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SQUARIN' OFF™

Game Rules

Game Objective

On your turn, place a playing stick in the grove on one side of any square on the game board. Occupy as many squares as possible by placing a playing stick on the fourth side.

Each player marks their completed square with their game piece. When filling all the playing squares, each player totals their points – the player(s) with the most points (not necessarily the most squares) wins. **Squarin' Off** can be played by two, three, or four players. Teams, if desired, always sit across from each other and can use the same color chips.

Equipment:

Squarin' Off consists of one playing board, 230 playing sticks (line pegs), 80 black and 80 white chips, and two extra sets of 40 blue & yellow chips). Two players use 80 chips; each player in a three- or four-player game uses 40 chips. There are 12 blockers (6 blockers each for two players, four for three players, and three for four players).

Turns: The player to choose a black chip from either hand goes first in a two-player game. In a three- or four-player game: place chips in a bag. A player drawing the black chip goes first with turns going clockwise.

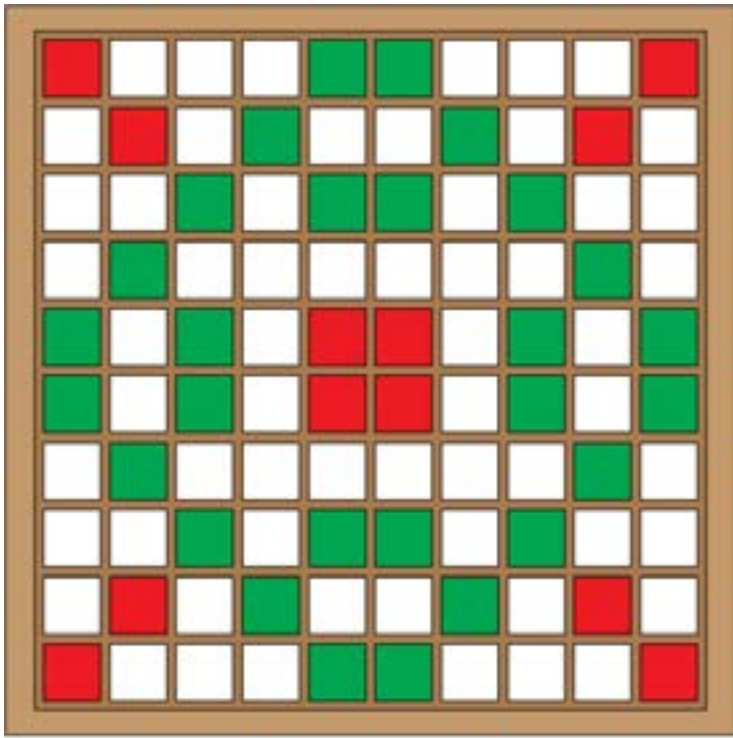
The Board:

The game board is composed of 100 playing squares, ten rows by ten columns. Sixty squares are of one-point value, 28 double point value, and 12 triple point value. See *diagram 1*. (Note: Colors used in the diagram may not necessarily match the colored square of actual game boards but will match the pattern.)

Rules of Play:

When placing your stick on the game board, avoid giving your opponent the chance to complete any square or series of squares by completing the fourth side; this will be more difficult to do as the sides fill up. You must try to create as many completed squares as possible when and wherever you can, limiting your opponent(s) to a few squares as possible. A player continues to create as many squares as possible during their turn, placing their colored marker in every complete square.

After a player has enclosed all the playing squares that they presume can be closed during their turn (it is possible to miss some), they must place another playing stick in a grove for the next opponent – ending their turn.

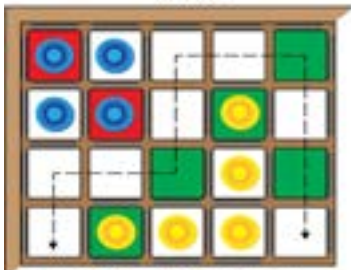


Single point square 60
 Double point square 28
 Triple point square 12

Diagram 1

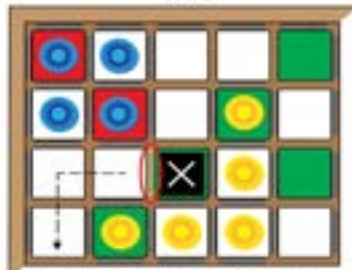
Cutting a String

Before



An eleven square string in either direction.

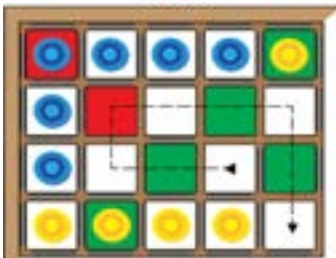
After



Using a blocker and placing a playing stick a player cuts it to a string of three.

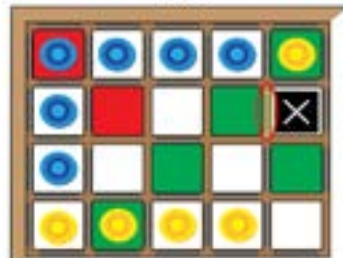
Using blocker to leave no squares for opponent

Before



A possible nine square string starting from a certain point.

After



Strategic placement of blocker and playing stick leaves no squares available to opponent.

Blockers:

Each player can decide to use six to two blockers for two players (four to two blockers for three players, 3 to 2 blockers when four players play – based on the player's mastery of the game). During a match, a long string of "ready-to-be-closed" squares will be visible to players. Blockers help break up a squares chain, limiting a few squares or no squares for the opponent. Place a blocker on any unmarked (open) playing square. Don't count squares occupied by blockers in the scoring. Placing your blocker and peg ends your turn.

To use a blocker, place it on an unmarked square **before** placing a playing stick on an adjoining open side. **Blockers cannot be adjacent to another blocker; one square radius must surround a blocker.**

Scoring:

At the end game (if scoring did not take place during play), each player totals their score by adding all 1-point (single), 2-point (double), and 3-point (triple) square they occupy. The player with the highest score wins.

Simple Strategic Hints:

Limit the fewest number of squares to your opponent as is strategically possible. Keep the creation of long strings of squares (boxes showing parallel filled-in sides) to a minimum. Find a way to break them up early in the game, even if one must sacrifice a few boxes to their opponent. Note: the board will fill up faster than expected, so stay sharp and pay attention to the placement of playing sticks.

Use Blockers sparingly, strategically, and generally during the late middle to end of the game. **Stay focused!**