

# Ang-Yue Go School Study Guide:



*Lao Tse and Kung Tze, two famous philosophers*

A presentation of ways to study and improve at  
this very complex game.

# **This guide divides into three sections:**

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# 1. Study material

We thought it would be relevant to first present the various study tools available. We chose to sort them according to which aspect of the game it allows to improve: *theory & principles*, *reading skills* and *knowledge of fixed patterns/openings*.

## 1.1 Theory & principles

This aspect of the game is what determines your perception of the game, this is what opens your mind and places you in a position in which you will be able to play a deeper game. It builds your capacity to reflect on a position; it teaches you the language of go, but alone doesn't allow you to play at a high level directly. The main sources of theory & principles include:

- Introductory books
- Theme books: attack and defense, using and playing against influence, choosing the moves in the opening, strategy in handicap go, etc.
- Deep analysis of games
- Online or offline lectures on specific subjects.

Where to find those resources?

- ◇ For the books we recommend that you read *David Carlton's Go Bibliography*: <http://www.gobooks.info/bib-difficulty.html> and [Sensei's Library](#).
- ◇ For deep analysis of games, we recommend our own [Detailed Reviews](#). Beginners can find many general principles on *The Go Teaching Ladder*: <http://gtl.xmp.net/>, even though the quality and the accuracy of the information is not guaranteed. Also, in China, there are many books with very deep analysis of pro games, pro games being used to explain the fundamentals of the game, but such thorough books don't appear to exist in English ☹.
- ◇ For the lectures, once again we recommend our own [Private Lessons](#), in which you can ask for a lecture on a specific subject, our [Group Lessons](#) and our [Go Questions](#). We also recommend the [KGS Plus Lectures](#).
- ◇ The wiki website [Sensei's Library](#) can also be very useful.

## 1.2 Reading skills

Reading itself is the ability to see ahead of time what can happen. Effective reading implies mastering the principles and theory, because they guide the reading, they help you determine what you should read; reading everything on the board would take forever. Reading is very important, but just like theory & principles, alone it won't allow you to play at a very high level. Apart from playing, reading can be improved through the following activities:

- ◇ Solving life & death and tesuji problems.
- ◇ Memorizing (pro) games: the more the mind gets used to seeing stones being combined, the easier it becomes to read ahead in a real game. We recommend that you memorize pro games, because not only do they allow you to get used to the mechanism of the stones, they also help you improve your opening and your shapes greatly: if you memorize low level games, you will remember bad shapes and bad openings.

Where to get the problems and the games?

- ◇ You can find problems on our website [here](#), on [www.goproblem.com](http://www.goproblem.com), on [Sensei's Library](#) and in problems books.
- ◇ For the pro games, for a [small collection](#) there is our website and for a bigger one, we recommend [Moyo Go's free pro games collection](#). For more links, see [Sensei's Library](#).

## 1.3 Knowledge: set patterns

Mastering theory & principles and having a deep reading will allow you to play at a high level, but go is so complex that researches have been carried on for centuries to find sequences that offer an even result for both players, josekis and openings. Knowing such patterns, knowing them and how to use them, will allow you to play at an even higher level; also, knowing what the most common moves are in a specific situation will make it easier for you to determine what there is to read.

For these set patterns, there are books, programs and some databases available on the internet.

- For the books, once again we recommend [Sensei's Library](#) for a list.
- For the programs, see our [Go programs](#) section.
- For some online databases, we recommend [Sensei's Library](#) again.

## 2. Study plans

Now that you know what you can study and where to find it, let's see some possible **daily and weekly schedules** according to the level of play: *beginners, intermediate and advanced players*.

### 2.1 Beginners (from 30k to 15k)

Each day:

1. Solve ten L&D (life & death) problems (a problem that suits your own level is one that you can solve within FIVE minutes. If it takes more than that, the level is too high and we don't think it will really help you).

*When solving problems, don't look at the solution until you have come up with an answer you think is good, because the objective being to improve your reading, you have to read the variations by yourself first, otherwise this is not very useful.*

2. Solve ten [tesuji](#) problems; this will help you know more about shape.
3. Play at least one game on 19x19 and three games three games on 13x13 or 9x9. This will allow you to practice what you have learned.

Each week:

1. Take 1-3 lesson(s) with a qualified teacher\* to learn from your mistakes and be properly guided so that you will be able to progress more rapidly.

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\* We recommend a qualified teacher to make sure that fundamentals are being properly explained; this is very important because this is what your go will be based on, its foundation, it has to be solid.

2. Memorize ten short common josekis and learn all the variations of the josekis, including the wrong moves, so to understand the correct order and punish opponents if they play the wrong move.

## 2.2 Intermediate (from 15k to 1k)

Each day:

1. Solve fifteen L&D problems (problems that suit your level are the ones you can solve within TEN minutes.)

*Don't look at the solution before you come up with an answer you think is correct after reading many variations.*

2. Solve fifteen tesuji problems:

*It improves your perception of the shapes and makes it easier to find the correct shape in your own games.*

3. Play at least one game (at least two serious games per week) to practice what you're learning and gain more experience.

Each week:

1. Each week take 1-3 lesson(s) with a qualified teacher.

*Start learning the opening and fighting strategies, how to choose a joseki and the direction of play.*

2. Have two of your serious games reviewed by your teacher.

*The comments will point out your mistakes and correct your wrong thoughts. You should send the games for a review after thoroughly looking at them yourself and having tried to find your mistakes.*

3. Memorize three pro games (or one every two days).  
*This allows you to study the opening and read and learn professionals' perception of shape and fighting. If the game has variations, it is good to memorize them.*
4. Memorize fifteen common josekis and learn all the variations of the josekis including the wrong moves so to understand the correct order and punish your opponents' mistakes.

## 2.3 Advanced (dan players)

Each day:

1. Solve twenty L&D problems (problems you can solve in TEN minutes are the ones suited to your level).

*Don't look at the solution before you come up with an answer you think is correct after reading many variations.*

2. Solve twenty tesuji problems:

*It deepens your perception of the shapes and makes it easier to find the correct shape in your own games.*

3. Play at least one game each day (at least 5 serious games per week) to practice what you have learned.
4. Memorize one pro game (it is very good to memorize games with variations).

*This allows you to study the opening and read and learn professionals' perception of shape and fighting. If the game has variations, it is good to memorize them.*

Each week:

1. Take 1-3 lesson(s) with a qualified teacher. This will make it easier for you to:

*Learn from your mistakes and keep improving. Gain more knowledge about attack, defense and the endgame.*

*Improve your opening and fighting strategy: “from which direction should you attack? When should you decide to kill?”*

*Learn how to choose a joseki and how to choose the moves in the opening.*

2. Have two of your serious games reviewed by your teacher.

*The comments will point out your mistakes and correct your wrong thoughts. You should send the games for a review after thoroughly looking at them yourself and having tried to find your mistakes.*

3. Memorize and study fifteen familiar josekis and learn all the variations of the josekis including the wrong moves in order to understand the correct order and punish your opponents’ mistakes.

Above are our suggestions for the players who want to improve more rapidly and effectively. Of course you can do more than that, but one of the most important things to improve is to learn seriously. If you try to do too much, it will become more difficult for you to concentrate and it will not very effective.

We hope you will benefit from these plans. We also hope you enjoy this great game while studying!

## 3. Go programs

This list is not intended to be exhaustive; we simply decided to suggest some programs we think are worth trying. For a more exhaustive list of programs, see [Sensei's Library](#).

### 3.1 SGF readers/editors/organizers

- **[Multigo](#)**: This is a very flexible and powerful SGF reader/editor. It is one of the only programs handling other formats. **Strongly recommended.**
- **[CGoban](#)**: This is the [KGS](#) client and a SGF reader and editor. The variation tree in the program is very intuitive.
- **[Jacoto](#)**: This is a program to manage collections of SGF files, sorting them according to properties such as rank, handicap, name, date, etc. This is NOT a SGF reader; you have to specify a SGF reader in the settings.

### 3.2 Joseki/fuseki & pattern analysis

- **[Moyo Go Studio](#)**: Moyo Go is a powerful pattern analysis program very useful for Joseki, fuseki and shape. It comes with a very large amount of games. It is also an advanced SGF reader/editor and handles other formats. It is the only program allowing you to convert into the format used on Sensei's Library. **Strongly recommended.**
- **[SmartGo](#)**: This program builds joseki and fuseki databases from collections of games, allows opening many files/games at the same time, includes a problems solving engine and is a powerful SGF editor.

### 3.3 Various utilities

- **[SGFC](#)**: SGFC is a SGF syntax checker and converter. There is a web interface available and you can compile the sources (the windows binary provided on the website is not working).
- **[SGF Merger](#)**: Merges SGF files (creates a separate branch for each SGF).

## 3.4 Go servers

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. See [Sensei's Library](#) for a longer listing of go servers.

- [KGS \(Kiseido Go Server\)](#): A large English speaking go community. This is the server on which we teach.
- [DGS \(Dragon Go Server\)](#): Turn-based go server.
- [CyberOro](#): Korean server, English client available, connects to Chinese, Japanese, and Thai servers as well.