KGS FROM SCRATCH
How To Join and Use the KGS Go Server

The KGS Go Server (www/kgsgo.com) is one of many servers where thousands of people play go at any hour of any day. We recommend KGS as a friendly place where a lot of Western players hang out.

KGS is divided into rooms. Some, such as "The English Gaming Room", are huge, with 1000 players or more. Others are like small towns where everyone knows each other." (More later.) This article will tell you how to get on KGS, how to find all the different rooms and how to set up a user account.

MAC USERS: KGS software requires Java, which no longer comes automatically installed on your mac. Before you can access KGS at all, you will need to download and install Java from this link: http://www.java.com/en/download/faq/java_mac.xml.

After installing Java, you still have to tell your Mac you want to run Java applications. To do that, open System Preferences, and click on the Security and Privacy icon, from there, make sure the General tab is highlighted, under "Allow apps downloaded from:" click the button that says "Anywhere". Now you will be able to use KGS, both from the website itself, and with the client. You can ignore all safety warnings about KGS, it is perfectly safe to use. You can also tell your computer to trust KGS when it asks you, and then it will stop asking you if you really want to use this application each time you try to open it.

TO GET ON KGS

1. Google *KGS* or type www.gokgs.com

2. Click on 'play Go now'.

You will be asked for your name and password:

3. Enter a user name, following the instructions for length of name and what characters you can use.

4. Click on 'Guest.' This gets you to the place where you can play Go.

If a screen comes up saying you need a Java client to run KGS, click on the Java 'download'. After the program downloads, click to install it. Then reboot your computer.

PLAYING ON KGS

There are many rooms on KGS where you can play Go. Some room tabs are on your window already. To choose a room, click on the "rooms" tab, select the "Main" menu, and scroll down to the room you want. Click "'Join," close this window, and you will see a tab for that room. Click and you will be in it. You can meet friends and play there.

You can play anywhere on KGS, including with Gobots (Go playing computer programs.) "The English Gaming Room" is a good place to start. With 1000 players or more most of the time, there's bound to be someone in your range. Or, practice your foreign language skills in dozens of rooms from all over. You can even make your own private room. (But good luck finding an opponent there . . .)

Tiger's Mouth, moderated by the AGF, is a private, safe area for young players. You have to post on the website if you want to be admitted:
 http://tigersmouth.org/forum/viewthread.php?thread_id=356

Getting your first few games can be difficult because most players like to know their opponent's rank, but once you have a rank (after one or two games) opponents are easier to find.

Automatch: One easy way to find opponents is to let KGS find them for you! Click "Play Go" on the top menu to use the "Automatch" feature. First set your automatch preferences -- opponents' strength, time limits and other options. Then click "Automatch" and your profile gets matched against everyone else who is waiting for an "Automatch" game. If someone meets your criteria, a board will appear with the opponents' info, and a screen will inform you that "The game will start in 10 seconds," then count down. Glance to the right quickly to see whether you are Black or White. It is customary to greet your opponent: "hi gg" ("Have a good game") will do.

TO OPEN A USER ACCOUNT

You can continue use KGS as a guest, but if you register your own account:

1. All of your games will be recorded and saved; studying them will help you to improve.

2. With a user account you can also start to use your KGS rating as a measure of progress.

So we recommend that before you begin using KGS, you set up a user account. **NOTE:** You can have more one user account if you like. Famous pros sometimes use special accounts to play anonymously online. Some users like to have different accounts for fast and slow games, serious and fun games, etc. At least one user believes that if you bring an account to life and play it, it will develop its own personality.

1. Click on the tab 'User'. Click on 'Register now.'

2. Answer the questions on the pop up screen. When you are done, click 'OK'.

3. KGS will send you an email. It will include your user name and a password. Open your e-mail in another window and retrieve your new user name and password.

4. Go back to the KGS home page and click "Play on KGS". Enter your user name and the password from the email. Click OK.

You are now on KGS with your own user account. All your games will be saved there permanently.

To change your password, click on the User tab, 'Edit personal information". In the upper right hand corner, enter your new password. Right below it, in the next box, enter it again. Click OK and the new password is set.

As you play more you can make friends with Go players all over the world. You could actually play Go 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with people from all over the world, if you didn't already have a real life. :) Good luck and good games!

The American Go Foundation