# grow21 - a competitive two player game

requirements + set up

two players. a playing surface. a deck of 52 playing cards.
separate the deck into two decks of 26, one with only red and one with only black cards. each player chooses a color. the red player shuffles the black cards and vice versa. each deck is placed face-down in front of the respective player. the decks remain face-down at all times.

play

red begins by placing the top card from her deck face-up in the center of the playing surface. players take turns. on each player's turn, the top card of their deck is revealed and placed edge-adjacent to any card on the playing surface. grey fields show the possible card placements.
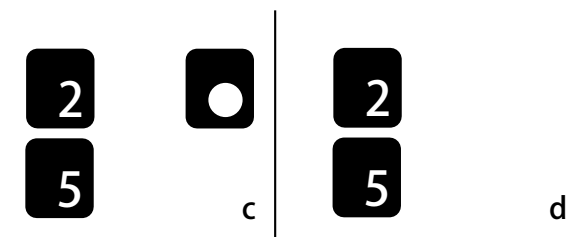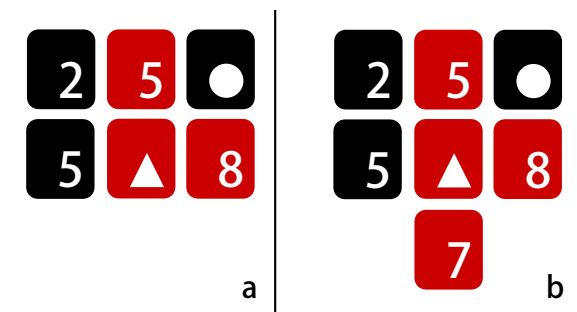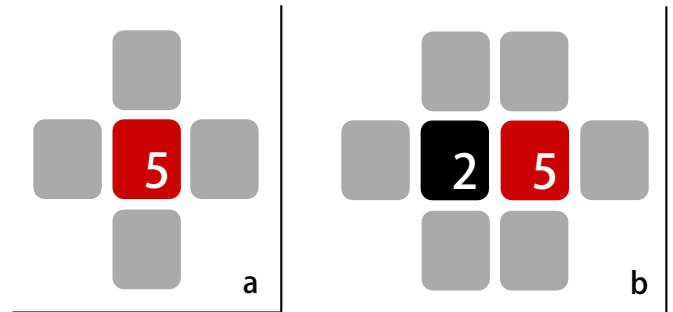
goal

edge-adjacent cards of the same color form a group. fig a shows 3 groups, black 2/5, black ●, and red 5/8/▲. the goal is to form stable groups that sum to exactly 21 points (fig b). cards count as they do in blackjack (2-10, ●s represent face cards and are 10, ▲s represent aces and count as 1 or 11). once a stable group has been formed, the group is removed from the play surface, placed face-down on the discard pile, and the player receives 10 points. if removal (fig c) results in separated groups that are no longer all edge-adjacent, then only the group with the most cards (not the most points) survives (fig d). all other cards are placed face-down on the discard pile. if there is no single group with the most cards, the player who removed the stable group decides which group survives.

change

instead of laying the revealed card edge-adjacent, if the current card is numbered, the player can choose to place it on top of an existing numbered card of the same color to raise or lower that card's value by at most 1 point. e.g. a 7 (or a 5) can be placed on top of a 6. a number card can also be placed on top of and thus replace any face card of the same color. if a stable group is formed as a result of the change, the removal rules described above apply.
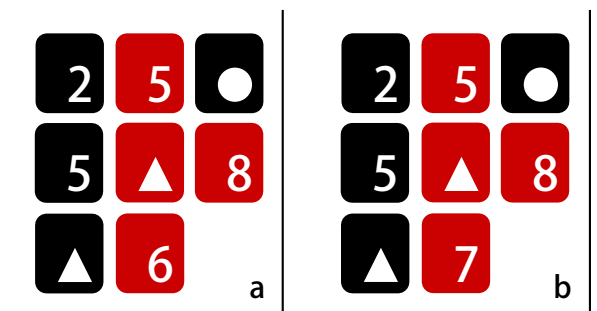
end

after all 52 cards have been placed, the game is over. if the game is tied, then groups that sum to 20 or 22 are worth 5 points. groups that sum to 19 or 23 are worth 2 points. all other groups are not counted.

grow21 is a minimalist game - inspired by blackjack and go - created by andy nealen and rupert helbig