Awalé

2 players	10 min	Tactic	Antiquity	Africa

 We find traces of the first games of Awele from the fourth century BC. The Egypt of the Pharaohs and India had in common this game whose apparent simplicity concealed real wealth. Arrived to us in different forms (named Mancala in North Africa, Wari or Ayo in various parts of black Africa), the game Awale always based on the same principle: rows of holes in which seeds are sown. These seeds often come from a tree called Caesalpina Crista, which has a different popular name in different regions. This popular name is often used to name the game, and this is the case for Awale.

Transmitted to the West Indies and the Americas by black slaves under the name of Adji, Awale remains a typically African game. About 200 variants have developed from one region to another, sometimes even from one village to another. Games of this type, such as "Pallankuli", also exist in Asia.

We propose here the rule played in Abidjan.

Material

A game board consisting of two rows of 6 holes, 48 seeds.

Game's goal

Harvest as many seeds as possible from your opponent.

Progress

- ### In the beginning

The camp of each player is constituted by the row of six holes immediately situated in front of him.

In turn, each player empties all of one of his six holes and sows the seeds one by one in the following holes, counterclockwise, without jumping holes.

- ### Seed catch

When a player deposits his last seed in a hole of the opponent's row and this box of arrival now contains 2 or 3 seeds, he seizes its contents. These captured seeds are removed from the game and stored separately in the player's attic.

It is possible in the same turn of play to harvest in several holes : this is the case if the square just before the one where the catch has taken place is located in the opposite camp and also

contains 2 or 3 seeds. And so on for a set of contiguous boxes that meet both conditions. As soon as a box no longer meets these conditions, the capture stops.

In the adjacent example, playing the hole indicated by the black arrow, the player collects 3 seeds from the opponent. By playing the hole indicated by the gray arrow, the last seed is sown in the opponent and the player can recover the 2 seeds of the hole. In doing so, he also has the right to harvest the seeds of the two previous holes. 7 seeds were harvested.

Special case: if during a take, we must completely empty the camp of the opponent, the decision is prohibited. In this case, no seed will be harvested. For example, if the player sows the seeds designated by the white arrow, no harvest is possible: all the seeds remain in the holes of the opponent!

- ### Special case

If a player sows 12 or more seeds (so he makes a full turn of the mancala), he must not supply seed to his starting hole. A hole emptied at the beginning of a sowing must always be at the end of this same sowing.

One can not starve the other: the player A has just played and he has no more seed in his camp. In his turn, player B must choose a hole that, once sown, will provide at least one seed to his opponent.

- ### End of the game

If a player can not feed his opponent, he picks the seeds from his side and the game is over. In order not to starve his opponent, he takes a seed from his attic and offers it to the hungry player.

The winner is the one who has collected the most seeds. A hungry player did not necessarily lose the game.

Variant

- ### Game for the youngest

The catch is automatic as soon as the last sown seed is at the opponent. The entire hole is harvested and the hand passes to the opponent. The game ends as soon as a player has no seeds in his camp. The winner is the one with the most seeds in his attic.