

AKUNUR

The Game of Echoes and Stillness

STANDARD RULES - 3.0.0-alpha.10

The shape of the game

Build through the centre, claim the six elemental corners and bring the board into Alignment. Reaching three corners is not the end: the winning player must return through the Still Point while that Alignment still holds.

1. Qualify	Complete a supported passage through the Still Point. The first passage awards your permanent Still Point marker.
2. Claim corners	After qualification, enter or capture corners using two adjacent supporting stones. The first claim of a corner awards its token and an Echo Piece.
3. Align	Control three corners at the same time. This creates Alignment, but the opponent receives a reply.
4. Complete	Win by completing another legal Still Point passage while still controlling three corners.

Quick start

- Use the standard fixed opening: 12 white and 12 black stones are already placed; White moves first.
- On a normal turn, move one stone to an adjacent empty hex unless a special move applies.
- Captures use the Rule of Two: two adjacent friendly supporters and a third friendly stone completing the capture.
- Before earning your Still Point marker, you may not enter, claim, capture or recapture any corner.
- A stone in a corner is locked in place but can be captured.
- A supported Still Point passage is one complete move: origin to centre to any legal empty non-corner destination.
- At three corners, place the newly earned Echo Piece normally. The opponent then has a turn to break the Alignment or block the route.
- At 3-3, both players are aligned; the first legal final passage wins.

1. Board, setup and movement

The board is a radius-7 hexagon with 169 cells, six corners and one central Still Point. The six sectors are Fire, Snow, Wind, Rain, Sand and Rock. Sector names and guide lines are visual aids only.

Components

- 1 board, 12 ordinary stones per player and a supply of red-marked Echo Pieces.
- 6 corner tokens, one at each corner at the start of the game.
- 1 Still Point marker per player. Keep it off-board once earned.
- Optional score track: each first-time corner token is worth 10 points.

Standard opening

Use the fixed rotationally balanced starting position. White takes the first movement turn. Free placement in rings 2-4 remains an advanced simulator option; no initial stone may be placed on a corner or the Still Point.

Normal movement

- Move one of your stones to an adjacent empty hex.
- A stone occupying a corner cannot move.
- An Echo Piece can move normally or use its Echo Point ability.
- A forced Echo Piece placement after a token claim is part of the same turn and must be completed before play passes.

The Rule of Two

The main tactical actions require two adjacent supporting stones. This applies to ordinary captures, entering or capturing a corner, and beginning a Still Point passage. The moving or capturing stone is the third stone that completes the action.

2. The Still Point

Immediate transit

A stone adjacent to the Still Point may enter only when two other adjacent friendly stones support it. The stone must immediately continue to a legal empty non-corner destination as part of the same action. It never remains on the Still Point between turns.

Qualification

The first completed passage awards that player a permanent Still Point marker. The marker unlocks every corner for that player. Further passages remain legal and may later become the winning move.

A passage is illegal if no legal exit exists. The exit cannot itself be a corner. Opponents may interfere by moving or capturing the supporting stones or by occupying useful destinations.

3. Capturing, Echo and corners

Ordinary capture

A stone is captured when it is adjacent to two supporting enemy stones and a third enemy stone moves into the legal capture position. The capturing stone occupies the target cell.

Echo displacement

A captured ordinary stone normally moves to its Echo Point: the cell at the same distance from the Still Point on the directly opposite radial line. If that destination is occupied, the occupying stone is removed and the captured stone takes its place.

Special capture cases

- A stone captured on a corner is removed and does not echo.
- A captured Echo Piece is removed permanently and does not echo.
- An ordinary stone captured by an Echo Piece still moves to its own Echo Point.
- An Echo Piece may capture an enemy occupying its own Echo Point without needing ordinary support.

Echo Pieces

The first player to claim a token-bearing corner receives one Echo Piece and places it immediately in the normal placement area. Its white or black body shows ownership; the strong red ring and centre mark identify its special type. Recapturing a tokenless corner gives no additional Echo Piece.

Corner control

- Before qualification, no corner action is legal for that player.
- After qualification, entering or capturing a corner requires two adjacent supporters.
- The occupying stone controls the corner and is locked there until captured.
- The first claim removes the corner token, scores 10 points and grants an Echo Piece.
- Control can change repeatedly, but the token reward occurs only once.

Why the opponent gets a reply

The corner that creates Alignment is deliberately non-terminal. Its token and Echo Piece are resolved, then the opponent acts. This opens the intended recapture phase: the opponent can attack an aligned corner, dismantle the supported route to the Still Point, or create a competing Alignment.

4. Alignment and victory

Creating Alignment

In standard play, a player is aligned whenever they control at least three corners. The status is derived from current corner control; it is not a permanent entitlement.

Alignment gained	You control three corners. Finish any required Echo Piece placement. You are now eligible to win through the Still Point.
Alignment broken	The opponent captures one of your corners and your total falls below three. You are no longer eligible to win.
Alignment restored	You regain three corners. Eligibility returns immediately.
Both aligned	At 3-3, both players are eligible. Each must balance a winning passage against disrupting the opponent.
Victory	Complete a legal Still Point passage while still controlling at least three corners. The game ends immediately after that passage.

Extended game

The optional four-corner setting uses the same structure but requires control of four corners before the final passage can win. It is expected to create longer games with more corner attacks and recaptures.

Strategy prompts

- Qualification is not merely a gate. A well-placed exit can begin a corner campaign or preserve a future return route.
- Before claiming a third corner, consider whether your supporting stones can survive the opponent's reply.
- Echo Pieces are strongest in the final phase, where one unsupported displacement may break a corner defence or a Still Point formation.
- When the opponent aligns, recapturing any one of their corners is often the clearest defence, but disrupting the centre may be faster.
- At 3-3, tempo matters: a player with a prepared route can threaten victory while forcing the opponent to react.

Prototype notes

This alpha is intended for playtesting. The three-corner Alignment plus final passage is the recommended ruleset. Points and token totals are recorded but do not currently provide an alternate victory. The simulator log and diagnostics are analysis aids rather than additional rules.

Everything aligns at the edge - and is completed at the Still Point.