1) to (5) are not jumping. The moves (6) and (7) are jumping but from (8) to (12) the move (9) is one step jumping but other moves are not jumping. By (11) and (12) the pattern became the same shape as both players made step by step moves from (8) to (12).