River Mountain Go

Volume 2: 20k to 8k

By Oliver Richman

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Contents

0.1 Acknowledgements

I believe in credit where credit is due. I wish to thank the thousands of opponents I have had over the years as I have improved myself through Go. I also wish to thank my students on KGS, who helped me to form the ideas presented in this book.

0.2 Introduction

Welcome to volume two of this series. If you have not read volume one, it is available free on the internet.

These books evolved from classes I gave at a Children's Go School in Canada in 2003 and 2004. Over the years I have expanded on the material and made some modifications to help me with teaching on KGS. The books are designed for self-study at home.

Whereas the information in book 1 was used mainly to guide a children's go class as they played their first 100 games, the material in this book is drawn from hundreds of teaching games I have given to 20k to 8k in the KGS Teaching Ladder room.

Unfortunately the material may seem rather thrown together, and I also wish to remind you that I am not a professional teacher, nor a master of Go, or the Japanese language. However I do think beginners can learn how to play better Go from this book.

0.2.1 Japanese Technical Terms

Japanese Go technical terms will appear in *italics* at least until they are defined, at which point they will appear naturally as technical terms used for discussing Go. At that point you should no longer consider them to be Japanese words per se, but part of your English Go vocabulary.

0.3 What you should Already Know

The first book in this series was intended to guide you in the right direction as you play your first hundred games of go. You should have started to play on 19x19 by now.

From playing many games of atari-go, you should now know enough not to place your own stones in immediate danger. It goes without saying that you know how to count the score at the end of the game.

Chapter 1

Go Proverbs

In the last book, we examined four key go proverbs. More than anything, it is important to examine the material in light of these four proverbs, and not to forget them simply because they were introduced in a book for beginners. To drive the point home, let's take a quick look at the opening from a game between two intermediate players.

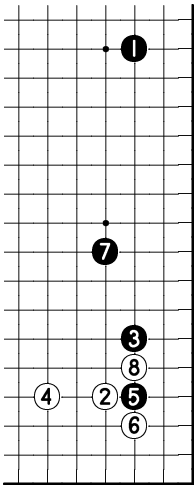


Figure 1 (1 - 8)

Moving in the empty corners first. The two points of note here, are that instead of moving in an empty corner first, black makes an approach move at 3. Secondly, black is the first player to make a mistake in play, at q9. Q9 represents a new go

proverb: “Don’t leave the field of Battle”. White attacks immediately by putting black’s stone into atari.

“Don’t leave the field of battle” means that you should always finish what you start. If you leave halfway through, then you will loose the battle. Here, although black has not been totally destroyed, he has suffered damage which is obvious to all.

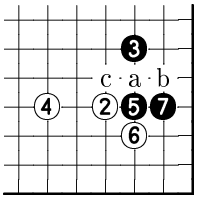


Diagram 1

Black 7 here is better than 7 in Figure 1. If white tries ’a’, black can respond ’b’ or even ’c’ to be more agressive. If there could be any fault found with Black 7 it would only be that it is too defensive. A move under 7 (to the right of 6) would be the best local play.

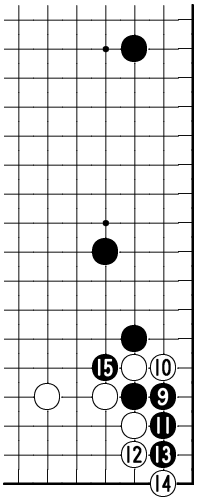
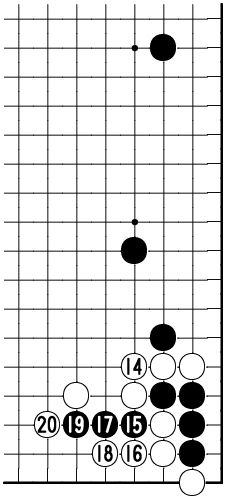


Figure 2 (9 - 15)

Now it’s a little late to move s4, but black does so anyways. The question is what to do after black 13. If white simply connects at 15, black is dead in the corner as he will not be able to escape (see page **??**). This is a result of black’s mistake with q9 - he simply was not strong enough to survive after leaving the field of battle. But white is overly agressive with at 14 instead, and black jumps at the chance to cut. White violated the proverb of *make yourself strong before attacking.* In retrospect, we can also say that *the enemy’s key point is my own.* If that wasn’t bad enough, one might say white also violated the proverb *“only connect”!*

White 14 should be the connection at 15. If black then cuts, white is safe:



White 20 makes a geta shape.

With 20, white captures black in a geta. Black has no avenues for escape. Note how capturing these three outside stones automatically kills the other black stones in the corner as well.

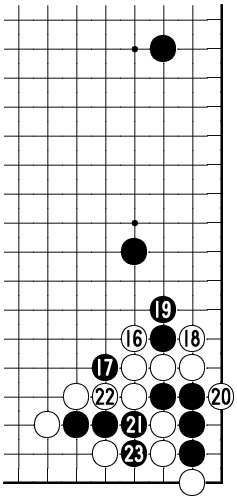


Figure 3 (16 - 23)

With 15 in Figure 2, black is alive in the corner. It is too late for white to connect

with move 16, because black will connect by moving at 18 himself and killing two stones.

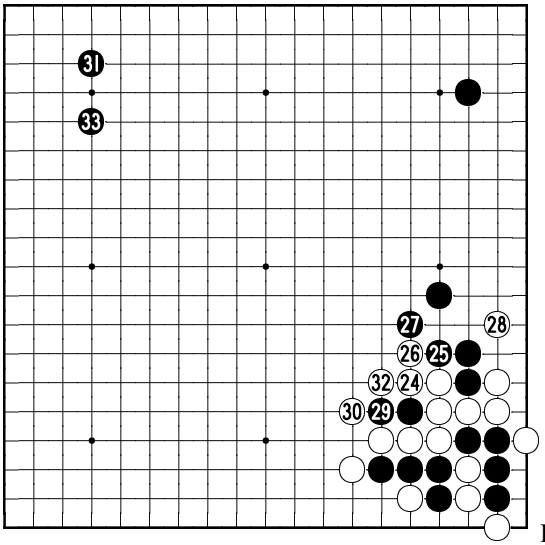


Figure 4 (24 - 33)

Black has the corner now, and white fights for the outside. White attempts to trap the two black stones in a ladder at 24. Black 25 and 27 are ladder breakers, but white keeps his cool and defends his position.

Take a second look at white 28. If you read out the ladder, black escapes by pushing white over top of his stones on the right. His theory is that he will either kill the black stones on the right or on the left if black plays the ladder instead. This looks bad for black, but if you read a little deeper you will see black has plenty of time to defend his group on the right.

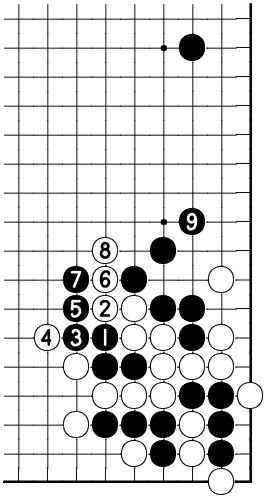


Diagram 2

Black 7 in Diagram 2 is a forcing move which allows black time to secure his group with black 9. Furthermore, black has read that his stones on the left are not in any danger yet. From this we learn that white should have continued to attack the two stones and not leave the field of battle. Attacking the black stones on the right will be difficult. Black is now good to go by moving his two stones out at 29. Those stones are no longer trapped in a ladder. From this we come to a new go proverb; *"The weaker player chooses the path of his own destruction"*. This means that he who reads deeper wins; Often times, a sequence that looks good is actually very bad, and you won't know which is which until you take a second look.

When white moves 30 to continue the ladder, however, black decides to play 31 as a ladder breaker at D17! When black completes the corner enclosure at D15, he is ahead in points. His sacrifice tactic has made white's play small, since white did not have a good chance with the ladder anyways. To contrast, black has secured a huge corner in the upper left - a clear gain for black. While not a real go proverb, always remember that sacrificing a few stones in the opening for a better position is a worthwhile endeavor.

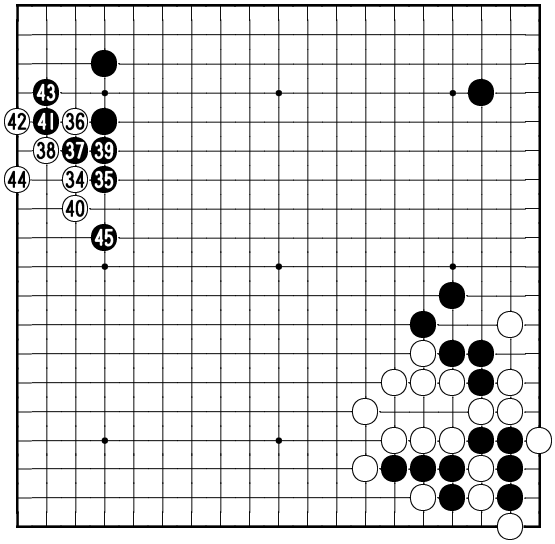


Figure 5 (34 - 45)

White is the player who plays in a new area with 34. It is interesting that white decided to play here and not in the empty corner below. In truth, black could easily ignore 34 and move anywhere, especially the lower left. At any rate, with 36 through 44 white has managed to slip under the black stones and secure a base while black putters around doing nothing. It's true that black does have something in the middle, maybe, but it is vague and undefined at this stage. Then black moves 45...

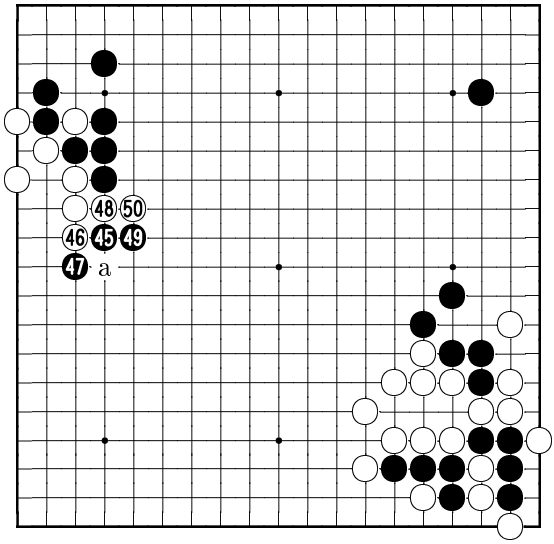


Figure 6 (45 - 50)

Black attacks the white stones by pressing down on them with 45. White extends to make territory, and black aggressively hanes down on the white stones. This was a mistake. When white pushes through at 48, black is forced to let him out, and all of black's center potential has been instantly destroyed.

We see that black once again violated the proverb about making yourself strong before attacking. The hane at 47 created a cutting point in black's stones at 'a'. Since there was already a cutting point at 48, black had created a weakness in his wall which he did not have time to go back and protect. White was coming through, and that was that. Diagrams 3 and 4 show what would happen if black played more solidly.

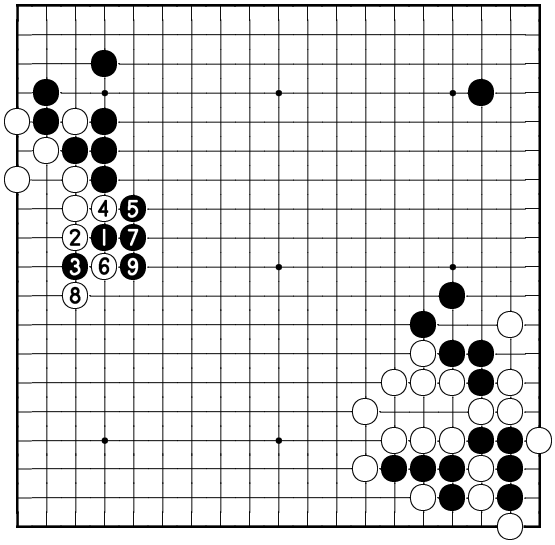


Diagram 3

In diagram 3 above, black realises his mistake and sacrifices black 3 by pushing white down with 9. This is better that what happened in the game.

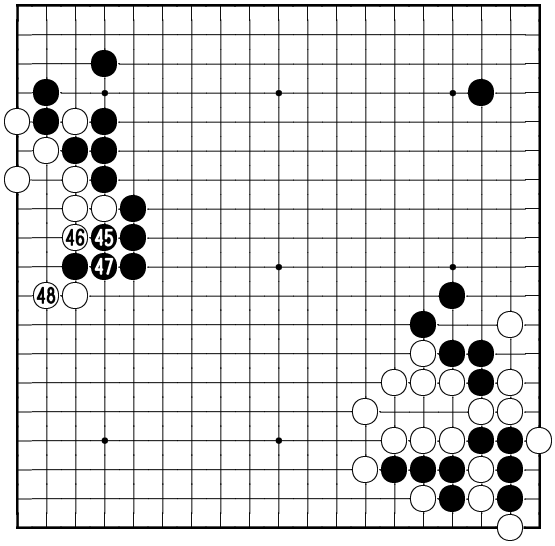


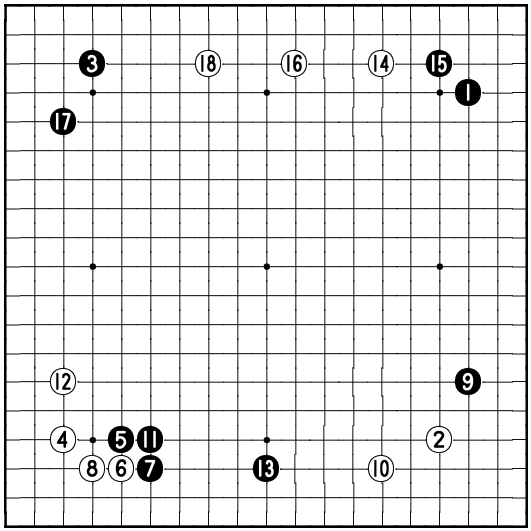
Diagram 4

In diagram 4 black plays solidly and white is pressed down into a low position. Perhaps this is even better than the previous diagram.

1.1 My thoughts about this opening

In this game, we see that the players have just begun their adventures in the world of 19x19. They do not know any josekis very well, but have adapted well to the transition from 9x9. There is much to learn from this point forward. Also, being humans, it is perfectly acceptable not to follow proverbs, although a little dangerous. For example I find it regrettable that no one moved in the bottom left corner during the opening. It is difficult to discuss the game without making reference to something as simple as this, because it affects the position in subtle but important ways. After all, the moves 1-3 *are* the start of a fuseki pattern. But no strong player would ever play them in a serious game. In my database of more than one million strong player's games, I could not find even one example where this pattern 1-3 occurred.

Perhaps a clue about this fuseki and what went wrong is contained in a certain professional game. Kobayashi Koichi 9 dan pro vs. Nakano Hironai 9 dan pro. The game is from the 38th Judan (10-dan) finals, played on March 9, 2000.



2000-03-09 : Kobayashi Koichi 9p vs. Nakano Hironai 9p

Black 3 here deviates from Figure 1 in Game 1, but note the approach pattern on the right side starts out the same. From this professional game, we can conclude that there was nothing wrong with black 3 in Game 1, it was just too early. Before approaching the lower right, black first made a group on the bottom.

If the pro players played like black in the beginner game, then white would not play at 10, but would choose Star Point Joseki B (see the chapter on josekis). White would then get 13 as the final move in that joseki. Then, it would be impossible for black to make a group on the lower left, as in the pro game. From this we see there is actually a very large difference between moving in the corner first and not - it is not a small difference at all! By not moving in an empty corner first and instead approaching white's corner with black 3, black has given white the chance to win the game: black could not make a group on the bottom of the board as in this pro game. In the pro game we see that black occupied this point with 13 and did not make any approach moves until all the empty corners had been played in.

Over the course of this book, try to understand how this simple go proverb can evolve into some of the most advancd ideas in Go.

Chapter 2

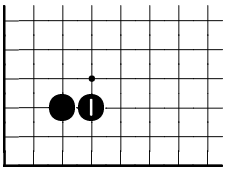
Hiraki

The idea of *hiraki* (extension) is a fundamental concept of go. Hiraki represents many important ideas, but most important is the notion that a stone is somewhat connected to another stone. After all, if it wasn't, then it would not be an extension. This means that a stone or group of stones begins to take on it's own life, growing on the goban like crystals forming on an icy window. Like these crystal formations, hiraki moves grow in size. If you can grow faster or more efficiently than your opponent, your stones will cover more area, and you have a good chance of winning the game. Hiraki is therefore the name given to a class of moves which are extensions from a stone or group of stones.

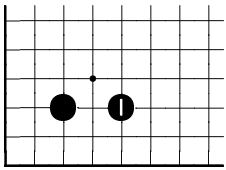
It is impossible to explain what Hiraki means to someone who does not understand Go. You, however, are finally ready for this knowledge.

2.1 Hiraki on the sides

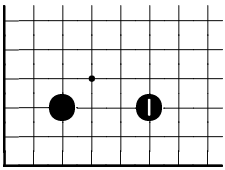
Hiraki means to extend. The first hiraki made in the game are usually extending on the side of the board. Pictured below are some common extensions made on the sides:



Nobi



Ikken Tobi

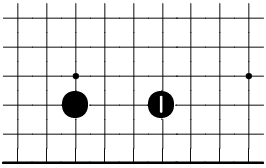


Nikken Tobi

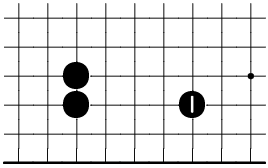
When black plays n any of the above diagrams, the idea is that he is extending *from* his stone in the corner *to* his move. This idea is so important because if the original stone is alive, then the extension move is also guaranteed to be alive, assuming that black is not cut by white. This danger is never trivial, but somewhat easy to memorize in the corners and along the edge of the board, as we have seen in our study of shapes from volume one.

Like a mystery wrapped in a riddle wrapped in an enigma, wrapped up in this concept of hiraki is the idea that along the edge of the board the stones have made potential territory. It's not really territory yet, but for all intents and purposes it is territory "now". If you wanted to count the territory under a nikken tobi, you would consider it between four and ten points, so maybe about 7 or 8 points. The extension from a two stone wall would therefore make between six and perhaps 15 points, so you might say it's worth 12 points. However you decide to approximate the territory, just try to be consistent when counting the enemy groups too. You will get better at guesstimating how much each shape is really worth as you become stronger.

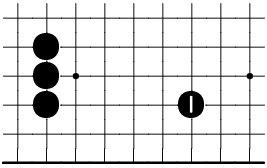
How far is it safe to extend? The rule is that on the third line, you may extend one space for every stone in the extension Therefore, to extend from a single stone you would make nikken tobi. If you had a two stone "wall", then you could extend as many as three spaces. A three stone wall, four spaces.



Nikken Biraki



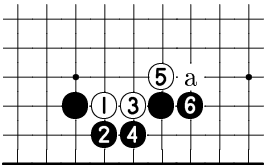
Sangen Biraki



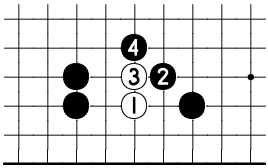
Yongen Biraki

Biraki is a vocalization of Hiraki. In addition to the hiraki shown here, there exist takabiraki moves, which mean the extension is to a position on the fourth line instead of the third. There is also a move known as Gokan Biraki. This means five point extension, and is most often performed as an extension from a corner enclosure to under the star point on the side.

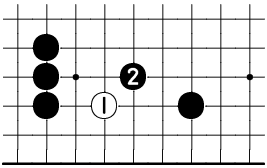
The reason that you can extend one line further depending on the height of the wall is so you can catch any enemy stone that tries to move inside. The concept of inside and outside is created by hiraki. Below are some examples of how to counter a white move played on the "inside" which was created by your hiraki move.



Black is connected



White cannot escape

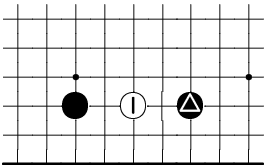


White is trapped

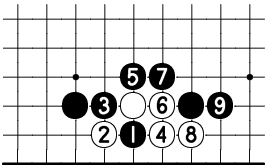
Note that if white invades one space to the right of 1 in the third diagram above, that black captures the stone with a diagonal move similar to the second diagram.

For this reason it is not proper to extend a mere three spaces from a three stone wall. You should extend one more. But what would happen if you extended more than you should?

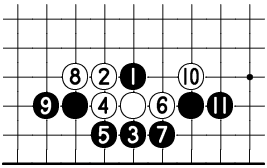
For example, let's assume black extends three spaces from a single stone, instead of the recommended two:



Black extends too far



Black can choose influence



Black can choose territory

Also note that if white tries to counter black's plan to get territory in diagram 3 above, black will simply move above and although white will make some territory at the bottom, black's influence on top will be much stronger. Therefore white often chooses to move as in diagram 3 above.

From this we see that extending one space too far from a single stone is possible, but does not really surround territory as securely as the simple nikken tobi move.

So then, what about extending one space too far from a 2 stone wall? In that case, black can still try to connect above or underneath as before. The pattern is similar to the original three space extension. However, whereas before black could kill a white invading stone, now white will live underneath black. So the power of black's two stone wall is somewhat diminished.

Keeping this in mind, it is almost always better to make the regular extension and not try to jump too far. And always remember - especially for the wider 4 and 5 space extensions, the goal is not always to prevent the opponent from living inside, but to make profit from attacking any attempt to do so!

2.2 Hiraki from a corner enclosure

There are many different kinds of corner enclosures, and how you decide to extend from them (if that is your move) is important. Listed below are a few corner enclosures and the "proper" extension from them.

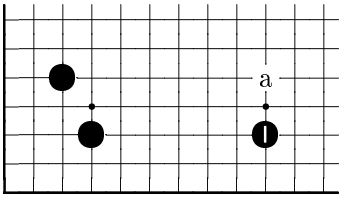


Diagram 1: Gokan Biraki can be appropriate here.

After this, black would like to move 'a'. Because this extension and it's follow up move at 'a' are so good, white often moves at imself, if only to prevent white from moving there. This follows the proverb "The opponent's key point is my own". In addition, white 'a' now is often a good approach move to black's position, although it seems a little late to the party! The Gokan biraki of black 1 is an especially good move when there is a black stone in the opposite corner.

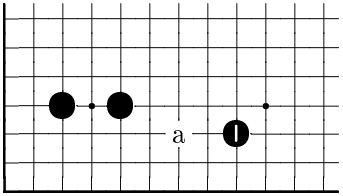


Diagram 2: Sangen Biraki is appropriate here.

If black wishes, he can extend in the same way from the other side of a shimari, but it is not as optimal as a gokan biraki from the face of the enclosure. This is because the follow up move shown in Diagram 1 does not exist. Notice the precise positioning of the extension stone, one space towards the shimari from the side star point. You might think that it is ok to move under the star point as before, but in this case k3 is too far. ❶ here also prevents white from moving at 'a' first, which would threaten to slide under the black stone in front of it. Note that if white moves 'a' now, black will cover him by moving directly on top. The fighting is good for black here and will be covered in more detail later.

Part of the reason that it is possible to extend so far from a corner enclosure is because of the stability of the corner enclosure. If white tries to break up the

formation directly, his stone will come under attack. So white is discouraged from moving into black's potential territory right away.

Hopefully this concept of hiraki has added another dimension to your game. I encourage you to play at least a few games and try out this concept of hiraki before moving on to the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Sente

Sente is another fundamental concept in Go, like hiraki. Much like hiraki, sente is a concept which is given to any move if that move exhibits a certain quality. To say a move is hiraki is to say that it exhibits the quality of being connected, at least in theory, to a friendly stone. To say a move is sente is to say it exhibits a certain quality. This is the only definition which has any value to us. Ideas such as a player "having" sente do not make sense and confuse the issue. So, what exactly is sente? It seems that many people find it rather hard to define.

3.1 Tasting sente

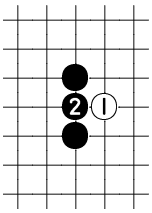


Diagram 1: The Peep

Many people will tell you that white 1 in the diagram is 'sente'. In this case sente is taken to mean a move which prods a direct response out of your opponent. But! The technique which we are looking at is more aptly called kikashi (forcing move). If the move itself has some deeper purpose, such as connecting two groups of stones by improving the position in the middle of a fight, then you might say that the two groups were connected in sente, but the move itself is a kikashi.

One way to understand sente is “the power to choose where to move”. In the above diagram the peep is sente, and the connection is gote. This does not mean either move was bad, it is just a classification we give to those moves. As a matter of fact, the peep might not have been sente, but it becomes locally sente if it is answered.

First try to understand that the player who connected his ikken tobi extension did not “have sente” during his move. After the peep the situation has changed slightly: due to the presence of white 1, white might be able to make a better extension in another area of the board. The payback is that black has been made stronger, and this is a real concern. If misplayed, white 1 here would only help the opponent.

3.2 Everything you ever wanted to know about Sente

Literally translated, Sente means “first hand”. The meaning is “playing first”. *Our* definition will borrow from a frank observation about why we play first in the corners.

The reason we play first in the corners is because it is easier and faster to make territory there. Simply put, the corners are the most important places to play first; a single stone on the 3-3 point, or a shimari from the corner encloses the corner in as little as two moves and can secure more than 20 points of territory. In no other position on an empty board can so few stones make so much “guaranteed” territory.

Often times, you will notice that moves in the corner seem to be more important or effective than moves on the side. This is the first feeling you will have about sente. I do not believe in calling sente “temperature” or anything else. You should be able to understand sente for what it is. Here are some examples of sente.

3.3 Sente in the Opening

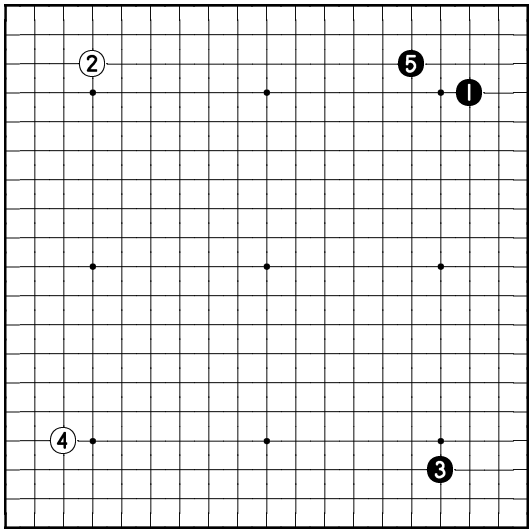


Diagram 2: Shusaku Pattern A

In the above fuseki pattern, black has made a shimari in the upper right corner. It is considered worth black's sente for black to make the guaranteed points and potential on the right side. White will now try to erase the right side of the board, but the question is where.

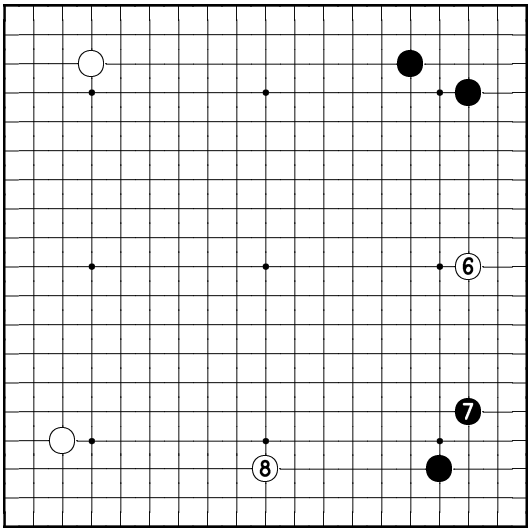


Diagram 3

White 6 and Black 7. Please notice black 7 is not sente against white's waruichi (wedging move) on the right. This is because no matter which side black next attacks white's R10 stone, white has room to make a nikken tobi extension and somewhat settle his stones. For this reason white will ignore black on the right and move on the bottom to prevent black from getting a good extension there first. This is a good fuseki strategy.

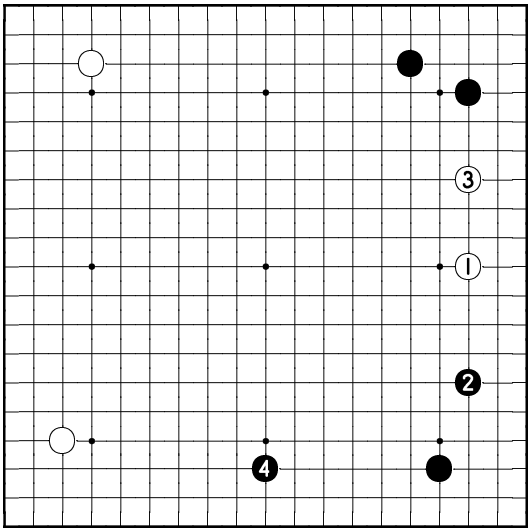


Diagram 4

If black doesn't like to move at 4 in this diagram, a better point is an approach move against the lower left corner of the board (facing the shimari).

Notice the subtle difference of black 2 in Diagram 4. Because black has made his shimari one line wider, white would now not have room to extend if black moved at 'a' next, and his stone on the right would fall under attack. For this reason, white must extend on the right side now, and black extends from his shimari on the bottom at 4. We can therefore say that black 2 was played in sente. This is a big difference from playing a move in gote as in the previous diagram. And, although one could say blacks shimari in the bottom right is a little weaker, it is more than made up for taking the big point on the bottom.

From this cursory analysis we see that playing the waruichi (wedging move) at White 6 in Diagram 3 presents a weakness which black can exploit. White 6 is definitely not sente. So, what could white have done better?

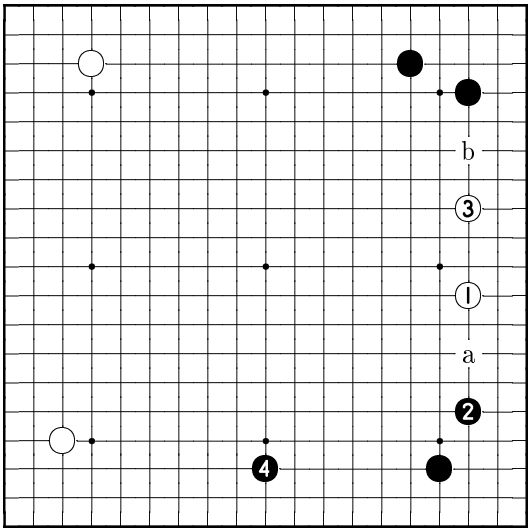


Diagram 5

If white wishes to play waruichi on the right, then above sequence at r9 is better for white than at r10. Firstly, black cannot make the wide shimari in sente as before, due to white being closer - it would fall under attack later. So black makes the "normal" shimari. Then, when white extends, he extends to farther from black's shimari in the upper right, but still enough to make a black extension from that shimari too small to play at this time. Another way to understand this, is that now a white approach move would be a lot stronger due to the presence of white r9, and would also be absolutely sente. A two or three space approach move to the bottom stone would be too perfect for white. So to prevent white from moving against the bottom right corner, black makes a shimari in sente first.

As a result of white's careful reading, even if black attacks at 'a' or 'b', white has room to take the other point himself. So white's group feels very comfortable in this area of the board. And yet, the move is still not sente. It is obvious black gains here more than white, as black seems to be able to extend from his shimari in the bottom first. Our conclusion then is that if white needs to move on the right, this is better than the previous example, but it is still not sente. It is true you cannot always find a sente move and sometimes must play waruichi-style. But don't be so quick to play waruichi at r10 or r9 before looking for a better move.

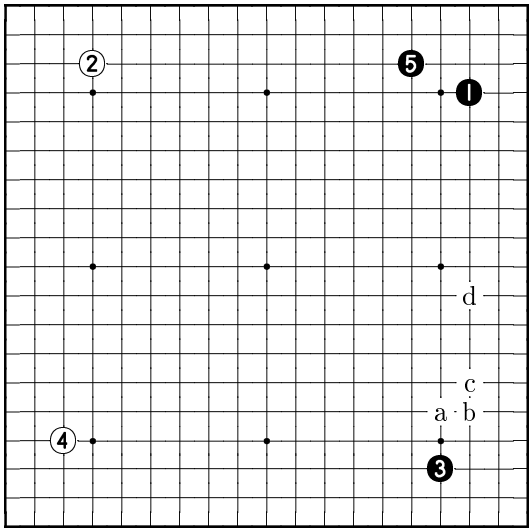


Diagram 6

From a study of professional games, we glean that 'a' is the most popular move in this situation. Each subsequent variation is about half as popular as the one before it; 'b' is half as popular as 'a', for example. So the first fuseki you should study in this situation is 'a'.

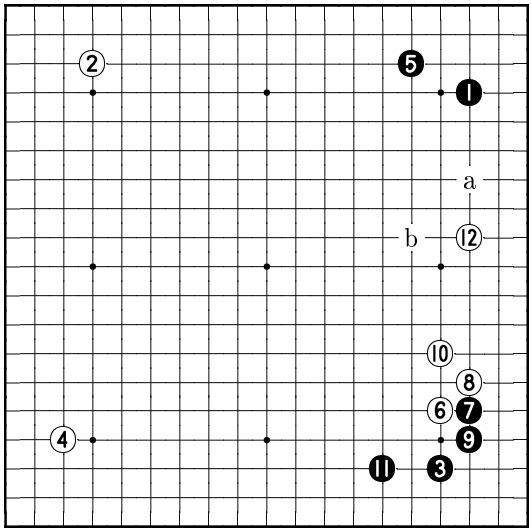


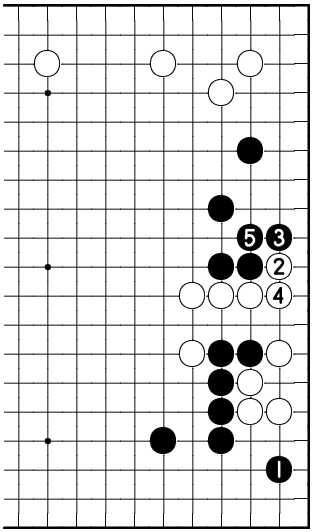
Diagram 7

It is very important to understand this standard sequence of play in the corners, discussed more deeply in section 5.6. This is the most common line of play in this situation. There are other lines of play, which you should study and acquire for yourself as you encounter them. In this particular example, white will almost always play r11 and settle his stones. The sequence is nearly guaranteed to be played - if you encounter another example before the dan level it is almost guaranteed to be worse than r11.

From this point, black will sometimes play 'a' first, and white must play 'b'. Notice that this is not always a viable strategy - it may seem that white is being pushed around and black is gaining territory, but notice that white plays first in the center. It is very hard to get something for nothing in a fuseki pattern!

3.4 Sente in the Middle Game

Sente in the middle game often has nothing to do with who is moving close to the corners and more often has something to do with the life and death status of a group worth more than x number of points. This is because a time comes rather quickly when you cannot make extensions along the side of the board. From this point forward you must play sente moves to improve your position.



In the above sequence, black takes some territory in the corner. It is true that white could have moved here to take black's territory and increase his own - however,

this is a gote move at best as it does not threaten the life and death status of either group.

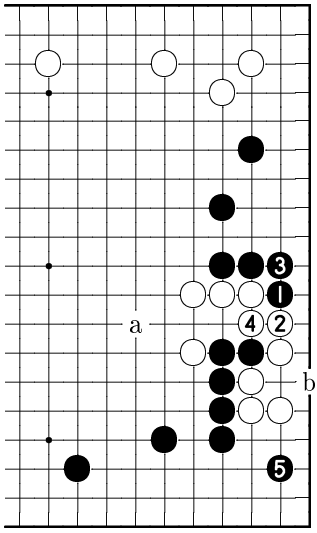


Diagram 8

Black 1. Reading carefully, black sees that If he first plays the sente sequence 1 to 4, then after white is forced into a smaller position in gote (white must connect at 4) black can take 5 in sente. White is forced to run for his life around 'a' or try to make a very small life at 'b'. Black can then play another move on the board anywhere he likes. It is at this point that some might incorrectly say that black has sente. It is better to say that s9 and s3 were played in sente, versus s3 being gote as in the previous example.

3.5 Conclusions about Sente

The definition of sente is therefore, where you must play first. At times it will be in the corners, at times in a certain place on the side. If your opponent plays a move which is "local sente", and you find the correct sente move, then his move is no longer local sente, but gote. You may play a sente stone or sequence of stones before returning to the position to answer your opponent's move. Furthermore, in real sente, your opponent may not gain more than you by ignoring your real sente move. We will therefore discard forever any notion such as a "local sente", and focus on developing a sensible whole board vision.

3.6 Honte

Honte is the proper move. A honte move is a curious kind of move. It is not exactly sente, but it must be done. It is important to understand the correlation between sente and hard points when you play a honte move. We know that a viable strategy is converting sente to points at the proper time. Examples could be when you have no weak groups, you are phenomenally ahead, or your opponent has made a move which is pure gote. The key to knowing when to make honte, then, is precisely the opposite situation. If you have a weak group, you must protect it. If you are behind, you must take your medicine and prevent further damage. If you have made a gote move, it could be beyond repair - unless that gote move was also honte, the proper move.

Remember that a weakness is worth negative points. If only because it can be lent on in sente. So fixing a weak spot is worth a lot of points, and can often stave off disaster at the last moment. Playing honte is extremely important. Never forget the classic examples of forgetting to play honte:

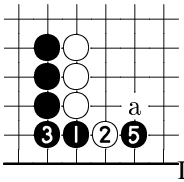


Diagram 9: white 4 elsewhere

Normally white will make the hanging connection at 'a'. If this move is omitted, black can exploit white's weakness at 5.

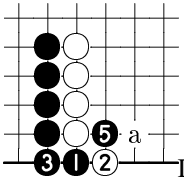


Diagram 10: white 4 elsewhere

In this example, the honte move for white was 'a'. It seems ridiculous to forget such a simple kind of protection move which must be made. But it is done more often than you may think, even in the endgame. It is better to be safe than sorry.

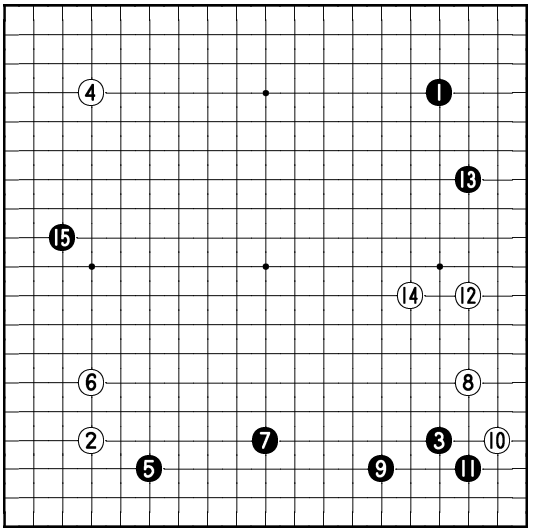


Diagram 11

This is a rather simple opening for black and white, with common josekis being played. When black approaches white's right side group, white says "better safe than sorry!" and jumps into the center with p9. Black then plays waruichi on the left. The waruichi itself is well-placed, and a big move, but simply not sente. It is probably better for black to make a move somewhere on the top side, considering his makings of a shimari in the upper right.

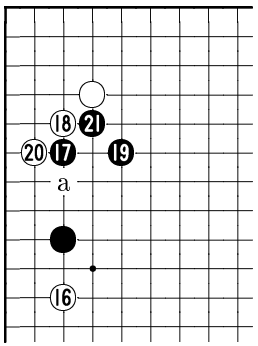


Diagram 12

Although a simple nobi is more common than the one space jump in response to white's attachment at 18, it is still perfectly acceptable to make ikken tobi in light of black's extra territory on the upper right and white jumping into the center first. The key here is to not be greedy. Black should not move at 21, but 'a' instead. This makes black's group strong. White will immediately atari black's stone at 'a'

now, to exploit black's failure to play honte.

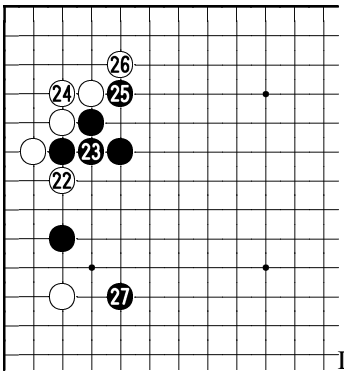


Diagram 13

When white gives atari at 22, black is forced to connect. Then, white must also play honte to fix his shape. Black then leans on white at 25, and white calmly protects at 26. Next, black 27 is again an example of not playing the proper move, and is the same class of mistake which got black into trouble here in the first place. What comes next should be obvious, but to state the conclusion first, black should have played as below:

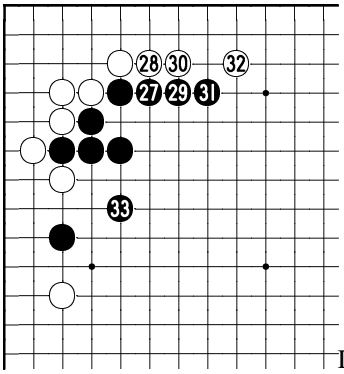
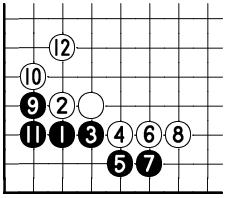


Diagram 14

In this way, black has fixed his weaknesses and connected his stones. Unfortunately white has made more territory than normal in this sequence, but at least black is still in the game. This way of playing is much better than capping at e9 in Diagram 13.

3.7 Sente Sequences

An example of a sequence played in sente is the 3-3 invasion:



Black decides when and where he can play 1. If his opponent decides his move is sente, and answers all of black's moves, then black can choose where to move after white plays honte at c6. Therefore we say that the 3-3 invasion was played in sente. Note that all of white's moves are also considered sente by black. If at any time either player made a play in another area of the board, it is very likely that his opponent would take advantage of the unfinished invasion. Why? Consider what would happen if black abandoned his invasion mid-way through. Giving white the opportunity to kill the stones and secure the area, one wonders why black would make the invasion in the first place at all, and simply play in the area he decided was more important first.

3.8 Making effective use of Sente

How do you employ sente to your advantage? In the opening, you can use sente to choose an opening you like or know well. Using sente to control the flow of the game like this gives you the subtle but definite advantage of choosing a variation which you have studied and feel comfortable with.

Another popular sente strategy is to convert sente into territory as we will see in in Star Point Joseki B (see the chapter on Joseki). This works especially well in handicap games. For example, if Star Point Joseki B was used in a 4 stone handicap game, then although black would lose sente, he would gain an extra 15 or 20 points.

This strategy is closely related to honte. Since there is a friendly black stone in the adjoining corner, it is now considered worth more to choose the gote joseki than to retain sente by attacking white. This is because in addition to the territory black has made, black will have a small advantage in any joseki played nearby the final black stone. So, giving up sente to secure a worthy number of points is a viable strategy for using sente, if there is nothing left to do.

Chapter 4

The Magic of Moyos

Recall Diagram 5 from Game One in the first chapter.

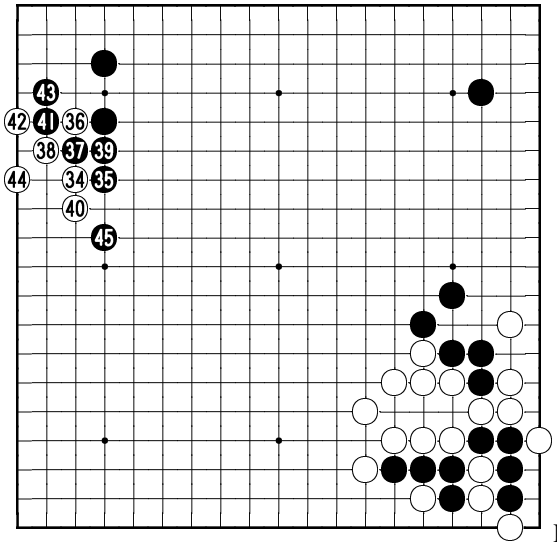
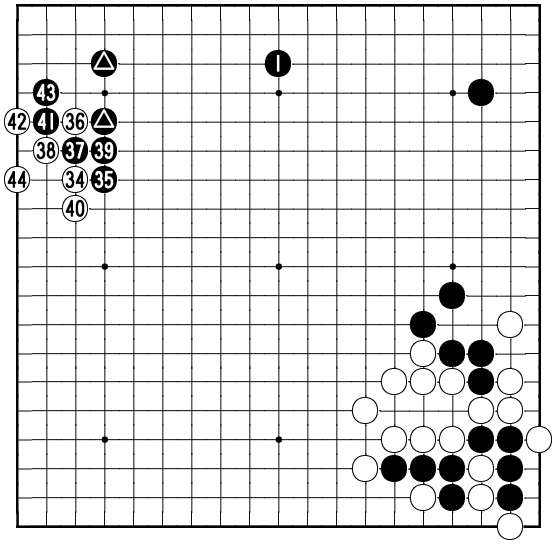


Figure 5 from Game One

I would like you to go over game one from the start of this book and look at moves 45 to 50 (Figure 6). The final two diagrams (Diagram 3 and Diagram 4) show two alternate ways black could play in the area. Both of these two possibilities work well with a moyo (potential) strategy.

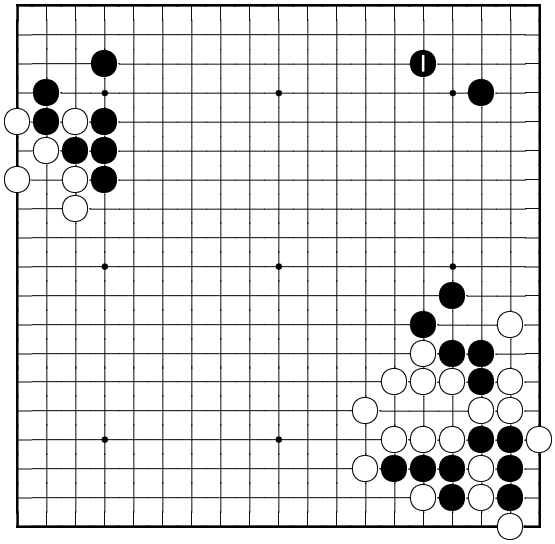
But if we consider black 45 here to be a mistake of a deeper kind, we can see that black has the capability to take a second look and make a better move in a totally unrelated area of the board. After diagram 3 or 4, or in fact instead of black 45...

4.1 Black should make an extension from his corner enclosure



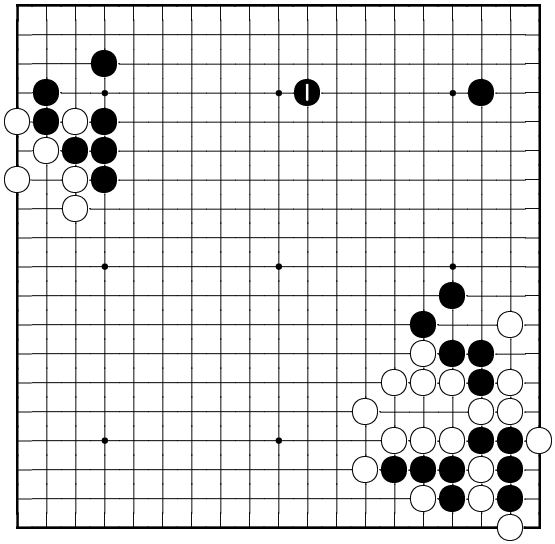
A move at the top, at k17. This move is an extension from the original (marked) corner enclosure in the upper left and has the effect of "asking for" the territory in the upper left. But if you look at the other side of the stone, black is also asking for all the territory in the upper right. With this one move, black is staking a claim to a land mass the size of an entire continent. If white does not stop black somehow, black will win. If white simply moves in the lower left corner now, black will jump up at k15 from k17 and solidify the entire upper side in as little as 2 or 3 moves. Is this the best strategy for black?

4.2 Black should make a shimari in the upper right corner

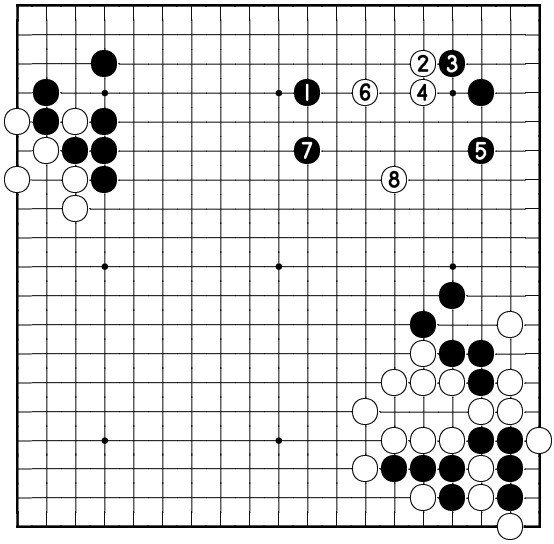


If black moves at p17 and makes a corner enclosure in the upper right, he will not only have accumulated territory there. The power radiating from this shimari helps his stones on the right, and as there are no josekis for white at the top, he shouldn't be able to make a larger territory than black there. This "strength" strategy could also be interesting for black now.

4.3 A True Moyo Move



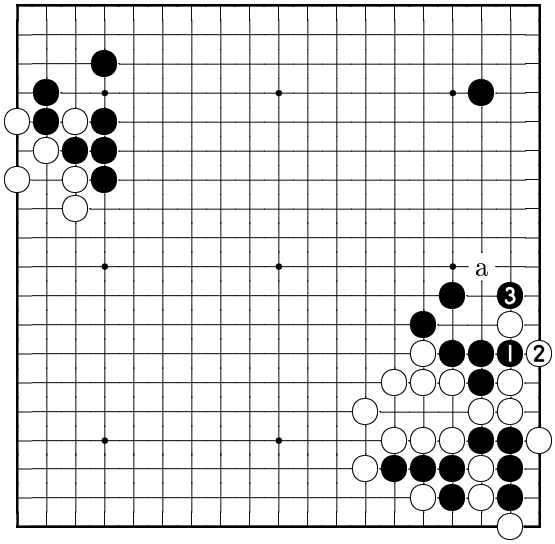
If black wants to employ a proper moyo strategy, he should have a larger vision. Consider L16. L16 is different in many ways from K17. First, it welcomes white to move on the top's third or fourth line, trying to invade. This is the moyo strategy: You cannot realistically expect to get the whole area, but since you are so strong in the area, an invasion should be drastically in your favor. For example...



If white approaches from here, black will use his L16 stone to limit white by choosing this joseki. Now white is in trouble and black's territory expands naturally, even though white has reduced half the moyo. This is why black will welcome any kind of direct invasion to his moyo, because white has very few choices here.

4.4 Black should fix his weak group first

I would have to say that any of the moves we discussed are better than black 45 from game one. Although, the moyo move may be best because it gives power to the center and might help black's weak group. But it is a little like putting the cart before the horse. If white manages to attack black's weak group in sente and destroys black's moyo at the same time, then suddenly all of black's hard work would go to waste.



So, fixing your weak groups first is the thing. Black could possibly move at 3 or 'a' first, but here plays black 1 before black 3. It is probably best if black fixes his weak group first. The point is that black is preventing white from moving on the right side easily, so black still makes some territory here, and also prepares to make a moyo move as discussed above. Then, it seems white would have to do a lot of work to find a winning move.

Chapter 5

Joseki

Joseki means fixed pattern. Commonly when one mentions the word joseki in relation to Go, one is referring to commonly accepted patterns which appear in the corner.

After you have come to grips with sente and have started to feel it's power, you should begin studying joseki wholeheartedly. Brute force memorization of joseki works well for giving beginners a good foundation, as does doing lots of life and death tsumego.

As you get stronger, you should also put in an effort to understand more about the meaning behind the moves in a joseki. For now, memorize the joseki and also who has sente at the end of the joseki. For now, when playing a joseki you have memorized, your goal is to choose a joseki which ends in a position favorable to you, and hopefully also gives you sente. If you really want to work hard, you can try to choose a joseki which ends in sente for you and then see what other josekis you can play in another corner, all before you play the first stone in a joseki sequence. Don't be discouraged if you can't do this right away. Step one is studying josekis in the first place!

Nearly everything you need to know about Go is contained in josekis. Studying josekis is studying best-play in one of the most important areas of the board. This is not to say all you need to do is study josekis to get stronger, but it is definitely true that without studying josekis your progress will be slowed.

So now it is time to present some joseki diagrams and explanations. I advise you to memorize all of these patterns and the reasons behind the moves, because you won't have time to read this book when you're playing a game.

5.1 Good and Bad Advice

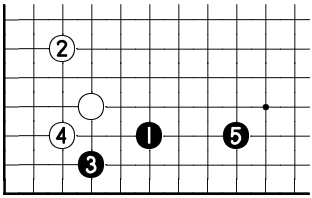
A stronger player might tell you not to bother memorizing josekis at this stage. This is bad advice! Their concern is that you will either miss the proper move and play a bad move which you think is joseki. Or worse, if your opponent plays a joseki you don't know, you may assume he made a mistake and try to punish him and end up getting punished yourself! You might even fall into the trap of playing without thinking, blindly setting stones down in a pattern you saw somewhere before.

While a valid concern, once you have heard it, realize that it speaks only of the close-minded who cannot think for themselves. If you make a mistake of this caliber and choose the wrong joseki for the situation, congratulate yourself for not making a mistake in the joseki itself, and then use it as an opportunity to learn about direction of play. So do not worry if you make a mistake when you play josekis. The fact that you bothered to try and play the proper move shows that you are making progress. Therefore every student of River Mountain Go School must memorize josekis to advance.

Joseki often teach you techniques for fighting and will help you understand corner situations you haven't seen before by looking for common patterns. The moves may be different but the ideas will be the same. As the great Kageyama said, if you truly understand even one basic joseki then you will have unlocked the key to a hundred others.

5.2 Common Star Point Josekis

Your first joseki embodies the fundamental principle of balance. I do not know what this joseki is called in Japanese, but the most important thing is that it looks like this:



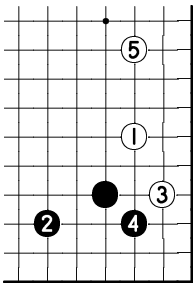
White has a stone on the *hoshi* (star) point. This first move is the nucleus from which all star point josekis flow. It's a "move in the corner", and considering that alone, we can say it's a good move.

Black 1 is the *keima kakari* (knight's move approach). This is the start of the joseki. There is an implied balance. A desire. A thought, a dream, a goal. This is the concept of an approach move: It doesn't blindly rush in, it keeps it's options open, but it is on exactly the right spot to do so.

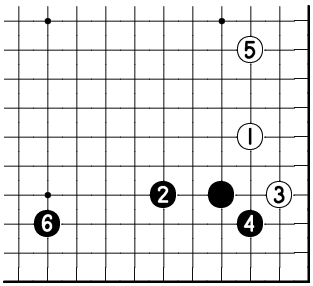
I present the balance move of white 2 as a standard response, and invite you to examine the meaning of this move on your own. As a clue, it removes the value of a white move on the 3-3 point.

Black 3 attempts to enter the corner with a knight's move, emphasizing the proverb that *first, the corners are most important*. Moving on the 3-3 point, as mentioned, would violate proverb #2 from the first book. White seeks to enter the corner because that secures a base for making eyes. When white blocks with 4, then a black extension to settle his stones (form a group) is the largest local move. The local situation then grinds to a total halt. Both sides have made a base, and this fact makes them reasonably strong – both groups have a very strong possibility of making two eyes even if attacked. For this reason, a play in any other part of the board is now more important than another move in this area. Top candidates would be approach moves against enemy stones or groups.

Now let us compare this joseki with a similar one and try to understand the difference.



Joseki A



Joseki B

These are two simple star point josekis. Note with particular interest that s used in both cases to approach the star point stone. Also note that the two most common responses are the balanced knight's move in Joseki A, and the ikken tobi move shown in Joseki B.

Black's extension at the knight's move creates a sort of balance considering white's approach move - a powerful idea. In this simple extension move is the essence of joseki. White 3 sliding under the black stones instead of making contact, is elegant and simple. It also does not present any weakness which black could exploit. Next, black blocks the corner territory and white extends to make a base for his group.

Note the difference. In the first star point joseki, play in the corner ends with

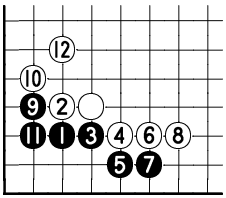
White now has the chance to make the first move in another area of the board. In the second joseki, white gives up his chance to make the first move somewhere else for a large potential territory with Both of these diagrams are joseki.

Finally, I must caution any upstart young black stones from playing as in Joseki 2 when there is an enemy stone in the way of

The above two diagrams are perhaps the most common josekis in modern go. They are also among the most simple. The ideas in these josekis merit deep study, so much so that they will be used to explain a very important concept in this book, called Sente. But that's another story.

5.3 Star Point Pincer Josekis and the 3-3 Invasion

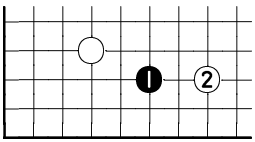
First let's take a quick look at the 3-3 invasion.



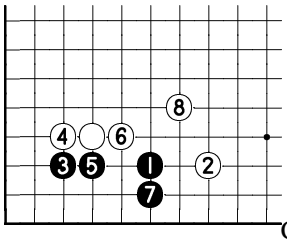
This is a sup rising departure from the direct territorial balance we discussed earlier. What will be traded here is territory and influence. Always remember that Go is a game of surrounding your opponent. As the theory continues, if your opponent makes life but becomes completely surrounded in the process, then he has in essence been cut off from the rest of the board. That being said, this is not a true joseki in that the corner territory is not big enough to compensate for the outward influence. However, if the 3-3 invasion is performed at precisely the right time, it can decimate your opponent's territory beyond repair. Note that white can block the other way (at d3 instead of c4) and a mirror image would result.

Now we can introduce the two most common pincer joseki for the star points, and their relationship with the 3-3 invasion.

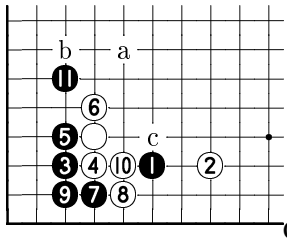
First, the pincer move itself.



As the opponent made a move which did not discourage an invasion (one could even say a pincer encourages a move on 3-3), the first pincer variation we can discuss is the 3-3 move. There are two basic ways to handle the corner variation:



Corner Variation A



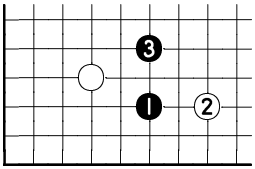
Corner Variation B

In Variation B, note that "c" was previously considered to be white's next move, but it has been removed in modern go. White "a" is the new move, although it is not required. If white "a", black has a choice to move "b" or not, but if not then white can move "b" any time himself. As for you, I suggest playing "c" for now. When you feel comfortable with the joseki you don't need to play at 'c'. Play at 'a' instead or move in another area of the board.

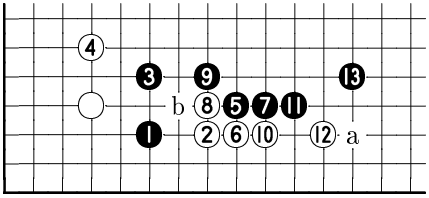
These two diagrams are joseki because the territory in the corner is generally larger than in a simple 3-3 invasion, and black is either not completely shut in (B) or he has moves for later which can exploit white's loose enclosure (A).

5.4 And now for something completely different

If you notice, in the previous josekis, black chose to go into the corner. This led to black gaining some territory, while while gained some outside strength and influence. What if either of those choices wasn't what black wanted?



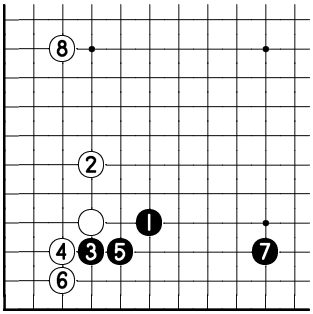
Black 4 here, jumping out into the center, is designed to prevent white from forming a moyo. Instead of territory, black is going for influence.



This joseki is rather advanced and there is much knowledge concealed within it. For example, after black 13 here. 'a' is a good point for either side; if white does not move here, black can usually move there right away. Furthermore, instead of black 13 black can simply connect at 'b'. If not, then white can cut black by moving at 'b' himself, or one space above 'b'. However, the payback for white 'b' is that black can make a 3-3 invasion in the corner.

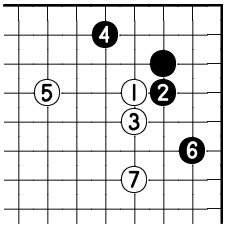
So as you see, there is a joseki suited for almost anything you might like to do The key is understanding which joseki you need to choose to get what you want. And, if you do not know the joseki to get what you want, it is up to you to create a new joseki as best you can based on what you have learned. Will you choose territory? Go for influence? The choice can be yours!

5.5 Final thoughts on the star point



High Approach

You may wish to make a high approach depending on the situation. Consider, what would happen here if black already had a stone near 7 or 8?

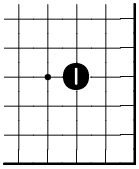


How to approach a 3-3 stone.

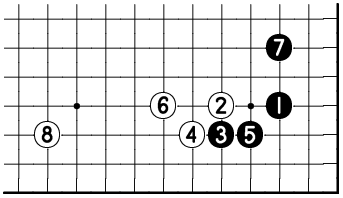
The above joseki is similar to what would happen when a 3-3 invasion was ignored. When playing like this you must take careful account of the position in the center!

5.6 Komoku Josekis every 10 kyu should know

The komoku stone is a 3-4 stone. That means it's one space closer to an edge than a star point stone. Why on earth would anyone choose a komoku stone versus a star point stone? In theory the komoku stone is focused more on direct territory. It has no "invasion" move against it like a star point stone does. Furthermore, it aims to enclose the corner with one more move (a star point stone requires two moves). Therefore the komoku stone is more efficient at making territory directly than a star point stone. This does not mean it is better, it just means it is different. It is wise to know both, and this is why I am briefly introducing some common komoku josekis. Many of these josekis are extremely old but age has not dulled their edge. They are still common in modern go.

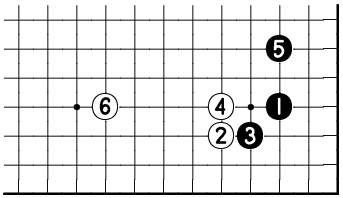


Black 1 above is an example of a move on the komoku point. A move on komoku is a move in the corner, just like a move on the star point. Hoshi and Komoku are fundamentally different. Hoshi (discussed in 1.1.1) has an eye on the center of the board. Komoku has an eye on the corner territory. As such, you may find that you like playing komoku much better than you like playing Hoshi because it "feels safer". Or you might prefer Hoshi as a first move - for now it is up to you. let's take a look at the most common Komoku joseki.

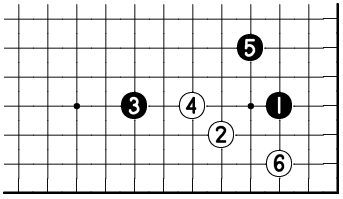


Above we see a standard response. Black attaches underneath, white hanes down, black pulls back. This is a common fighting technique. You will find that you learn a lot of common fighting patterns from joseki.

Next, white must protect his weakness by preventing black the option of cutting at white 6. Black then extends to avoid being blocked on that side of the board, and white also extends to make a base. This joseki is finished. If white chooses the variation where 6 directly connects 2 and 4, then white's extension at 8 must be one line closer.



In this simple and clear komoku joseki, white 6 can sometimes be played on the third line depending on how white feels.



In this final example, white escapes into the center before making a base. These moves are simple and clear.

Chapter 6

Your First Go Lesson

Your success will be aided by following three simple rules as you begin playing a game of go.

6.1 Clear your mind

Start each game by relaxing and clearing your mind. Forget your opponent and only concentrate on the stones. Do not have feelings about playing black or white. You must play against the board, and not against the opponent.

6.2 Nirensei is your friend

This means to play moves which you know. It's ok to experiment, but do not make wild, crazy moves with no purpose. Try to make each fuseki your own. For now, always make a nirensei opening (two star points in a row).

There are several reasons why you should always play Nirensei when you are just starting to learn the opening. First, no matter how your opponent plays on the board, he cannot prevent you from making nirensei. Simply move in the opposite quadrant from his first move (or anywhere if he moves tengen). Then, make nirensei. Because you are always guaranteed to be able to make nirensei if you want to, beginners should study it first to help them feel comfortable with this stage of the game.

This technique is not limited to kyu players. It is a technique which was put into practice by the famous professional Kato Masao. In his early career, he would often continue to play one fuseki strategy until he felt he had mastered it and then work on a different opening. Other very famous pros have used this strategy too. For example, both Nie Weiping and Go Seigen played nirensei almost exclusively for large parts of their professional career.

Focusing your energy to study one fuseki pattern and learn it well will help you in other patterns as well. When you have learned Nirensei well, feel free to experiment with komoku patterns.

6.3 The Three Qualities

The best kind of move will exhibit three important qualities.

First the move should be hiraki. This means you do not place yourself in danger.

Secondly, the move should be sente. This means it exhibits the possibility to cut, connect, surround or kill in order to win the game. If you cannot directly cut, connect, surround, escape, kill or live to win, then you must threaten to do so. The threat itself is a form of sente. If your move cannot be a good move played in sente, consider making a honte move, but never gote. If a move is played which is gote and not honte, it was a waste. If a honte move was played when a sente move could have been played first, the honte move was really gote.

Thirdly, moves should be fast. This means they improve your position strategically no matter what the response. This can take many forms, but usually means to expand your position while ideally squeezing your opponent's. For example you can build a moyo while threatening to kill your opponent's group by pressing him down. Or you could expand your own moyo while reducing your opponent's, killing two birds with one stone.

This creates a situation where your opponent gains nothing or is slightly reduced but your territory naturally expands. This means your moves have a strategy behind them. If a move is slow, then it does not accomplish a strategy compared to what your opponent can accomplish. You must make the game your own by always trying to improve your position in this way.

Each of your moves should ideally exhibit, or attempt to exhibit these three qualities. It is not always possible, but if you can do this then you have definitely made progress.

Examples of this sort of play are found throughout the game, but are often most visible in a close game just before the endgame starts.

Chapter 7

Techniques of Counting

Now that you are studying josekis and life and death, your reading should naturally improve if you take time to think about the situation on the board. The next step in your progress is training yourself to count. Sometimes when the score is obvious because it is huge (fifty or 100 points difference, for example) you don't need to count to see who is winning. But in a close game counting skills are invaluable.

7.1 Counting by pairs

Don't try to count points of territory one by one, this is too slow. Use is counting by pairs.

Counting by pairs means that you quickly count 2 intersections at once and then move on to the next two. You don't count "two, four, six.." you count "one, two, three.." and then three would be six points. It is at least twice as fast as normal counting when you get used to it. A dead stone is counted as one, so it can be very fast, and can also easily estimate floating groups on the outside which are worth negative points.

You should start by trying to count the score once, sometime during the middle game. As you improve, try counting the score at least three times each game: after the opening, in the middle game, and as you enter the endgame stage. Counting even more is better. I often find myself counting five times or more during a game.

Counting requires practice, and patience. At first you will not be good at counting, but you must practice every game. One step forward and two steps back is not

good enough. Count at least once in every game from now on. If you play a game and you did not count, you did not make real progress.

7.2 A strategy based on evidence

You can change your strategy based on your estimate of the score. If you are winning, you should play safely, not over-extending. If you are winning a lot, you should even play more tightly, and not give the opponent any chance to upset your position. This will incite the opponent to make more and more ridiculous moves in a vain attempt to win. Keep your cool and do not make wild overplays.

If you are losing, you know it. You cannot make a mistake. You must concentrate even harder now. Can you make a ko? Can you make an upset in your opponents position? Suddenly capture or rescue some stones? Perhaps this is your last chance, so you better make it good. If it does not work, do not be afraid to resign. A wise man knows when to invest in loss.

If you are losing, try to play a meltdown move if there is no other choice. Starting a ko for the game is an acceptable strategy when you are behind, but only if it is possible to win. Obviously you would not gamble your game away for no reason if you were ahead, so it is very important to know the score during the game.

Chapter 8

Strategy and Tactics

From Atari go, we know that you must not place your stones into danger. From hiraki we know that every move played should be an extension from a living group of stones. What this is really saying is that the tactics behind moves we play should not interfere with our strategy.

Regarding the tactics themselves.. fighting is often unclear, and much fighting can be accused of gambling. Do not base your game on a random chance if you can avoid it. If you must fight, read deeply. However... there is some fighting for which little reading is required beyond seeing that the sequence is possible or not. This is like studying josekis, or doing tsumego. Visualize the possibilities before you play.

8.1 Strategies of Connecting Surrounding and Cutting

The name of this game in the original Chinese is “Wei Qi”. Literally translated, this means “surrounding game”. When a stone is surrounded, it is killed. When a group is surrounded, it is forced to make life, which usually means an extra move must be spent inside. Remember, that making life means making two eyes. So this must be explicitly done if a surrounded group does not want to die. In practice this means that when your opponent is forced to make life “inside”, you get a free move on the “outside”. A strong player develops quickly and maintains a lead in this way.

If you connect two weak groups, then you need to make life only once, while otherwise you would need to make life twice. A strong player keeps all his stones connected and alive whenever possible.

Remember, a stone cannot be captured and killed unless it is cut off from a living group. Therefore surrounding, cutting, and connecting are all related to a common principle. Killing is a three stage process. First the enemy stone must be cut off from any living group, then it must be surrounded. Finally it's eyespace must be filled in. If any of these three stages cannot be accomplished, the enemy stone will live. However, it gets progressively worse for him if he is first cut, then surrounded, then fails to live.

Our conclusion is that the the basic tactic of the game is life and death based on connecting, cutting, and surrounding.

It is not always possible to always be connected. For example, during an invasion, you are intentionally creating a group cut off from the rest of the board. Understand the tactical weakness of the invasion, before you work it into your strategy.

8.2 Tactics from Joseki

Cutting and connecting is a powerful strategy which your opponent can not allow you to do if he hopes to win. He who reads deeper and further will know more about the situation with regards to basic tactics. One good way to train reading is to study josekis which involve a ladder. Try to read out the result of the ladder before you play the joseki. Then try to apply those skills to other sequences of forcing moves.

From any joseki we can learn basic fighting tactics which can be applied anywhere on the board. This allows us to read faster and farther because we know which shapes to look at first. If we read correctly we can then see a life and death situation, and that helps a lot when we also have studied tsumego. We can choose moves which lead to life for our stones, and death for the opponent's.

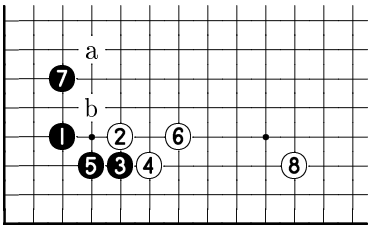
8.3 Press down techniques

Your opponent is not stupid. He is not going to let you kill his stones, and if he does, there is probably a good strategic reason for doing so. But in the case of his large group, death is a fear which you can exploit. By threatening to kill his large group in sente, you can often change the position of the board in your favor.

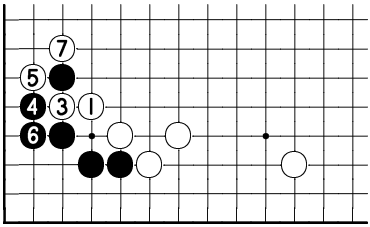
If the opponent you are playing is weaker, beware that the tactics you use against him might not work against a stronger player. So do not let your opponent choose how strong you are - you must exhibit your own strength from yourself when you play. This is why you should study josekis and their tactics in light of a strategy, and that all moves must be performed in light of this grand plan.

There exists an entire class of techniques of pressing down on a previously played position. This falls under the category of center-plays, for and against building moyos. The key to building a moyo is to prey on the opponent's fear of losing his precious territory. If your opponent is starting to build a moyo, and you have more solid territory, perhaps it can not hurt to erase some of his moyo by pinning down one of his groups. On the other hand, if you have a great potential in the middle, then playing press-down can often win you the game in one fell swoop.

8.3.1 Komoku Joseki A



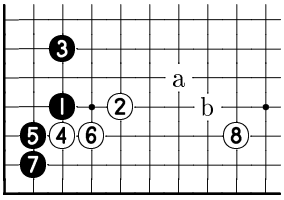
Consider the above standard joseki. Later, white can move at A or B to aid in the formation of a moyo in the center of the board. As an example, let's look at what happens if black does not answer 'b'.



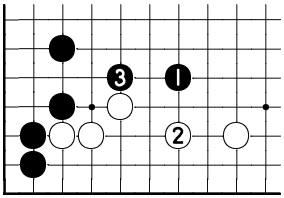
Not only has white trapped a black stone in a ladder, but if it dies, black will be completely enclosed in the corner. White's power on the board will have increased dramatically. Note that if black is greedy and attempts to atari the cutting stone, white will sacrifice it and atari at 6. Then the black stones in the corner will die in a ladder.

Therefore, black will often connect against white 'b', or push against white 'a' which enables white to build a position in the center.

8.3.2 Komoku Joseki B ex. 1

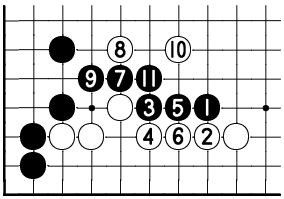


Again, a common joseki sequence. Again, black has good follow-ups against white's shape. Here we can discuss 'a' and 'b'.



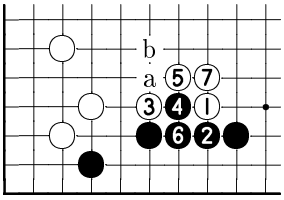
Here, if white responds by protecting his territory, black can connect on top. This means black is placing importance on having influence on the left side of the board.

8.3.3 Komoku Joseki B ex. 2



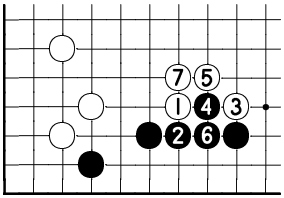
In a press-down sequence like this, white has decided to press from the outside as well. White must be careful to avoid letting these two stones play themselves into a weak position.

8.3.4 Star Point Joseki A ex. 1



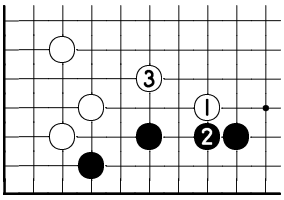
In this press-down sequence of a standard star point joseki, note several things. First, the final connection is done on the outside. It must be carefully decided in advance if white wants to connect at 'a', because at least the ladder should work for white when black cuts the outside. However, in this diagram, if black now cuts at 'a' white will connect his stone, and if black now moves at 'b', white will attack the 2 floating black stones. White can attack those stones easily since in theory he has a strong center before choosing to play this way.

8.3.5 Star Point Joseki A ex. 2

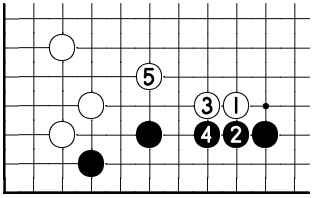


This press-down is slightly different. Notice that white connects by default on the left side now. If black cuts, white can simply extend.

8.3.6 Star Point Joseki A ex. 3

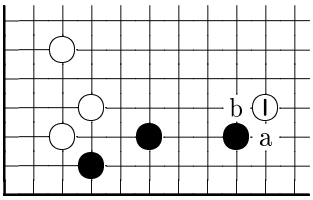


White can also play this way, depending on the situation. This might be useful in a custom press-down sequence as shown below:

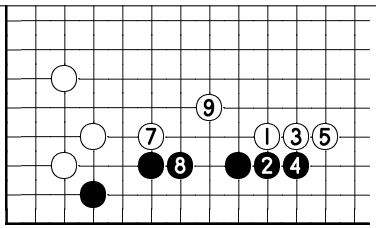


So far we have discussed standard approaches from the inside center. Now let us discuss from the outside center.

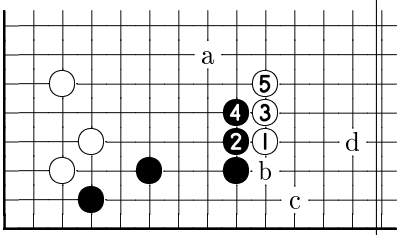
8.3.7 Star Point shoulder hit variations



White one, against the group or against a lone stone, is known as the "shoulder hit". Black has two basic choices: a, for territory, and b, for the center. Both are local joseki, but you must decide what to play based on the whole board.



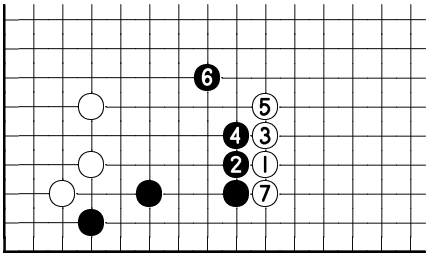
Black 6 elsewhere



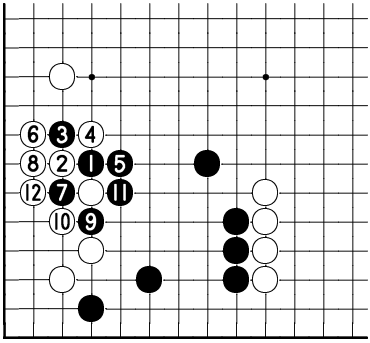
In the follow up to black sliding under, white will simply extend and if the idea behind the shoulder hit was to build a wall facing the center, it was a success. Note that it is not usually necessary to play here right away. But if white gets the chance and his potential in the center is good, white has the follow-up press down at 7! So, the shoulder hit can in fact work on several areas at once. Play this way at the right time and black will be dumbfounded. Play like this at the wrong time and your position will be too thin to survive.

In the second variation above, black pushes up with 2. In this situation, after three pushes black can choose 'a', in which case white is likely to move 'b' or

tenuki. Alternately black might play at 'c', in which case white is likely to play at 'd' (or one line farther), jump out, or even tenuki depending on the configuration of stones in the lower right. Why would black choose to jump out or to slide down? If white played the ikken tobi variation (Star Point Joseki B) then black might choose to jump out with a knight's move. If white played the knight's move variation (Star Point Joseki A) then black might slide under. It is a matter of taste, but some heed must be paid.



Assume this standard sequence has been played. Now that black has moved 6, if white moves at 7, it is a big point, but black also has a trick up his sleeve to even the score.



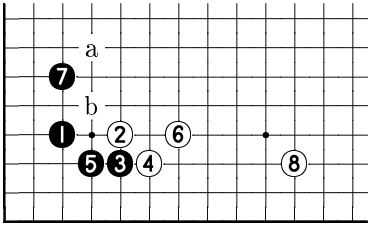
Here, white has been pressed into a low position and black's group is a little safer. If white had not extended from the star point with an ikken tobi, then black might not feel the need to move at h7(a), and would move at l2(c) from diagram x instead. instead.

8.4 Reduction Techniques

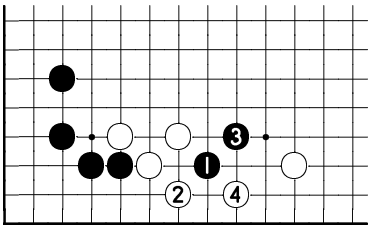
There exists another type of tactic, reduction techniques. As with press down, what is gained and lost really depends on the whole board situation. This section

exists only to show you a few of the tactical possibilities you can look for when deciding your strategy. Try them out on the goban, and you may be pleasantly surprised!

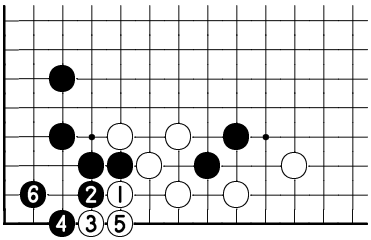
8.4.1 Komoku Joseki A reduction 1



Do you remember this diagram? Yes, it shows some points where white may press down on black. However, since this is a joseki, isn't it true that black should also be able to attack white later on, if it is a part of his strategy?

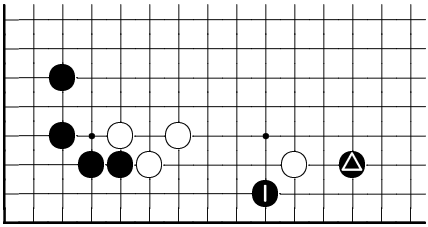


Yes, black 1 can escape and live. However, since white moves 2, black automatically lost 7 points in the corner. Why? First, although black can reduce some of white's territory, later on white can perform the following endgame sequence in sente:

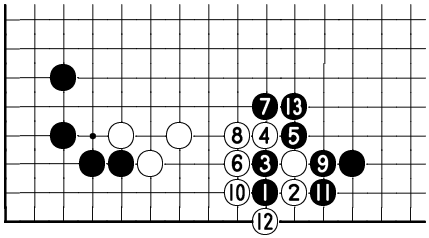


So one must ask, before moving black 1 above, is it really worth it? If there is a black stone one or two spaces to the right of white's extension, then the answer is usually yes! But if you have no reason for moving here, what would the point be?

8.4.2 Komoku Joseki A reduction 2

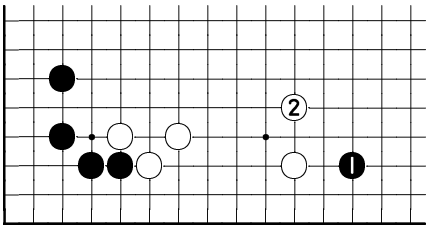


even in the first variation (at h3) it is best to have a stone in the marked position before trying the reduction. This technique shown above at j2 can be sup rising. If white moves on top, then obviously black will connect underneath. But if white tries to capture the stone...



black has sente

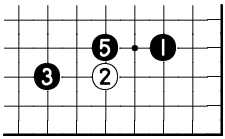
Black's original stone was poisoned. No matter how white plays he will get an inferior result. Either he will become nearly completely enclosed, or lose most of his territory! In addition, black can choose to take sente with 13, depending on the position. This is not good for white.



So, when black approaches white's position, this stone, white should jump out. Better safe than sorry!

8.5 Ignoring the Pincer

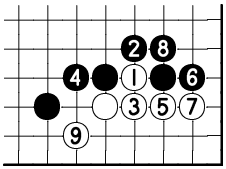
Although this is probably better placed separately in sections related to the individual josekis involved, I wish to discuss the general technique here.



White 4 and 6: Tenuki

When white plays 2 in another area of the board, the opponent often has a heart attack and, overjoyed, plays on top of ② right away. Unperturbed, white again plays tenuki with ⑥. The key is that white gets two moves in another area of the board while it looks like black spends three moves to attack one little stone in the lower right corner.

If white is a quick study, he can understand why black spending so many stones to attack that white stone could be considered small. It is not often that you should ignore two moves from your opponent in another area of the board! So at this point black is likely to ignore the situation in the lower right. As white has played two moves in another area of the board, he is likely to end up with sente later on. At the proper time, he can then return to the lower right.



Notice that white is able to make a reasonable life for the situation, although black has completely surrounded him. Considering that this is ok for the situation, white will often not wedge in at 1 right away, but first build a position near the star point on the right side. The weight of the possibility of white 1 above often induces black to spend a fourth move in the corner to attack one stone - very inefficient!

If, above, black does not protect the cut at 8, white can cut right away to escape.

8.6 Conclusion

To conclude this rather long and boring chapter, please remember the following important points. Joseki teach us the basic fighting tactics of the middle game.

Most joseki have weaknesses as shown above which can be exploited at the right time. The key is, of course, not to attack your opponent too early. For if you do, you will only make him stronger and gain nothing for yourself. These tactics are to be employed in the context of a larger strategy, and not to be played without careful thought!

Appendix A

Glossary of Technical Terms

This section contains a list of all the technical terms of Go mentioned in this Book along with a short description of what they mean. Japanese technical terms have been given preference due to their high visibility in existing English Go literature.

Technical	English
atari	to reduce a group of stones to one move before capture
chuban	the middle game; the stage after the *fuseki* has been played.
d	same as *dan*; a rank of **4d** is the same as saying **4 dan**.
dan	advanced skill levels: 1 dan to 9 dan
damezumari	shortage of liberties; a common mistake made in reading
fuseki	whole board opening sequence, usually comprised of several *joseki*.
geta	net - a shape from which one cannot escape
goban	the board upon which go is played
hane	A diagonal move which 'bends around' an enemy stone.
ikken tobi	one space jump
joseki	a sequence of moves, usually in the corner, which produces an even res
k	same as *kyu*; a rank of **23k** is the same as saying **23 kyu**.
kakari	approach move
ko	repeating sequence rule.
komi	extra points given as compensation, usually $\frac{1}{2}$ or $6\frac{1}{2}$
kosumi	diagonal move
kyu	beginner skill levels: 30 kyu to 1 kyu
miai	if two moves are miai, then if you take one, he will take the other
nikken tobi	two space jump
nobi	extension from a stone

nozoki	peep
ponnuki	death star; shape made by four stones capturing one stone
seki	dual life
shicho	ladder
tengen	the spot in the center of the board (e5 on 9x9)
tesuji	skillful move
tsuke	to attach against a single stone
tsumego	Go puzzles which train your reading skills
yose	Endgame; A settling of groups and territory at the end of the game.

Appendix B

Tsumego

You may have noticed that this book does not contain a section on Tsumego as the first book did. I could have included a section on Tsumego, but I would never have had enough room to include a satisfactory number of go problems. Instead, I strongly reccomend that you download and install a program such as Go Grinder (http://gogrinder.sourceforge.net/), and then download some of the problem sets available for it. An example would be the goproblems.com archive, which is freely available on the goproblems.com website. However, the original problems you can download are unsorted, and there are many errors when trying to use them with a tsumego drilling program...

I have therefore taken the liberty of unoficially editing and organizing the tsumego from goproblems.com for use with Go Grinder. Look for the Usagi Edition of goproblems.com. Only the life and death tsumego have been included, and all problems have been checked for validity and worthiness of study. In addition, the tsumego have been sorted into sets of around 20 to 30 problems each, perfect for studying tsumego in your spare time every day.

Appendix C

This book is not finished yet!

This book is free, and intended to help spread and popularize Go.

But it is not quite finished yet. I would sincerely appreciate it if you could help me.

If you could spend some time and rate each chapter on a scale of 1 to 10 based on how interesting and useful it was, and then send me an email, I would be eternally grateful. Also, please make sure you have the latest version of the book before you send any corrections! Thanks.