

Contents for Kalah Help

Kalah is an ancient game of skill and strategy that you play against your computer. To learn more about the game, select a topic below. To learn how to use Help, press F1.

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Playing Kalah

Kalah is an ancient game of skill and strategy played by two players. It is known around the world by various names (Mancala, Mankala'h, Pallanguli, Kalah, Wari, Awari, etc.). In this version, you play against the computer.

The game consists of a board with two sides on it, one beside the other. Each player controls one side of the board.

Each side contains seven areas. Six of the areas are called pits. They contain the points that the players compete for. The seventh area is called a kalah. Each kalah contains the total points for a side. Kalahs are initially empty.

The object of Kalah is to accumulate more points in your kalah than your opponent accumulates in the other kalah.

To accumulate points in your kalah, during your turn you select a nonempty pit on your side of the board. Points are then distributed around the board in a counterclockwise direction according to the rules.

The game ends when all the pits on one player's side are empty, or when one player's kalah contains a majority of the points.

Moving First

At the beginning of a new game, you may move first by selecting a pit on either side of the board. After your turn, the computer will select a pit from the other side of the board. From then on, each player may only select pits from their own side of the board.

If you prefer to have the computer move first, select Pass from the **Game** menu. The computer will select a pit from one side of the board. The other side of the board becomes your side. During your turn, you must select a pit from this side only.

Passing Your Turn

Select **Pass** from the **Game** menu, if you prefer to have the computer move first at the beginning of a new game.

Selecting a Move

To select a move, move the mouse pointer to a nonempty pit on your side of the board. The pointer will change from an arrow to a cross to show a valid move. To choose a pit, click the mouse.

Alternatively, use the keyboard by pressing the Tab key repeatedly to cycle among the valid moves. Then, to choose a pit, press the Enter key.

Starting a New Game

Select **New** from the **Game** menu, to initialize the board and start a new game.

Rules for Kalah

- Players alternate turns.
- If your last point during a distribution lands in your kalah, you receive an **extra** turn.
- If your last point during a distribution lands in an empty pit on your side of the board, you receive that point plus **all** the points in your opponents opposite pit.
- The game ends when one player's kalah contains a majority of points, or when all the pits on one player's side are empty.
- At the end of the game, **all** remaining points on each player's side are added to the player's kalah.

Strategies for Kalah

Try to select moves which give you extra turns.

Try to select moves which allow you to capture points from your opponents side of the board.

\K\footnote strategies; strategies, extra turn; strategies, capturing opponents points; strategies, clearing the boardIf all else fails, it *may* be a good idea to somehow clear your opponents side of the board, thus ending the game.

Using Hints

To get a hint about what move might be your best move, select **Hint** from the **Help** menu. The *best* move will be marked.

To accept the hint, select the marked area.

To ignore the hint, select another move.

