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# MODERN BACKGAMMON

**PARKER BROTHERS, Inc.**

Salem, Mass., New York, London



## HOW TO PLAY

The Backgammon Board is divided into **Four Parts** or **Quarters**, each part having **SIX Triangular Pyramids** or **Points** in **Alternate Colors** or **TWENTY FOUR** Points to the Game.

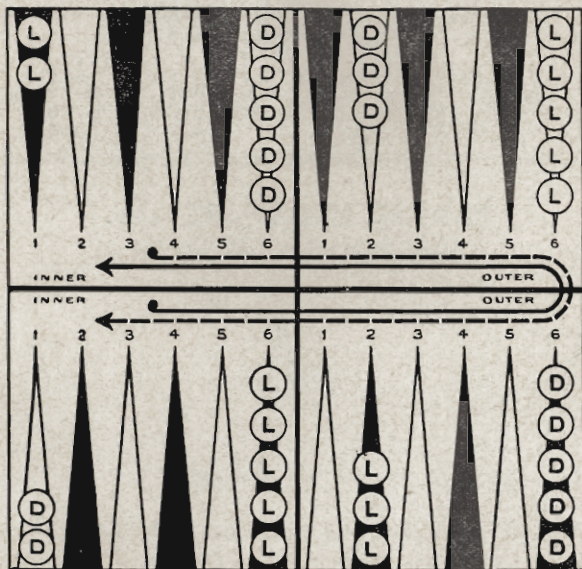
These four sub-divisions or "**TABLES**" as they are called by old Backgammon players consist of **TWO INNER** and **TWO OUTER TABLES**, separated by the Bar (see diagram below.)

To arrange the Board for play, one player takes the **15 men** of one color and the other player the **15 men** of the other color.

The first player now places **all** of his 15 men on the board as follows: 5 men on the #6 point of his inner table—3 men on the #2 point of his outer table—5 men on the #6 point of his opponent's outer table and 2 men on the #1 point of his opponent's inner table. His opponent then places his 15 men on the board in the same manner on the points di-

rectly opposite to where the first player's 15 men have now been set, (see diagram below.)

BAR



D = Dark Checker L = Light Checker

The Idea of the Game is, first, for each player to get all of his men into his own inner table and following his accomplishment of this to remove all his men by play from that table and off the board, as described later. The first player succeeding in doing this **WINS THE GAME**.

There are three simple and major factors to be considered in playing. First, to move your men with discretion to avoid capture; second, to take advantage of your opponent so far as possible by capturing his men; and third, to make as many points as possible in your own inner table.

### TERMS OF PLAY

**Making a Point.** When a player has two or more men resting on a single point, it is called "MAKING A POINT."

**Leaving a Blot.** When a player has only one man resting on a single point, it is called "LEAVING A BLOT."

**Hitting a Blot.** When your opponent throws a number which will enable him to move one of his men to a Blot, it is called "HITTING A BLOT."

**Bearing.** Which means removing your own men from the board after they all have been played into your own inner table.

Players will note that five of their own men are placed on the #6 point on each of their inner tables. These men cannot be moved outside of their respective inner tables, although they may be moved from the #6 point towards the #1 point on this inner table which is in the general direction of play (see diagram) at the discretion of the players to cover certain plays which might be to their advantage, to be described later.

To begin the game, each player throws **BOTH DICE** once in turn and the one having the **HIGHEST** count as shown by the spots uppermost on them, starts the play.

The player who is to start now throws **Both Dice** again and can move any of his men from point to point either by making one move with one man for the total count of both dice, or making two moves, one for each of the counts on both dice with any two of his men.

### HOW TO MOVE

The Player who is sitting at the side of the board with his inner table at his left, moves always from point to point from left to right, or in a clockwise direction (see dotted arrow line in diagram). The other player whose inner table is at his right, moves always from right to left or in a counter clockwise direction, (see solid arrow line in diagram).

The march of the men is from your opponent's inner table to his outer table into your own outer table to your own inner table.

Each player plays in turn, moving his men from point to point, according to the count of the dice.

### CAPTURE

Whenever there are two or more men on any of the 24 points, they are free from capture by the opponent.

When a player leaves a Blot, that man is subject to capture. If the opponent Hits the Blot, that man is captured. When a man is captured, it is temporarily removed and

placed upon the Bar, and the player **cannot** move any of his other men until that captured man is **returned** to the board. This can only be done by a throw of the dice in his natural turn, which would enter it on the point of his opponent's inner table corresponding to one of the two number of the dice, providing this point is either **unoccupied** or **occupied by only one** of his opponent's men.

A player may capture as many of his opponent's men as he wishes, providing he can. If the opponent has one man captured and it is not entered and another is captured, **both men** must be **entered** before he can start to play again with his other men.

When a player enters a captured man and **Hits a Blot**, the opponent's man is captured. It is, therefore, **dangerous** for a player to leave a **single man** on any point of his inner table.

### RULES GOVERNING PLAY

A player **cannot** put a man on any point where his opponent **Has Made a Point**. In moving his men, he may jump over his own or his opponent's men no matter how many may rest on a single point. If a player wishes to move one man for the count of the two dice, he can only do so when either count **does not** land him on a point where his opponent has **two or more men** and the second count likewise. If the first count should land him on a **Blocked Point**, and the second count should likewise land him on a **Blocked Point** although the two counts together should land him on an **Open Point**, he **cannot** make that play.

A player **cannot** move **part** of a throw of a single die. If he throws a 3 and a 5, for instance, and he finds he cannot move any man 5 points or 8 points (the sum of the two dice), he may move one man the single count of 3, then he loses a move on the other die and must wait until his next turn.

When **doublets** are thrown, the player has a **double move**. If he throws two 3's, for instance, he may move one man 12 points or two men 6 points each, or four men 3 points each. **In no case** can a player move two men for the split count of one die.

The game proceeds until a player has **all his men** in his own inner table, then that player starts to remove his men from the board or **Bear** them.

### BEARING

A player **Bears** his men according to the count of the dice. If he throws a 5 and a 6, for instance, he **Bears one man** from the #5 point and one man from the #6 point. A player may at his option move a man instead of Bearing it. In the above example he may Bear the man from the #6 point and move a man from the #6 point to the #1 point. If his opponent has a man to enter and the player has left a Blot on the #1 point, this would be a very good play to make because it would **block the opponent** from entering on the #1 point.

In case a player cannot Bear a man because that point is empty, he **Bears one** from the next lower point. If he throws a 3 and 6, for instance, and he has no man on the #6 point, he Bears one from the #5 point and if he does not have any on the #5 point, he Bears one from the #4 point. Due to the fact that the play proceeds in this manner, often times it is advisable to **move the men at first** rather than Bear them because later on they may be removed from the board regardless of the count of the dice.

When one player has started to Bear his men and his opponent has to enter a man already captured, if that captured man captures a man on entering, the player **cannot Bear any more men** until that man is **entered** and played around the board into his own inner table.

If a player has two or more men on all six points of his inner table and his adversary has a man to enter, the player continues throwing and playing until he is obliged to leave a point open where his opponent may enter. It is possible that after this happens, the opponent may not be able to enter for three or four turns, because he fails to throw the count of the dice which corresponds to the point which is open.

**The player who first Bears all his men WINS THE GAME.**

### SCORING BY GAMES

If his opponent has begun to bear his men before the winner has completed his bearing, it is A **SINGLE GAME**.

If his opponent has not begun to bear at all, it is A **DOUBLE GAME**, or A **GAMMON**, and counts **DOUBLE**.

If his opponent has not begun to bear at all and has a man or men in the winner's inner table, it is A **TRIPLE GAME**, or A **BACKGAMMON**, and counts **TRIPLE**.

## SCORING BY LOSER'S STRANDED MEN

**Option 1.** The winner scores a point for each man his opponent has stranded on the board irrespective of location.

**Option 2.** The winner scores for each opponent's man:  
1 point if stranded in opponent's inner table  
2 points if stranded in opponent's outer table  
3 points if stranded in winner's outer table  
4 points if stranded in winner's inner table or on the bar.

**Option 3.** The winner scores for each opponent's man:  
1 point if stranded in opponent's inner table.  
Double the above (2 points) if stranded in opponent's outer table  
Double again (4 points) if stranded in winner's outer table  
Double again (8 points) if stranded in winner's inner table

## SCORING BY STRANDED MEN AND GAMES COMBINED

The Winner scores a point for each man his opponent has stranded on the board irrespective of location (Option 1). The score is then doubled if the game is a Gammon or tripled if it is a Backgammon (see Scoring by Games above). Other combinations of scoring can be played by applying the double for Gammon, and the triple for Backgammon to Options 2 and 3 as the players may elect.

## OPTIONAL DOUBLING

Optional Doubling is distinct from the automatic doubles described in the methods of scoring above. It is voluntary and permits the further increasing of the score as the players may elect.

In a game, at any time, a player may say before he throws the dice, "I Double". His opponent may accept or decline this double. If the double is declined, the game ends, the player declining loses, and the game is scored as it stands. If the opponent accepts, the game continues. The player who accepted the double may, at his discretion, re-double and his opponent may accept or decline, and the game continues or stops accordingly. In this fashion the doubling may

continue alternately during the game or until one player declines. Remember that a player, having doubled cannot do so again until after his opponent has done so.

By the method of scoring adopted, a game is scored at the value agreed upon, doubled or re-doubled as many times as the optional double has been accepted.

## CHOUETTE

For more than two players, the game of Chouette has been introduced into modern Backgammon.

In Chouette, two or more players combine against one player who is "in the box." The combination of players against him are known as a "partnership," one of their number being the "playing opponent" who makes the plays in consultation and with the advice of his partners.

To determine who shall be "in the box," and who the "playing opponent," a die is thrown by each player, the one casting the highest number is "in the box," the one who throws the next highest becomes the "playing opponent," and his partners are ranked in the sequence of the number each casts from the highest to the lowest.

If, during the game, the partners cannot agree upon the nature of the play to be made, or whether to double, or to accept or reject a double by the player "in the box," the "playing opponent" makes the decision which is final except that a partner may decline a double, whereupon he withdraws from the game losing his score as it then stands to the "playing opponent" who thereafter wins or loses the retired partner's full share when the game is completed.

If the player "in the box" defeats the partnership, he continues "in the box" in the next succeeding game, and the opponent who originally cast the third highest number, becomes his "playing opponent," while he who has just been defeated takes the lowest position in the partnership—thus in turn all partners become the "playing opponent."

If the partnership wins, the "playing opponent" sits "in the box" and plays against the other members of the partnership with whom his predecessor "in the box" is now associated as the lowest member.

When the player "in the box" wins, he scores the amount of the game in count or points from each of his opponents in the partnership. If he is defeated, he loses the amount of the game in count or points to each of his opponents.