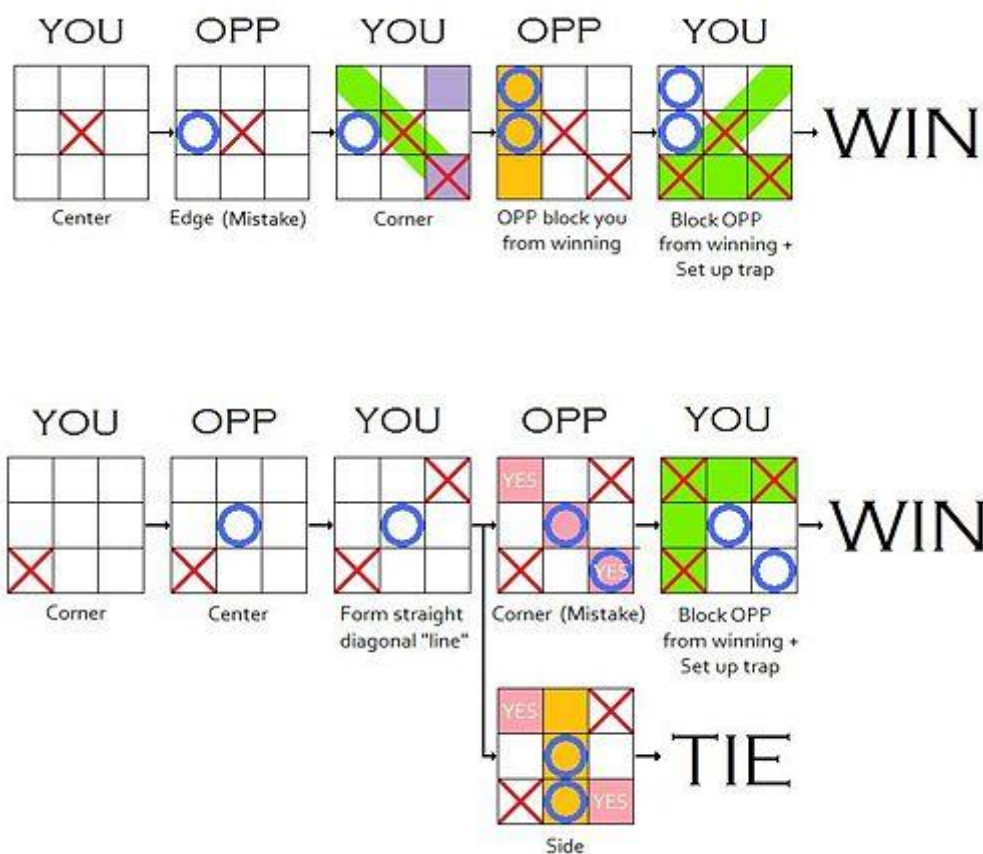


## ATTACKS, DEFENCES AND THREATS

A **THREAT** means a threat to deliver **CHECKMATE**, to capture a piece for nothing, or to capture a stronger piece with a weaker piece. If your opponent's last move creates a **THREAT** you **MUST** either meet the **THREAT** or reply with an equal or greater **THREAT**.

A **THREAT** to win a piece can be **DEFENDED** in several ways: by moving the **THREATENED** piece to a safe square, by **DEFENDING** the **THREATENED** piece, by **CAPTURING** the piece creating the **THREAT** or by **BLOCKING** the **THREAT**.

Think of the simple game of Noughts and Crosses...



Here, if you create a **THREAT** your opponent should block it.

If you create a **DOUBLE THREAT** you will win the game.

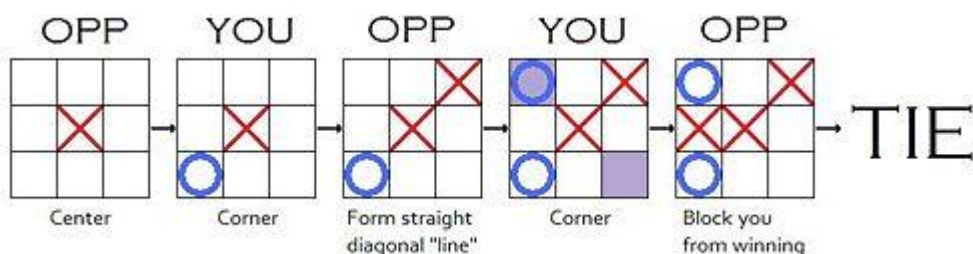
This is what chess is all about underneath, and when we build on top, it takes us into the world of **STRATEGIES** and **TACTICS**... S { ^\_^}Z

## LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE STRATEGY FOR WINNING NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

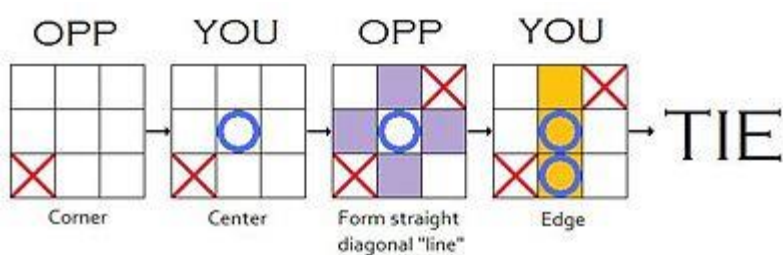
### *If Your Opponent Goes First*

Consider your strategy based on their first move. Your opponent will choose to place it at the **centre** or **corners**.

- ✓ If they mark the centre, you must mark a corner immediately, as shown in the diagram.
- ✓ Put your next mark in any square that's not next to your first mark. Then it's just a matter of blocking until a tie is reached.



- ✓ If they mark any other squares, simply block them. You will end up in a tie.
- ✓ If they mark a corner, you must mark the centre or you will lose against a good opponent.
- ✓ After you mark the centre, they have two choices.
- ✓ If they place their mark such that all the marks will form a straight diagonal line, mark any edges and avoid marking any corner. You will end up in a tie.

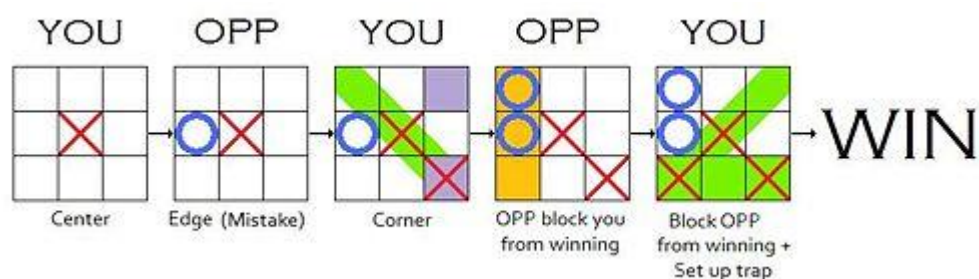


- ✓ Otherwise, just counter-attack their moves and you will have a tie.

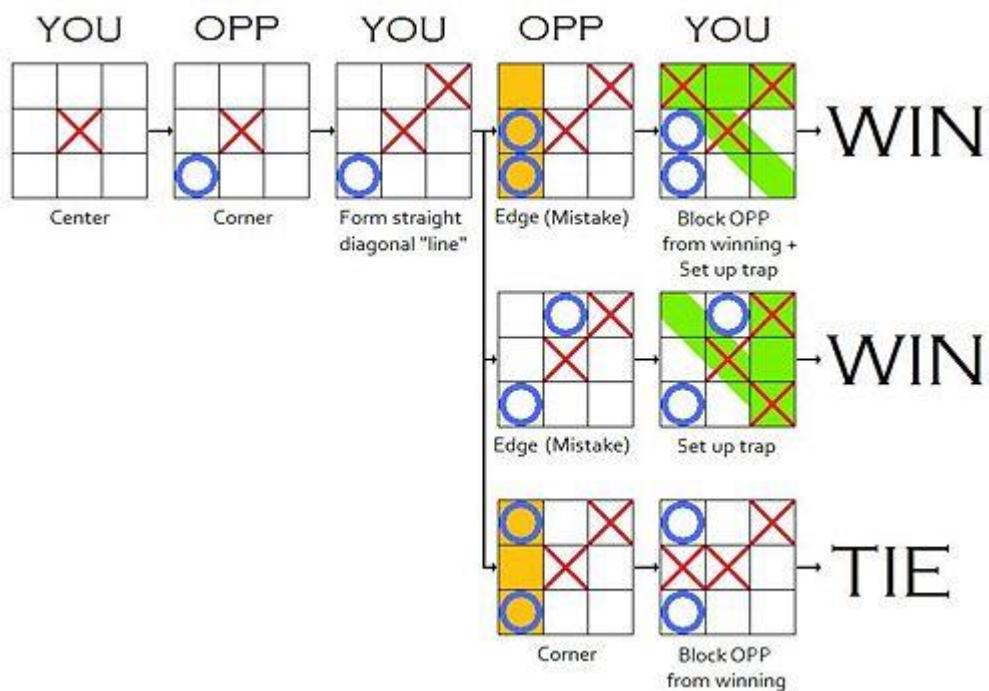
## If You Go First

**Make your first move.** If you are the first player, you have two choices. You can either mark the **centre** or a **corner** square. Avoid marking the other four squares, which are also known as **edge squares**. The steps for each case will be given below.

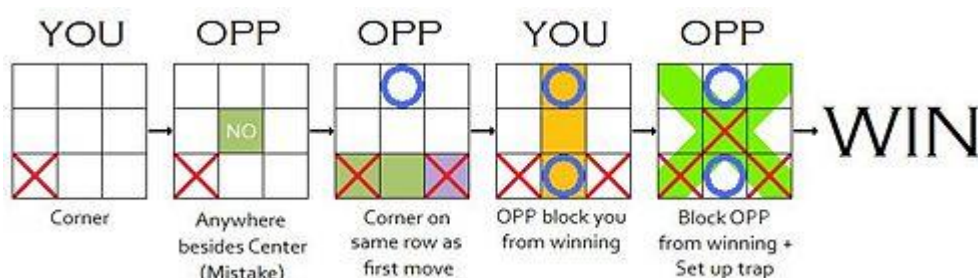
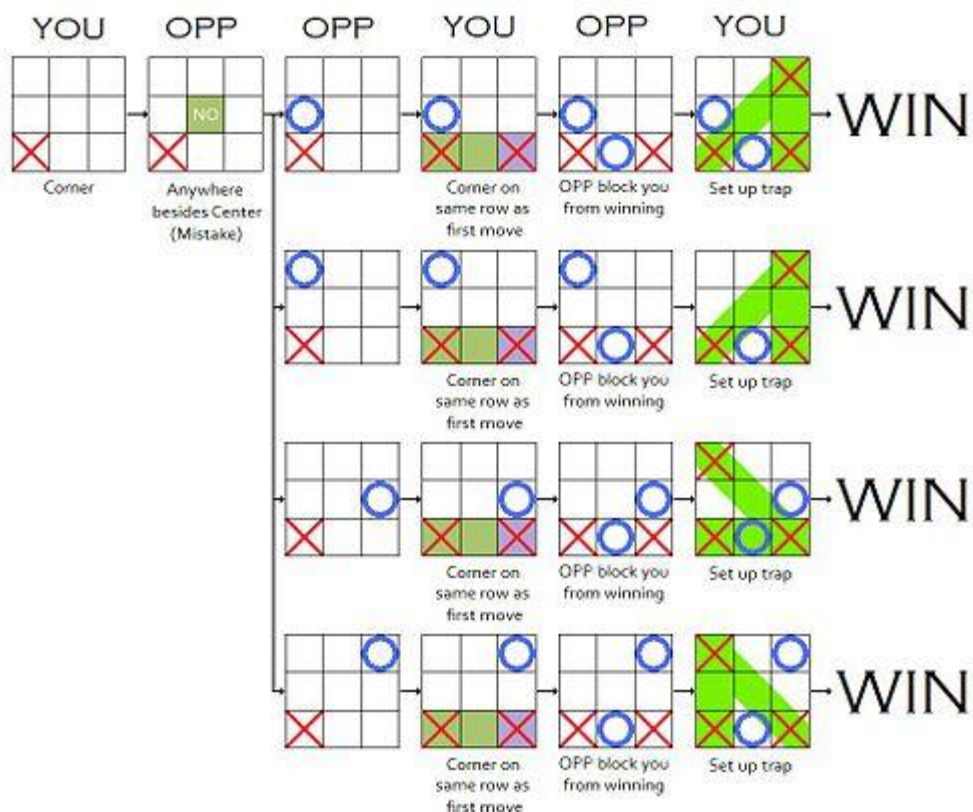
- ✓ If you mark the centre as your first move, the opponent will then either mark a corner or the edges.
- ✓ If they mark an **edge**, put your next mark in any of the two corners furthest from their mark, as shown in the diagram below as shaded squares. If they block your attempt to win, you are on your way to winning! Just simply block their own attempt to win by placing your mark in that particular corner and you will be in a position where you will have **two** chances of winning, as described in the diagram as two straight green lines. But if they didn't block you, you will still win anyway!



- ✓ If they mark a **corner**, you should place your mark in such a way that all three marks will form a straight diagonal line (your mark in the opposite corner box as theirs), as shown. If their next move is on an edge, you will have **two** chances of winning, as described by the two **highlighted** lines in the diagram. Other than that, you will end up in a tie (if you keep counter-attacking them).



- ✓ If you mark a corner square as your first move, there will be two potential responses by your opponent. They will either mark the centre or one of the other squares.
- ✓ If they chose to mark the other squares, you can win. Find the square in which you made your first move. There should be a horizontal row and a vertical row of squares that contain it. Pick a row that doesn't contain your opponent's move. Make your second move in the corner that is part of your selected row.
- ✓ Now it's time to trick your opponent. Look to see if you can win immediately or if you should counter-attack in the centre. If you can win right now, make the winning move! If you need to go in the centre, then do so and create a situation where you can win in two different places. If you don't have to do either of these things, then go in another corner. Again, you have created two ways to win at the same time!



- ✓ If they mark the centre, you will mark in such a way that all the three marks will form a straight diagonal line, as shown in the diagram. They will then have a choice of marking the corner or the other squares.
- ✓ If they **(a)** mark a corner, you are well on the way to winning! Mark the last corner, as shown in the diagram. You will have two chances of winning, as described in the diagram as two straight green lines. However, if they **(b)** mark any other squares, the best scenario is a tie, assuming you keep counter-attacking.