



**COMPETITION RULES
OF OWARE**



Oware is a strategy game for two players, mostly played by people in the West Africa. To play oware you will need a game board and forty-eight game pieces, for example some seeds or balls. The board consists of two rows of six holes located at opposite sides. Two larger holes on the sides of the board are used to store the seeds players capture during the match. The player, who captures more pieces wins the game.

OWARE – intellectual game (countries of Western Africa)

Composition of the teams – 5 people: 2 men, 2 women, 1 coach.

Competitions are held as an individual and a team competition. Swiss system is used to make a pairing.

Number of rounds – 7. The results are counted separately for the men’s and women’s teams. The time limit is 20 minutes for each player for one game.

Competition rules of Oware

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North player

	6	5	4	3	2	1	
0	4	4	4	4	4	4	0
	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	



South player

Initial Setup

In the starting position, each hole excluding the two largest ones (stores) contains exactly four seeds. In this position the south player will make his first move, followed by a move by the north player and so on until the game ends.

The goal of oware is to capture the greatest amount of seeds as possible. To do so, players make moves in alternate turns until one of them has captured more than 24 seeds. The player who captured more seeds than his opponent when the game ends wins the match. It may also happen that both players have captured the same amount of seeds at the end. In this case, neither player wins the game and the match is said to have ended in a draw.

Each move of the game is done in three phases: collecting, sowing and capturing. During the sowing a player distributes the collected seeds along the board, and during the capture phase the player takes, if possible, the seeds found in the pits of the opponent.

Collecting Seeds

In the first phase of a movement, the player who is to move chooses one of the holes on his own side of the board and collects all the seeds on it, leaving the hole empty. Subsequently, these seeds will be distributed on the board during the sowing phase.

A player may collect the seeds from any of the holes that belong to him if it contains one or more seeds, only with the exception that after making the move his opponent must be able to play. Therefore, a move that would leave all the holes empty on the opponent's side is not legal.

Sowing Seeds

During sowing, the player distributes the seeds collected in the first phase along the board in a counterclockwise direction; dropping one seed in each of the playing holes until all the seeds are distributed. A player will never sow on the holes used for storage.



After sowing the seeds, the hole from which the player has collected seeds will be empty. It may well be the case that the player sows twelve or more seeds, in which case the player will sow them going round around the board, dropping one seed in each hole in every round, but never dropping a seed in the hole from which the seeds were collected.

Capturing Seeds

When the last sown seed is dropped in one of the holes belonging to the opponent, and after dropping the seed the hole contains exactly two or three seeds, the player will capture them. Taking all the seeds from the hole and saving them in his own store.

When the hole immediately to the right of the last pit from which seeds were captured contains also two or three seeds, the player will capture them too. And so on until the player cannot capture more seeds, always taking into account that players can only capture seeds from their opponents holes and never from their own holes.

Note that a player can never capture all the seeds of the adversary. If a player makes a move that would capture all the seeds on the opponent's side, that player will sow normally but will not capture any seeds.

The game is over when one of the players has captured more than 24 seeds or when both of the players have captured 24 seeds.

It may also happen that a player cannot make any legal move on his turn, in such a case, each player captures the remaining seeds on their side of the board and the match ends.

A special situation is when the game enters a cycle, so that the same positions and movements would repeat indefinitely. If this happens, players may agree to end the game and each player will capture the remaining seeds on their side of the board.

The game is played with the time limit 20 minutes per player per game with the standard chess clock. Players should call the arbiter when at least one has less than 3 minutes left. The tournament will have seven rounds, pairing for each



round will be made according to the swiss system. The player who wins the game gets 1 point, the player who loses the game gets 0 points, if the game is a draw, then both players get 0,5 points. Score of the game is counted as a number of the seeds in player's store in the moment, when one of the players collect 25 or more pieces. In case of draw, score is 24:24. When one of the players runs out of time, his store is counted. If he has 25 or more, he gets 1 point, if he has 24, the game is draw, if he has less than 24, he has 0 points and his opponent score is 25.

The players obligatory records the games.

Tie breaks:

- number of points;
- Head to Head results between the players involved
- the progress coefficient;
- the Bucholz coefficient;
- the Berger coefficient;

Results from the individual games are counted for team competition. If both players wins, the team gets 2 points, if one player wins and one loses, then the team gets 1 point, if both players loses, the team gets 0 points and so on if the game finish as a draw.

Tie breaks:

- number of points;
- highest cumulated score from lost games;
- the progress coefficient;
- the Bucholz coefficient;
- the Berger coefficient.