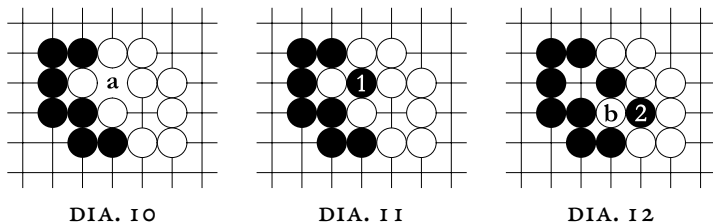


4.3 The two-step ko fight

The two-step ko fight – sometimes called the two-stage ko fight – is a relatively common variant of the normal ko. In the two-step ko, when a player captures one stone, a second ko shape is formed on the board.

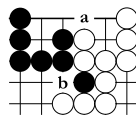
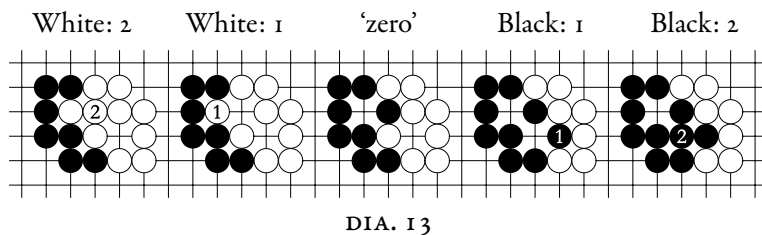


DIA. 10 shows a standard two-step ko shape. If White plays a move at 'a', the position is finished, with White securing one point of territory.

If Black captures with 'a', we move on to DIA. 11. There, Black has scored one point in the form of a captured stone, and the newly created position is symmetrical. Thus, not counting the captured stone, the net score is zero.

If Black gets to capture one more stone with ② in DIA. 12, we have the reverse shape of DIA. 10 on the board. If Black then gets to add one more stone at 'b', he secures one point of territory in addition to his earlier two captures.

Where a regular ko fight has four possible states (including when either player connects the ko), a two-step ko has five. DIA. 13 illustrates how the net score changes between different states of the two-step ko. We can see that any move in the regular two-step ko is worth one point.



Black 'a' and 'b' are also one-point moves.