HOW TO PLAY

OH-WAH-REE®

...an absorbing capture game

It takes a fascinating game to live on for 3500 years, and to have devotees in nations all over the world. Such a game is OH-WAH-REE, an ancient gambling game brought up to date for modern tastes. Each player attempts to "sow" strategically his portion of the smooth pebbles, in order to capture pebbles from his opponent's pits. Depth of strategy is not limited by age: children love it as a swift game of capture; adults play in another strategic dimension, enjoying it as an exercise in long-range planning and execution.

The main object of OH-WAH-REE is to capture the most pebbles.

SETUP

Distributing Pits and Pebbles

Divide the 12 OH-WAH-REE pits equally among the players (each player's pits are in sequence) and place the following number of pebbles in each pit:

Players	2	3	4
Pits	6	4	3
Pebbles/Pit	4	5	6

Marking Pits

Each player marks his pits with markers of the same one color.

Players' Turns

First player is chosen by lot or coin-flip; players take turns in clockwise rotation.

PLAY

Sowing

First player takes the pebbles out of any one of his pits and sows them all, one by one, into the adjacent pits. When two play, all pebbles are sown counterclockwise; when three or four play, pebbles are sown in either direction, but all pebbles sown in one move must be sown in the same direction. The other players sow their pebbles similarly in turn. Players may *not* take pebbles out of a pit in order to count them; once they have been removed, the pebbles must be sown.

Sowing 12 or More Pebbles

When a player empties a pit of 12 or more pebbles, carrying him around the board, he must skip over the emptied pit and deposit the 12th pebble in the next pit.


The easiest way to learn Oh-Wah-Ree is to play a

SAMPLE GAME

Each of the following diagrams illustrates the first move printed directly beneath. The **twelve circles** are the playing pits. The **colored dots** are the markers used to indicate to whom the pits belong. The four large **corner pits** are for storing captured pebbles.
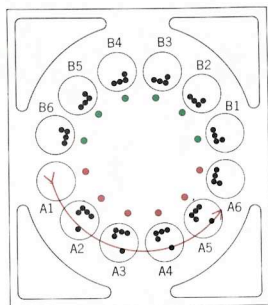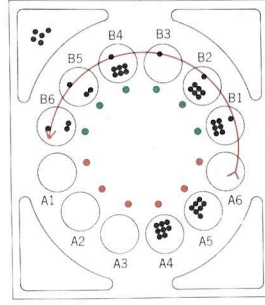

1. Player A (red) empties one of his pits and sows the four pebbles, one by one, into four adjacent pits, moving counterclockwise.
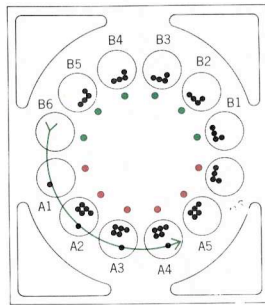

1. Player B (green) sows from his pit, B6.
2. A sows from A2.
2. B sows from B5.
3. A sows from A3.
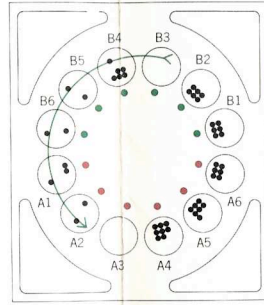
3. B captures the pebbles from two of his opponent's pits, and places them in a storage pit. Notice that the "backward chain reaction" stopped when B reached his own pits.

4. A retaliates by capturing six pebbles, placing them in a storage pit.
4. B attempts to set up A1 and A2 for pebble capture by sowing B1.
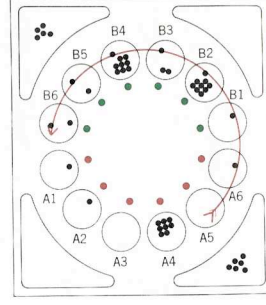
5. A captures four pebbles. This time, the chain reaction stops at a pit with more than three pebbles.
5. B reinforces chance to capture by sowing from B2.

Capturing Pebbles

Capturing pebbles from *opponent's* pits is the main object of the game. The sower captures pebbles only when the *last* pebble he sows in a given move falls into a "ripe" pit (an opponent's pit containing two or three pebbles after the sower has distributed his own handful).

Multiple Capture

The sower may capture pebbles from two or more adjoining ripe pits at once if the last pebble he sows falls into a ripe pit. The sower then captures the pebbles from this pit and, in a backward chain reaction, the pebbles from any other ripe pits belonging to his opponent. The backward chain reaction stops when the next pit (backwards) does not have 2 or 3 pebbles in it, or if the pit is the sower's own pit.

Storing Captured Pebbles

All of the pebbles, including the one placed in the ripe pit by the sower, become the property of the sower, who places them in one of the corner storage pits. These pebbles are inactive for the remainder of the game.

ENDING THE GAME

Moving

If a player has pebbles in his pits, he must move. The game ends when one player cannot move because his pits are empty or, in three- and four-player games, when two players *in succession* cannot move. Any pebbles remaining in the opponent's pits become the opponent's property.

Scoring

When the game ends, the player with the most pebbles wins the game. Pebbles that players have captured, as well as ones remaining in their own pits, are counted.
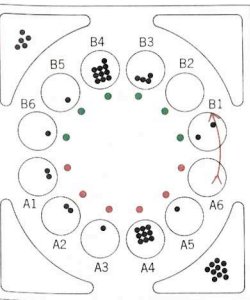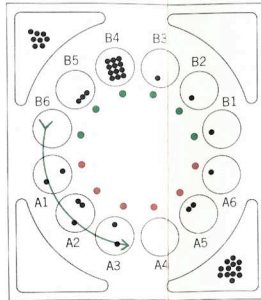

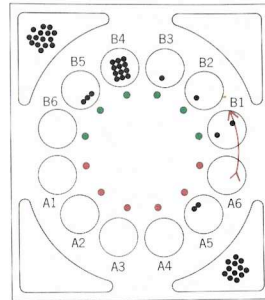**5. A** sows one pebble to capture two.
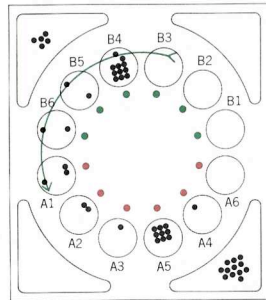
6. B takes three pebbles.
7. A should empty A2 to prevent capture. Alas, thinking "tidily", he empties well-fed A4, leaving himself only seven pebbles.
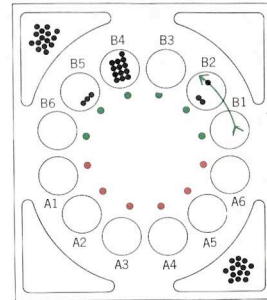
7. B captures seven pebbles, crippling A.

8. A makes the best of it.
8. B stalls by playing B3.
9. A must Play A5.
9. B vacates B1.
10. A has but one move: A6.

10. B empties B1. A's pits are empty. The game is over. B totals the pebbles in his storage pit with those in his playing pits: B wins, 34 to 14.