The Secret: Master the Winning Patterns

Hare & Hounds appears to be a simple game, but it is hard for beginning players to develop a clear strategy. This is a good thing! Underlying the game movements is a strong mathematical pattern. Once you learn this and practice the moves, you will become a powerful player able to overwhelm your opponents.

While the math will guide you, you also need to use common sense: never make a move that will put you in jeopardy of losing. If you find yourself in a bad spot, back up and practice the moves you made that brought you to that position.

The Math Strategy

At the end of each of your turns, you want the four tokens (yours and your opponent’s together) to be in a pattern where one token is on an orange spiral (shown here as light gray), one token is on a purple spiral (shown here in dark gray), and two tokens are on unmarked spots. If you follow this pattern throughout the game, you will most likely win. This strategy works for both the Hare and the Hounds.

Strategy Moves for the Hare

The Best Start Move

This Move Stays On Pattern

If you can’t make a move that stays on the winning pattern, move so the Hounds can’t move onto this pattern themselves and get back on pattern your next move. Here are two examples.

Strategy Moves for the Hounds

These Moves Keep Hounds On Pattern

Any of these moves will win, but move the bottom hound to win quickest.

Both of these moves stay on pattern… but you will lose if you move the bottom hound. Use your common sense!

Four Examples of Tokens that are On Pattern