

DIMPLED FOOTBALL

by Mark Steere

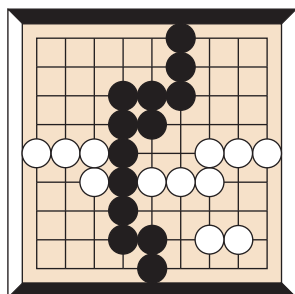


Figure 1
Black wins

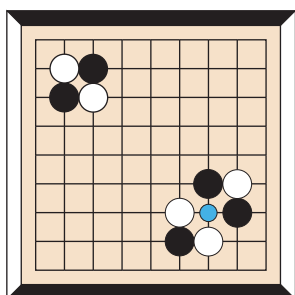


Figure 2
Crosscut and football

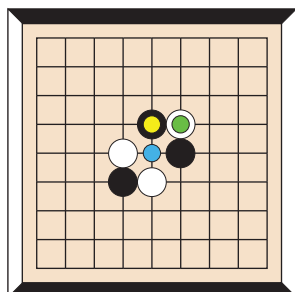
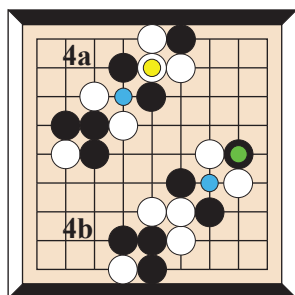


Figure 3
Black formed a football



Figures 4a and 4b
Chain reaction

INTRODUCTION

Dimpled Football is a two-player game played on a square board of any size, initially empty. The top and bottom board edges are colored black. The left and right edges are colored white. Mark Steere designed Dimpled Football in April 2026.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Black must form an orthogonally (horizontally and/or vertically) interconnected path of black stones connecting the two black edges of the board. White must connect the two white edges. In **Figure 1**, Black has won.

CROSSCUT

A “**crosscut**” is a 2x2 area containing two diagonally adjacent black stones, and two diagonally adjacent white stones. See **Figure 2**, upper left.

FOOTBALL

A “**football**” is a 3x3 area containing a black stone and a white stone in diagonally opposite corners. These are the football “**tips**”. Each tip is horizontally adjacent to an opposite colored stone and vertically adjacent to an opposite colored stone. The football “**center**” is unoccupied, and is represented by a blue dot. Each of the two remaining two points in the 3x3 area can be unoccupied, or occupied by either color of stone. See **Figure 2**, lower right.

PLAY

The two players, Black and White, take turns placing their own stones onto unoccupied points, one stone per turn, starting with Black. Passing is not allowed, but if you don't have an available placement, your turn is skipped.

Players are not allowed to form a crosscut (Figure 2, upper left).

DIMPLING

If your placement forms a football, you must “**dimple**” the football by moving one of its tips to its center. In **Figure 3**, Black has placed the stone marked with a yellow dot, forming a football. Black then chooses the white football tip to move to the football center (blue dot), concluding his turn.

CHAIN REACTION

If moving a football tip to the football center causes a new football to form, you must then move a tip of the new football to the new football center (but not by undimpling the previously dimpled football). When there are no more footballs, your turn is concluded. **Figures 4a and 4b** show a sequence of positions. In **Figure 4a**, White has placed the stone marked with a yellow dot, forming a football. White then chooses this football tip to move to the football center (blue dot), forming a new football, as seen in **Figure 4b**. White must then move the black football tip (green dot) to the new football center (blue dot), concluding his turn.

DESIGN NOTES

Dimpled Football was inspired by Luis Bolaños Mures's Crosswake (2026).

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Feel free to publish this rule sheet and to program the game of Dimpled Football. 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.