

Rock, Paper, Scissors

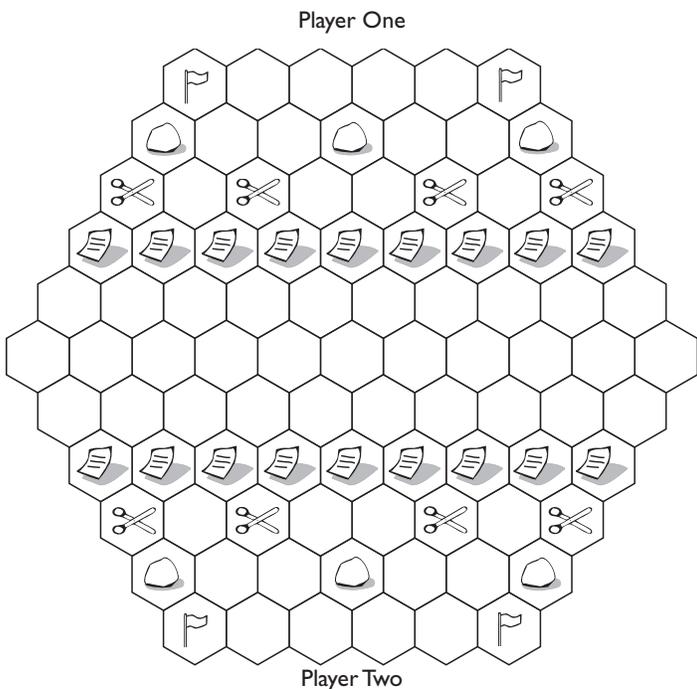
by Greg Lam

Overview

Rock, Paper, Scissors is a strategic game in which each player controls a set of Rocks, Papers, and Scissors and guards two flags. Each type of playing piece has different movement characteristics and features. The object is to destroy one of your enemy's flags before he or she can do the same to you.

Set-Up

Set up the two board segments to form the completed board below. Each player nine Papers, four Scissors, three Rocks, and two Flags, placed as shown in the diagram. The order of play is determined by (what else?) a quick bout of rock, paper, scissors, the hand version, the winner of which moves first.



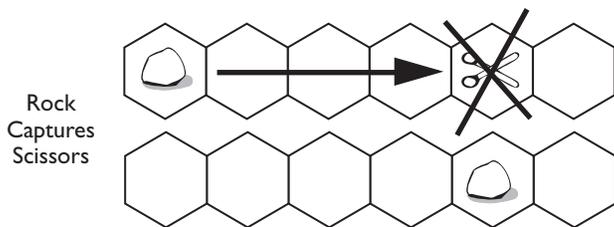
Play

The two players take turns moving until one flag is captured. Any token, friendly or otherwise, will destroy a flag if it moves onto the same space as a flag.

Capture

Captures are made by moving one piece onto another piece, as in Chess, ending the turn. However, Rocks capture Scissors, Scissors capture Papers, and Papers capture Rocks. The piece that moves onto another piece can actually be the one captured.

Any piece that moves onto a Flag will destroy that Flag. Unlike Chess, pieces can legally capture friendly pieces, either intentionally or by being forced to by the other player.

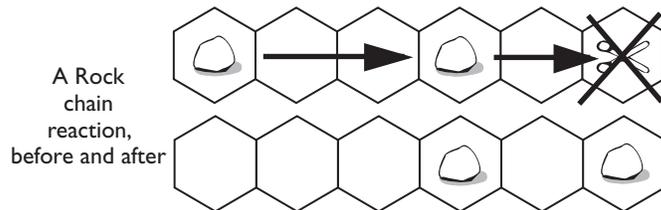
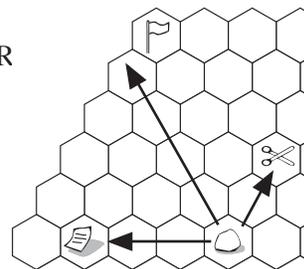


Movement —

Rocks

Rocks can move down a row in any direction in a straight line any number of spaces, but they cannot jump over another piece of any type.

Whenever a Rock hits another R the first Rock takes the place of the second Rock, and the second Rock continues in the same direction, until it either moves off of the board (and is eliminated) or crashes into another piece (in which case normal capture rules are enacted). A Rock chain reaction can go through any number of Rocks in the same row.

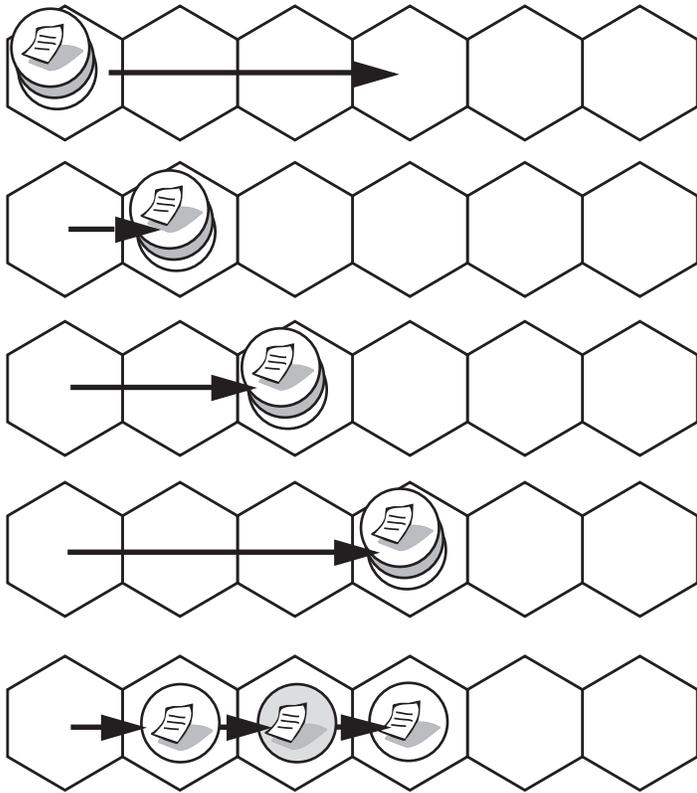


Paper

A single Paper moves one space in any direction. However, Papers also stack on top of one another (friendly or enemy) when they move onto the same space. The Paper that is on the top of the stack controls the stack. A stack of two Papers can move up to two spaces in a row, a stack of three Papers can move up to three spaces, etc. A stack can move either in one clump, or it can spread as it moves, dropping the bottommost sheet on top of each space as it moves along. If it spreads, it must move the full number of sheets in the stack, even if some sheets fall off of the board and are eliminated from the game. A spreading stack that drops a sheet of Paper onto a Rock or a Flag will capture those pieces.

A stack of Paper can jump over any piece but a Scissors, which would destroy it. A Scissors captures every Paper in any stack it encounters.

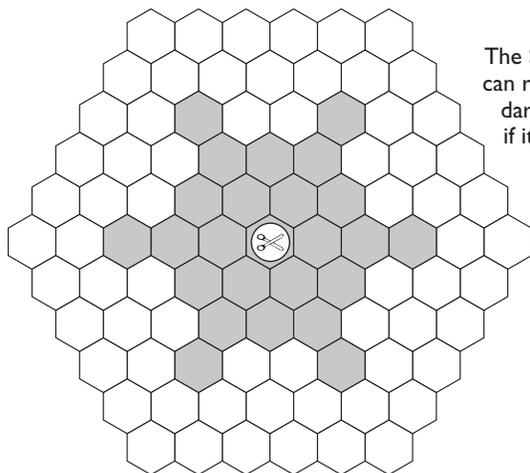
The possible ways a stack of three papers can move down a row.



Scissors

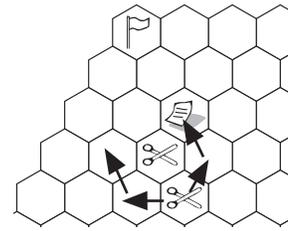
Scissors can move up to three spaces if it moves in a straight line, or up to two spaces if it changes direction. Scissors cannot jump over any other pieces.

If a Scissors moves into an adjacent space with an enemy Scissors, they become locked together immediately, ending the turn. However, any Paper that encounters any locked Scissors is still destroyed. If a Scissors is locked, it may still move but must remain in contact with the enemy Scissors it is locked together with. Locked scissors can still move so long as it remains in contact with the enemy Scissors at all times. A Scissors can be locked together with more than one enemy Scissors. Friendly Scissors do not lock together with one another.



The Scissors shown can reach any of the darkened spaces if it's path is not blocked.

A locked Scissors' possible moves.



Flags

Flags do not move. In the standard game, the capture of one flag ends the game. If a piece is forced to land on a friendly flag (such as a Rock getting knocked backward or a stack of paper being spread out), the flag is still captured.

Two-Flag Version

For a longer, more intricate game, play with the goal of capturing *both* enemy flags. This introduces many complex new strategies into the game, including endgame possibilities. It is usually possible to save one flag even when one flag is doomed.

Notes on Play

As the Rocks are by far the most mobile of the pieces, it is important to guard against them slipping past the defenses and threatening the flag. Papers are important in keeping Rocks in check, and are also able to mount a threat as well. Stacks of Paper are highly mobile and therefore dangerous. Their ability to float over most other pieces make a stack of four or more Papers even more dangerous than Rocks. Scissors can often be used to penetrate deeply into enemy territory by cutting through the line of enemy Papers. Their ability to lock enemy Scissors can sometimes be paralyzing, and also to keep Papers in check.

The loss of all of any one of your types of playing pieces will result in being unable to defend against another. For example, if you lose all of your Scissors, it will be very difficult to defend against a coordinated Paper attack.

In the Two-Flag version, the loss of one flag is not necessarily fatal, as the second flag can become better fortified as a result. You may even begin the game by deciding to fortify one flag while exposing the other.



Pair-of-Dice Games

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