



NineManMorris

Background

It may be one of the oldest games in history. Depictions of the game are found in carved stone in the eastern Alps and in Egyptian temples dating back to as early as 1400 BC. The board pattern has also been found on ancient Egyptian roofing tiles, Roman and Greek buildings, an English wall dating from 1200, and even choir stalls in old English cathedrals.

In Shakespeare's time the game was often played on a game "board" cut out of turf with stones for the markers.

The number of legal positions in Nine Men's Morris is estimated to be 10^{10} , while the total number of possible games is approximately 10^{50}

Rules of the Game

Play of the game is divided into two stages. The object throughout remains the same, eliminate your opponents pieces by getting three of your own pieces in a line (also known as a mill) along the horizontals or verticals (you cannot move diagonally in this game. It is also not possible to form a mill along the diagonals). The player that forms the mill can then remove one of their opponent's pieces as long as the piece does not belong to a mill itself - mills are safe from capture. However, the player can remove from an opponent's mill if those are the only pieces they have left.

Once a piece is removed it no longer takes part in the game. If one of the players reduces their opponent to two pieces, the game is won. The game is also won if a player blocks their opponent from being able to move a piece,

First Stage

The game starts with an empty board. Each player takes turns in placing one of their pieces on any vacant space on the board until all nine of their pieces have been placed. Play then moves on to the second stage. You may create a Mill in this stage as well as in the second phase.

Second Stage

Once all the stones have been placed, the players take turns moving one of their stones along the lines to an adjacent open spot. Anytime a player manages to close a Mill (form a row of three), the player removes an opponent stone. A Mill which is opened and then closed again on a later turn is considered a new row. Players may not pass a turn; a stone must be moved, even if it is to the player's disadvantage.

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Play continues until one or both players are reduced to three pieces or one of the players is unable to move. Once a player is reduced to 3 pieces he may move his pieces anywhere on the board that contains a free square. . Play continues to alternate until one of the players is reduced to two pieces and consequently loses the game

Strategy

At the beginning of the game, it is more important to place pieces in versatile locations rather than to try to form mills immediately and make the mistake of concentrating one's pieces in one area of the board.

An ideal position, which typically results in a win, is to be able to shuttle one piece back and forth between two mills, removing a piece every turn. For example, in the diagram below, BLUE can create a mill every time he moves the centre blue counter.





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To Summarise

The aim is to get your opponent down to two pieces, or to block him from making any legal moves. You get to remove an opponent's piece every time you make a mill

Playing a Game against the iPad

To start this process **first tap the top of the screen** to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the PLAY button. Now select the **Single Player Option**. See Example Below



You now need to place your first counter on the board. Do this either by tapping on an intersect point or by dragging a BLUE counter from the left hand pile onto an intersection point on the board. The iPad will now place a RED counter . This process continues until all the counters have placed on the board. See next page for an example board after all the counters have been placed. Notice that the message at the bottom of screen has changed from "Place your Next Counter" to "All counters out - make move".

If you are new to the game and want some help then you can get the App to tell you what a good next move might be. To do this **first tap the top of the screen** to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the **HINT** button. The suggested move will be animated. If you have the chance to remove an opponents counter after getting a mill you can also use the HINT button to tell you the best counter to remove.



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Remember that if you form a mill during the first stage of play you will be able to remove one of the iPad's red counters from the board. **You cannot remove an opponents counter if it is part of a Mill unless he does not have any counters that are outside of a mill formation.**



Board after all counters have been placed



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Playing a game against a friend using the same iPad

To start this process **first tap the top of the screen** to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the PLAY button. Now select the **Two Player Option**. See Example Below



Just take it in turns to make moves. The rules are the same as when playing against the iPad.

Using Wi-Fi to play an Opponent

If a friend also has Walkthrough's Nine Man Morris on their iPad you can play against them on the same local Wi-Fi system, or via the Internet. To start this process **first tap the top of the screen** to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the PLAY button. Now tap on the **2 Player Networked Option**. See example above.



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Using Wi-Fi to play an Opponent Continued..

You will then see screen below. You may see a message asking if it's OK for the iPad to use your current location. It only wants to do this so that it can list players who are closer to your general location. It won't give away details of your exact location when doing this. Simply refuse permission if you don't want to divulge your general location.



Choose Local Wi-Fi if you want to find an opponent on the same Local Wi-Fi system or Global to find an opponent on the Internet.



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Using Wi-Fi to play an Opponent Continued...

Now the app displays a list of opponents who are also looking for a game. See screen below.



Tap on one of the names and your opponent will get a message asking him if he wants to play. If he confirms that he does then the game will begin.



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Options

First tap the top of the screen to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the OPTIONS button. You will see a screen like this



To change the options

One Player: Play against the iPhone/iPod Touch.

Two Players: Play against a friend. Automatically selected if you use Wi-Fi. Or Internet

Counter select: Tap counters next to player names to toggle player counter colour.

Player Name Entry: Tap name field to enter player one and player two names.



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Options Contd..

Level Select: In one player mode select levels 1 - 8 by rolling to, then tapping the relevant level from Beginner thru to Grand Master

Select Start Counter: Select to start every game with a red counter, blue counter or choose to alternate.

Note:

Example: Player one has selected to play with blue and blue counter is selected to start the game. Player one then decides to change and play with red. Start counter will automatically also change to red so player one still starts the game.

Board: Click on one of the four boards to change the board background / color scheme.

Game Statistics

The app collects game statistics for each player and for each level played. To access these **First tap the top of the screen** to bring down the Menu Buttons and tap the STATS button. You can also reset the stats at any time simply by tapping the reset stats option shown on this screen.



Acknowledgments:

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