

# MUR<sup>TM</sup>

MONSTRUM ULTRA REGNUM



2 Players



20 – 60 minutes



# MUR™

## INTRODUCTION

Mur is a 2-player strategy game played with 15 game pieces — 14 ships and one kraken. Seven ships are black and belong to the first player, seven ships are white and belong to the second player, and one piece—the kraken—is red and is a neutral piece. The kraken does not belong to any player and cannot ever be directly moved by any player; it can only be indirectly moved by another piece bumping it during a move. The Mur board is a round grid with 25 intersections. The center of the board is one intersection and all of the intersections of rings with diameters are the other 24. The smallest ring is the first ring, the second largest the second ring, and the largest the third ring.

**Note:** *When playing Mur with stone game pieces, the black and white stones represent ships, while the red stone represents the kraken.*

## A NOTE ON THE DIAGRAMS

The diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. In real games of Mur, the kraken is always present upon the playing area, but for the sake of simplicity, only the game pieces required to explain the rules have been shown.

## GOAL

The goal is to be the first player to execute three closes, **OR** the first to execute a close on the Kraken.

## SETUP

Place the kraken upon the center of the board. The setup is now complete.

## PLAY

In Mur, ships are placed on intersections. Only one ship may occupy an intersection at one time. Black plays the first play of the first game. During a play (turn) a player may execute one of the following:

- 1) place a ship on any unoccupied intersection
- 2) move a ship already placed upon the board
- 3) withdraw a ship (SEE close)

## PLACING SHIPS

Any ship off the board may be entered into play whenever it is the owner's turn. To enter an off-board ship into play, simply place the ship on any unoccupied intersection.

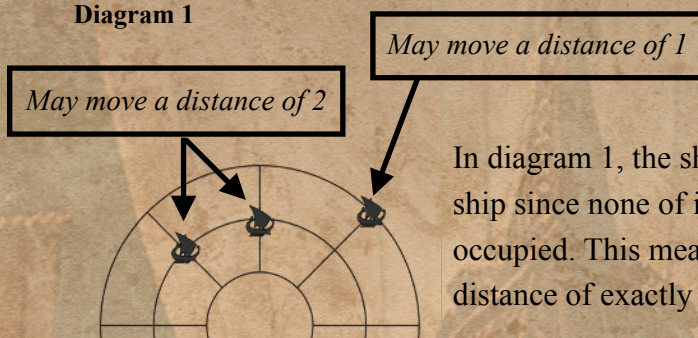
## MOVING SHIPS

A move is the transfer of a ship from one intersection to another intersection. There are only two different paths during a move. A ship may move along a diameter or a ring. When moving along a ring, a ship must maintain its direction either clockwise or counter clockwise. A ship should only move in one direction along a diameter with the exception that if a ship moving along the diameter reaches the third ring—and still has not completed its move—it must continue moving in the opposite direction to complete its move.

## DISTANCE OF MOVES

Each ship may move an exact distance and this distance is determined by the number of ships in the group the ship is in. Adjacent ships are considered linked; linked ships can form a pair or a group. For example, a single ship may only move a distance of exactly one, a ship in a group of two may only move a distance of exactly two, a ship in a group of three may only move a distance of exactly three, and so on.

Diagram 1



In diagram 1, the ship to the far right is a single ship since none of its adjacent intersections are occupied. This means this ship may only move a distance of exactly 1.

The other ships, however, form a pair since they are linked at adjacent intersections. This means each of these ships may only move a distance of exactly 2.

Diagram 2



In this diagram black has one group of 3 ships and another group of 4 ships. White has a group of 2 ships and a group of 4 ships.

## CLASSES

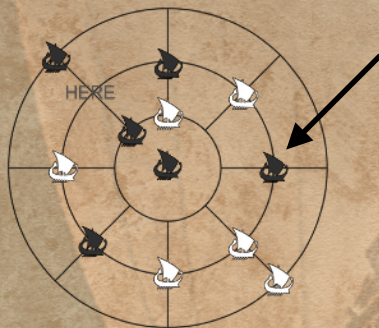
The class of the ship is determined by the number of ships in its group. A single ship, called a first-class ship, is of the first class—the strongest class—and therefore may only move exactly a distance of 1. Each ship in a pair of ships is of the second class and therefore may only move exactly a distance of 2. Each ship in a group of three ships is of the third class and therefore may only move exactly a distance of 3 and so on. The Kraken is a neutral piece with no class.

\*Navy terms are used when referring to the different classes beginning with *admiral* for the first class followed by *commander* at second, *lieutenant* at third, and *master* at fourth.

## MOVING TO OCCUPIED INTERSECTIONS

Moving to an occupied intersection is called bumping or knocking. A ship may only move to an occupied intersection if it is of a stronger class than the occupying piece. The strongest class is the first class. The second strongest class is the second class and so on. The Kraken may be knocked by any ship, regardless of class. The occupying piece is then bumped out of its intersection and must continue moving along the same path and come to rest upon the first unoccupied intersection in the same direction. Note that the piece that is bumped may be the kraken or a ship belonging to either the owner or the opponent.

Diagram 3



This black first-class ship (single ship) on the second ring East of the center may move clockwise a distance of one and knock the white ship next to it to the intersection labeled 'here'. This is because the knocked white ship must take the first unoccupied intersection in the same direction.

## THE SECOND DIRECTION KNOCK

If a ship moving along a diameter reaches the third ring and has not completed its count, it must continue moving in the opposite direction; if after changing direction, the ship knocks another piece then the knocked piece must continue moving in the second direction and occupy the first vacant intersection in that direction.

## TRAPPED SHIP

When a ship is immobile so that it is not able to move to any intersection, that ship is referred to as a 'trapped ship'.

## EYES

When an unoccupied intersection is surrounded by ships of the same colour this is called an eye intersection or 'eye'. An eye is formed from the withdrawal of a game piece from being closed on or may be formed just from the course of play. Any player may place into an eye without penalty. In the example below, White may place into the eye without penalty.

Diagram 4



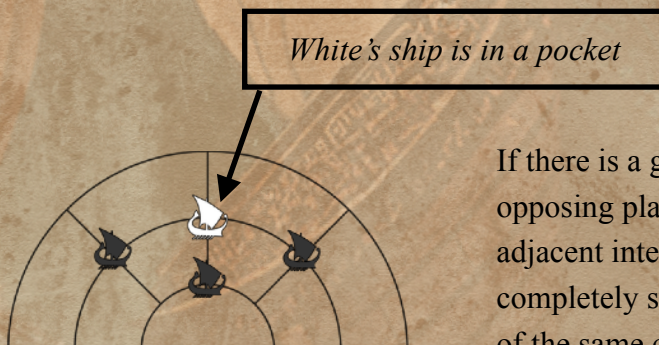
## POCKET

A pocket is a formation which is one intersection short of being an eye. A pocket may be occupied or not and the intersection which falls short of completing the eye formation may be occupied or not.

Diagram 5



Diagram 6



If there is a game piece in a pocket and an opposing player places or moves into the last adjacent intersection so that the game piece is completely surrounded by opposing game pieces of the same colour, the game piece is considered to have been 'closed on'.

## CLOSE

A close is achieved when a player places or moves into an intersection that closes a pocket on an opponent's game piece. Here are some examples:

**Diagram 7**

*Black closes by placing or moving here*



Diagram 7 is an example of a White ship in a pocket on the third ring. Black must place a ship on or move to the indicated intersection to close on White. Note that only a third opposing ship is required to close on a game piece on the third ring.

**Diagram 8**

*Black closes by placing or moving here*



Diagram 8 is an example of a White player in a pocket on the second ring. Black may close on White by moving to or placing upon the intersection indicated with the arrow. Note that to close on the second ring a fourth opposing ship is required.

**Diagram 9**

*Black closes by placing or moving here*



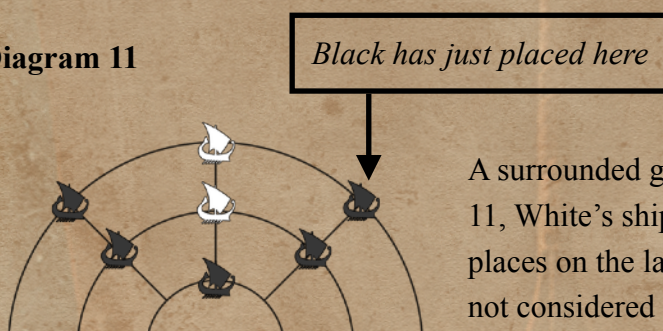
Diagram 9 is an example of a close on White on the first ring. A fourth opposing ship is required with one of the ships occupying the center intersection.

**Diagram 10**



In diagram 10, Black only needs to place a ship on or move a ship to the intersection labeled 'HERE' and he will close on both of White's ships. White then must use his turn to withdraw both ships.

**Diagram 11**



*Black has just placed here*

A surrounded group cannot be closed on. In diagram 11, White's ships are in a group so although Black places on the last adjacent intersection, the group is not considered closed on.

## **KNOCKING INTO A CLOSE**

A player may knock an opposing game piece into a pocket and at the same time close on the knocked game piece within that pocket. However, A player may not knock a game piece so that it closes on one of his own game pieces.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM CLOSE**

There is no capturing in Mur. When a ship has been closed on (not the kraken), the owner of the ship must use his turn to remove it from the board. In the examples given in diagrams 7, 8 and 9, White is closed on. White, after being closed on, must use an entire turn to withdraw the closed ship; he must remove the said ship off the board. The withdrawn ship then becomes an 'off-board' ship. A player may have a number of off-board ships at any one time. Any off-board ship may be entered back into play by simply placing it back on the board on any unoccupied intersection.

Note: As shown in diagram 10, it is possible to close on two game pieces simultaneously as long as each of the game pieces are in first class positions for their withdrawal and not part of a group.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM PORT

Intersections 'g3' and 'c3' are designated as ports. During a player's turn, should he have a ship already occupying either g3 or c3, he may use his turn to withdraw the ship off the board. The ship may be of any class. This is the only voluntary way to withdraw a ship in Mur; all other ways of withdrawing a ship are forced.

Diagram 12

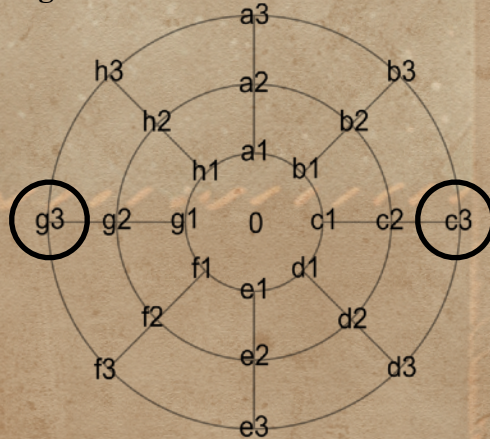


Diagram 12 shows the c3 and g3 ports as circles on the board, indicating where players can withdraw ships.

## COMPLETING THE GAME

The game is complete when a player becomes the first to execute a close three times **OR** when a player becomes the first to execute a close on the kraken.

## SPECIAL CASES

### NO REPETITION RULE

A completely identical board position must not occur within 5 turns.

Example 1: If Player A knocks Player B's ship, it is illegal for Player B to immediately pick up the knocked ship and respond by knocking Player A's ship back to its original position, thereby restoring the board to its previous state.

Example 2: If a player knocks a ship of the same colour so that it is knocked to the intersection just moved from; this repeats the game position and is therefore illegal.

Example 3: White creates a position that threatens to close on a black ship. Black responds by moving the threatened ship to escape. On the following turn, White restores the threat by repositioning. Black escapes again. Then, on the fifth turn, White recreates the **exact same board position** that started the cycle. Since this identical position has reappeared **within five turns**, this move is illegal.

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