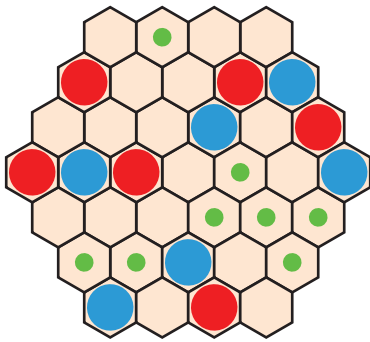# DIE

by Mark Steere

Figure 1

Figure 2

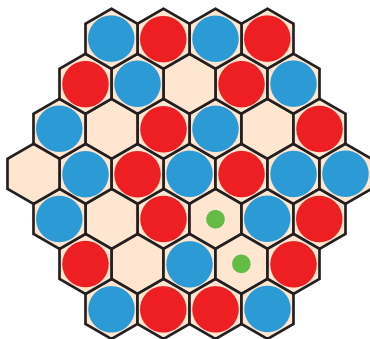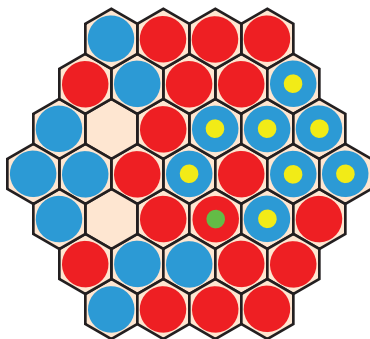**Figure 3**

INTRODUCTION

Die is a game of self-annihilation. It's a two-player game played on a hexagonal board of any size, initially empty. The two players, Red and Blue, take turns placing their own stones onto unoccupied cells on the board, one stone per turn, starting with Red. Sometimes friendly or enemy stones are removed immediately following a placement. Mark Steere designed Die in June 2025.

PLAY

You must place your stone onto an unoccupied cell either adjacent to, or having a clear path of unoccupied cells to, another friendly stone. Additionally, you must place your stone onto an unoccupied cell with the fewest possible adjacencies to friendly stones. Legal placements for Red are indicated by green dots in **Figures 1 and 2**. Note that in **Figure 2**, Red can't place on the leftmost cell. There is no clear path of unoccupied cells from there to another red stone.

BOUNDED GROUP

A group is an interconnected group of one or more like colored stones. A group is bounded if none of its stones are adjacent to unoccupied cells.

CAPTURES

If your placement forms a bounded, friendly group, immediately remove said group from the board, concluding your turn. If your placement doesn't form a bounded, friendly group, but bounds one or more enemy groups, remove all of the enemy groups so bounded from the board, concluding your turn. In **Figure 3**, Red has just placed the stone marked with a green dot, and must immediately remove from the board all of the blue stones marked with yellow dots, concluding Red's turn.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

If, at the conclusion of either player's turn (except Red's first turn), you have no stones on the board, you win.

DESIGN NOTES

The design goal was an Oust class game, but with a distinction. Instead of annihilating your opponent, the goal should be self-annihilation. Cavity (Michael Amundsen, 2022) is an essential game. Simply changing Cavity's goal to kill all friendly groups instead of enemy groups doesn't work because both players will avoid making territories. It becomes a non-robust blob war. To overcome this obstacle, I added the rule that placements should make the fewest possible friendly adjacencies. Players are then forced to fill the board with singletons, and from there, form snakes, branching roots, and territories. Die, at the time of this writing, seems to be the only game in this subclass of an already tiny class.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Feel free to publish this rule sheet and to program the game of Die. No licensing fee or royalties are expected. However, please don't change the name or the rules, and please attribute the game to me, Mark Steere. My other games can be found at marksteeregames.com.