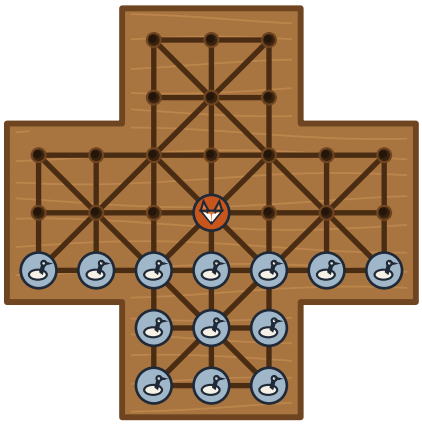
Fox and Geese: How to Play

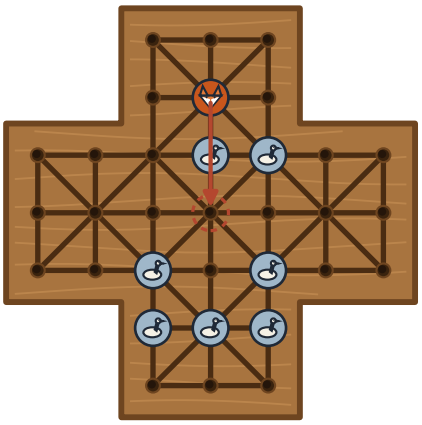
2 players · about 15 minutes · ages 6 and up

Start



13 geese and the fox

The fox jumps a goose



The goose it jumps over is taken off.

1. **Set up**
   One player is the fox, the other plays all the geese (the pieces sheet, or 1 coin and 13 buttons). Put the 13 geese on the bottom arm and the full row above it, and the fox on the center point (see the picture). Geese move first.
2. **Move**
   On your turn, move one piece one step along a line to the point right next to it, if it is empty. Fox and geese may move in any direction, forward, sideways, backward, and along the diagonal lines.
3. **Fox jumps**
   The fox captures a goose by jumping over it in a straight line to the empty point just beyond, like in checkers. Take that goose off the board. The fox may keep jumping in the same turn if it can. Jumping is allowed but never required.
4. **Geese never jump**
   Geese cannot capture. They win by crowding the fox so it has nowhere to go.
5. **Geese win**
   If the fox cannot move or jump on its turn, the geese win.
6. **Fox wins**
   If only 8 geese are left (the fox caught 5 of 13, or 9 of 17), the fox wins.
7. **Draw**
   If 20 moves each pass with no goose caught and the fox not trapped, it is a draw. Swap sides and play again.

About these rules: Fox games were played all over Europe with many different rules. This is the English game: 1 fox and 13 geese that can move in any direction. For a harder fox, add 4 geese on the 2 left and 2 right end points of the fox's row, so there are 17.