

Polarity™ Rules

by Temple Games, Inc.

Polarity includes:

- canvas play mat
- 52 black and white discs
- 1 red center disc
- durable carry bag
- rules

NOTE: *Polarity contains magnets. Do not allow the magnets to come in contact with anything that could be damaged by magnetic fields.*

How Polarity is Played

Polarity is, at its heart, a very simple game, though it can be tricky to understand if you've never played it before. Below is a summary of how to actually play a game—read this before you read the rest of the rules and things should become much clearer!

The key to Polarity is to try and play all of your discs to the table, but you need to do things in a certain order. First, you need a disc laying on the mat—this is called a Foundation Disc, and each player begins the game with five. On your first turn, you'll need to place another disc (a Leaner) near a Foundation Disc. These are the discs that really make Polarity unique, as Leaners will “float” on the Foundation Disc's magnetic cushion (see the illustration to the right for an example). Once you have at least one Leaner, you'll want to begin converting Leaners to Foundation Discs. To do this, use the magnetic field of a disc in your hand to force a Leaner to fall flat on the table. Many players get hung up on this, as it is technically a “Fault” and ends your turn, but this is key to winning the game, as it gives you more pieces to play off of! Once you've converted a Leaner to a Foundation Disc, you can now play another Leaner off of it, which you can then convert, and so on.

Once you have this down, you can delve deeper into the strategies of Polarity, many of which include trying to force your opponent to make Faults that are not advantageous to him or her, unlike the conversion mentioned above.

Object of Polarity

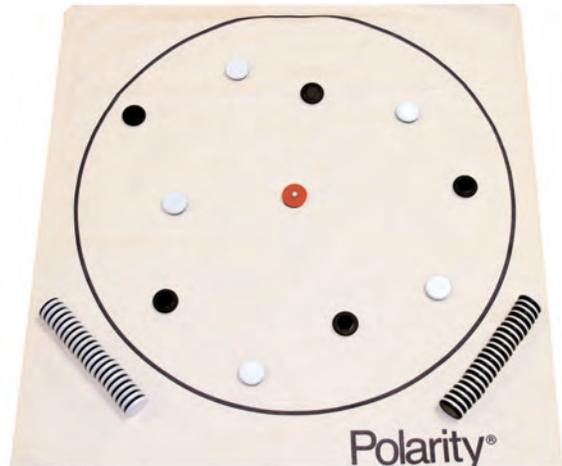
Play all of your discs to the play mat and gain as many points as you can. Place your own discs in places that will make it difficult for your opponent to place his or her own, causing him or her to mess up and let you capture discs and form Towers.

Setup

1. Lay the canvas play mat out on a sturdy level surface. Avoid surfaces that have metal in or around them.
2. Set aside the red disc. Take the 52 black and white discs and divide them evenly into two stacks of 26 discs. Give one stack to each player.
3. One player should take the red disc and flip it in the air (like flipping a coin). The other player calls “bar” or “dot” while it is in the air. Whoever wins the flip chooses whether he or she will play White (plays first) or Black (plays second).
4. Place the red disc on the dot in the middle of the play mat with the result of the flip showing.
5. Starting with white, each player places his or her Foundation Discs. See below for more information.

Foundation Discs

Foundation Discs are one of the most basic aspects of Polarity. When you begin the game (after colors have been determined and the red disc is on the mat) White takes five discs from his or her stack and places them on the board with the white side showing. These discs can be placed anywhere inside the circle, providing that they do not touch another disc (including the red disc). Once White is done, then Black takes five discs and places them, using the same guidelines but with the black side showing. Once all ten Foundation Discs are on the board, the game begins.



Game Play

Starting with White and alternating, each player places one disc from his or her stack onto the Polarity play mat. This disc is called the Action Disc and must always be played with your color upward and can only be played on your own discs. However, unlike the way that the players placed Foundation Discs while setting up, a player may not merely lay the Action Disc down on the play mat. Instead, players need to use the forces of magnetism to make the Action Disc float in the air, resting on a magnetic cushion provided by other discs. When they do this, they are called Leaners.

You may take as much time as needed to play your Action Disc—it may take a couple of tries to get the Action Disc to rest on the magnetic field of another disc. If the Action Disc falls flat, try again. However, if while trying to place the Action Disc you cause other discs to react in some way—such as two discs snapping together or another disc falling—your turn immediately ends (see the Faults section if this happens).

Leaners (aka “standing discs”)

Leaners use the magnetic fields of the existing Foundation Discs (and later in the game Towers) to “float” in the air. To place a Leaner, hold the Action Disc in your hand, your color facing upward. Holding the disc at about a 45-degree angle, slowly move it toward one of your Foundation Discs. FEEL your way toward the magnetic force that your disc in hand and the Foundation Disc will naturally create as the discs get close to each other. There is a magnetic cushion-like area between the discs upon which Leaners will hover.



Towers

Towers consist of two or more discs stacked on top of each other that score points at the end of the game. They are the result of Faults that have been captured. Once there are Towers in play, you can play Leaners off of them just as you would play them off of a single-disc Foundation Disc.

Faults (aka creating a reaction)

If you're trying to place the Action Disc and you cause other discs to react, then you've created a Fault and your turn ends. These reactions include:

- Causing two or more discs that were not touching to touch each other
- Making an already-placed Leaner fall and lay flat on the play mat
- Having a disc on the play mat snap up onto the Action Disc
- Making a Foundation Disc or Tower move more than its diameter
- Making a disc in play move entirely outside the circle (out of bounds)

Any Faults that occur before your opponent brings his or her hand into the circle count against you.

After a Fault Has Been Created

Once a player creates a Fault, that player's turn ends and the Action Disc, if still in hand, returns to the unplayed stack. Then one or more things can happen:

- If the Fault caused Leaners to fall to the play mat, and those discs are not touching other discs, those discs are left where they landed. However, if an opponent's Leaner is flipped over to your color, your opponent gets to capture that disc.
- If the Fault caused discs to snap together onto the Action Disc that was still in hand, then that player adds those discs to his unplayed stack.
- If the Fault caused discs to snap together on the play mat, then the opponent gets to capture these discs.
- If the Fault caused a Foundation Disc or Tower to move more than its diameter but no discs are touching, nothing further happens.
- If the Fault causes discs to be moved entirely outside the circle, then that player adds those discs to his or her unplayed stack.

Capturing Faults

At the beginning of your turn, if any discs are connected together due to a Fault (excluding previously captured Towers), then you must attempt to capture them before you make your normal turn, even if they are already in Tower form.

To capture, grab one disc or Tower section of the Fault and lift it off the play mat so that the other discs in the Fault snap up and form a Tower of discs in your hand. Then place the new Tower anywhere on the play mat (within the circle) with your color facing up. If the Fault is already completely in Tower form with your color upward, you may leave it where it is and declare it captured.

NOTE: Capturing must be done without causing another Fault. If another Fault is created, that player's turn ends and the normal Fault rules apply. Discs that become separated from the capture attempt cause a new Fault.

Conversions

Sometimes it can be to your advantage to create Faults. A player can use the Action Disc to force a Leaner down to the table, creating another Foundation Disc. This is called a conversion. To create a conversion, carefully approach your Leaner from above with the Action Disc. Once the Leaner falls flat, quickly remove your hand so that you do not create any additional Faults. Your turn immediately ends (as you have caused a disc to fall, which is a Fault), but you now have another Foundation Disc to play on.

Winning the Game

The game ends when one player is out of discs in their stack. To determine the winner, count the number of discs that each player has in their Towers (not Foundation Discs or Leaners). From this number, subtract any discs that a player has left in their hand. The player with the most points wins!

Also, a player immediately loses if he or she:

- causes any disc to touch the red disc.
- causes the red disc to move completely off the center dot.
- has no discs on the play mat with his or her color showing.

Polarity on the Web

Want play tips, a downloadable strategy guide with illustrated moves, an active player community, and more? Visit us online at www.polaritygame.com.

Credits

Game design by Douglas Seaton

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