

TAKO  
(take-o)  
by Chuck Henry

OBJECT OF GAME: The player to make the last legal move wins.

EQUIPMENT:

- Two players
- 22 stones (Not required - see Alternate equipment section.)
- 1, 6 sided die
- 1 coin

START: Make two piles of 11 stones. Each player rolls the die. Whoever rolls the highest value makes the first move.

PLAY: Each player starts his/her turn by flipping a coin. If the coin lands heads up then the turn must be TAKO HI. And if the coin lands tails up the turn must be TAKO LO. TAKO HI and TAKO LO affect how many stones the player can remove from each pile in this turn. Then the player rolls the die and makes note of the value. Next the player must make a legal move. Legal moves consist of:

1. Taking any number of stones from one pile.
2. Taking an equal number of stones from both piles.
3. Using an option move.

If TAKO HI is encountered the value of the die roll is the maximum number of stones that can be taken away from the piles. IE: The coin lands face up, so it is TAKO HI. The dice roll is 5. The player now can take 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 stones away from one pile. Or the player can take 2 from one pile and 2 from the other(2+2=4). The total number of stones taken CANNOT exceed the number on the die. BUT, the number of stones taken can be less than the number on the die. IE: The dice roll is 5. The player could take 1 from one pile and 1 from the other(1+1=2).

If TAKO LO is encountered the value of the die is the minimum amount of stones that can be taken away. IE: The dice roll is 3. The player must remove AT LEAST 3 stones from the piles. The player can remove all 3 from a single pile or remove 2 from one pile and 2 from the other(2+2=4). The number of stones removed CAN BE more than the number on the die.

OPTION MOVES are special moves that can be used during the course of the game only once. The two option moves are:

1. Pass your turn; Your coin toss and dice roll are passed on to the other player and he/she must choose a move.
2. Add a stone; the player can add one stone to one of the piles.

NOTE: Each player can only make one pass and add one stone during the game. IE: The player chooses to pass his turn, the player now can no longer take this option again. He/She, however can take the other option move at a

later time.

The players alternate taking turns until one player can no longer make any legal move. Each player must have at least one turn. This prevents the first player from taking all the Stones in the first turn.

#### GAME ORDER:

- I. Determine who starts.
  1. Player with highest dice value starts.
- II. Player must flip the coin.
  1. Heads- TAKO HI (stones taken must be lower the dice roll)
  2. Tails- TAKO LO (stones taken must be greater than dice roll)
- III. Roll the die.
  1. Number on die must be noted.
- IV. IV. Player must choose one of following moves:
  1. Take any number of stones from one pile.
  2. Take an equal number of stones from both piles.
  3. Use an option move.
    1. Pass.
    2. Add a stone.
- V. Next player's turn.
  1. Player starts at II.

#### SAMPLE GAME:

Chuck Henry (CH) and Jackie Kilmer (JK) start by rolling the die. CH rolls a 1 and JK rolls a 4. JK will start.

Number taken from pile

Player	TAKO	Die roll	#1	#2
JK	TAKO LO	1	2	2
CH	TAKO HI	1	1	
JK	TAKO HI	6		2
CH	TAKO LO	1	4	
JK	TAKO HI	1	1	
CH	TAKO HI	4		2
JK	TAKO LO	3	2	2
CH	TAKO LO	6	MOVE PASSED.	
JK	.	.	MOVE COUNTER-PASSED.	
CH	.	.	STONE ADDED TO PILE #1	
JK	TAKO LO	2	1	1
CH	TAKO LO	4	NO MOVE POSSIBLE	

JK WINS

ALTERNATE EQUIPMENT: The playing stones are not required. The players may draw 22 circles in 2 groups of 11 on a piece of paper. Then the players cross out the circles instead of taking the stones out. The game setup

would look like:

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Other helpful suggestions that have come from play-testing are a piece of paper should be used in order to keep track of who has used what option moves. Or maybe two pennies, each symbolizing a pass option, and two dimes, symbolizing a add-stone option could be used instead of using paper. Then each player would get one penny and one dime.

#### VARIATIONS:

**TAKO ADEPT:** To spice up play if the game becomes dull for experienced players; use a 10 sided die instead of a 6 sided. Also, if the players can find a pyramid shaped die(which has three outcomes), use it instead of the coin. The number 1 would be TAKO HI. The number 2 would be TAKO LO. The number 3 would mean no restrictions. This would allow the players to any move they liked without worrying about TAKOs.

**BETTING TAKO:** If the player feel in the betting mood, replace the stones with quarters(or dimes, pennies - whatever!) The players then must both put up an equal amount of coins. One player makes one pile and the other player makes the other pile. The number of coins in each pile **MUST** be an odd one. IE: 5 coins, 7 coins, 11 coins or 15 coins in each pile are acceptable. The players then keep the coins they remove from each pile. At the end of the game, whoever wins the game then gets to take half of the coins the other player has accumulated during the game. Always round up if the number has a remainder. IE: The loser has 7 coins, so the winner takes 4 coins from him/her. Seven divided by two is three point five.

Three point five rounded up is four.

**HISTORY:** I based this game on a pen and paper game called Tsianshidsi. The original game I fell in love with and play extensively. Then I discovered one flaw: There is a strategy which allows Tsianshidsi players to win **EVERY** time, if allowed to go first. This, I used many times to sucker my friends. Eventually they figured out I was cheating and stopped playing the game with me. So in order to play my favorite game again, I came up with the TAKO rules to even the odds. Now, the chances of following the cheat strategy perfectly are reduced enormously.

**NOTE:** For all those interested, the cheat strategy is **NOT** included in this document. I figured you should have the fun of discovering what it is (Ha Ha)

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