

THE RULES OF CHESS

A Beginner's Guide to the Royal Game

Master the fundamentals and start playing with confidence

The Chessboard

An 8 x 8 grid of alternating light and dark squares

- **64 Squares Total**

32 light squares and 32 dark squares

- **Correct Orientation**

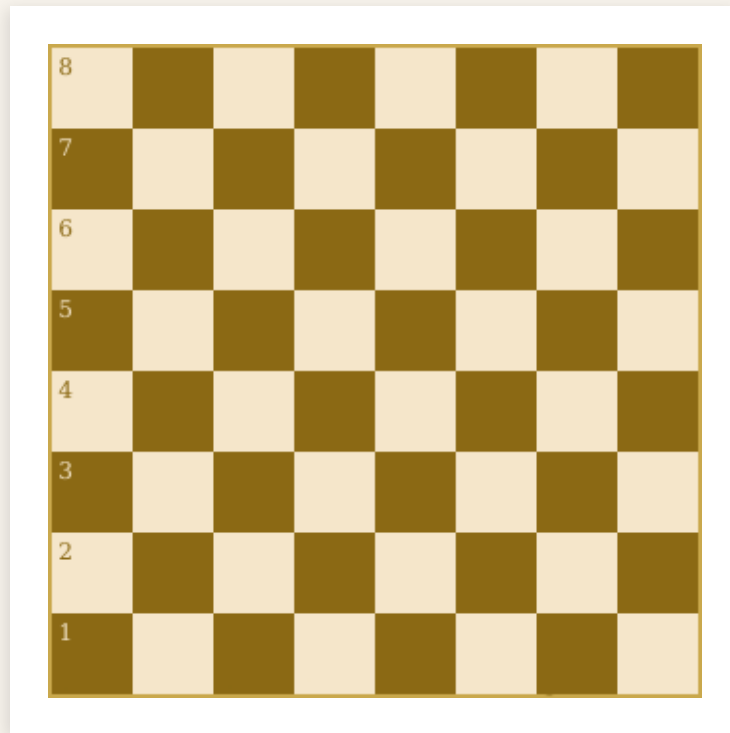
White square in each player's right-hand corner

- **Ranks & Files**

Rows (1-8) are ranks, columns (a-h) are files

- **Diagonals**

Lines of same-colored squares running corner to corner



Each player begins with 16 pieces on their side of the board

The Chess Pieces

Each player starts with 16 pieces: 1 King, 1 Queen, 2 Rooks, 2 Bishops, 2 Knights, and 8 Pawns



King

Infinite

Must be protected at all costs



Queen

9 points

Most powerful piece on the board



Rook

5 points

Controls rows and columns



Bishop

3 points

Rules the diagonal lines



Knight

3 points

Jumps in an L-shape

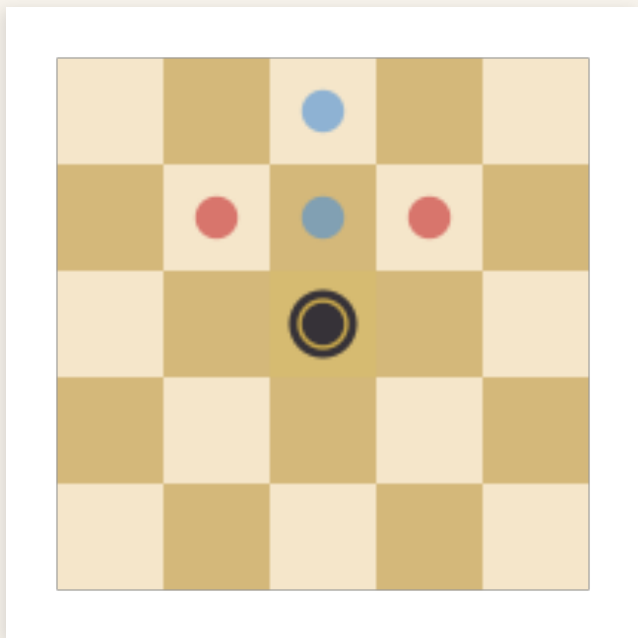



Pawn

1 point

The foot soldiers of chess

The Pawn



 Move

 Capture

- **Forward Only**

Pawns move forward one square at a time and can never move backward.

- **First Move Option**

On its first move, a pawn may advance one or two squares forward.

- **Diagonal Capture**

Pawns capture enemy pieces by moving one square diagonally forward.

- **Promotion**

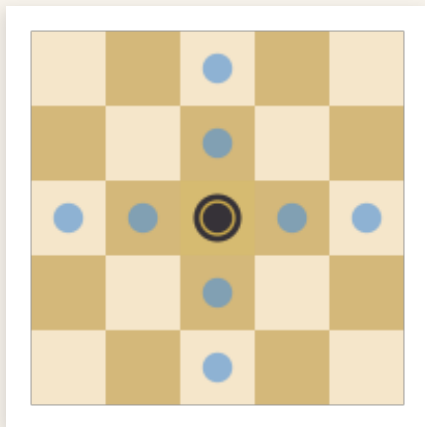
When a pawn reaches the opposite end of the board, it promotes to any piece (usually a Queen).

Rook & Bishop



The Rook

Value: 5 points



Moves any number of squares along a rank or file (horizontally or vertically).

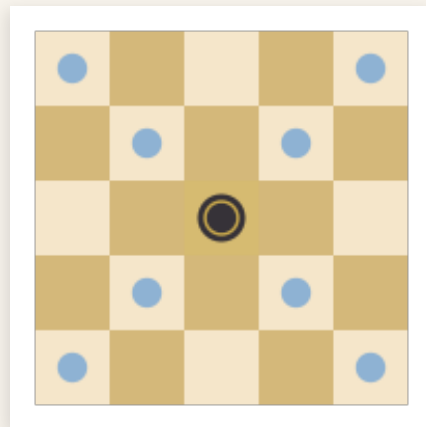
Cannot jump over other pieces.

Participates in castling with the King.



The Bishop

Value: 3 points



Moves any number of squares diagonally.

Each player has one light-square and one dark-square bishop.

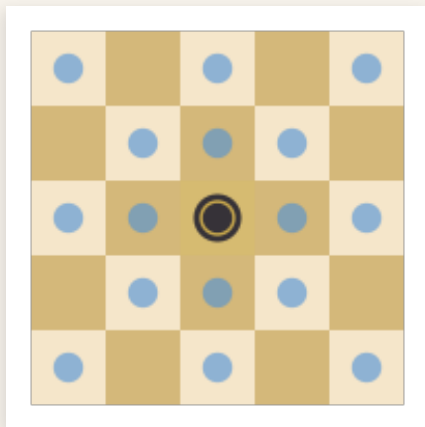
A bishop always stays on its starting color.

Queen & Knight



The Queen

Value: 9 points



Combines the power of the Rook and Bishop.

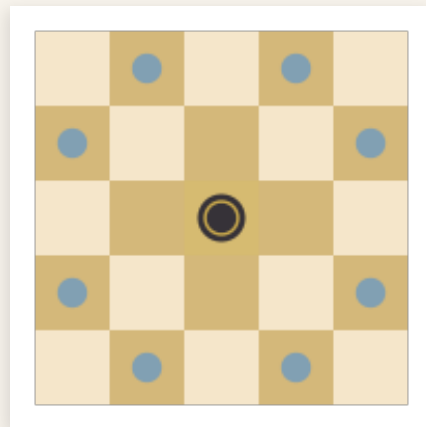
Moves any number of squares in any straight direction.

Cannot jump over pieces.
Protect her — losing her is devastating.



The Knight

Value: 3 points



Moves in an L-shape: 2 squares in one direction, then 1 square perpendicular.

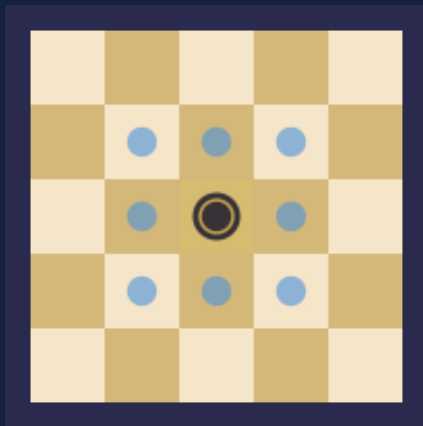
The only piece that can jump over other pieces.

Great for surprise attacks and forks.

The Queen controls the board; the Knight controls chaos

The King & Check

King Movement



Moves one square in any direction. The most important piece in the game.

When You're in Check

- 1 Move the King to a safe square
- 2 Block the check with another piece
- 3 Capture the attacking piece

You can never move into check!

If none of the three options work, it's checkmate and the game is over.

Special Moves



Castling

King moves 2 squares toward a Rook; the Rook jumps to the other side.

Conditions: neither piece has moved, no pieces between them, King not in or through check.

Great for King safety and activating the Rook.



En Passant

A special pawn capture that can only happen immediately after an opponent's pawn moves two squares forward from its starting position.

Your pawn captures it as if it had only moved one square.



Promotion

When a pawn reaches the opponent's back rank (8th rank), it must promote.

It can become a Queen, Rook, Bishop, or Knight. Most players choose Queen.

How the Game Ends

Winning

● **Checkmate**

The King is in check and has no legal move to escape. This is the ultimate goal.

● **Resignation**

A player may resign at any time, conceding the game to the opponent.

● **Time Forfeit**

In timed games, running out of time means you lose (if opponent has enough pieces to checkmate).

Drawing

● **Stalemate**

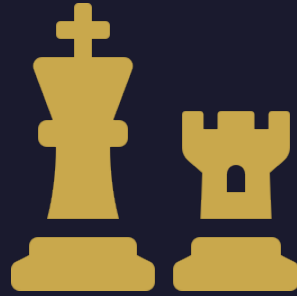
The player to move is not in check but has no legal move. The game is a draw.

● **Agreement**

Both players agree to a draw at any point during the game.

● **Insufficient Material**

Neither player has enough pieces to force checkmate (e.g., King vs. King).



Now You Know the Rules

The best way to learn is to play. Set up the board and start a game!



Control
the Center



Develop
Your Pieces



Castle
Early



Think
Ahead