



Play Go!

"It's not fun and games until you
poke somebody's eye out."

Beginner's Guide to Learning Go through Hikarunix

1) On your desktop you'll see an icon for **Learn to Play**. This will bring up Hiroki Mori's "The Interactive Way To Go". Click on this link and go through the entire tutorial. Depending on your computer it may take awhile for Firefox to load up the first time so please be patient.

2) If you find yourself getting bored or distracted take a look at "The Way to Go" by Karl Baker. You can access it by double clicking on the **Go Documents**. It's a great introduction to the game and rules and it's only 26 pages.

Whenever you feel ready for a game move on to step 3, but I do recommend finishing both Mori's tutorial and Baker's book and some point.

3) Play a 9x9 game against GNU Go. Double click on the **GNU Go** icon on the desktop. Choose a board size of 9, komi of 0 (don't worry about what komi is yet), handicap 5, Black: human.

4) The board will pop up and you will already have 5 pieces on the board. The computer will move and you get to go next. When you can beat GNU Go with a 5 stone handicap try a handicap of 4, then 3 and so on. Eventually try a board that's 13x13.

5) At some point when you feel comfortable with the rules read through "EZ-Go" by Bruce and Sue Wilcox from **Go Documents**. There's a lot of good initial strategy in there for beginners.

6) When you're ready, move on to playing humans on the internet. This is when your learning will really begin.

Beginners Tips

A couple of tips. Don't get overwhelmed or feel like you will always lose at the game. It takes time and requires patience. Take it one step at a time and go as slowly as you need to. The game gets more fun the more you learn and you should be having fun. If you aren't, then stop, and try again in a couple of days or months or years.

Some things that helped me get over that huge beginners hump.

- Don't play 9x9 or 13x13 for too long. They are only good for learning the rules, but eventually they won't help you much when you play a real game. Play 19x19 as soon as possible.
- Take a break from study and do fun things like reading Hikaru No Go for inspiration.
- Take some time to explore some of the bookmarks in Firefox.
- Everyone will tell you to play stronger players. I agree, but every now and then it will help your self esteem to kick the butt of some newbie that just learned the rules.
- Play slower games on <http://www.dragongoserver.net>. Even just one move a day keeps you in the game.
- Finally remember the Go proverb "Lose your first 100 games as quickly as possible". It's expected and is exactly how you'll really learn the game. Just get it over with, be courteous and have fun.

Thanks for supporting the Hikarunix project and welcome to world of Go!

Sincerely,

Karl Sigler
karl.sigler@hikarunix.org
<http://www.hikarunix.org>