

Hidden  
Dimension of  
SET: The  
Classification  
of Magic SET  
Squares

PRIMES  
STEP Junior  
Group, led by  
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Khovanova

The Game of  
SET and  
Magic SET  
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Classifying  
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Magic SET  
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# Hidden Dimension of SET: The Classification of Magic SET Squares

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PRIMES STEP Junior Group, led by Tanya Khovanova

MIT

June 6, 2020

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# The Game of SET

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## Definition

SET is a card game with a deck containing 81 unique cards. Each one has a different value for four different features: color, shape, shading, and number.

Color	Red		Shading	Empty	
	Green			Striped	
	Purple			Solid	
Shape	Oval		Number	1	
	Diamond			2	
	Squiggle			3	

# Definition of a set

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## Definition

A **set** is a group of three cards, where in each feature, all values are either the same or different.

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## Definition

A **set** is a group of three cards, where in each feature, all values are either the same or different.

## Definition

The **order** of a set is the number of features that are different across that set. The order can range from 1 to 4.

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## Definition

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## Examples



This is an example of a set, with shading and number being the same, but colors and shapes being different. It has order 2.

# Sets (continued)

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A set is defined by two cards. Try it out: what would be the third card here?

## Examples



# Sets (continued)

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A set is defined by two cards. Try it out: what would be the third card here?

## Examples



This set has order three because the cards differ in every feature but color.



# Magic Set Squares

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## Definition

A **magic set square** is a three-by-three table of set cards such that each row, column, diagonal, and anti-diagonal is a set.

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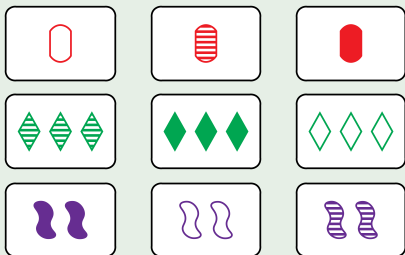
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## Definition

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## Examples



# Magic Set Squares (continued)

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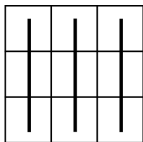
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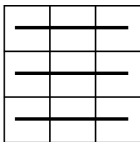
Each magic set square contains 12 sets.

## Definition

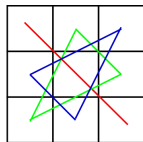
These twelve sets are broken into four groups, called **triplets**, and are pictured below. All three sets in the triplet are the same order.



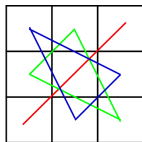
(a) Columns



(b) Rows



(c) Diagonals



(d) Anti-Diagonals

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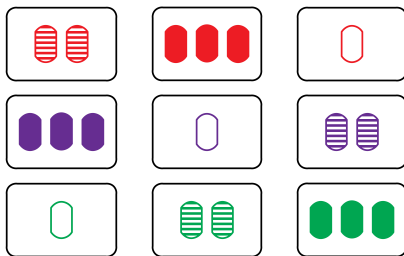


- 81 ways to pick first card, and 80 ways to pick the second.
- 6 ways to rearrange cards
- $\frac{81 \cdot 80}{6} = \boxed{1080 \text{ sets}}$

# Magic SET Squares With The Same Cards

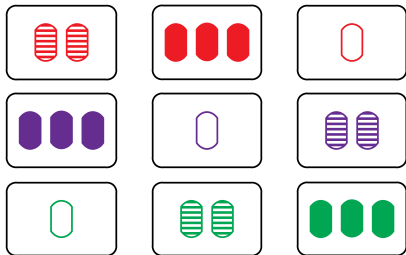
## Theorem

2 bottom corners and center cards define a **unique** square



- Square has any 2 cards' completing card
- 2 cards for bottom corner:  $9 \cdot 8$
- Center card possibilities: 6
- $9 \cdot 8 \cdot 6 = 432$  squares with same cards

# Counting the Number of Magic SET Squares



- In a Magic SET square, there are 81 ways to pick the bottom left corner, and 80 ways to pick the bottom right corner.
- The middle card can't complete the set, so we have 78 options
- $81 \cdot 80 \cdot 78 = 505440$  squares

# Order of a Magic Set Square and its diversity

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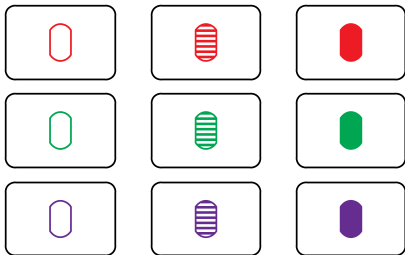
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## Definition

The **order** of a Magic SET Square is the number of features that are not the same for all the cards in the square.

## Definition

The **diversity** is the average of all the orders of the triplets and will always be three fourths of the order of the square.



# Our Classification

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- Magic SET squares with same orders for row/column and diagonal/anti-diagonal are same type
- Row, columns, diagonals, and anti-diagonals can be permuted in different ways
- Magic SET squares that can geometrically transformed to each other are same type
- Notation:  $(x-y; z-w)$ .  $x-y$  represent the row and column(interchangeable) and  $z-w$ (also interchangeable)



# The Number of Squares of Each Type

Type	Order	Number of Squares
(1-1;2-2) and (2-2;1-1)	2	3888
(1-2;1-2)	2	15552
(1-2;3-3) and (3-3;1-2)	3	15552
(1-3;2-3) and (2-3;1-3)	3	31104
(2-2;2-3) and (2-3;2-2)	3	31104
(1-3;4-4) and (4-4;1-3)	4	10368
(1-4;3-4) and (3-4;1-4)	4	20736
(2-2;4-4) and (4-4;2-2)	4	7776
(2-4;2-4)	4	31104
(2-3;3-4) and (3-4;2-3)	4	62208
(2-4;3-3) and (3-3;2-4)	4	31104
(3-3;3-3)	4	31104

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# Sharing Features

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For each order distribution of triplets of a magic set square, there is a specific distribution of features assigned to each triplet. We can find this by using two principles:

- each feature is either the same in all triplets or different in three triplets
- for any two triplets the union of all features that are different has to equal to the order of the square

# Review of Group Theory

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## Definition

A **stabilizer** of a card is a subgroup that keeps this card the same.

- The group we will be studying is the group of that acts on the cards, sets, and squares
- The group has a total size and a stabilizer subgroup which keeps the element in place
- The orbit is how many different states are possible. All the cards are in the orbit.

## Theorem

$$\text{Size of an orbit} = \frac{\text{Size of Group}}{\text{Size of Stabilizer}}$$

# Group Size of Cards

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- Four features each with 3 values
- Values for a feature can be shuffled in six ways
- Four features can be shuffled 24 ways
- Total group size:  $24 \cdot 6^4$  which is 31104, a factor that appears many times
- This is the total group size for cards, sets of an order, and squares of an order

# Stabilizers of Cards

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- Shuffle 4 features (if shuffled to the right value. In the example color can be shuffled for shape if green is shuffled with diamond)
- 2 values per feature are not being used that can be shuffled

Total Group Size:  $24 \cdot 6^4$

Stabilizer:  $24 \cdot 2^4$

Dividing, we get 81, the number of cards in a SET deck.

# Stabilizers of Sets



- Set of order  $k$
- $k$  features that differ
  - Can be shuffled (permuted):  $k!$
- $4 - k$  features are the same.
  - Can be shuffled (permuted):  $(4 - k)!$ .
  - Swap 2 values not present:  $2^{4-k}$
- Shuffle/Permute the 3 cards:  $3! = 6$ .

# Stabilizers of Sets



Stabilizer of a set of order  $k$  has size:  $6 \cdot 2^{4-k} \cdot k! \cdot (4-k)!$

## Theorem

$$\text{Size of an orbit} = \frac{\text{Size of Group}}{\text{Size of Stabilizer}}$$

$$\text{Order 2: } \frac{31104}{96} = 324$$

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Two players are presented with a magic set square. They take turns choosing cards. Once a player has a set, they win.



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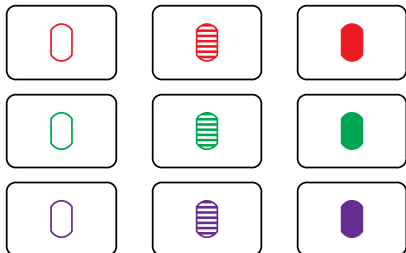
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Let's try playing! You'll vote on where to go using the raise hand button. Click on participants and then press the hand.

# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example

We'll play with this square, but it doesn't matter which one.



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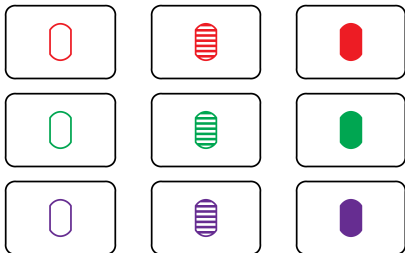
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You'll be X, and usually you'll vote, but this one is the same by symmetry. Let's practice voting anyway, top-middle or top-middle?



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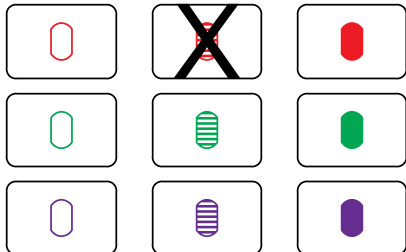
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Oh, look! Top-middle won!



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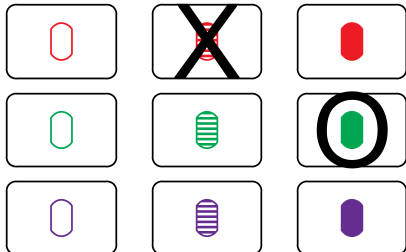
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O has gone, and now its your turn again. Let's vote!



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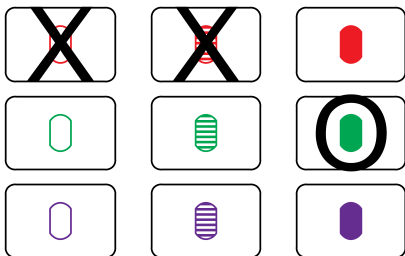
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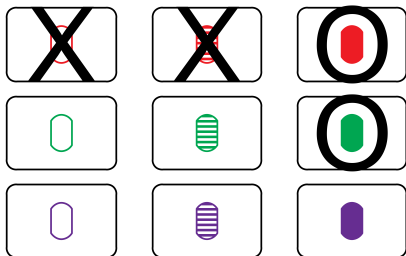
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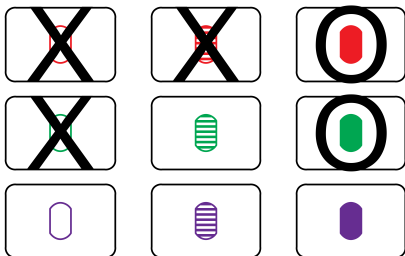
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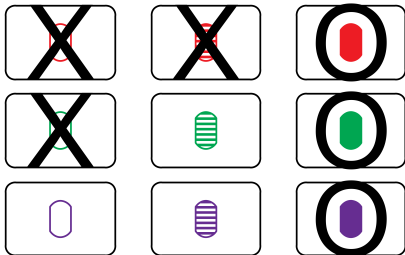
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O wins!

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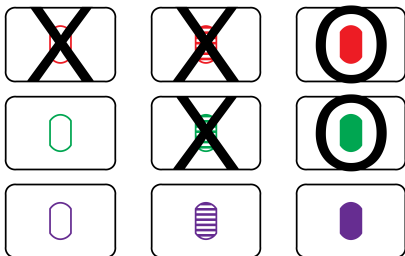
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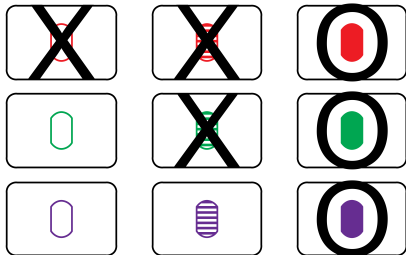
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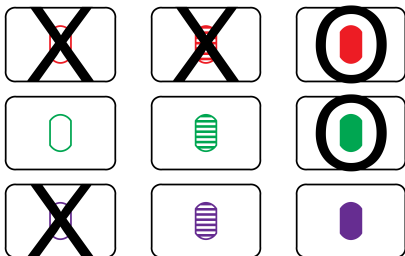
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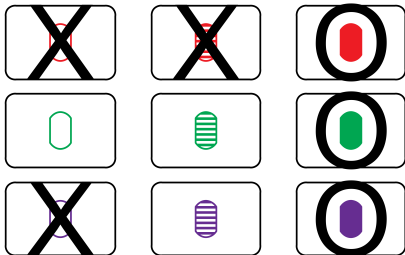
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The Game of  
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O wins!

# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example

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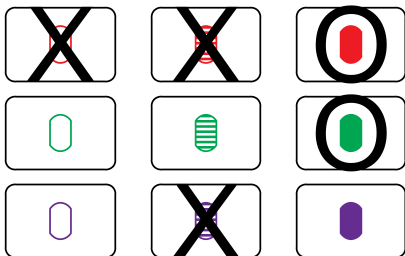
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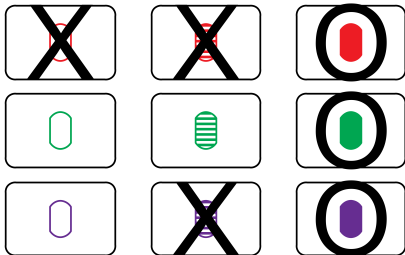
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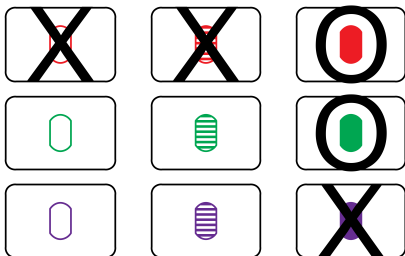
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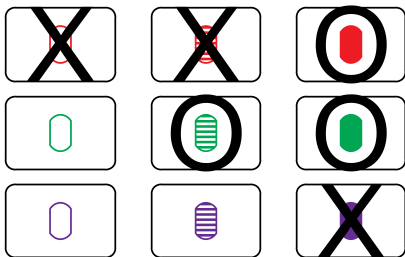
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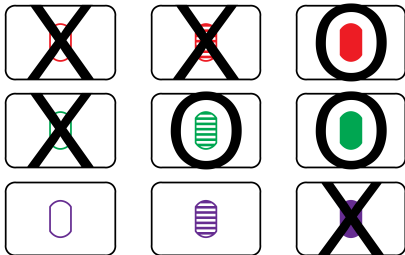
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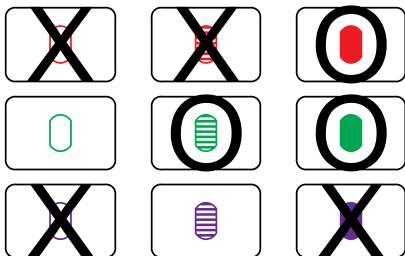
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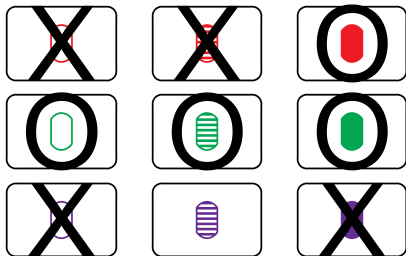
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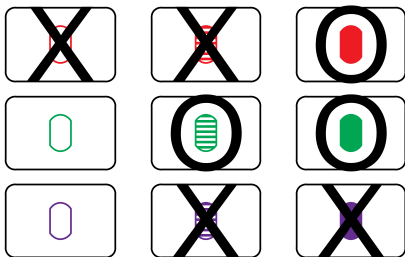
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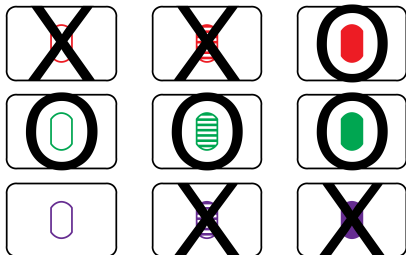
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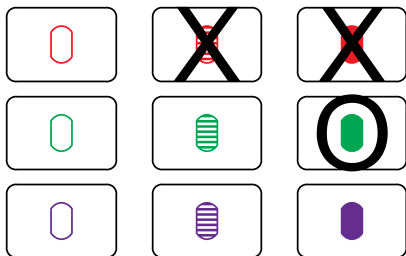


# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



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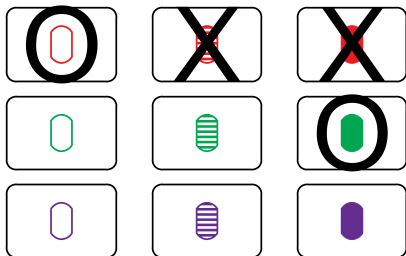
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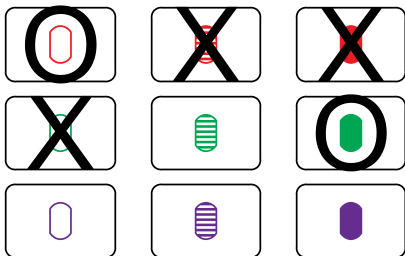
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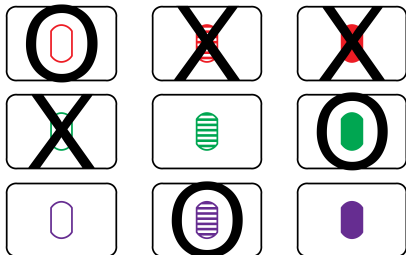
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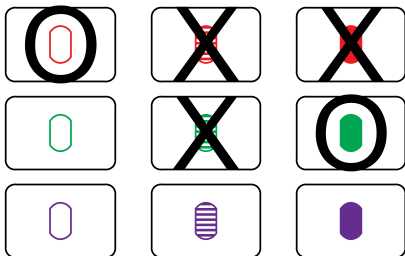
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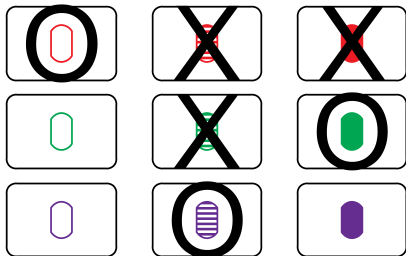
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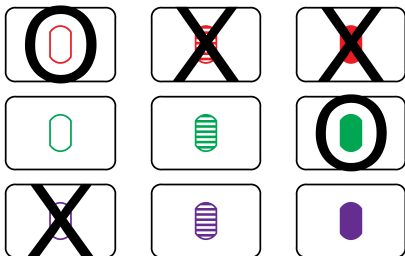
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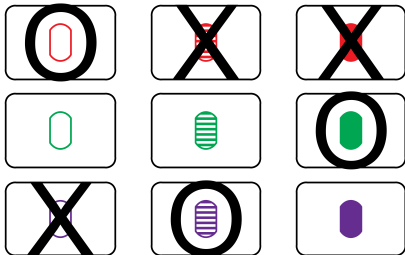
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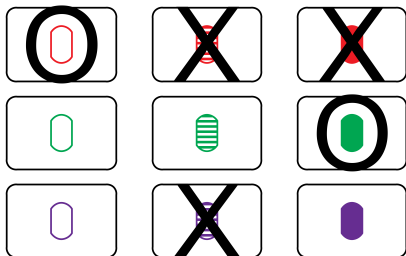
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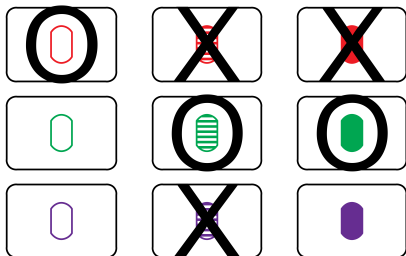
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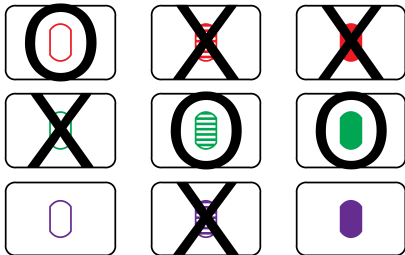
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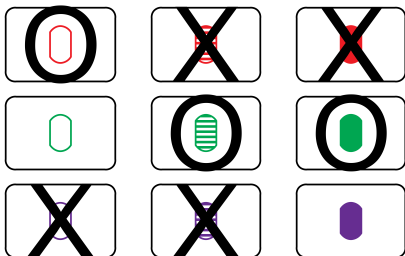
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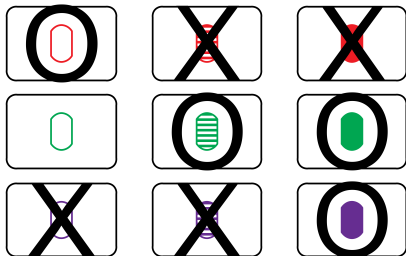
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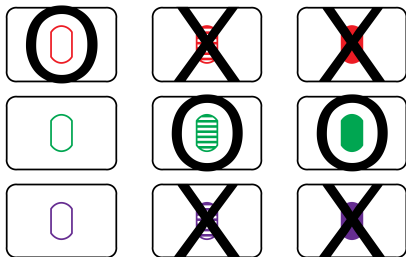


# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



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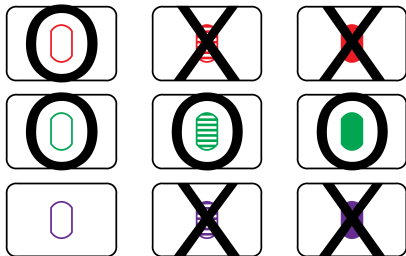
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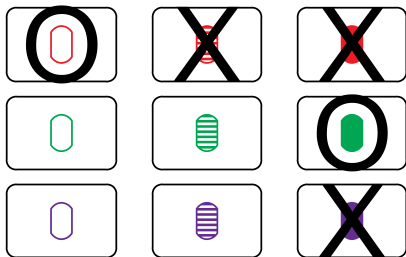
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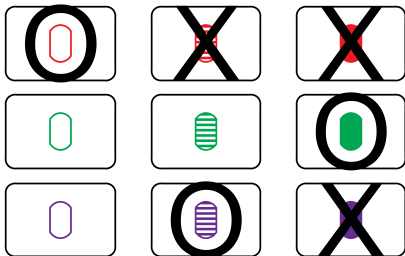
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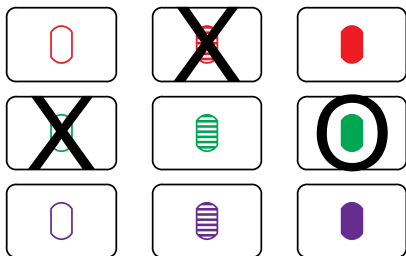
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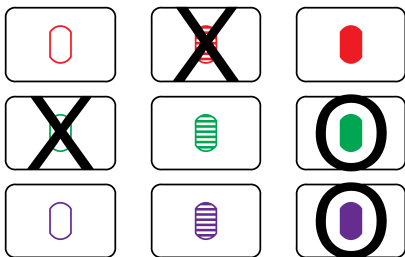
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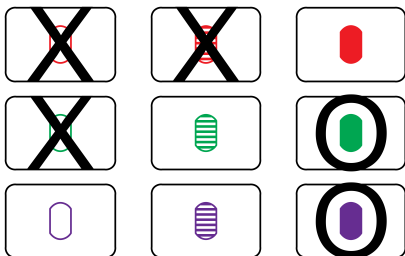
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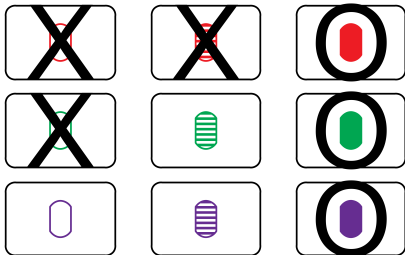
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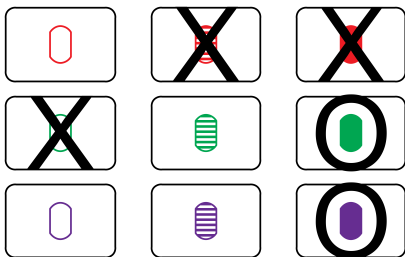
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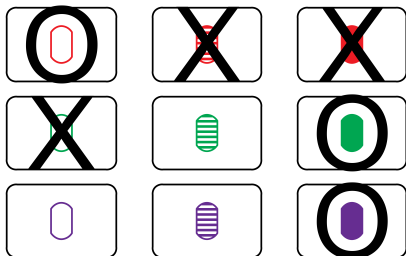
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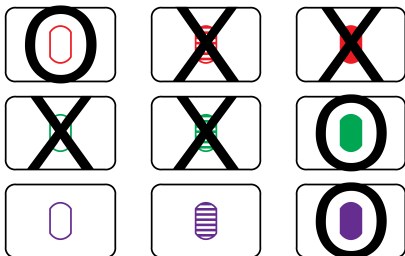
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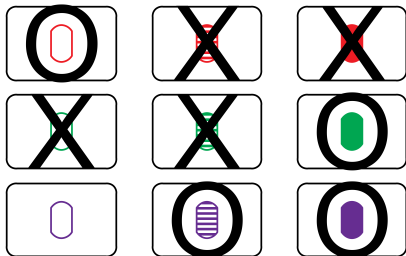
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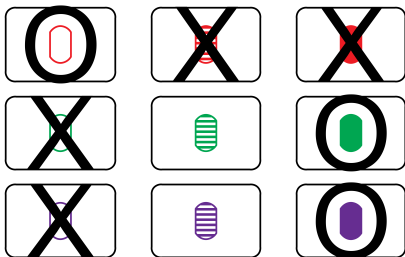
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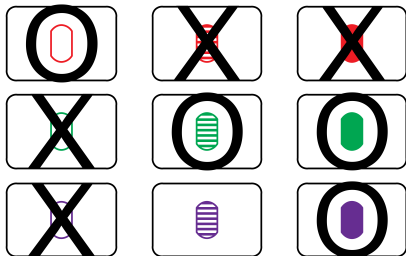
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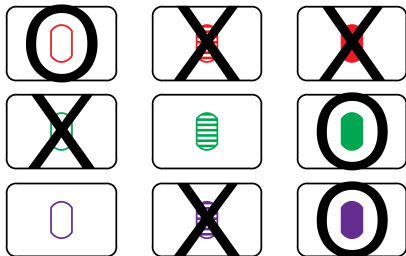
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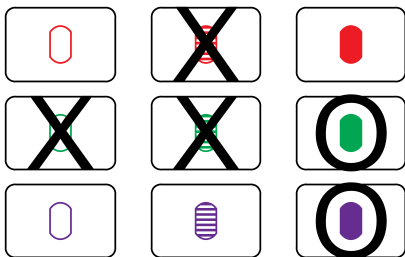
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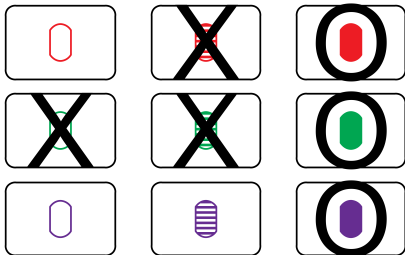
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O wins!

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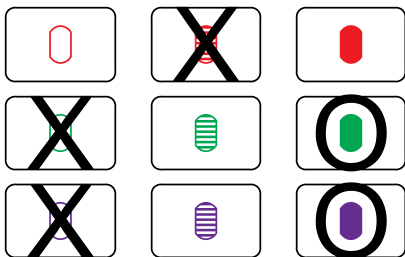
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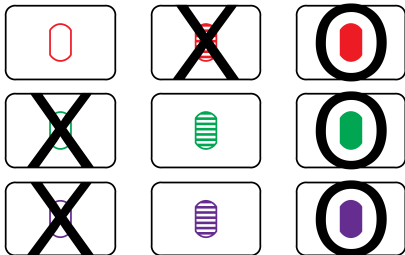
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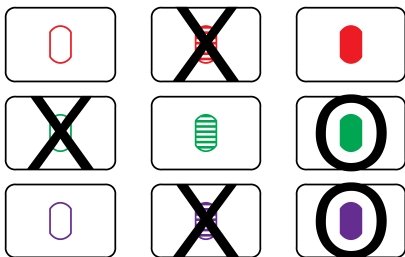
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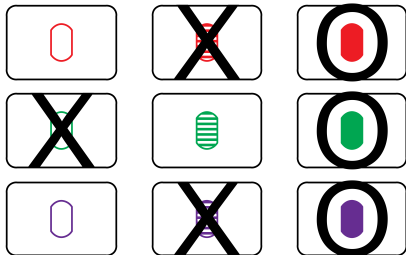
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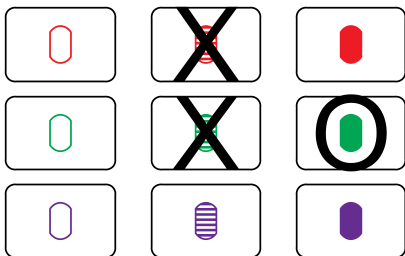
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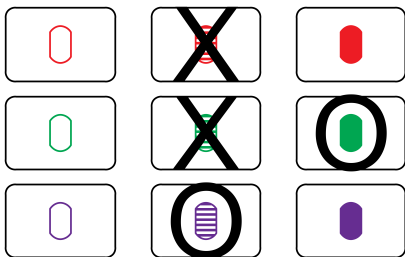
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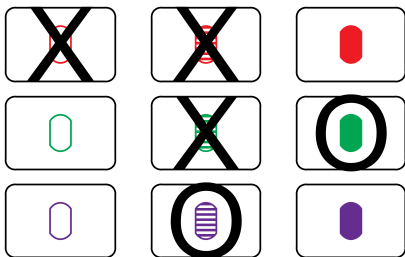
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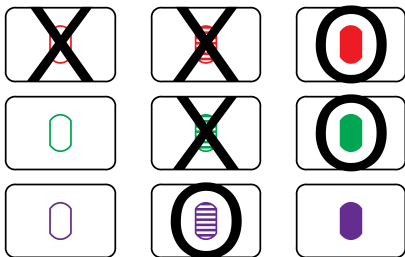
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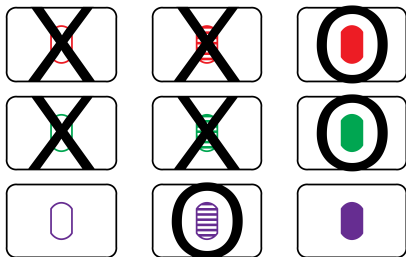
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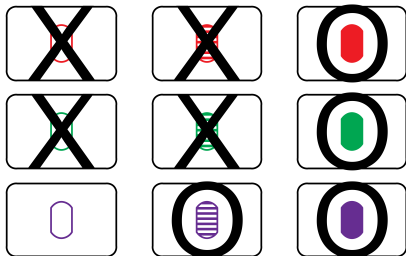
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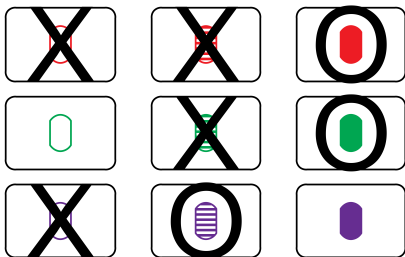
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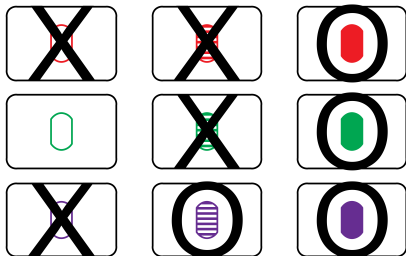
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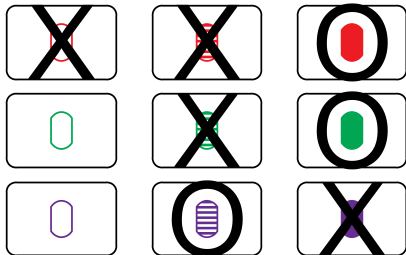
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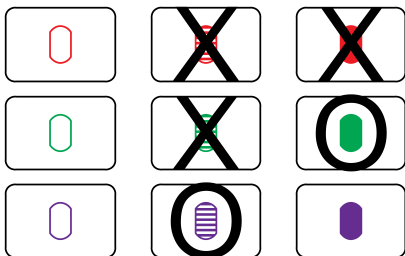
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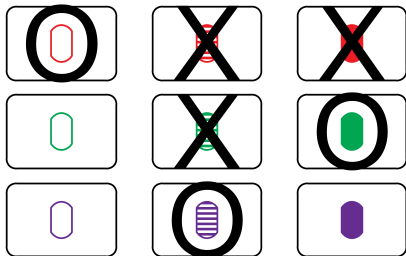
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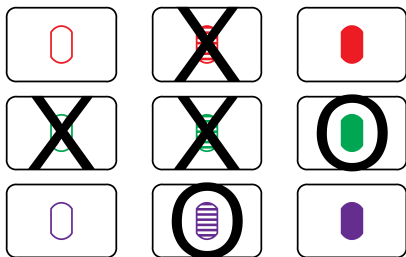


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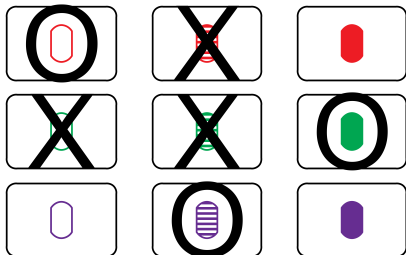
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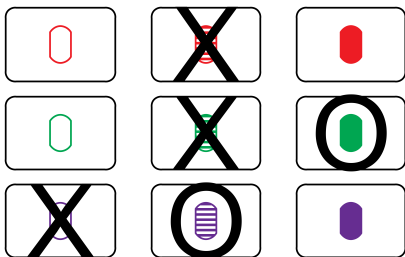
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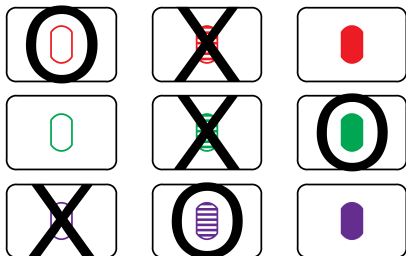
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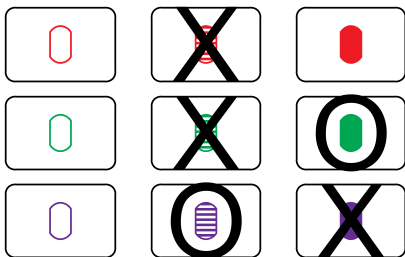
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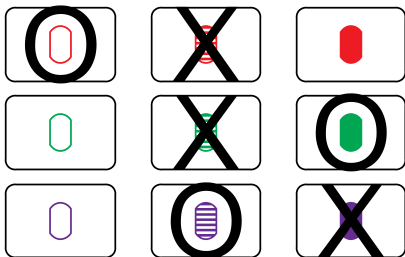
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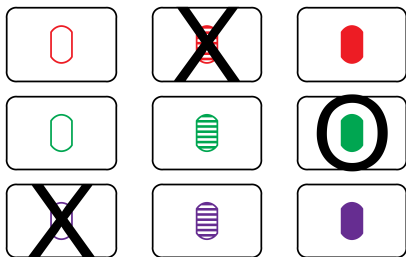


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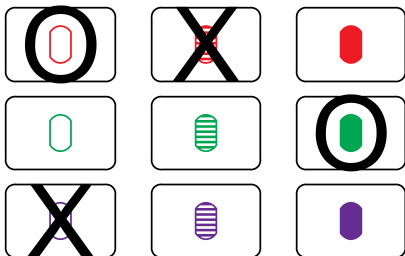
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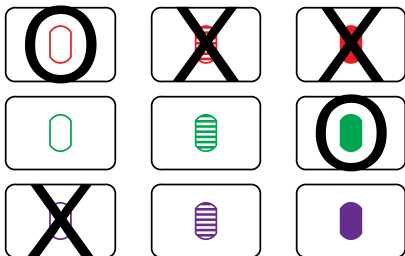
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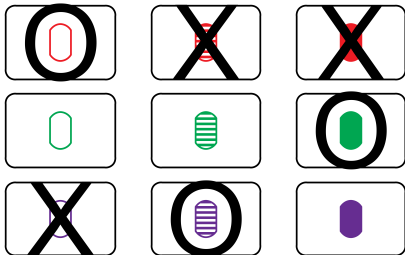
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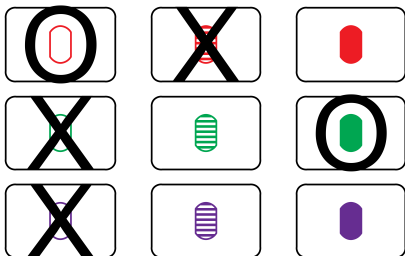
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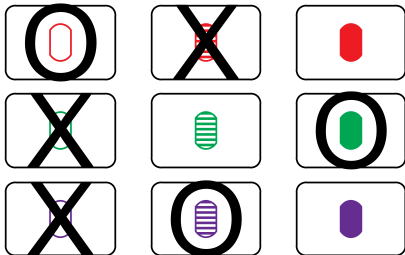
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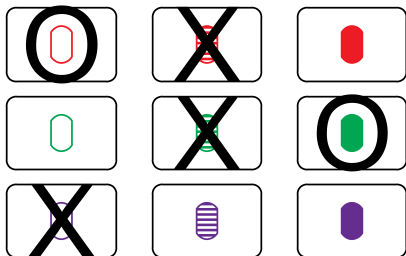
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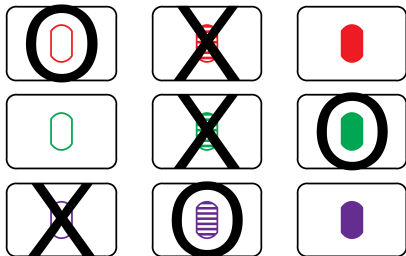
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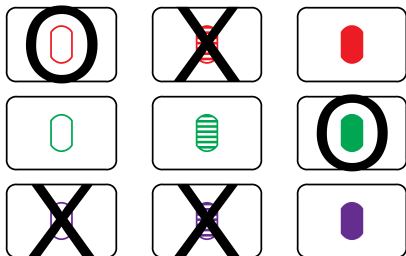


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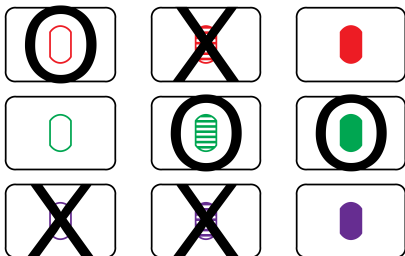
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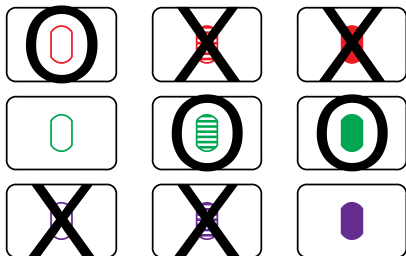
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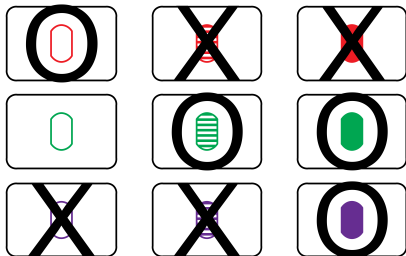
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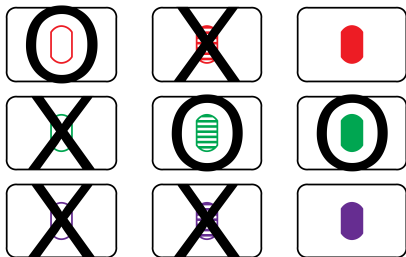
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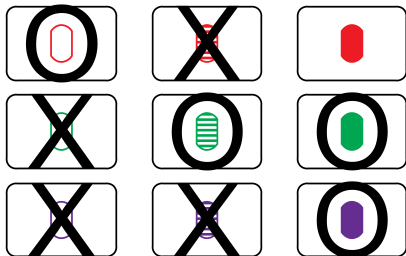
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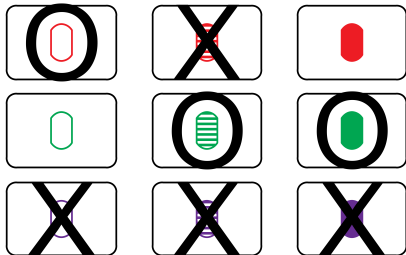
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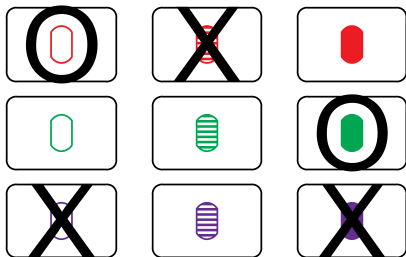
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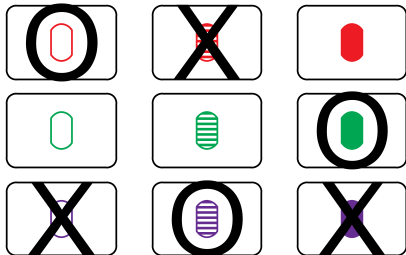
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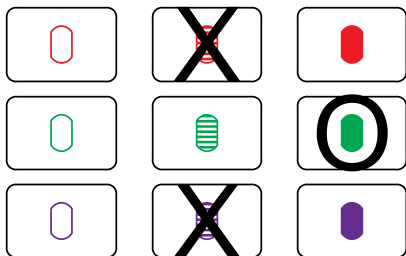
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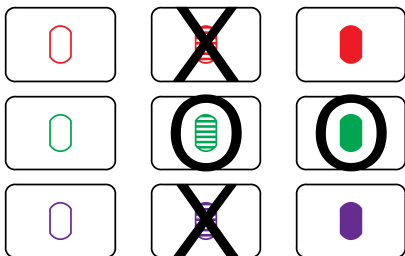
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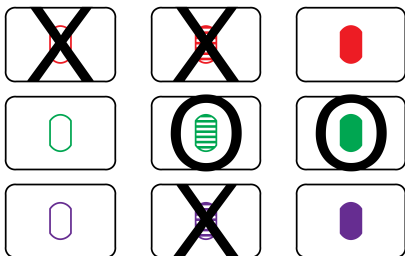
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Magic SET  
Squares and  
Group Theory

SET  
Tic-Tac-Toe



# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example

Hidden  
Dimension of  
SET: The  
Classification  
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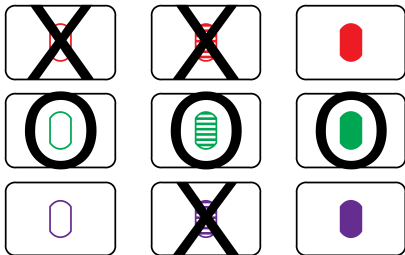
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STEP Junior  
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Khovanova

The Game of  
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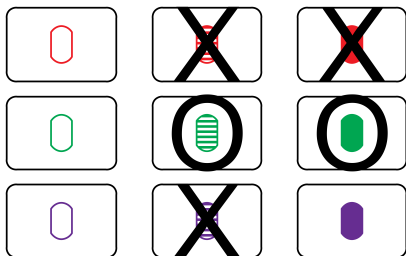
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O wins!

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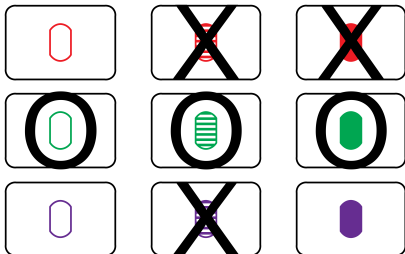
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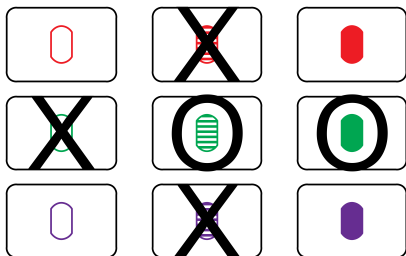
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O wins!



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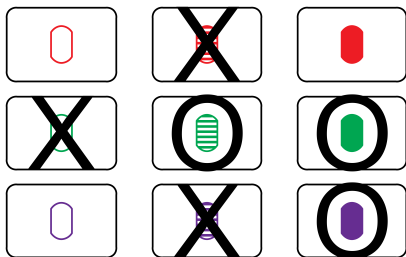
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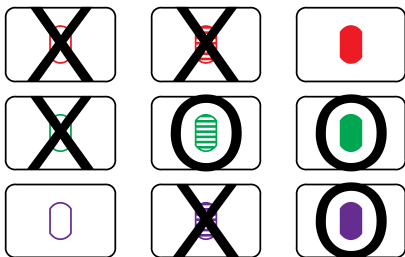
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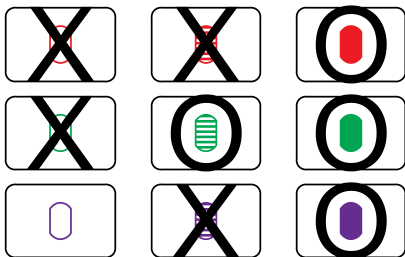
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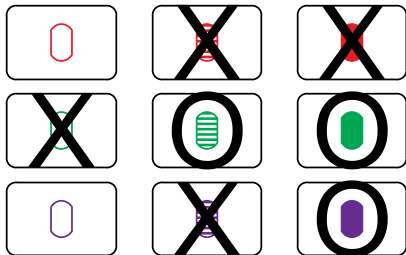
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# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



X wins!

# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example

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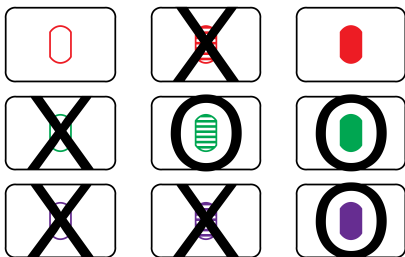
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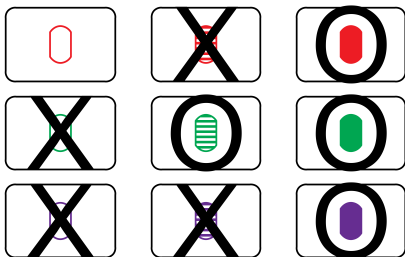
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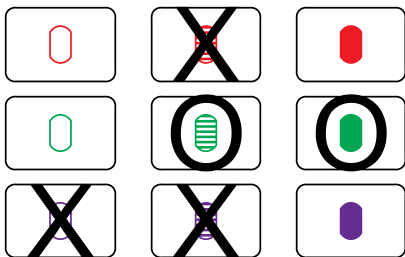
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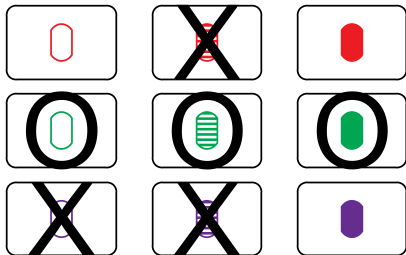
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# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



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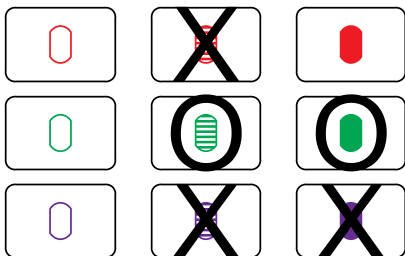
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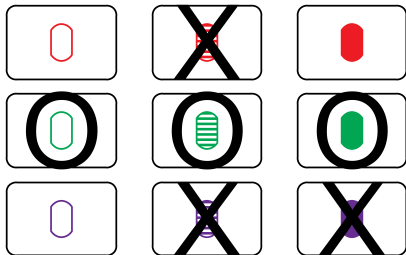
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# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



O wins!

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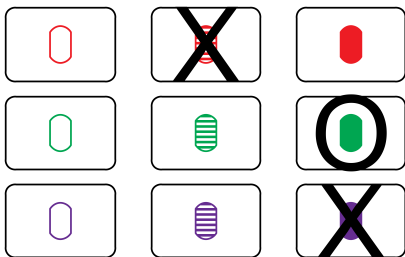
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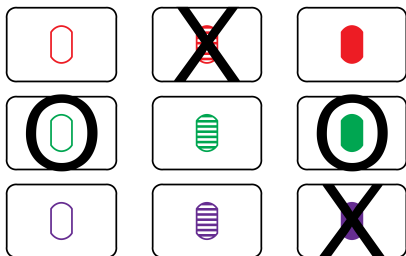
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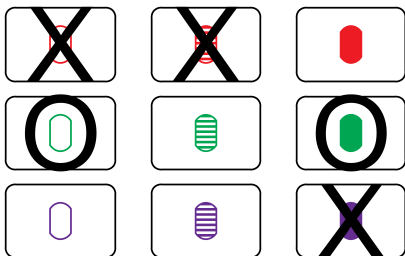
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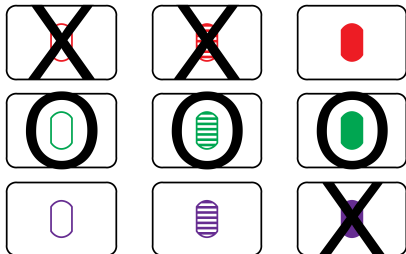
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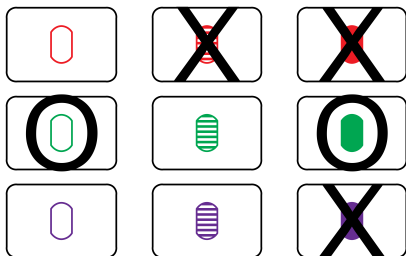
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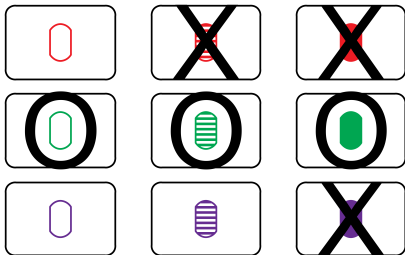
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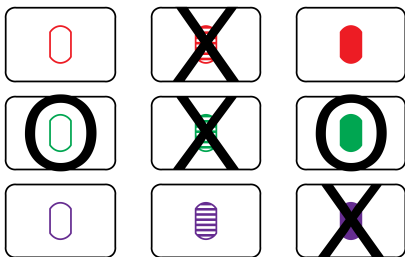
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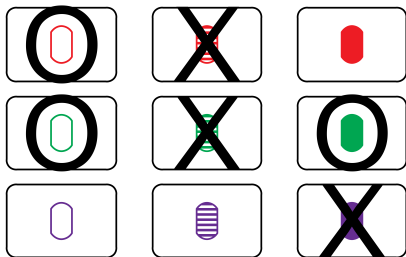
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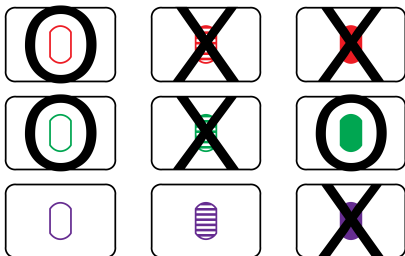
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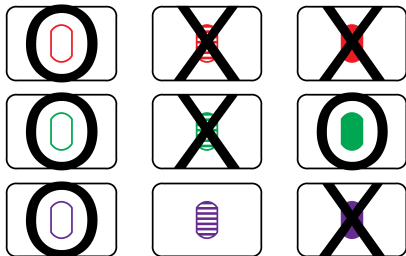
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# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



O wins!

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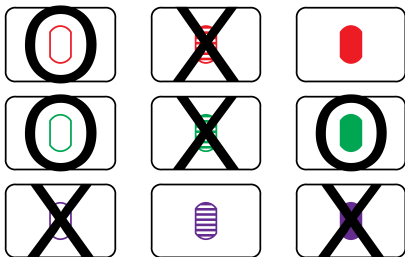
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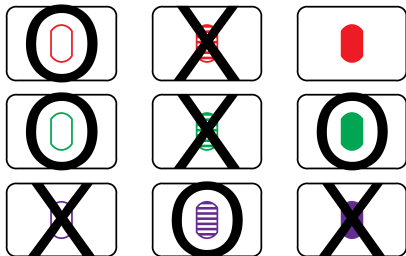
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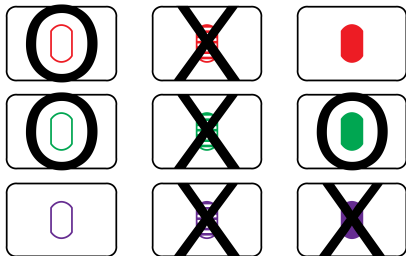


# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



O wins!

# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



X wins!



# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example

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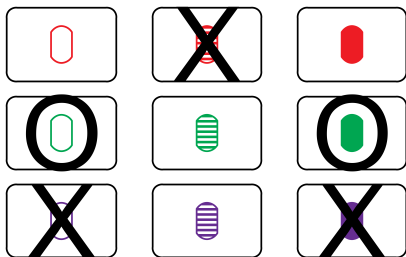
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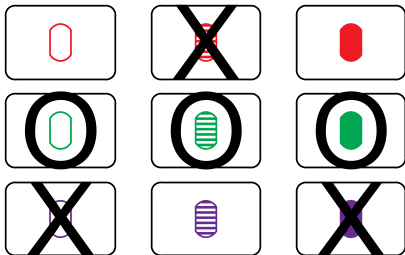
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O wins!

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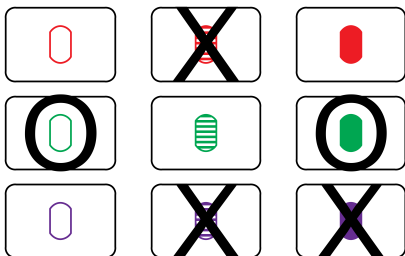
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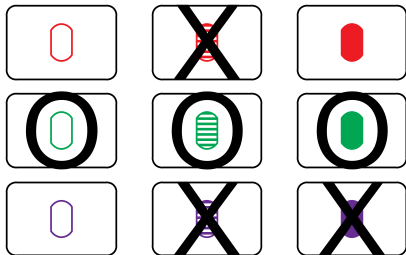
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# SET Tic-Tac-Toe Example



O wins!

# Who wins?

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- The first player will always win on their third or fourth turn if they play well.
- The game can never end in a tie.

# Game of 15

- The game of fifteen consists of two players taking turns choosing cards from 1 - 9. The first to get 15 wins.

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- The game of fifteen consists of two players taking turns choosing cards from 1 - 9. The first to get 15 wins.
- SET Tic-Tac-Toe is similar to the Game of 15, but not the same.

# Game of 15

- The game of fifteen consists of two players taking turns choosing cards from 1 - 9. The first to get 15 wins.
- SET Tic-Tac-Toe is similar to the Game of 15, but not the same.
- Can you see why?

2	9	4
7	5	3
6	1	8



# Acknowledgements

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Thank you

- PRIMES STEP, for providing this opportunity.
- Tanya Khovanova, for mentoring us.
- Our parents and families.

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Thank you for coming!