

# **strata5™**

by Milton Bradley

For 2 players

Strata 5 is the high powered, high suspense, high level strategy game in which you actually build your own ever-changing gameboard. You and your opponent stack blocks and maneuver your pawns up, down and all around this 3-dimensional structure that you're building. It's an exciting race to be the first player to move a pawn on top of a block at the 5th level. You have to be a clever and daring strategist to win. Do you have what it takes? Play Strata 5 and find out!

## **OBJECT**

Be the first player to move one of your pawns on top of a block at the 5th level.

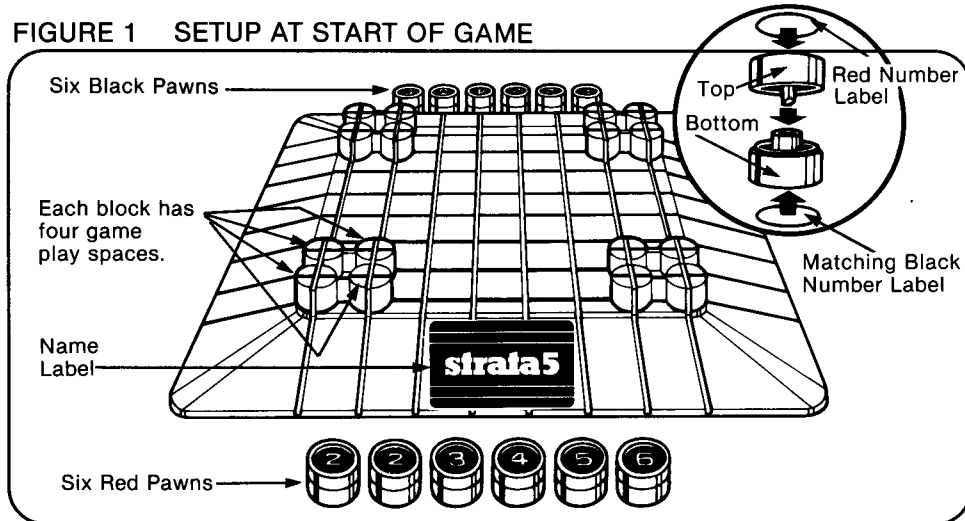
## **CONTENTS**

1 label sheet  
1 instruction booklet  
1 plastic gameboard unit  
32 plastic building blocks  
12 plastic pawns (to be assembled)

## HOW TO SET UP THE GAME

1. **NAME LABEL APPLICATION:** peel off the two name labels from the label sheet and apply them over the name STRATA 5 that is engraved on opposite sides of the gameboard unit.
2. Place the gameboard on a flat surface so it's accessible to you and your opponent.
3. **PAWN ASSEMBLY:** carefully break off the 12 pawn tops and the 12 pawn bottoms from the runners. Insert a top into each bottom and press into place as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 SETUP AT START OF GAME



4. **PAWN LABEL APPLICATION:** there are 12 red number labels and 12 matching black number labels. Attach a red label to the recessed area on one side of an assembled pawn, then turn it over and attach a **MATCHING BLACK LABEL OF THE SAME NUMBER** to the recessed area on the opposite side as shown in Figure 1, above. Attach **MATCHING** red and black number labels to the remaining 11 pawns in the same way.
5. One player takes six pawns including two 2's and one each of numbers 3, 4, 5 and 6, and turns them red label side up. The other player takes the remaining six pawns and turns them black label side up.
6. Carefully break off the 32 building blocks from the runners and set them next to the gameboard.
7. Position one building block in each corner of the gameboard as shown in Figure 1.

## BASIC GAME PLAY SUMMARY

You and your opponent build a 3-dimensional structure by stacking up blocks as high as five levels. As you stack, you move your pawns up and sometimes down the structure. There are strict "building codes" you must follow when moving your pawns or positioning a building block. An exciting part of the game is the interaction between opposing pawns as they compete to be the first to move up to the fifth level. By cleverly maneuvering your

pawns, you can block or even capture an opposing pawn and make it your own. By strategically positioning a block, you can blockade an opposing pawn so it cannot escape from a certain area or you can trap an opposing pawn so it cannot move by actually covering it with a block. There are lots of things that can happen and they usually do! So plan your strategy well but be ready to change it in a split second if the unexpected happens.

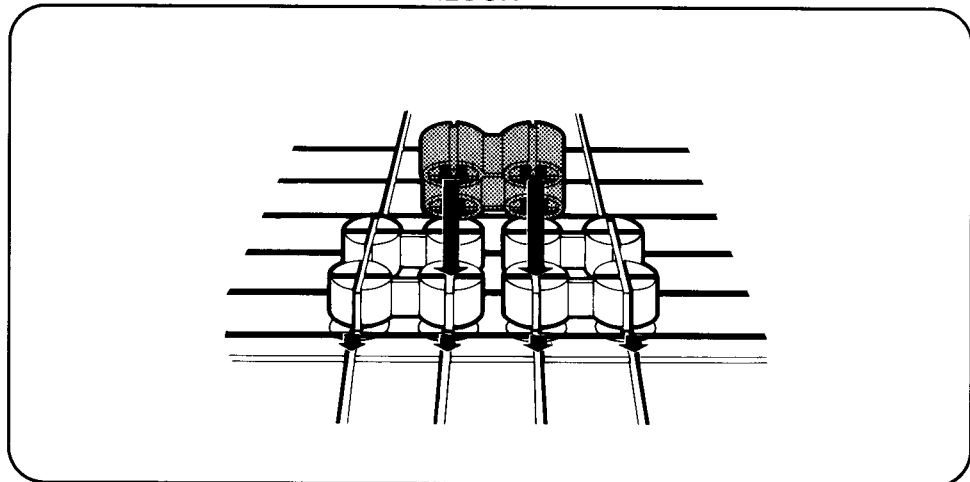
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## HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

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1. Choose a player to go first, then players alternate turns.
2. **THE BUILDING BLOCKS:** you and your opponent will position building blocks both on the board and on top of each other as you build a 3-dimensional structure during the game. A block interlocks with the grid pattern on the board or with other blocks as shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2 HOW BLOCKS INTERLOCK



These building blocks form a structure of game play spaces on which the pawns move. Refer to Figure 1 to see the spaces of a building block.

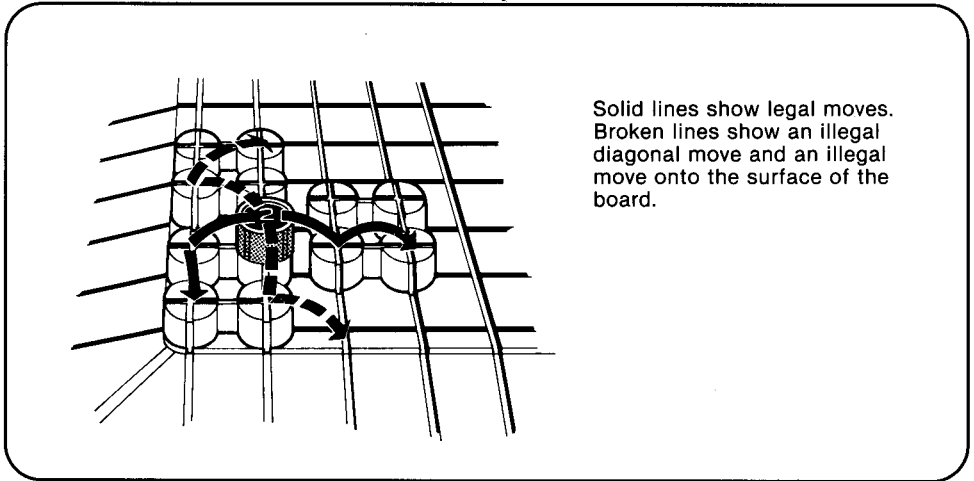
3. **BASIC TURN:** on your turn, do the following in exact order.
  - A. **Move Two Of Your Pawns:** the number on a pawn indicates how many spaces it **MUST** move on a turn. For example, a number 3 pawn must move three spaces when it is moved. On your turn, move one of your pawns the amount of spaces designated by its number then move another one of your pawns the amount of spaces designated by its number.
  - B. **Then Add One Building Block:** take a building block from next to the board and position it on the gameboard. A block can be positioned directly on the surface of the gameboard **OR** on top of blocks already positioned on the board. Read the section "THE STRATA 5 BUILDING CODE" on page 5 for more details on how to legally position a block.
4. **HOW TO ENTER A PAWN INTO PLAY:** the four building blocks positioned in the corners of the gameboard, at the beginning of the game, are called the Starting Blocks. The two blocks on **YOUR** side of the board are your Starting Blocks and are the **ONLY** places you can enter your pawns onto the board. To enter your pawn, place it on top of one of the four spaces of either Starting Block on your side of the board (which counts as 1 on your pawn's move),

THEN continue to move the pawn for the balance of its move count. Once a pawn is entered on the board, it remains in play on the board unless it is captured by an opposing pawn.

**5. RULES OF PAWN MOVEMENT:**

A. A pawn CANNOT land on the SURFACE of the plastic gameboard at any time as shown in Figure 3. Remember, a pawn moves from space to space ONLY on top of blocks.

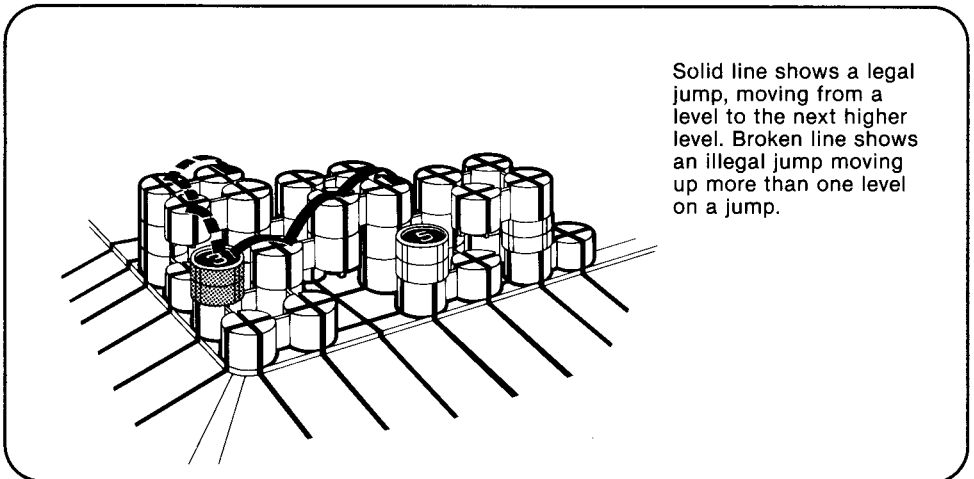
**FIGURE 3 LEGAL AND ILLEGAL MOVES**



B. A pawn can move ONLY HORIZONTALLY OR VERTICALLY. A pawn CANNOT move DIAGONALLY as shown in Figure 3, above.

C. A pawn CANNOT move more than one level above or below its present level on one jump. Here are examples of legal and illegal jumps.

**FIGURE 4 LEGAL AND ILLEGAL JUMPS**

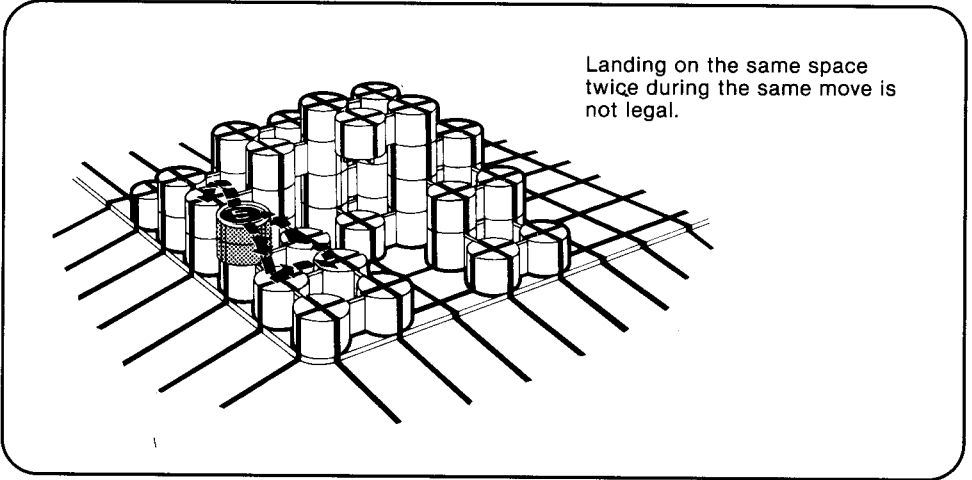


D. A pawn CANNOT land on the SAME space as another pawn EXCEPT when capturing an opposing pawn. See Rule 7 on page 7 for details about capturing a pawn.

E. A pawn CANNOT jump over another pawn. This rule makes it possible for your pawn to BLOCK the path of your opponent's pawns.

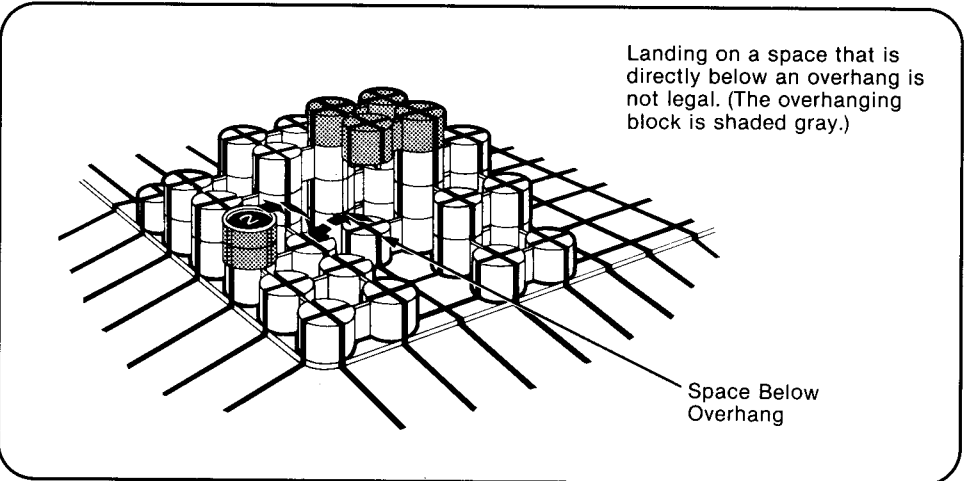
F. A pawn CANNOT land on the same space TWICE on the same move as shown in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5 ILLEGAL MOVE



G. A pawn CANNOT land on a space that is DIRECTLY BELOW AN OVERHANGING SPACE as shown in Figure 6. Such a space is OFF LIMITS to all pawns.

FIGURE 6 ILLEGAL MOVE



*Important: if you can only move one of your pawns on your turn, you forfeit the move of the second pawn. If you cannot move any of your pawns on your turn, you forfeit the move of both of your pawns. In either case, you can still add a block.*

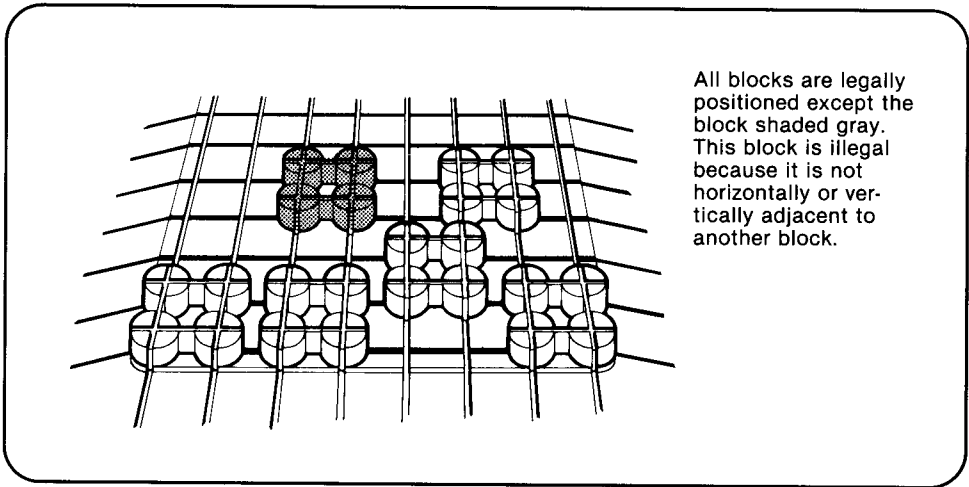
6. THE STRATA 5 BUILDING CODE: on your turn, AFTER moving two of your pawns, you add a building block to the structure on the gameboard. Your objective is to stack layer upon layer of blocks to build a structure FIVE

**LEVELS HIGH.** Each layer of building blocks is **ONE LEVEL**. Here's how to add a block. Take a building block from the pile next to the gameboard then position it either on the surface of the board or stack it on top of already-positioned blocks according to the rules outlined, below.

**RULES FOR LEGALLY POSITIONING BUILDING BLOCKS:**

**A.** When positioning a new block directly on the surface of the gameboard at level 1, at least one space of the block you're adding **MUST** be next to a block already on the board, either **HORIZONTALLY OR VERTICALLY**. Here are examples of legally and illegally positioned blocks.

**FIGURE 7 LEGAL AND ILLEGAL POSITIONING OF BLOCKS ON GAMEBOARD**



**B.** When stacking a new block on top of other blocks, at least three spaces of the block you're positioning **MUST** interlock with at least two already-positioned blocks as shown in Figure 8. You **CANNOT** stack a block directly on top of another block as shown in Figure 9.

**FIGURE 8 LEGALLY STACKED BLOCKS**

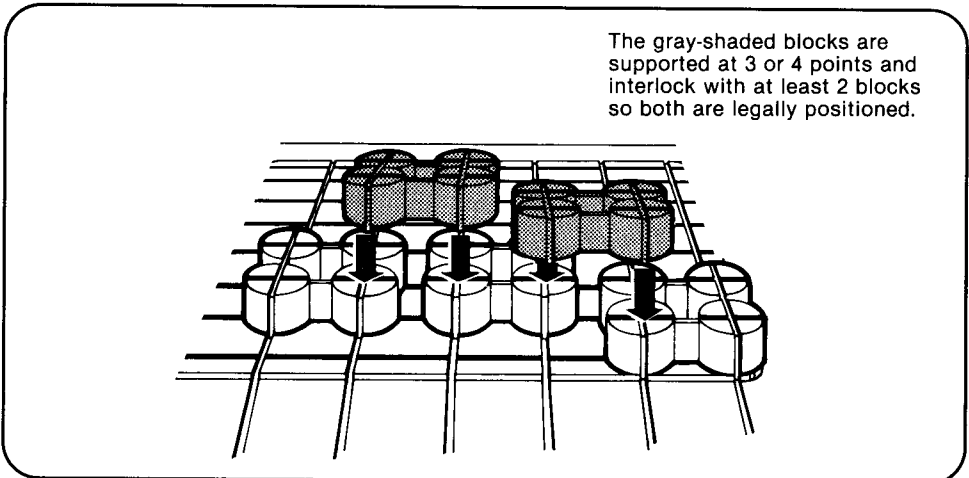
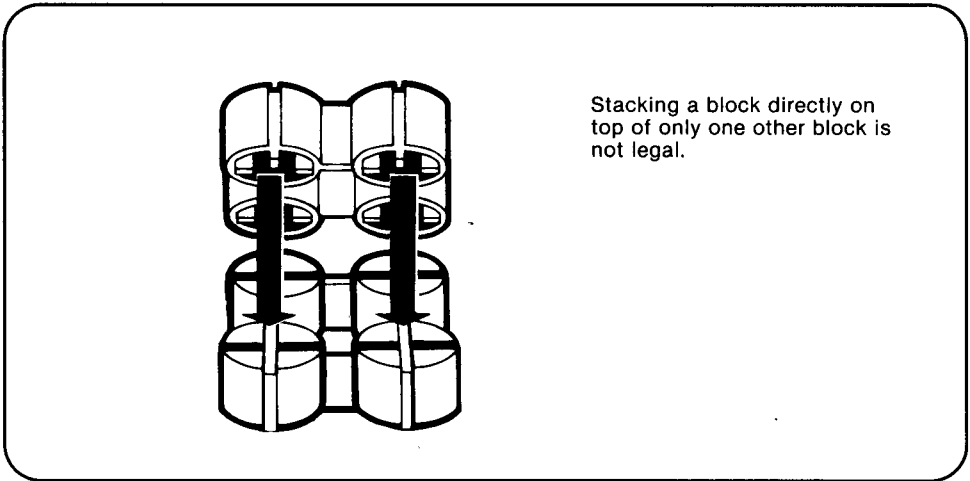
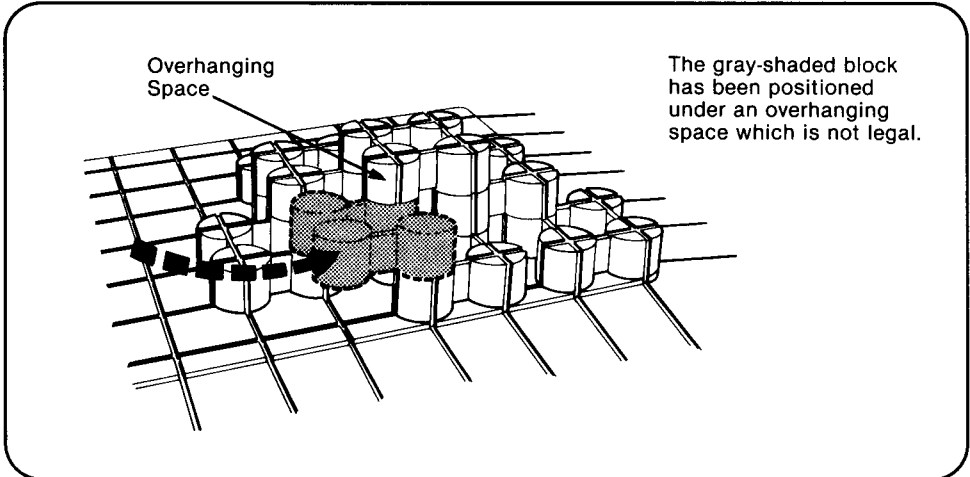


FIGURE 9 ILLEGALLY STACKED BLOCK



- C. Blocks **CANNOT** be stacked more than FIVE LEVELS HIGH.
- D. Once a block is positioned, it **CANNOT** be moved or removed.
- E. No block can be positioned **UNDER** an **OVERHANGING** space of another block. See Figure 10 for one example of this.

FIGURE 10 ILLEGALLY POSITIONED BLOCK



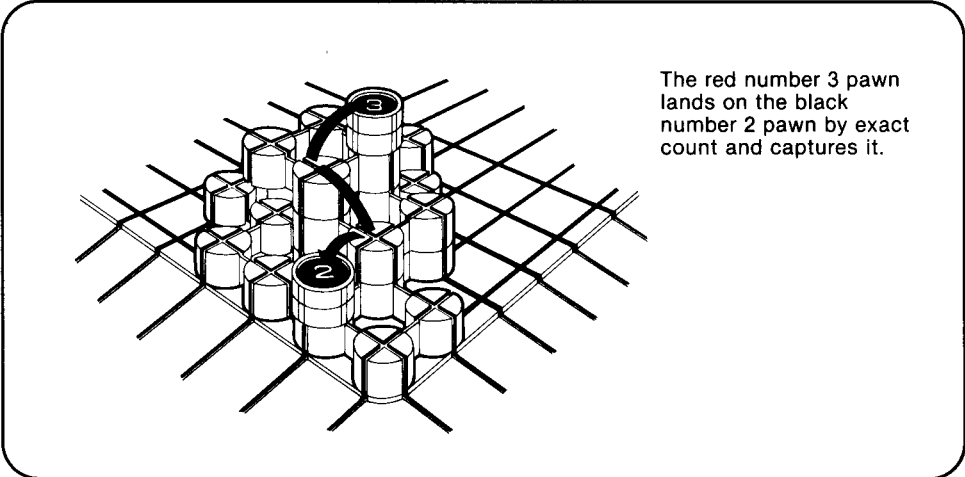
*Important: if you cannot legally position a block, you forfeit that part of your turn.*

**STRATEGIC MOVES TO MAKE ON YOUR WAY UP:** you already know how to move your pawns and position building blocks. Now it's time to learn how to attack your opponent's pawns using this knowledge!

**7. HOW TO CAPTURE YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN:** if you capture your opponent's pawn, it becomes your pawn. To make a capture, move your pawn onto the same space as your opponent's pawn **BY EXACT COUNT**. Remember, a pawn moves the number of spaces designated by its number, so a pawn labeled 4 **MUST** move 4 spaces on its turn. Here's how an actual capture is

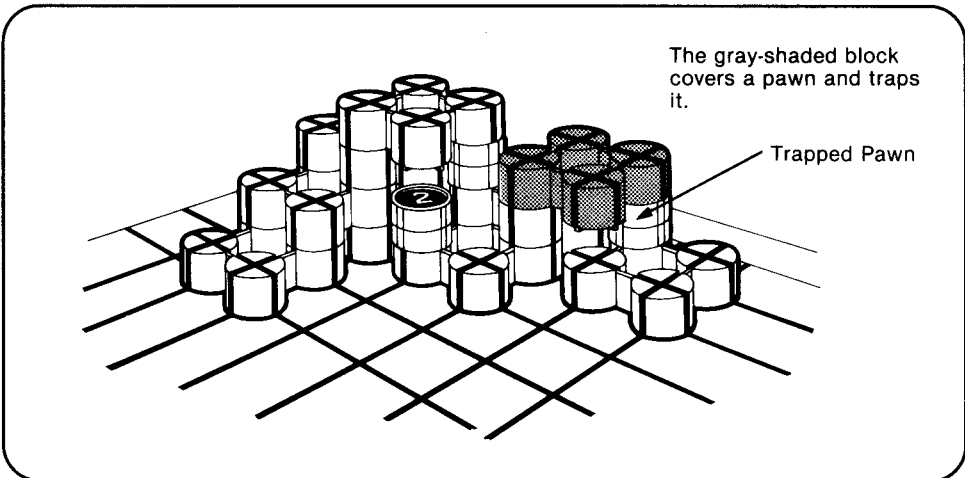
made. Move one of your pawns so it lands on one of your opponent's pawns by exact count. Replace your opponent's pawn with your pawn. Put the captured pawn with your other pawns then turn it over so the side of your color is showing. Now this pawn belongs to you! You can enter it on the board and move it just like your other pawns. *Please Note:* the number of a pawn has no bearing on what opposing pawn it can capture. A pawn can capture an opposing pawn of any number. Here's an example of a capture.

FIGURE 11 CAPTURING YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN



8. HOW TO USE A BLOCK TO TRAP YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN: try to position a building block to cover an opponent's pawn so it is trapped and cannot move. The trapped pawn actually becomes part of the structure and helps to support it. Here's an example of a trapped pawn.

FIGURE 12 TRAPPING YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN



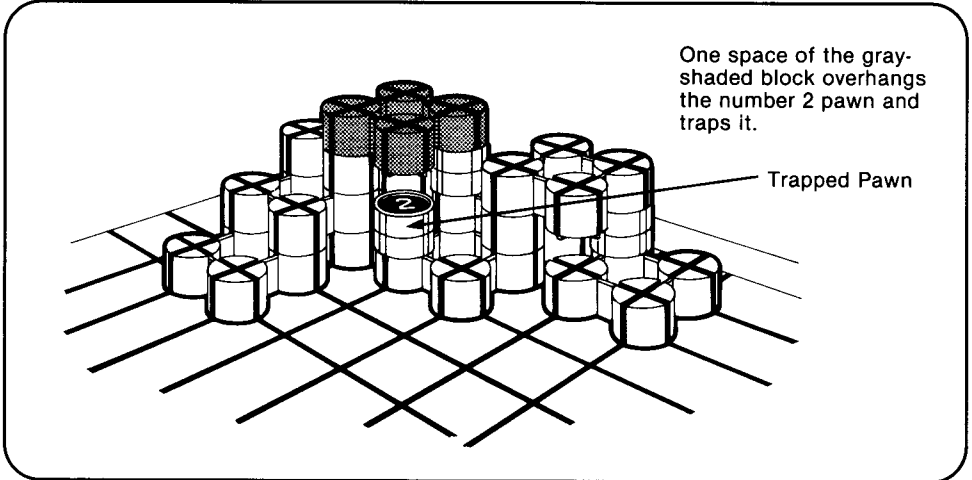


When positioning a block to trap a pawn or pawns, at least three spaces of the block MUST be supported from below by pawns or other blocks. You can trap one, two, three or four pawns by positioning only one block.

*Please Note: in certain situations, it may be a smart play to trap one of your own pawns so you can position a block in a strategic location.*

There is another way to trap a pawn. Position a block to create an overhang directly above your opponent's pawn as shown in Figure 13. This traps your opponent's pawn and it CANNOT move for the remainder of the game.

FIGURE 13 ANOTHER WAY OF TRAPPING YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN



Remember, a pawn that is directly below an overhanging block is trapped and cannot move.

**9. HOW TO BLOCKADE YOUR OPPONENT'S PAWN:** to blockade your opponent's pawn, you must position blocks to surround the area the pawn is in so it cannot escape. Remember, a pawn cannot jump up or down more than one level so try to isolate your opponent's pawn in an area where every avenue of escape is at least two levels above or below its present level. In Figure 4 on page 4, the number 5 pawn is blockaded in an area from which it cannot escape. Sometimes a pawn is only temporarily blockaded until a block is positioned that the pawn can move to legally.

**REACHING THE FIFTH LEVEL:** As the game is played, you and your opponent stack block on block to build a unique, 3-dimensional structure that rises level by level. Eventually this structure will be five levels high. Any number of blocks can be positioned at the fifth level but no block can be positioned ABOVE the fifth level.

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## HOW TO WIN THE GAME

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Be the first player to move one of your pawns on top of a block at the fifth level BY EXACT COUNT.

**HERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO WIN THE GAME:** moving your pawn on top of a block at the fifth level is not the only way to win the game. If you can trap, blockade or capture all of your opponent's pawns, you automatically win the game.

**WHAT TO DO IF ALL THE BLOCKS ARE USED UP:** if all the building blocks are positioned on the board before the game is won, and there is at least one block at the fifth level, then the game continues. Players move two of their pawns on their turn but DO NOT position a block. If all the building blocks are positioned on the board before the game is won, and THERE IS NO BLOCK AT THE FIFTH LEVEL, then the game is over and it is declared a DRAW.

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## STRATEGY HINTS

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- Sacrifice your lower number pawns by trapping them to build up levels of blocks more quickly.
- Move your pawns in tandem together to protect each other. If your opponent captures your pawn then you are in position to capture your opponent's pawn.
- Build levels and position blocks that hinder your opponent's building strategy.
- Try to control the top blocks on the higher levels.
- Try to blockade your opponent's starting blocks so his or her pawns cannot be entered in play.
- Don't lose your higher number pawns because they are the fastest and most mobile.