



PipQuest

Find the Winning Move

A SPARK & ANVIL STRATEGY BOOK

PipQuest — Find the Best Play

A Story Time–style strategy puzzle workbook — every position is drawn from the app's shipped, engine-verified tactics bank. No position is made up.

About this book

Part of the **Pipquest** Companion Book Program. Free to download and print under **CC BY-NC-SA 4.0**. Every puzzle is a real, engine-verified tactic — solve it, then turn the page to check your move and the reason it works.

Contents

1. Hit the Blot
2. Count the Race
3. The Cube

How to use this book

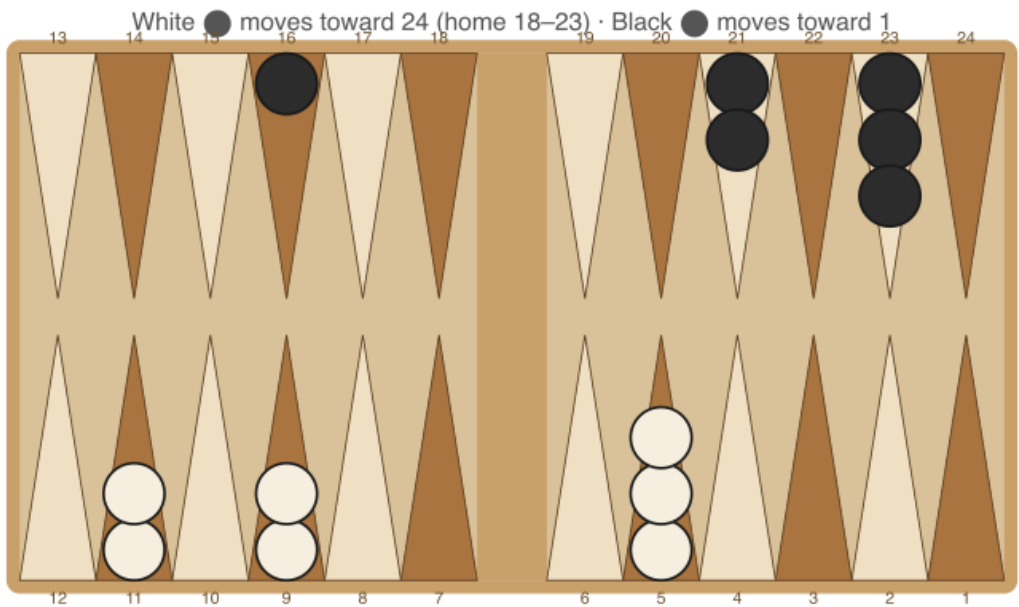
This book has three kinds of backgammon puzzle:

1. **Hit the blot** — you roll one die; find the White checker that lands EXACTLY on the lone Black checker (a *blot*) and sends it to the bar.
2. **Count the race** — add up White's pips (each checker's distance home). Say your count, then check it.
3. **The cube** — in a pure race, decide from the pip lead: double? take or pass?
White ● moves toward point 24; Black ● moves toward point 1. Turn the page to check.

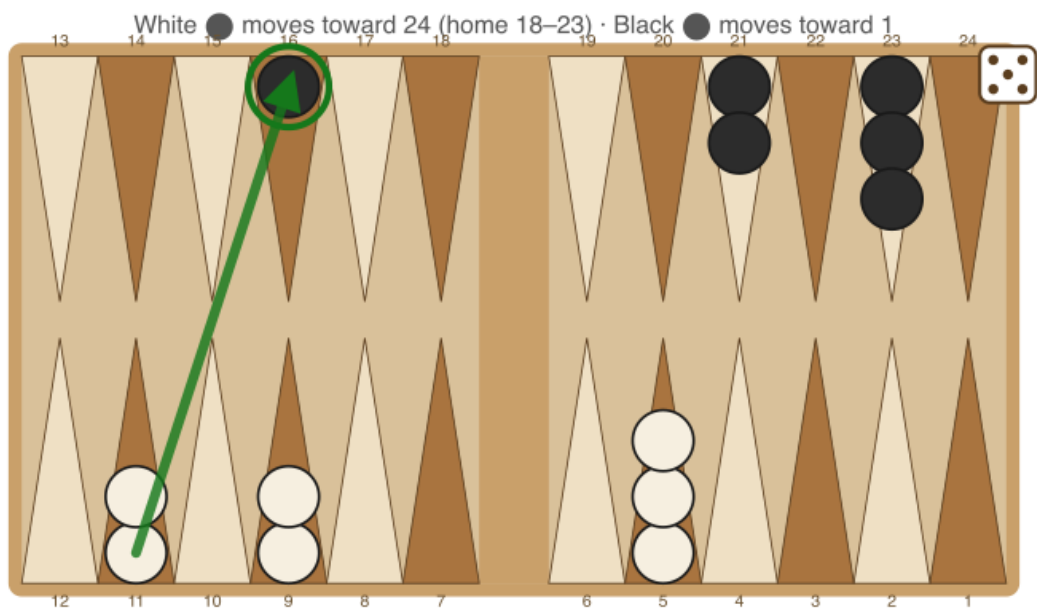
Hit the Blot

Puzzle 1

White rolls a 5 — which move HITS the Black blot?



Puzzle 1 — Answer

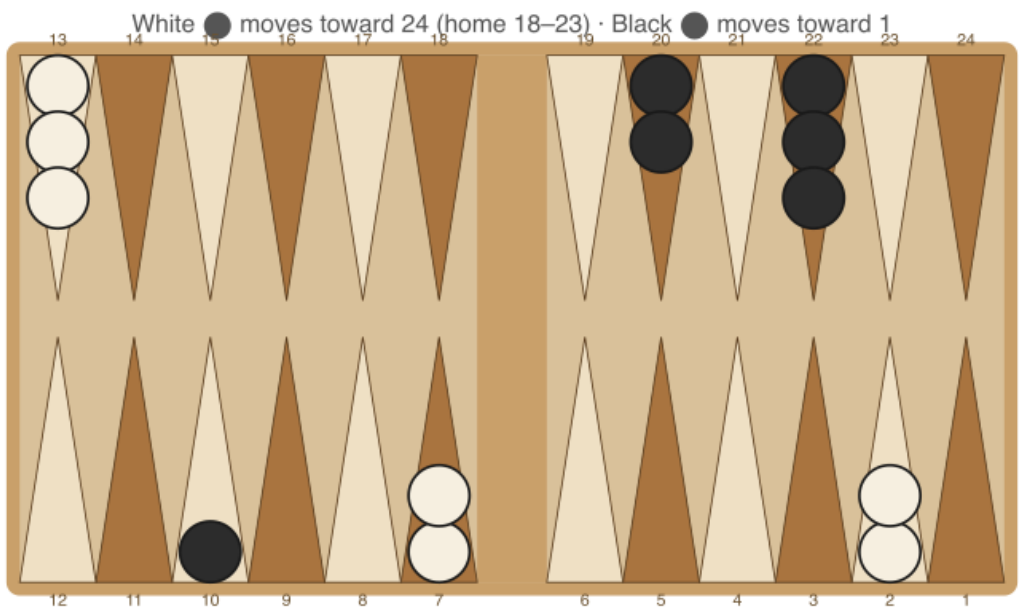


Play 11/16 (arrow) — the 5 lands on the blot and sends it to the bar.

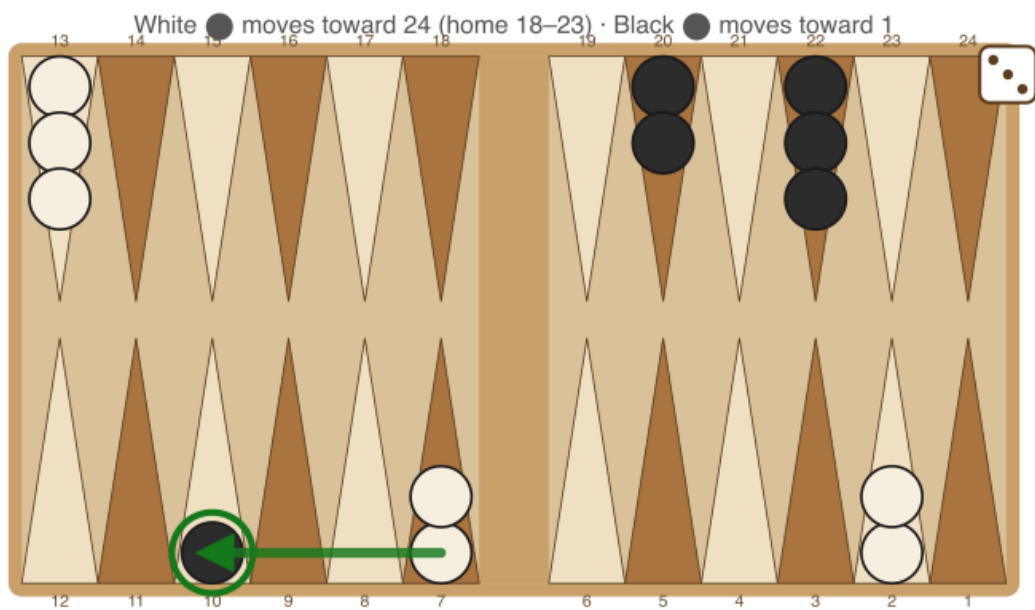
A checker moves exactly the die's pips; landing on a lone enemy checker (a blot) hits it — it goes to the bar and must re-enter before Black can do anything else.

Puzzle 2

White rolls a 3 — which move HITS the Black blot?



Puzzle 2 — Answer

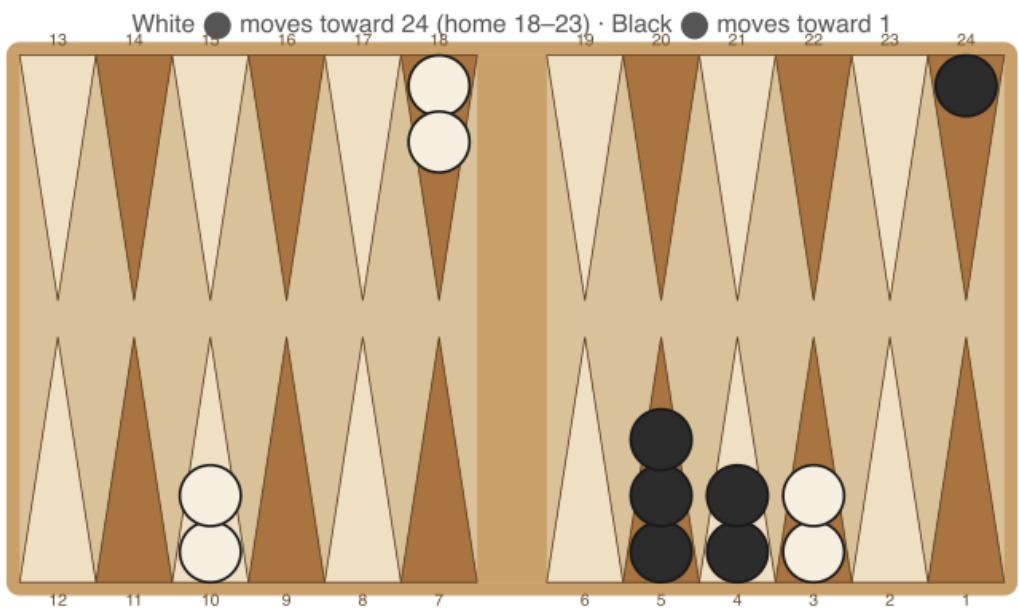


Play 7/10 (arrow) — the 3 lands on the blot and sends it to the bar.

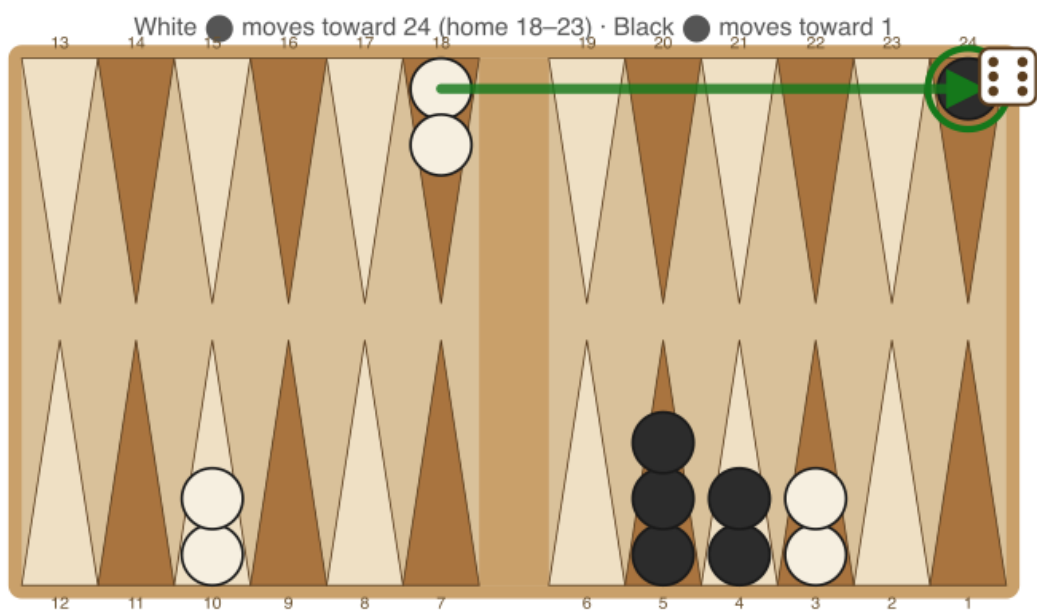
A checker moves exactly the die's pips; landing on a lone enemy checker (a blot) hits it — it goes to the bar and must re-enter before Black can do anything else.

Puzzle 3

White rolls a 6 — which move HITS the Black blot?



Puzzle 3 — Answer

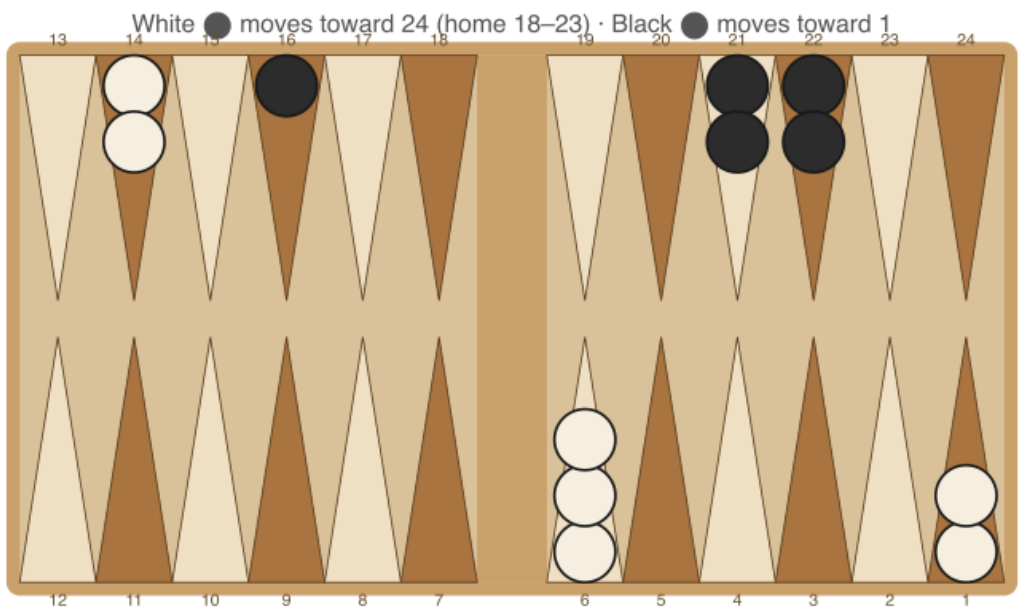


Play 18/24 (arrow) — the 6 lands on the blot and sends it to the bar.

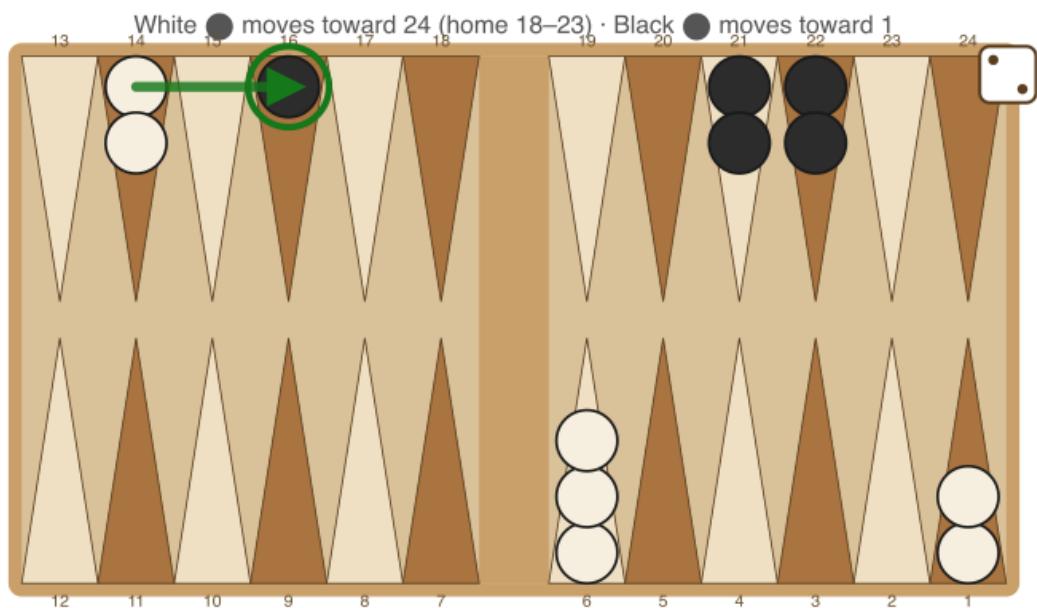
A checker moves exactly the die's pips; landing on a lone enemy checker (a blot) hits it — it goes to the bar and must re-enter before Black can do anything else.

Puzzle 4

White rolls a 2 — which move HITS the Black blot?



Puzzle 4 — Answer



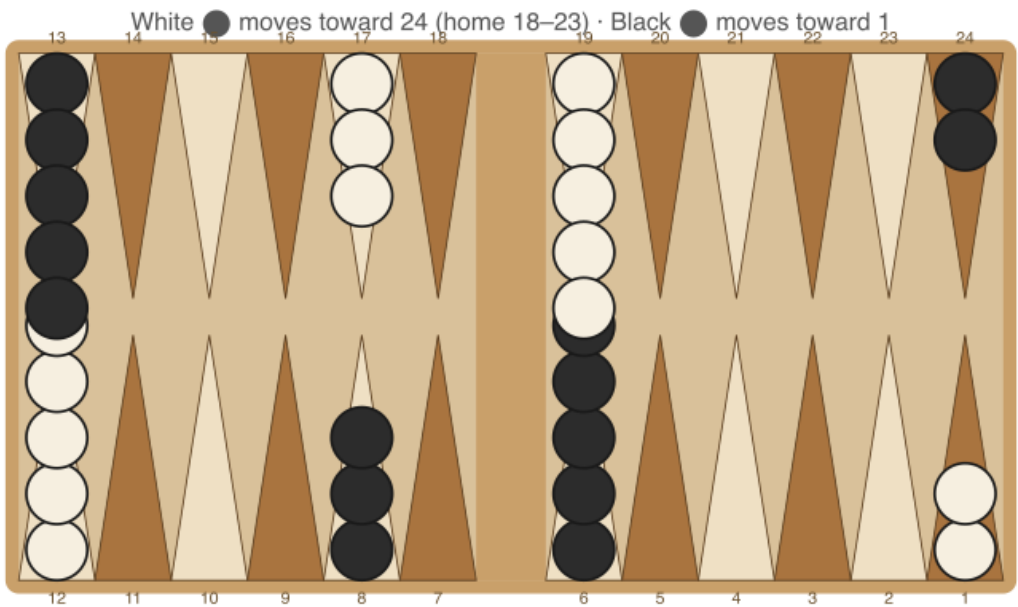
Play 14/16 (arrow) — the 2 lands on the blot and sends it to the bar.

A checker moves exactly the die's pips; landing on a lone enemy checker (a blot) hits it — it goes to the bar and must re-enter before Black can do anything else.

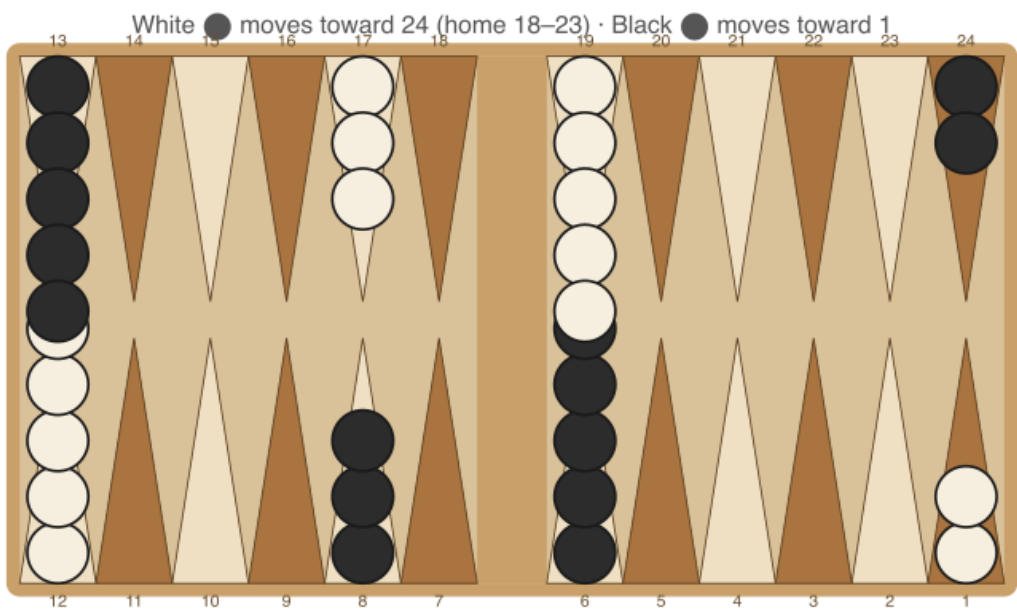
Count the Race

Puzzle 5

Count White's pips — add every checker's distance home.



Puzzle 5 — Answer

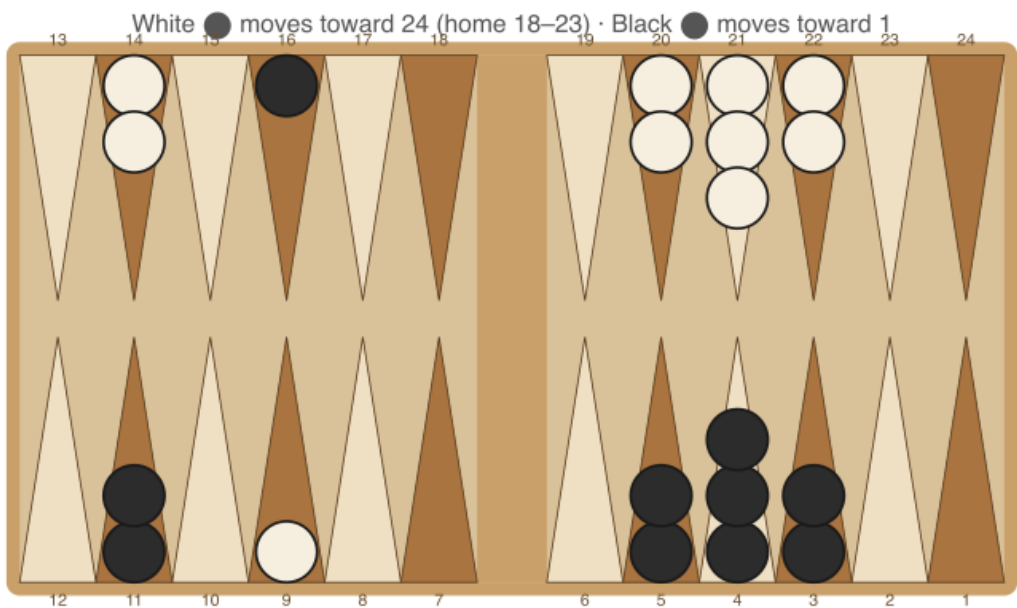


White's pip count is 167.

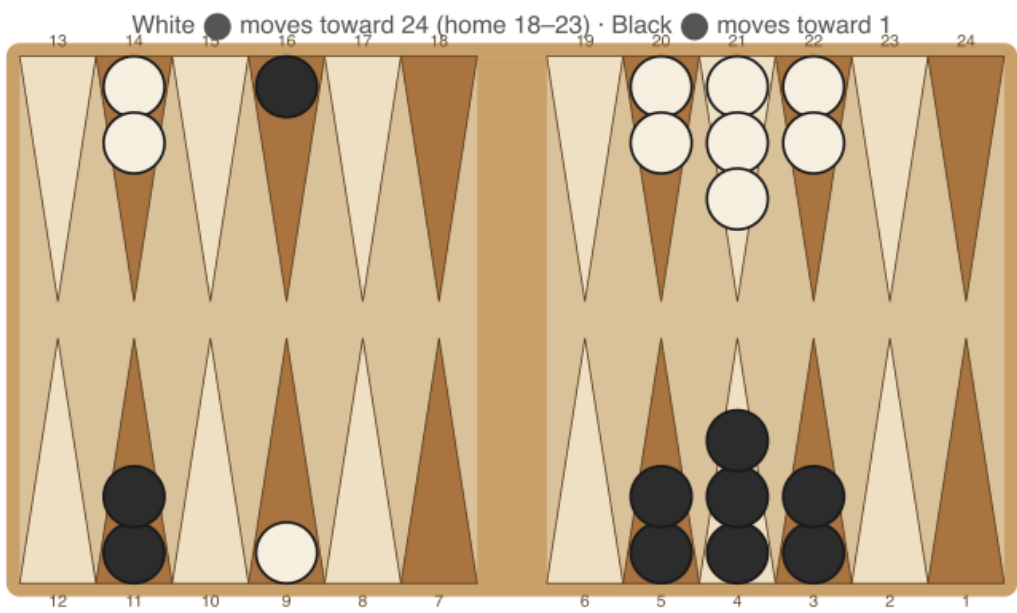
Each checker counts the number of pips it still needs to bear off; summing them gives the race scoreboard. The lower count is ahead.

Puzzle 6

Count White's pips — add every checker's distance home.



Puzzle 6 — Answer

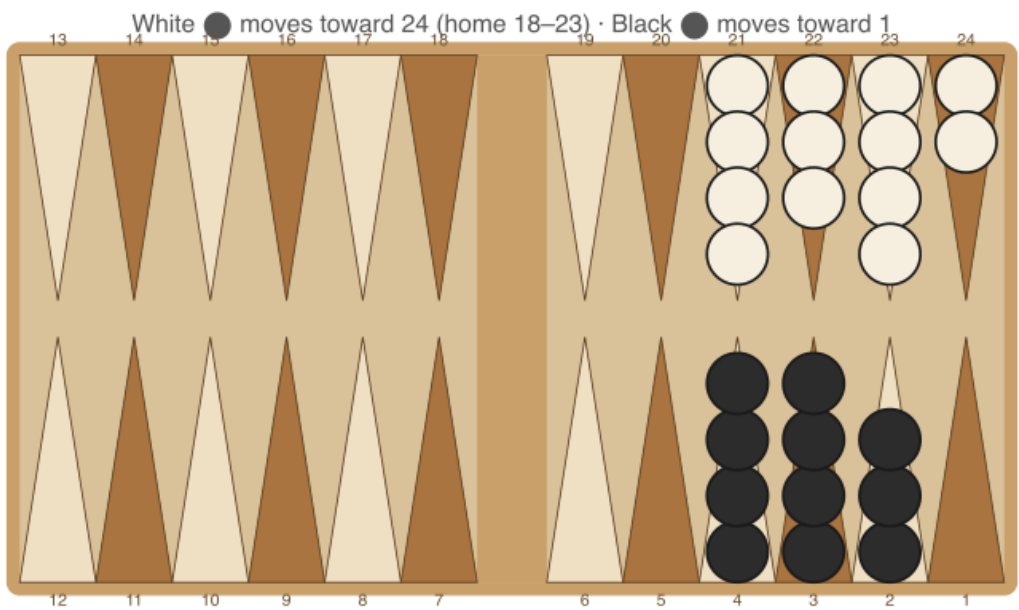


White's pip count is 66.

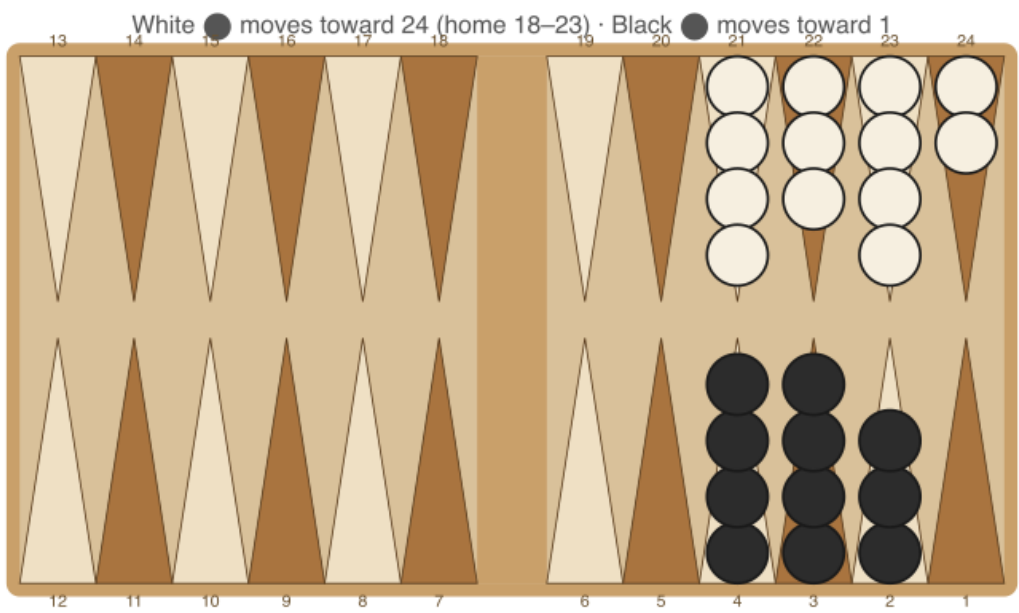
Each checker counts the number of pips it still needs to bear off; summing them gives the race scoreboard. The lower count is ahead.

Puzzle 7

Count White's pips — add every checker's distance home.



Puzzle 7 — Answer

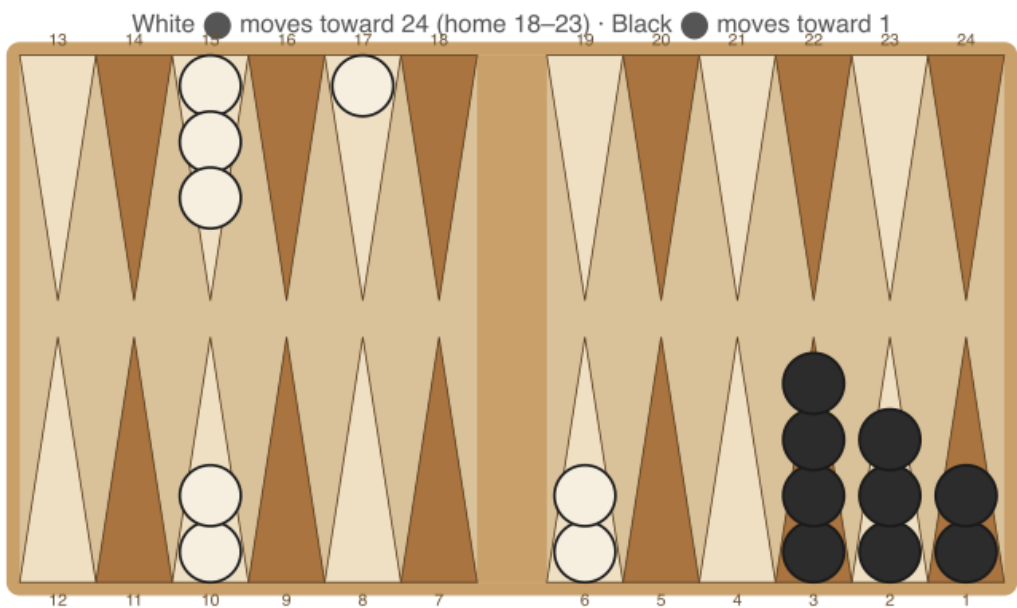


White's pip count is 35.

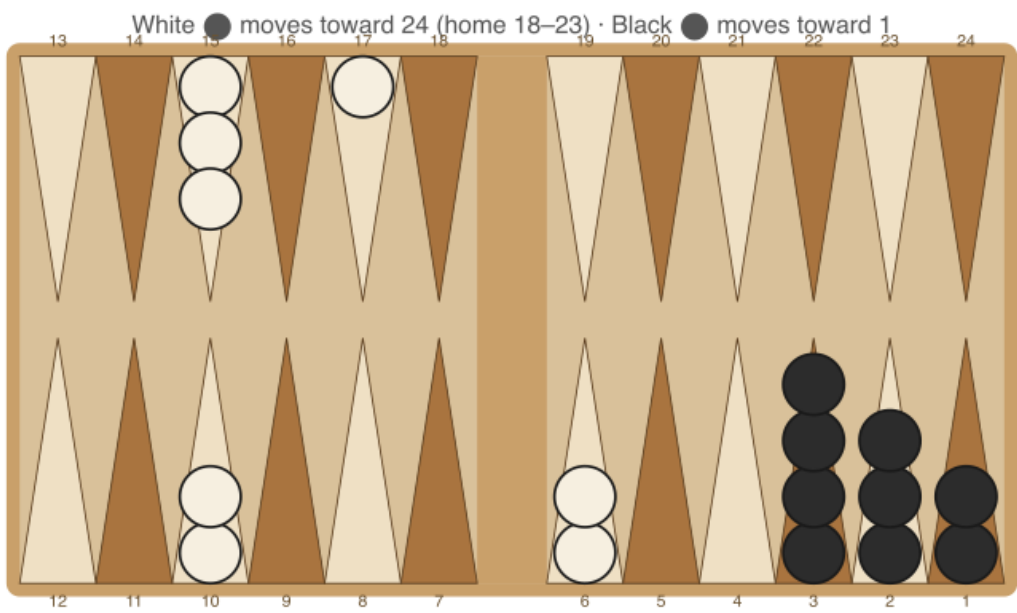
Each checker counts the number of pips it still needs to bear off; summing them gives the race scoreboard. The lower count is ahead.

Puzzle 8

Count White's pips — add every checker's distance home.



Puzzle 8 — Answer

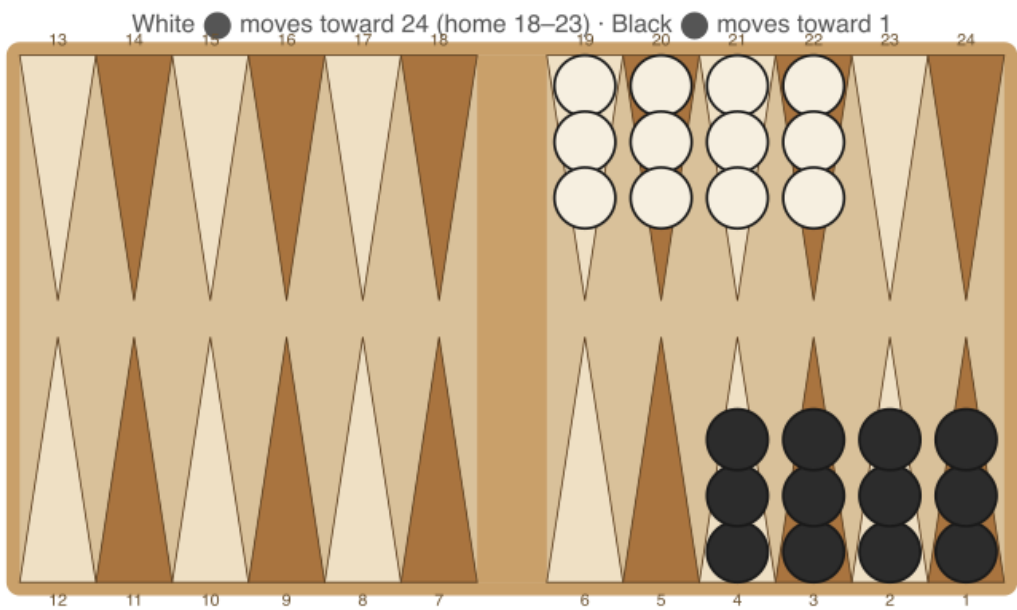


White's pip count is 106.

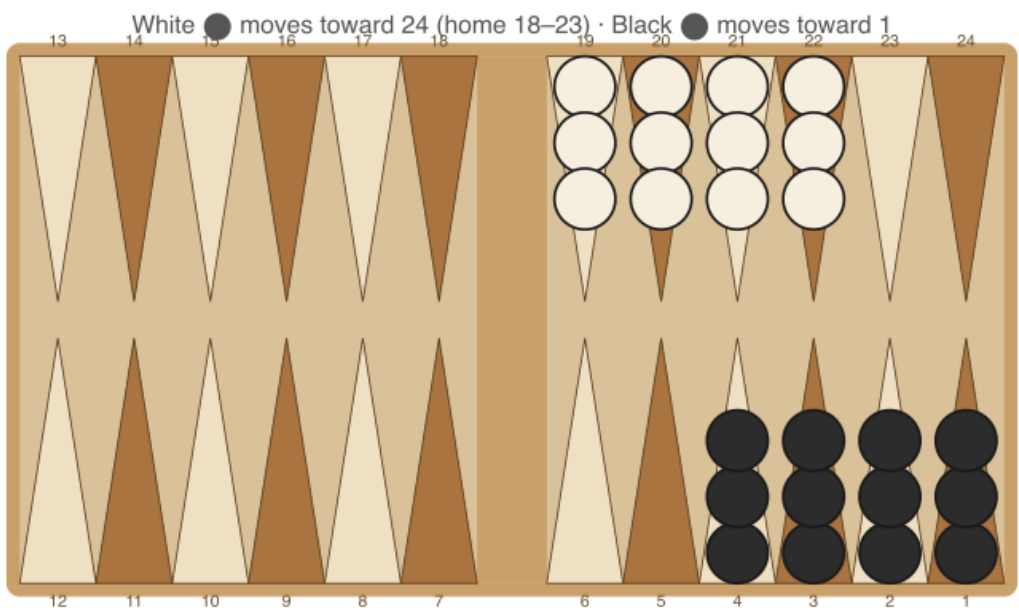
Each checker counts the number of pips it still needs to bear off; summing them gives the race scoreboard. The lower count is ahead.

Puzzle 9

Count White's pips — add every checker's distance home.



Puzzle 9 — Answer



White's pip count is 54.

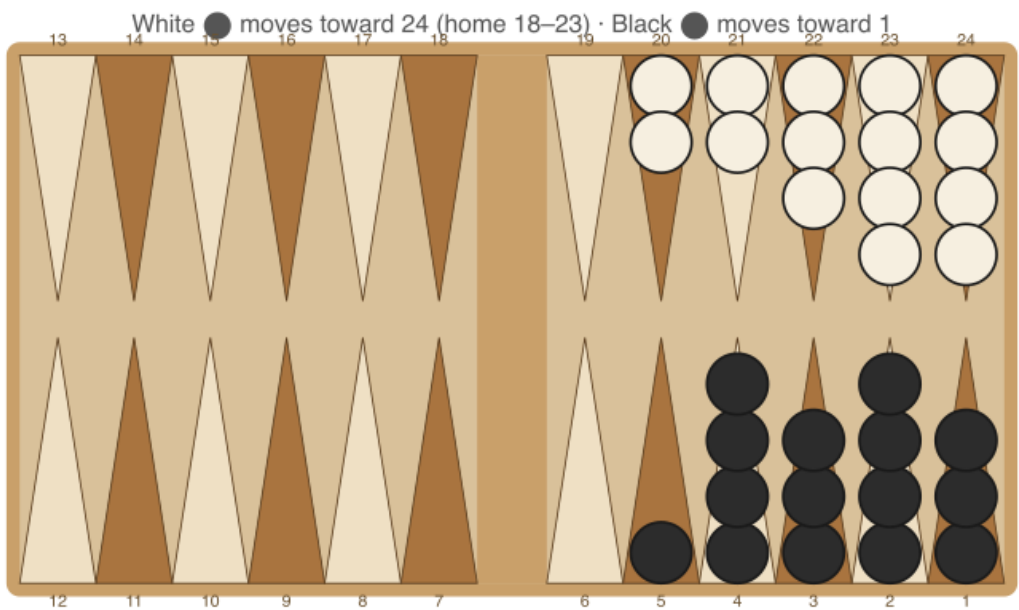
Each checker counts the number of pips it still needs to bear off; summing them gives the race scoreboard. The lower count is ahead.

The Cube

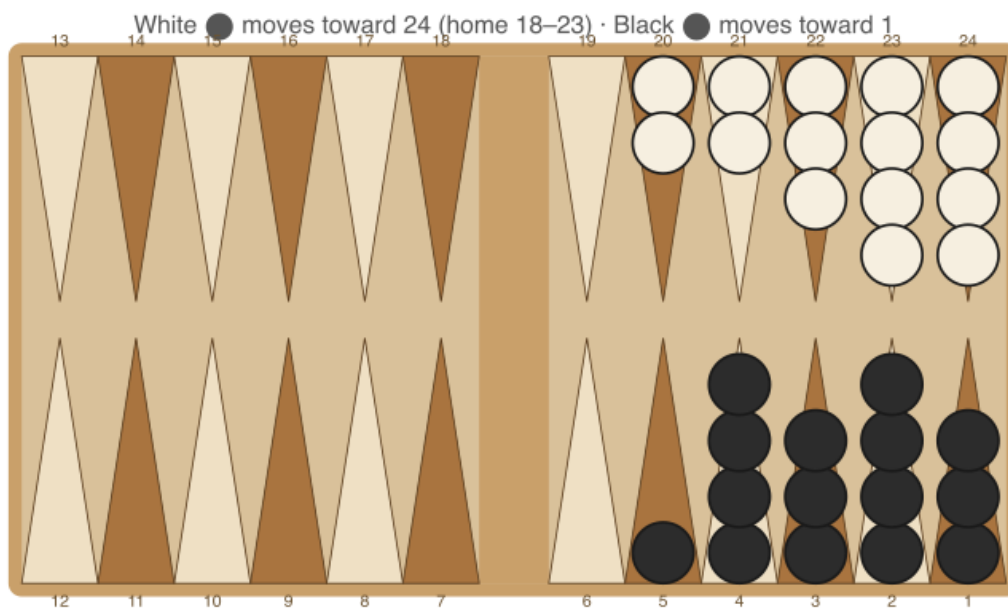
Puzzle 10

White's roll to come — should White double?

White 39 pips vs Black 41 — a lead of 2.



Puzzle 10 — Answer



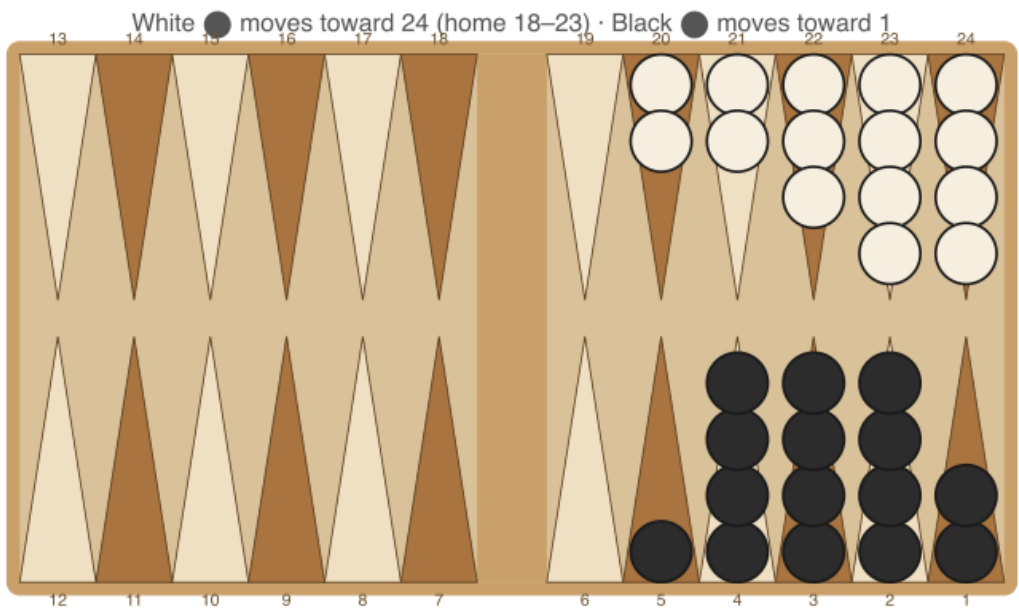
Too early to double — hold the cube.

In a pure race the cube is a pip-lead decision: White leads by 2 (5% of White's own count) — under ~8% it's too early, ~8–12% is double/take, over ~12% is double/pass.

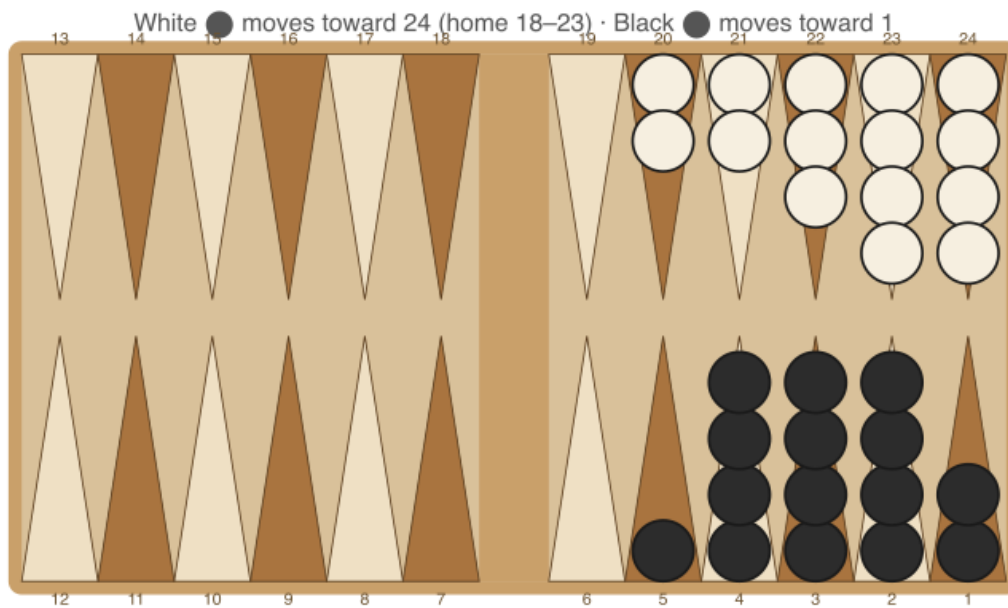
Puzzle 11

White's roll to come — should White double?

White 39 pips vs Black 43 — a lead of 4.



Puzzle 11 — Answer



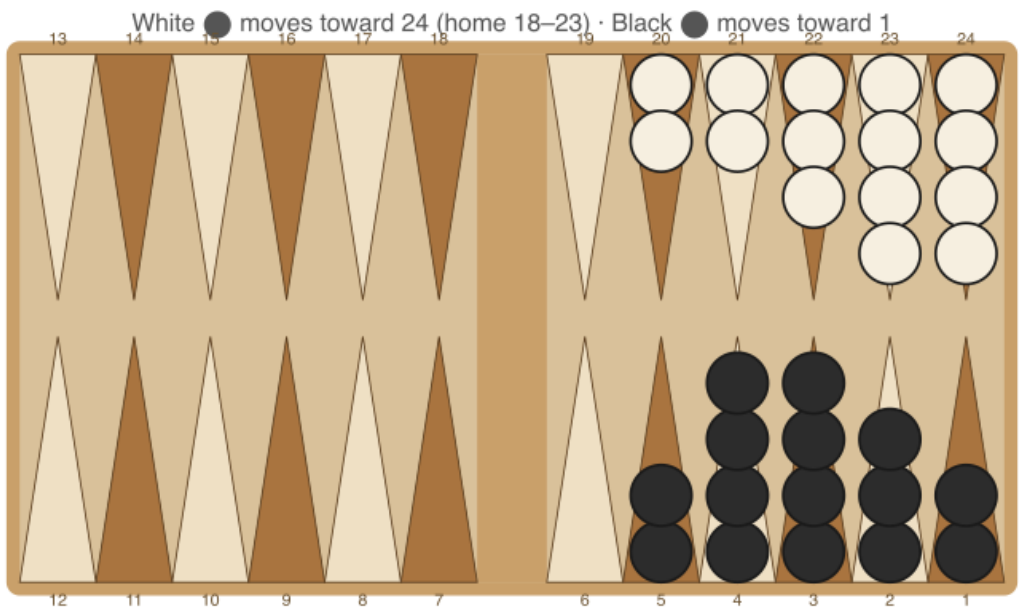
Double — and Black should TAKE.

In a pure race the cube is a pip-lead decision: White leads by 4 (10% of White's own count) — under ~8% it's too early, ~8–12% is double/take, over ~12% is double/pass.

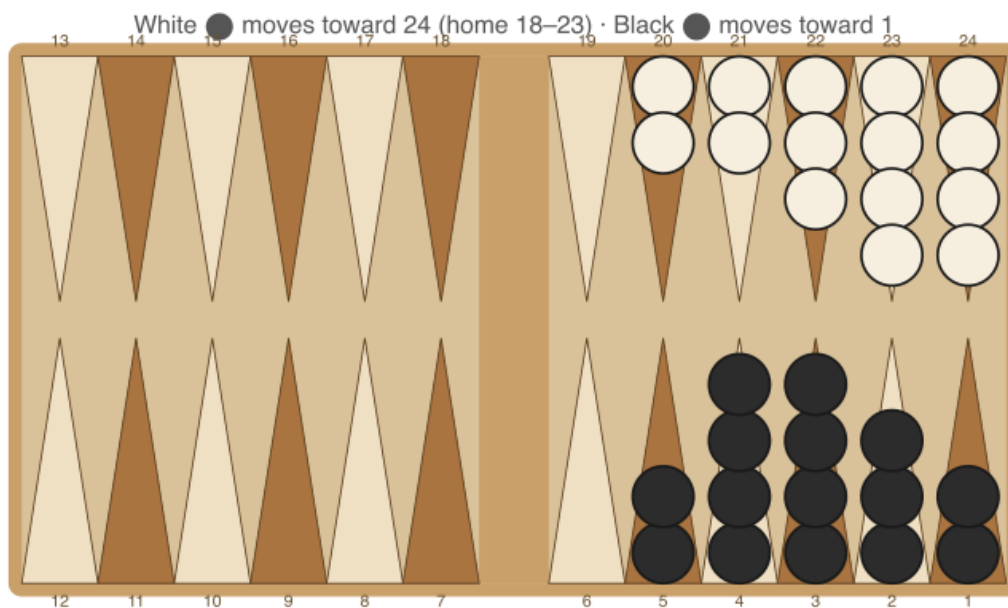
Puzzle 12

White's roll to come — should White double?

White 39 pips vs Black 46 — a lead of 7.



Puzzle 12 — Answer



Double — and Black should PASS (drop).

In a pure race the cube is a pip-lead decision: White leads by 7 (18% of White's own count) — under ~8% it's too early, ~8–12% is double/take, over ~12% is double/pass.

Keep playing

Play the live tactics trainer at spark-and-anvil.org/play/pipquest and read the cast's strategy stories at spark-and-anvil.org/cast/pipquest.