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a game by Jonathan A. Leistikio

Object

To strategically fill spaces on the board with mines, limiting your opponent's movement options, while keeping yours open.

You Need

- A 5-by-10 grid
- Two different playing pieces to represent Minelayers (one for each player)
- About 48 markers to represent Mines (pennies will do nicely)
- [Note: All you really need is a writing surface and something to write with - just draw the 5-by-10 grid and mark where your pieces are as you play.]

Setup

- Each player starts by playing their Minelayer in one of their five "home squares" at opposite ends of the board.
- Peacefully decide who goes first.

play! >>

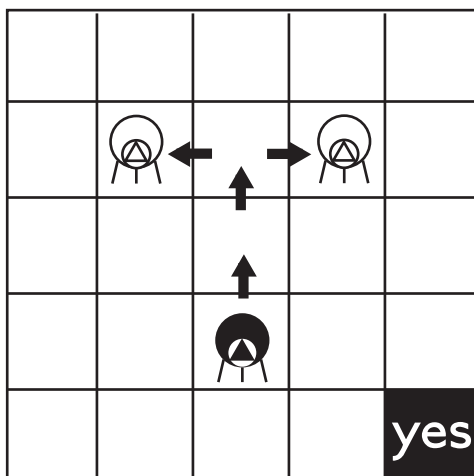
Manic Minelayers

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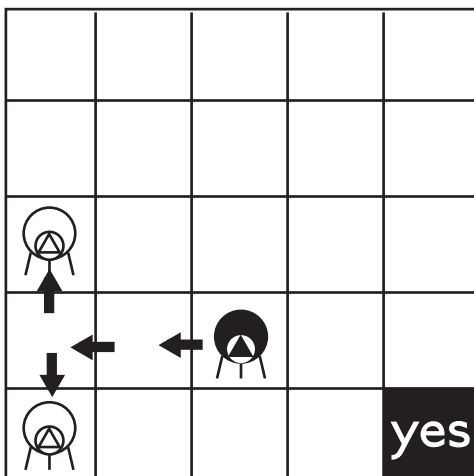
Play

- On a turn, a player must move their Minelayer into an unoccupied square and place a Mine in the square they just occupied.
- Minelayers may only move in "L"-shaped paths; a valid move consists of moving two squares in one direction, then moving one square at a right angle to the initial direction (Minelayers move just like Knights do in Chess).

For example, a Minelayer could move two spaces North, then one space to the East or West.



Or it could move two spaces West, then one space North or South.



more >>

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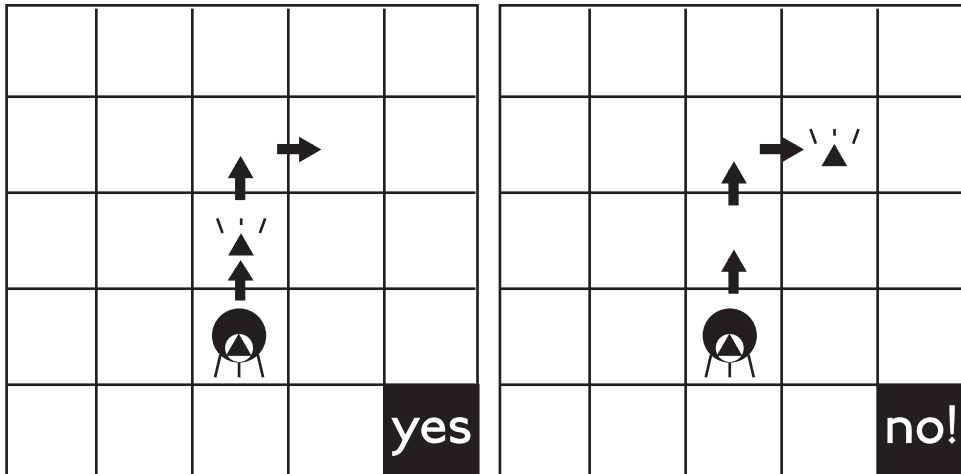
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Play, continued

- A Minelayer may move through squares occupied by Mines and Minelayers, but may not end their move in an occupied square.



Winning

- If a Minelayer is incapable of moving, then the other player wins if they can make a valid move, or if they did not move first.

Origin and credits

- This has strong roots in the classic "Knight's Tour" Chess problem, where a Knight must visit each square on a 10 x 10 board once and only once. Give it a try!
- Manic Minelayers was originally called Reload. It was first played on the mostly-barren floor of Frank Truelove's last apartment. Thanks Frank!

--Jonathan A. Leistiko

Enjoyed this game? Let us know: jonathan@invisible-city.com