

Surakarta

Surakarta, also known as Roundabouts, is an interesting abstract strategy game from Indonesia. The board has an unusual layout and gives rise to the game's unique method of capture which can only be achieved by a piece that first travels around one or more of the corner loops!

A colourful game, Surakarta is easy to learn but reasonably deep and is both fascinating and enjoyable for children and adults alike.

The game of Surakarta is named after the large town on the island of Java and in Indonesia it is called Permainan, which translates simply as 'The Game'. Surakarta is also played across China and Korea and was first brought to Europe in 1870.

The game of Surakarta is played on a special board of 6 x 6 points connected orthogonally to form a grid. Additionally, eight further loops extend out from the board. The points second in at each corner are connected by a three-quarter circle and the points third in from each corner are connected by a larger three-quarter circle concentrically outside the first. Surakarta is played with 12 stones and 12 shells although the materials are irrelevant as long as there are two sides with distinguishing colours.

With each player sitting opposite each other, each player will have their 12 pieces on the first two horizontal rows nearest them. A coin should be tossed to decide who plays first. The objective of the game is to take all of the opponent's pieces.

Players take turns to move one of their pieces. A piece moves orthogonally or diagonally one space within the main grid except when capturing. Jumping over another piece or landing on an occupied point is not allowed for a non-capturing move.

Capturing is done by moving along a line over any number of unoccupied points including a loop until an opponent's piece is reached whereupon the opponent's piece is captured and the attacking piece takes its place. At least one loop MUST be travelled around in order to capture.

The game is won by the player who first manages to take all his opponent's pieces. If a series of games are being played, a score can be kept - the winner of each game scoring the number of pieces remaining on the board at the end of each game.

Page 2. Game diagrams.

Page 3. Printable Game Board.

Page 4. Printable Counters. Stick to card and cut out.



