the 'winning' player cannot have their own king bared on the next play. If they can, the result is a draw.

### *Acider de Los Quatros Tiempos*
### *(Four Seasons Chess)*

(The rules have been adapted from those given on http://www.chessvariants.dir/historic.dir/4seiz.html)

This is a chess game for four players. Either use pieces from two different chess sets, or mark half the pieces of each colour with thread and treat the queens as kings.
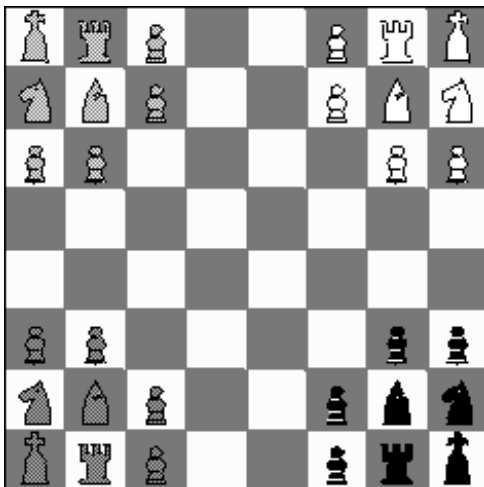


The board is set up as shown in the diagram. Each player has one king, one knight, one bishop, one rook, and four pawns. The king is placed in the corner, the knight, bishop and rook surround the king, and the pawns surround them on two sides.

#### Pieces:

*King:* as in modern chess. Moves one square in any direction.

*Bishop;* leaps two squares diagonally.

*Knight:* as for modern chess; moves orthogonally one square in one direction and then two squares at right angles, or vice versa; able to leap pieces.

*Rook:* as in modern Chess. Moves any number of squares orthogonally

*Pawn:* move one square forward, and in only one direction. E.g. For black above, the pawns adjacent to the Knight and the Bishop will move towards the white pieces, and the pawns adjacent to the Rook and Bishop will move towards the dark grey pieces.

When a pawn reaches it's last rank, it promotes to a *General.* (If using two different chess sets, replace the pawn with the queen piece; if using one chess set and marking half with thread, add a second thread to differentiate the promoted pawn as a General.) Generals can move one square diagonally, in any direction.

Traditionally the pieces in this game are coloured red (light grey in the diagram), green (dark grey) white and black. Green moves first and play progresses anti-clockwise.

**Capturing:** as for other forms of chess, by placing your piece on a square occupied by an opponent's piece.
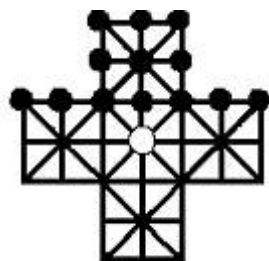
Winning: both checkmate and stalemate are considered a loss. A king that has been checkmated is removed from the board, and the conquering player takes over all the mated king's remaining pieces. All of a stalemated players are removed from the board.

The last remaining player is the winner.

# Rules for

# Various

# Period
# Board Games

## Fox & Geese



There are 13 'Geese' pieces in one colour, and one 'Fox' piece in another. The Geese are set up as shown in the diagram; the Fox can begin on any vacant space.

### Play:

The object for the geese is to trap the fox in a corner in such a way that the fox cannot escape. The object for the fox is to capture enough geese that they cannot trap it.

The fox moves first. On their turn, each side may move one counter. Both fox and geese can move along a line, forwards, backwards, or sideways, to the next contiguous point.

The fox captures the geese by jumping over them and removing the pieces from the board. Two or more geese may be captured by the fox in one turn, providing that he is able to jump to an empty point after each one. The geese cannot jump pieces, nor can they remove the fox from the board.

### Winning:

The fox wins if it captures 8 or more geese (6 is the minimum number of geese that can capture the fox.) The geese win if they can 'pen' the fox so it cannot leap to another square. (Adapted from rules by Modar Neznanich [Ron Knight], http://www.modaruniversity.org/Game6.htm Please provide credit for any further reproduction.)

## Halatafl

Halatafl is the Scandinavian, and probably older, version of Fox and geese. There are more pieces—20 Geese and 2 foxes—the board is set up differently, and the geese have two ways of winning.
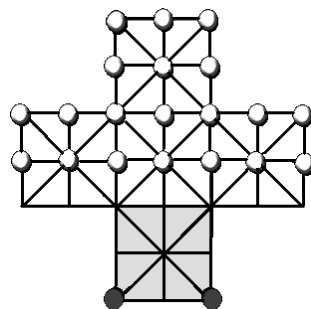


**Play:** In this game, the foxes can move along the lines in any direction, and can leap the sheep, capturing and removing the pieces from the board in the process. If a fox *can* capture one or more geese in a move, it *must* do so.

The sheep can only move forwards or sideways, they may not move backwards.

**Winning:** The grey shaded area is the sheep pen; the sheep win the game if they can get nine sheep into this pen, or if they can trap the two foxes so they cannot move. The foxes win the game if they can reduce the number of sheep to less than nine.

## Merels

The game of Merels is more commonly known today as Nine Men's Morris. It is a simple board game for two players. From period documents and illustrations, it is known that it was very popular in the 1300s, but the game itself is far older.

**Capturing:** (see 'Pieces' for a description of how Pawns capture.) Capturing is done by moving one a piece onto the same square as an opposing piece; the opposing piece is then removed from the board.

**Check:** if the king is in a position whereby an opponent's piece could capture it, it is in check. One should say 'check' when putting an opponent in check, out of courtesy, so they may avoid capture. Note that a king cannot make a castling move if it would be in check on any of the squares it moves over, even if it does not stop there.

**Promotion:** when a pawn reaches the last rank, it promotes to any other piece the player chooses (usually the queen.) If that piece has already been captured, simply substitute the piece, otherwise mark the promoted pawn with a piece of thread.

**Winning:** By checkmate, i.e. by capturing the king, or by putting your opponent into stale mate i.e. making it impossible for your opponent to move a piece (unlike modern chess, where stalemate is a tie.)

## Byzantine Chess

(These rules have been adapted from those given on http://www.chessvariants.org/historic.dir/byzantine.html)

This is a version of chess played on a circular board. Despite the name, it wasn't played in Byzantium; there was a popular misconception that it was played there. This was more popular in the Middle East and eastern Europe than in Western Europe. Pieces are the same as in Shatranj, and move identically.

Pieces are set up on the board as shown in the diagram. Note that the kings and queens are heading towards each other.
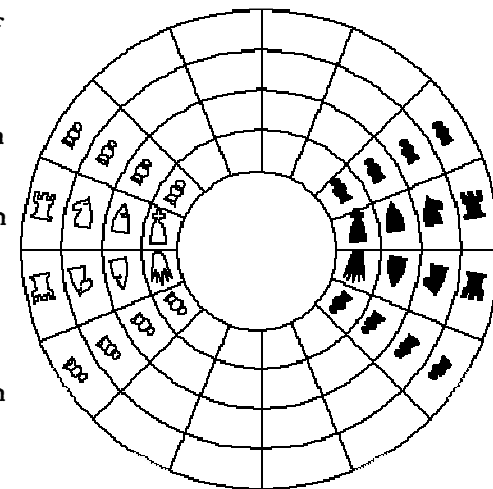


**Pieces:** see 'Shatranj'

Pieces move around the board. Pawns can only move forward, forward being the direction away from the pieces behind them in the initial set up (i.e. on its first move, a pawn moves 'forward' to the open square.)

Pawns cannot promote, as there is no 'end' to the board. If two pawns meet such that neither can move forward, the opponent can remove both pawns from the board immediately, or choose to leave them as an obstacle on the board (this is not necessarily permanent, as the impasse can be broken if a piece is move to an adjacent square allowing one pawn to move diagonally to capture it.) If the opponent chooses to remove both pieces, this does **not** count as their move.

### Winning:

1. By Checkmate; loser's king is captured

2. by Stalemate; losing player cannot make a legal move.

3. By Baremate; the losing player is left with only their King. This can be done only it

forward. Cannot move onto a square occupied by another piece. There are two ways in which a pawn can capture a piece.

1. By moving diagonally one square forward onto an occupied square (the only time a pawn moves anything other forward or-thogonally.)

2. *En Passant*— when a pawn makes the first two-square move, if land adjacent to an opponent's pawn, that opposing pawn may move into the empty square passed over and remove the original pawn.
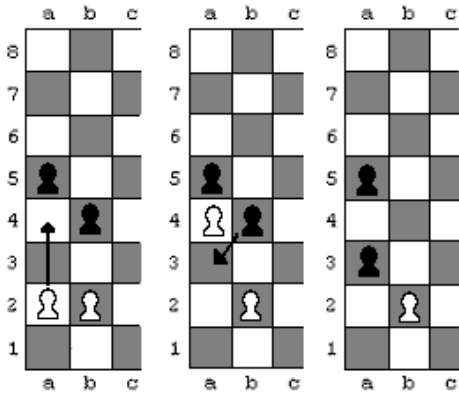


In other words, the opponent may act as though the pawn had moved only one square instead of two, and capture it.

## Castling & other 'Kings Leap' moves.:

There are several moves that have been used in period available on a one-time-only basis for Kings, all based on the King being able to leap squares. In all cases, only one option was used —players must determine before the game which one, if any, they will use.

*The King's Leap 1*—is exactly the same as the Knight's move. It can be played once during the game, even if the king has already moved, but cannot be played once the king has been in check.

*The King's Leap 2*— can only be made on the king's first move. The king can either move as a knight does, OR can leap 2 squares diagonally or orthogonally (i.e. can leap over other pieces to make this move, unlike the standard 2 square kings first move.) This can only be done if no capture is made, the king is not in check, and the king does not move over check to do so (i.e. would not be in check in any of the intervening squares.)

*Old Castling*: this form of Castling is first recorded by Luis Ramirez de Lucena in 1498. It consists of two moves; the rook moves first, then the king in the next move. It can only be done if the following conditions are met: the king and the rook have not moved; there are no pieces between the two; the king is not in check, and will not be in check at the end of the move; the king would not be in check if it stopped on any of the intervening squares.

If the rook is on the queen's side of the board, it moves three squares towards the king; if it is on the king's side, it moves two squares towards the king. In the next move, the king moves past the rook, to stop on the next square (i.e. if the queen's rook was moved, the king moves two squares, if the king's rook was moved, the king moves three squares.)

*New Castling*: is exactly the same as Old Castling, with exactly the same conditions, except that it is all done in one move, not two. It should be noted, however, that this game is technically post-period, being first used in France in 1620.

The game is played on a square board made up of three concentric squares connected by intersecting lines in the centre of each of the square's sides. Each player has nine pieces, 'white' and 'black'.
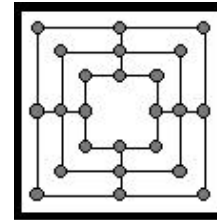


**Play:** The players decide who starts first, then take turns placing one piece at a time on any unoccupied point on the board.

Once both players have placed all nine pieces on the board, they take turns in moving the pieces on the board one at a time Pieces can only be moved to adjacent points along the marked lines and only one piece may be placed on any point.

The object is to form mills, which consist of a straight row of three of a player's pieces along a straight marked line. If a player succeeds in making a mill, they may capture an opponent's piece and remove an opponent's piece from the board. Once captured, pieces cannot be brought back into play.

Players must move a piece if they can, even if it would be to their disadvantage. It is permissible to move a piece in and out of a mill, capturing another piece each time the mill is reformed.

**Winning:** There are two ways to end the game. A player who cannot move a piece loses the game. Once a player has been reduced to two men, and therefore is unable to form a mill which lets them capture their opponent's men, they lose the game.

**Variations:** A common variation of this game is to require that one intervening move must be made before a piece may be moved back into the same mill. No such restriction applies if a mill is being formed along a different line, or using different pieces.

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## *Alquerque*
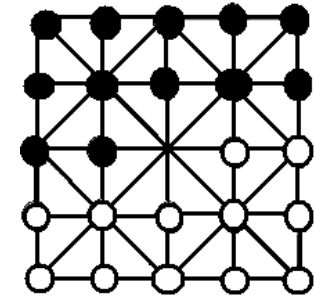


**Pieces::** Each player has 12 pieces, 'black' and 'white', laid out as shown in the diagram above.

**Play:** Pieces move from one point to any adjacent point along an empty line, forwards, diagonally or sideways, but not backwards.

**Captures:** Pieces are captured by leaping over them to an empty space, then removing that piece from the board. Multiple captures can be made in this manner.

Players must capture pieces if they can: if a piece can make a capture, and a player moves another piece instead, then their opponent may remove the piece that was able to make the capture from the board. (This does not apply if more than one piece can make a capture, provided the piece moved does make a capture.)

**Winning:** There are three ways to end the game: a player wins by capturing all the opponent's pieces, or all their pieces have moved to the back row (so they can no longer move); a player loses if they cannot move a piece.

(adapted from rules by Modar Neznanich {Ron Knight}, http://www.modaruniversity.org/Game6.htm Please provide credit for any further reproduction.)

# Tafl

(also called Cyningtaefl, Hnefatafl, Tawlbwrdd, Gwyddbwyll, Gwezboell, Tablut, etc.)

A related group of games, all played in a similar manner, with variants in terms of the board used—they are all played on grid boards, of varying dimensions. The size of the board will determine the number of pieces used.

No complete, unambiguous descriptions of the rules of a tafl game exist. It is probable that some variants used dice to determine play, but no rules of this form of play have survived.

The oldest full set of rules are for a Finnish game called Tablut (c.f.), written down in 1732 by Carolus Linnaeus.

**Play:** there are two sides, consisting of an 'attacking' side of uniform colour and size, and a 'defending' side of another colour, which has a 'king' piece identified by being larger or of a third colour. The attacker seeks to capture the defending king, the defender seeks to move his king to a 'fortress' square (usually the corners, in some rules getting the king to any edge square is a win.)

Because there are no complete rules given until post-period, there are several variations in play that need to be agreed upon before beginning (see 'Variations')

**Movement:** pieces can only move orthogonally, they cannot move diagonally. Any piece can move any number of places, *however* they may not occupy the same space as another piece, nor may they travel over or leap over another piece.

**Pieces and Board:** see individual tafl games for the board size, layout, and number of pieces. The pieces are nearly always in a 2:1 ratio, with the side with the fewer pieces having the 'king'. The board is always square, and the sides are of an odd number of squares (e.g. 9x9, 11x11, etc.)

The king always starts on the centre square, which is marked on the board, and no other piece can entre this square (the 'konakis' or 'castle'). Set up will always have the defending pieces surrounding the king and the attacking pieces will be arranged around the edges. Set up is always symmetrical horizontally and vertically.

In games where the king must get to a corner for the defenders to win, the corners are marked (These and the castle are called 'fortress' squares). Games where the corners are not marked, the defenders can win if the king can make it to the edge (which makes for a more unbalanced game.)

**Capture:** is done by surrounding an enemy piece on two opposing sides.

Pieces cannot be captured on an angle, or diagonally, or against an edge, e.g.
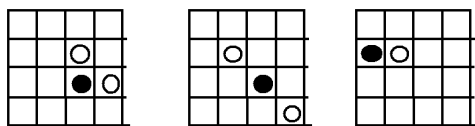
**Rook:** as in modern Chess. Moves any number of squares orthogonally

**Pawn:** Moves one square orthogonally forward and captures moving one square diagonally forward.

**Play:** Similar to modern European Chess, with the following differences:

Elephants replace Bishops, Generals replace Queens.

Pawns do **not** have an initial two-square move.

There is no castling, or en passant capturing.

Pawns will *always* promote to Generals on reaching the last rank.

**Capturing:** a player captures their opponent's pieces by moving one of their own pieces onto the same square as their opponent's piece. Captured pieces are removed from the board.

**Winning:**

1. By Checkmate; loser's king is captured

2. by Stalemate; losing player cannot make a legal move.

3. By Baremate; the losing player is left with only their King. This can be done only it the 'winning' player cannot have their own king bared on the next play. If they can, the result is a draw.

## Queen's Chess

This is essentially modern chess, as developed in Italy and Spain in the 15th Century. The only real difference between Queen's Chess and Modern Chess is that a Stalemate is a loss, not a draw, and the King has some addition opening moves.
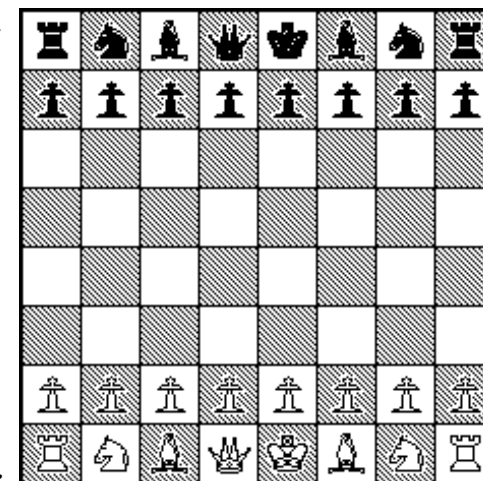
Note that the Queen is always on the square of her own colour, and the king is on the square of the opposing colour, and that Kings and Queens face their opposing number.

**Pieces:**

*King:* moves one square in any direction. Is able to move two squares diagonally or two squares orthogonally on the first move. See "Castling & other King's Leap' moves" for additional moves available to the King.

*Queen:* moves any number of squares orthogonally or diagonally. Cannot leap other pieces.

*Bishop:* can move any number of squares diagonally. Cannot leap other pieces.

*Knight:* moves in an 'L' shape, moving orthogonally one square in one direction and then two squares at right angles, or vice versa. **Can** leap other pieces.

*Rook:* can move any number of squares orthogonally. Cannot leap other pieces.

*Pawn:* can move once square, forward only. In its first move, a pawn can move 2 squares

*Counsellor:* replaces the Queen. Moves ones square diagonally.

*Elephant:* replaces Bishop. Moves 2 squares diagonally, and may jump diagonally adjacent pieces.

*Knight:* as for modern chess; moves orthogonally one square in one direction and then two squares at right angles, or vice versa; able to leap pieces.

*Chariot:* replaces Rook. Moves any number of squares orthogonally (as for a modern Rook)

*Soldier:* replaces Pawn. Moves one square orthogonally forward and captures moving one square diagonally forward.

**Promotion:** A pawn can promote when they reach the 8th square (i.e. the last rank) but *only* to the piece that was originally on that square. Promotion can only happen if a player has already lost that piece, i.e. Promotion is done by substituting the pawn for the matching captured piece. Pawns cannot, of course, promote to King.

**Capturing:** a player captures their opponent's pieces by moving one of their own pieces onto the same square as their opponent's piece. Captured pieces are removed from the board.

**Winning:** By checkmate (player making checkmate wins) or by stalemate (player putting opponent in stalemate loses.) Bare-mate is not a loss.
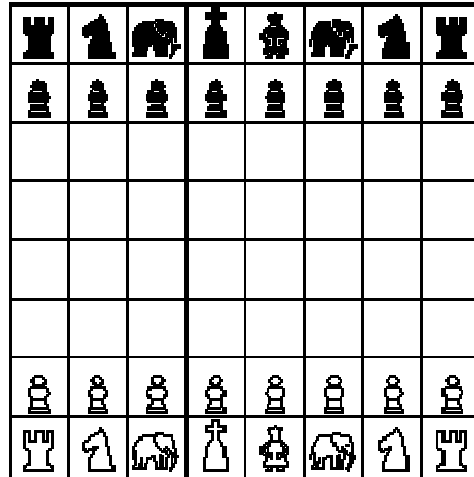
### Shatranj

This is the Persian game which is the direct ancestor of modern European Chess. As with Chaturanga, the pieces have different names, and some move in different ways to modern chess.

Also like Chaturanga, the board was an 8x8 grid, and not chequered, although the game can, of course, be played on a modern chess board, using modern chess pieces.

Note that in Shatranj, the Kings and the Generals are directly in line with their opposing number.

### Pieces:

*King:* as in modern chess. Moves one square in any direction.

*General:* replaces the Queen. Moves one square diagonally.

*Elephant:* replaces Bishop. Moves 2 squares diagonally, and may jump diagonally adjacent pieces.

*Knight:* as for modern chess; moves orthogonally one square in one direction and then two squares at right angles, or vice versa; able to leap pieces.

(See 'Variations' for captures/trapping against castle and corner squares)

**Capturing the King**—there are two schools of thought on this. The first is that the king can be captured like any other piece—this gives a more balanced game. The second is that the king must be surrounded on four sides, which gives a more unbalanced game, e.g.
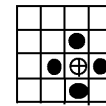
King surrounded by 4 attackers
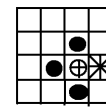
King surrounded on three sides and the castle square on the fourth (only if playing that once the king has left the castle, it cannot return—see 'Variations')
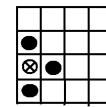
King surrounded on three sides and trapped against the edge (only if playing that the king must reach a corner to win—see 'Variations'.)

**Trapping:** because the pieces cannot move diagonally, it is possible to trap a piece against a fortress, e.g.
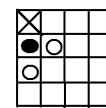
Black trapped by 2 white pieces against a fortress

**Variations:** Tafl games are not balanced (i.e. one side is always at an advantage.) Because of this, there are several variations that will affect play and can change the balance. These variations must be agreed on before play begins.

1. Defenders Win—it must be decided if the defenders wins by the king reaching the edge or reaching a corner fortress. If the board has the corners marked as fortresses, then assume the king *must* go to a corner to win; otherwise players decide whether it is corner or edge.

2. Capture of the king—either as any other capture, or requiring the king to be surrounded on four sides. Having the king captured as other pieces gives a more balanced game, and seems to be the prevalent version. Please note *Tablut* (c.f.) expressly insists on the four way capture.

3. Fortress squares—the marked corner squares and the central castle. No piece other than the king can enter the central castle square, however players must decide if the corner squares can be occupied by pieces other than the king or not. If the corner fortresses are marked on the board, assume that only the king can enter them.

4. Castle square—once the king has moved off the castle, one variant states it cannot return to that square. Players must decide if this rule will operate.

5. Trap = capture—players must decide if trapping a piece counts as a capture or not.

6. Castle Capture: if playing that the king is captured like ordinary pieces, this variant states that if the king has not yet left the castle, then it must be captured by four instead of 2 pieces.
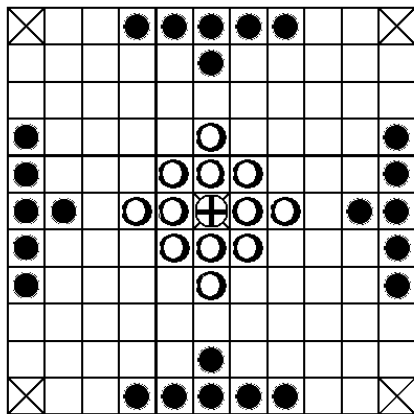
### Hnefatafl

Hnefatafl was a popular game in medieval Scandinavia and was mentioned in several of the Norse Sagas.

Also called *Cyningtaefl* by the Anglo-Saxons.

**Board:** 11 by 11; fortresses are marked.

**Pieces:** 24 attackers, 12 defenders plus king.



### Tawlbwrdd

Tawlbwrdd was played in Wales.

Robert ap Ifan documented it with a drawing in a manuscript dated 1587. His version was played on an 11×11 board with 12 pieces on the king's side and 24 on the opponent's side. His passage states:

"The above tawlbwrdd should be played with a king in the centre and twelve men in the places next to him, and twenty-four men seek to capture him. These are placed, six in the centre of each side of the board and in the six central positions. And two move the men in the game, and if one [piece] belonging to the king comes between the attackers, he is dead and is thrown out of the game, and the same if one of the attackers comes between two of the king's men in the same manner. And if the king himself comes between two of the attackers, and if you say 'Watch your king' before he moves to that space, and he is unable to escape, you capture him. If the other says 'I am your liegeman' and goes between two, there is no harm. If the king can go along the [illegible] line, that side wins the game."
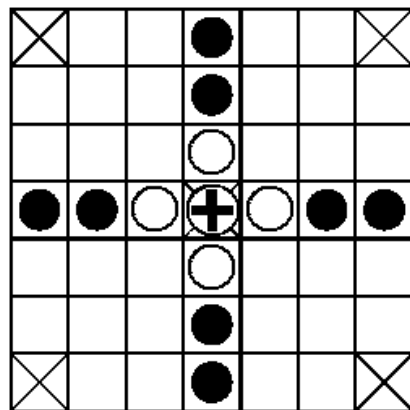
**Board:** 11 by 11, fortresses are marked.

**Pieces:** 24 attackers, 12 defenders plus king.
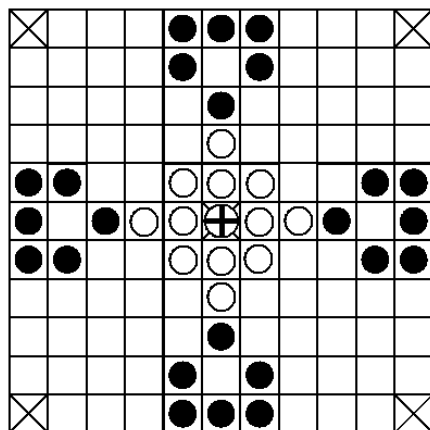


### Brandub

Brandub was the Irish form of tafl. We know from two poems that it was played with five men against eight, and that one of the five was a "Branán", or chief.



A number of 7×7 boards have been found, the most famous being the elaborate wooden board found at Ballinderry in 1932,

doubles). If you have played only two checkers off your *talon* and they are now on your *coin* and you roll a 1 or a 1-1. However, if the opponent's *coin* is already filled, it is *contre-jan do mezeas* and the opponent takes the score.

- *Potential capture*, 4 points for each potential capture, (i.e. landing on an opponent's single piece) in a *Petit Jan*, 2 points for each potential capture in a *Grand Jan* (2 extra points for doubles). You cannot actually make this move.

- *False capture*, 4 points for the **opponent** for a false hit in the *Petit Jan* and 2 points for the **opponent** for a false hit in the *Grand Jan* (2 extra points) for doubles). A "false capture" is a potential capture that could be made if the two dice were added together, but the relevant piece could not actually move because neither combination of the two moves is legal (i.e. there are opposing pieces on the required points.)

- *Battre le coin*, 4 points (6 points if by doubles). Scored if you have made your own *coin*, the opponent's *coin* is empty, and you roll numbers which would make the opponent's *coin*.

- *Unplayable number*, 2 points each. Scored for your **opponent** for each number you cannot play.

- *First off*, 4 points (6 points if by doubles). Scored if you are the first to bear off your checkers.

- *École*, failing to take all the points allowed, your opponent can claim *all* the points of the move. The opponent, however, must also correctly score all the points of the move; failure to do so means neither player scores.

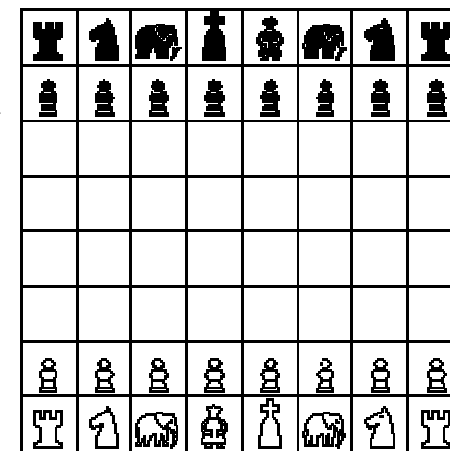**Winning:** The first player to make 12 trous wins.

# Chess

## Chaturanga

The original Indian game believed to be the ancestor of all Chess games. Note that Chaturanga was played on an 8x8 grid, not a chequered board (although it can, of course, be played on a modern chess board.)



Note that the Counsellor is set up on the King's left for both players.

### The Pieces:

*King:* moves one square in any direction. Also can make one knight-move during the game, provided the king has not yet been checked.

their opponent has not yet scored, and they may make a trou bredouille.

If the opponent makes a score, the first player is no longer able to make a trou bredouille, but the second player **can**, provided the first player scores no more points until the trou is made. So the bredouille-piece is now paired with the second player's point-piece. If the first player then scores again, so that neither can make a trou bredouille this time, the bredouille-piece is returned to between the talons until the next trou is being fought for.

**After making a trou:** it is possible to make a tou by 'overshooting' the score. If this is the case, the extra points are used to start the next trou attempt. So, for example, if a player has 10 points, and scores another *6*, they use 2 points to make the trou, and then place their point-piece on the fourth point, to indicate they have 4 points in hand (the left over 4 points from making the previous trou.) However, they do not move the bredouille-piece, as they have not yet scored in this round.

If a player scores a trou on their own dice roll, they have two options:

1. Continue playing—the winner of the trou shifts their point piece to the appropriate spot and the loser returns their point-piece to sit between the talons. The next person to play is the person who lost the trou.

2. Reset the game—both players' point-pieces are returned to sit between the talons, and all the playing pieces are set up at their starting positions again. The next person to play is the person who won the trou.

**Scoring:** there are numerous plays that score points. Trictrac is perhaps unusual in that points are scored for *potential* scoring moves, not the moves themselves; you may not have to make the move in order to score the points. In fact, some scoring moves cannot actually be legally played, even though points are scored for being able to make them. Remember, all scores must be marked **before** the pieces are moved. This means that one dice roll may result in several potential scoring moves; they may all be scored for, depending on the scoring play type, even though only one (or potentially none) of those moves are actually made..

- *Jan de trois coups*, 4 points. Scored if your third roll of the game allows you to end up with exactly one checker on each of the points two through seven. <u>You are not required to actually make this play to score the points.</u>

- *Jan de deux tables*, 4 points (*6* points if by doubles). Scored if only two checkers have been played off the *talon* and your throw would enable you to move one checker to both your own and your opponent's *coin*. (You score, but <u>you cannot move there.</u>)

- *Filling your Petit Jan, Grand Jan*, and *Jan de Retour* 4 points (*6* points if by doubles) for each way possible. Scored if you pile checkers on each point of the *jan*. For **every** move which preserves the *jan*, the player scores again, even if the position is merely preserved by the inability to play all or part of a roll.

- *Jan de mezeas*, 4 points (*6* points if by

featuring holes for pegged pieces, possibly to allow for portability of the game. The name *brandub* means "raven black".

**Board:** 7 by 7, fortresses marked.

**Pieces:** 8 attackers, 4 defenders plus king.

### Ard Ri

Ard Ri (Gaelic *High King*) was a Scottish tafl variant played on a 7×7 board with a king and eight defenders against sixteen attackers. This is the least documented of the known tafl variants
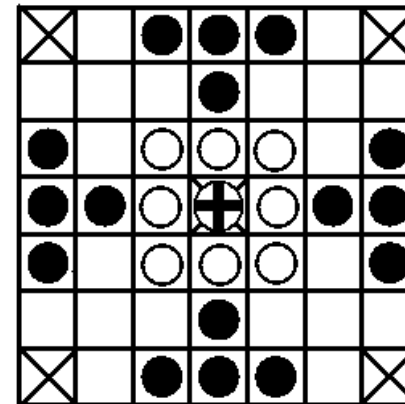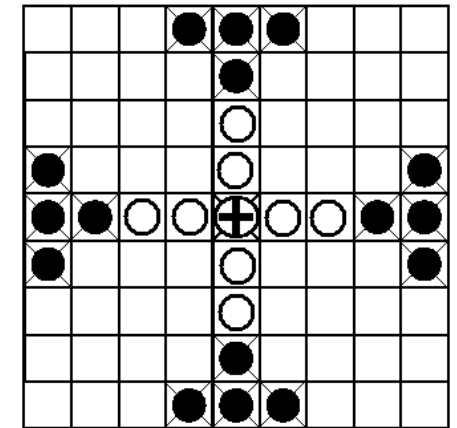


**Board:** 7 by 7, fortresses marked.

**Pieces:** 16 attackers, 8 defenders plus king.

### Tablut

Tablut is the only tafl game for which we have a complete set of rules, from 1732

The game is played on a 9×9 board. Initial set-up is as shown in the diagram.

The king starts on the central square or castle, called the *konakis*, which no other piece may ever occupy.



The eight defenders, called *Swedes*, start on the eight squares adjoining the *konakis*, in the form of a cross.

The sixteen attackers, called *Muscovites*, start in groups of four at the centre of each edge of the board. (*In Linnaeus' notes, these squares were embroidered to signify them as the domain of the Muscovites.*)

All remaining squares (neutral zone) may be occupied by any piece during the game.

Any piece may move any number of vacant spaces in any straight line [←↑→↓], but not diagonally. (*Compare to the rook in Chess.*)

No piece may ever pass over another piece in its path.

If the king should ever have an unimpeded path (through the neutral zone) to the edge of the board, unless he is immediately blocked by a *Muscovite*, he may escape and the game is over. (*This rule suggests that the king may not escape through the domain of the Muscovites.*)

If the king should ever have a path of escape, he must call out "*raichi*"; if two paths of es-

cape, then his escape is imminent and he must call out *"tuichu"*. (*Compare these to "check" and "checkmate" in Chess.*)

Any piece, save for the king, may be captured and removed from the board if it becomes surrounded on two opposite sides by enemies. (*This is known as custodial capture.*)

If the king is surrounded on all four sides by enemies, he is taken prisoner. If he is surrounded on three sides, he may escape by the fourth.

If the king is on a square adjoining the *konakis* and is surrounded on three sides by his enemies and the fourth by the *konakis*, he is captured. (*This rule suggests that once the king has left the konakis, he can never return.*)
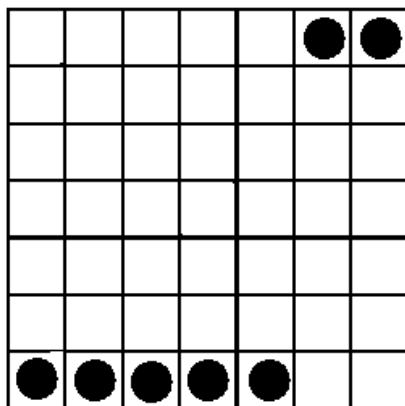
If the king is captured, the *Swedes* are conquered and the *Muscovites* victorious.

## Tablero de Jesus

(Note: there is debate as to whether or not this is genuinely a period game; current consensus says probably not, but it is very well known within the SCA)

The game is played on a board of seven-by-seven squares, using two dice.

### High Roller



### Low Roller

Players each roll a die to determine who goes first and who pays most up front. The highest roller goes first and places two "coins" (counters, chips, etc) on the two right hand columns from their point of view. The lower roller places five coins on the remaining columns.

Counters can only be moved up and down their own column; they cannot be moved horizontally or diagonally.

On each turn, player roles both dice and moves any two counters the number of the dice; each die moves a separate coin. That is, if your throw a 2 and a 3, you can move one coin 2 spaces back or forwards and one coin 3; you cannot move just one coin 5 spaces. Each player keeps rolling until they throw a seven or an eleven, they roll a combination that means they cannot move any coins, or they win coins from the board.

When a player succeeds in getting three or more coins in a row, they remove them from the board and their opponent must replace them. The row may be horizontal or diagonal. If a player gets all seven in a row, they take not only those seven coins but their opponent must pay an eighth coin extra. Play continues until one player runs out of "money" or either player wishes to stop playing.

**Variation:** There is a drinking game version of this where shot-glasses are used instead of coins and the loser refills. In this game, a win is only made if there are seven in a row. Before play begins, the high roller rolls a single die—the number that comes up is the Queen's number, and every time it is rolled, both players must drink a toast to the Queen (players filling their own glass.)

**Filling Tables:** If you have two or more pieces on each point in your Petit Jan, Grand Jan or Jan de Retour, you have filled that table. If a roll allows you to fill a table, you must do so. Once you have filled a table, you must keep it filled for as long as possible, that is, if you can avoid 'breaking' a filled table, then you must.

**Bearing Off:** once all a player's pieces are in their Jan de Retour, they may begin bearing off. There is a specific order in which pieces may be bourn off:

1st—the die roll is the exact number to take the piece off the board.
2nd—if a counter cannot be exactly taken off, then a piece must be moved from the highest numbered point closer to the end.
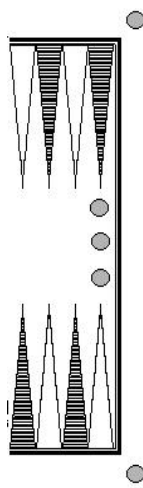3rd—if no piece can be moved closer, then the piece on the highest numbered point can be moved off.

Once all the pieces have been bourn off, the pieces are returned to the starting positions and play begins again.

**Scoring Play:** Trictrac is not won by the player who is first to remove all their pieces from the board, as in other Tables games, but rather by a method of scoring.



**Keeping Score:** Scoring is kept using the five additional pieces.

Each player takes one of the scoring pieces, and places it to the right of their talon; this is their trou-piece. The other three are places between the points as shown. The piece closest to the player keeps their score; this is their point-piece. The third, central piece, is used for marking a *trou bredoille.*

For every point scored, a player moves their point-piece down the board to the relevant point. Thus, scoring 2 points moved the point-piece to sit above the number 2 point; another 2 points scored moves the point-piece to sit above the number 4 point. Scoring another 6 points moved the point-piece to sit above the number 10 point, and so on. Note that although the point-pieces start sitting between the talons, this is a 'no point' position.

You must mark your score **before** you move your pieces. If you move a piece before marking it, or if you mark the score incorrectly, then your opponent may take the score instead (this is not obligatory.) This is called an *école*; if you claim an école, you must score it correctly, or you forfeit the points.

When 12 points have been scored, a player has made a trou; the point-piece is returned to sit between the talons, and the trou-piece is moved to sit beneath the talon, to indicate one trou has been made. Every time a trou is made, the trou-point is moved along one point, sitting beneath the point.

If you can make a trou without your opponent scoring once you have moved your point-piece from the talon, you make a *trou bredouille,* which counts as **two** trous.

This is what the fifth scoring piece, the bredouille-piece, is used to show. When the first player to score points moves their point-piece from the talon, they also move the bredouille-piece with it, to show that

pieces used for scoring (either in a third colour, or placed upside down)
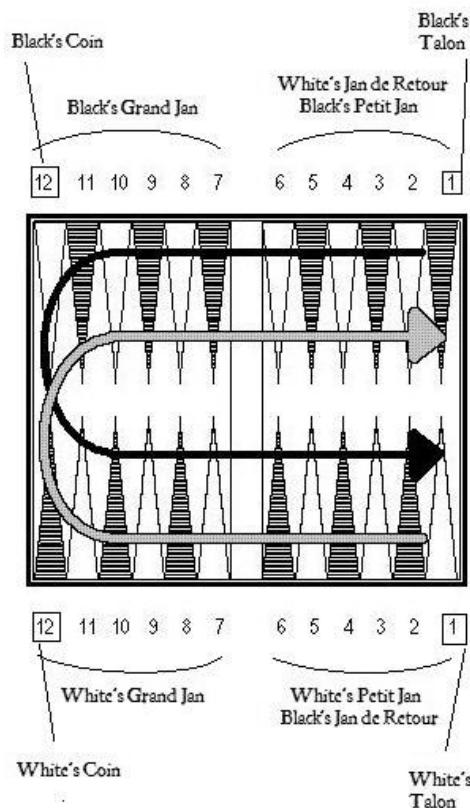


Board set up: All fifteen counters start on the player's first point, called the *talon*.

Play: although play follows the directions of the arrows on the diagram above, the object of play is to score points for different configurations of pieces. Twelve points make one *trou* and twelve trous make a match.

Racing Play: Movement is similar to backgammon, with some differences:

Doubles do not give a second roll.
A piece can only be moved to an open point; it cannot occupy the same point as an opponent's piece(s).

For each roll, either two pieces must be moved, one for each die, or one piece must be moved twice, where each move is legal (i.e. does not land on a point occupied by an opponent's piece.)

You must move a piece for the higher roll; if you cannot move any piece for the higher roll, you cannot move any pieces, even if you can move a piece for the lower roll.

You cannot capture your opponent's pieces and remove them from the board. However, being in a position to do so will score you points, even though you cannot make the move (as you cannot move pieces onto a point with your opponent's piece or pieces on it.) See 'Scoring'.

There are several rules specifically regarding the point called the *coin*.

1. You cannot move a single piece to your own coin; you must move two pieces on the same roll to place pieces on your own coin. Once two pieces are on your coin, you may add others to this point.

2. If you have only 2 pieces on your coin, you must move them both off at the same time. If you have more than two, you may move pieces off singly until you have 2 pieces left on the coin.

3. You cannot place your pieces on your opponent's coin.

4. There is a specific move called *par puissance*; if you roll two numbers that would allow you to place 2 pieces on your opponent's coin, and your own coin is empty, you may move those 2 pieces to your own coin instead. If, however, the same roll would allow you to move two pieces directly to your coin, then you must do this rather than move par puissance.
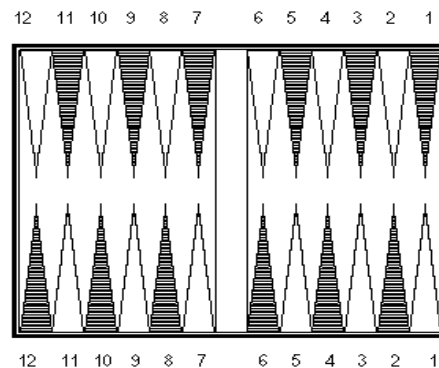
# Tables

A family of games, of which the best known is "Backgammon"

### Number of Players - Two

Tables is a group of games played on what today is called a backgammon board.

Nearly all tables games use 2 lots of 15 counters ('black' and 'white') and two or three dice.

The board used is shown below, with numbering as used for most tables games:



For each player, the number 1 point on the opposite side of the board is the 'talon' and this is the starting place where pieces 'enter' the board. The number 12 point on the opposite side is called the coin. For most games, the points labelled 1-6 on each player's side of the board is their inner table, and the points labelled 7-12 are their outer table.

## Racing Game

The most basic games of tables is simply a race, where each person races to get all their pieces to their inner table, and then remove all their pieces from the board. Pieces start 'off' the board, and are moved onto the board beginning on the player's 'talon' point. Doubles do not give an extra move, and pieces are not captured.

Gambling: each player stakes an equal sum, winner take all.

## Backgammon (Todos Tablos)

Modern backgammon is very similar to period backgammon, and can be seen as a more complex version of it. There are several variants of the rules; it should be agreed upon before playing which version is being used (see 'Variations'). In all versions, all the pieces must be in the inner table before being born off, basic capturing applies, and rolling a double does *not* give a player a second roll.

Setting up the pieces: Each player has 15 pieces, set up as shown in the diagram below:
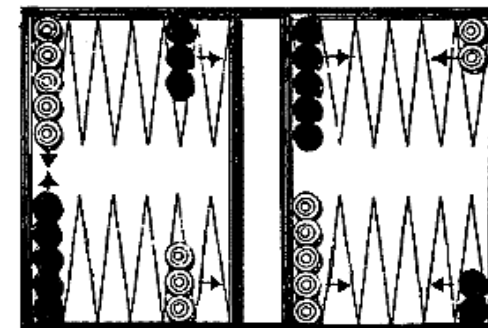


Play: To move, the player rolls the two dice. They must move the number shown on the dice. They may move one piece for both dice, or two pieces, one for each. . Each player moves the pieces towards their own inner table. Once all a players pieces are in inner table, and then remove

their inner table, they may start to move the pieces off the board ('bearing off'); the first player to have removed all their pieces from the board is the winner.

**Capturing:** Any single piece on a point is vulnerable to capture. If the other player can make one of their pieces land on the same point as a single piece, then that single piece is captured and removed from the board. The player cannot now make any other move until that piece is redeemed. Redeemed pieces begin moving from the player's 'talon' point.

**Forced Capture:** if a point has two or more of a player's pieces on it, those pieces are safe from capture. However, if the only points a player can move to have protected pieces, then the player *must* move to one of those points, and their relevant piece is captured. (This is an optional rule—see 'Variations')

**Redeeming a captured piece:** when one of a player's pieces has been captured, none of their other pieces can be moved until it has been redeemed. (See 'Variations' for the two rules to bring the piece back into play.) If a player has all their other pieces in the inner table, even if they are already in the process of moving pieces off the board, when one of their pieces is captured, they may not move any more pieces off the board until the captured piece has been redeemed and is once more in their inner table.

**Variations to be agreed upon before play:**

1. A player can only move a piece onto a point that already has two or more of the opponent's pieces: the options are forced capture (c.f.) *or* the go is forfeited without any pieces being moved.

2. Redeeming captured pieces: either the piece is brought back immediately into play, and must be the first piece played in the next move, *or* a double must be thrown before the captured piece can be redeemed.

3. When all a player's pieces are in their inner table, they are ready to move pieces off: either pieces can be moved off only if the number rolled gives the exact number to remove a piece from the board (where the last place moved is "off") *or* pieces can be moved off the board regardless of the number rolled, provided it is as high or higher than the number of points to be moved.

**Winning:** When a player has removed all their pieces from the board, they have won. If they have managed to win and their opponent has not yet removed a single piece from the board, the win is a Gammon. If they win, and their opponent not only has not removed any pieces from the board, but also has a piece that has been captured and not yet redeemed, it is a Backgammon.

**Gambling:** gambling is either a case of each player stakes an equal sum, and the winner takes all, *or* the loser pays a coin of agreed value for each of their pieces still on the board, *or* each player stakes 30 coins and the loser removes the same number of coins as they have taken off the board from the pot (i.e. the winner receives fifteen coins for the fifteen pieces they removed from the board, plus one coin each for every piece their opponent has left on the board.)

In all cases, if the win is a Gammon, the loser pays double, and if it is a Backgammon, the loser pays triple.

Alternatively, each game won is a point (with a Gammon worth 2 points, and a Backgammon worth 3 points), and players agree on a number of points to be reached and a stake, with the first to reach the said number of points winning the stake (5, 7 and 9 are common.)

## Tabula

(These rules are based on "Roman Board Games by Wally J. Kowalski", found at http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/showcase/boardgames5.html Please give credit in any further reproduction. The website also gives a good account of the history of the game, and other games played in Classical Rome.)

**Pieces:** while Tabula still has 15 counters for each player, unlike other Tables games, it uses 3 dice.

**Board set up:** Tabula is different from many other Tables games because all the pieces start from the same place and move in the same direction, rather than opposite directions. This means that the points are numbered one through to 24. A period Tabula board looked a little different from the Tables board (see the website mentioned for an illustration) but a Tables board is its obvious descendant. The board is numbered differently, 1 to 24:
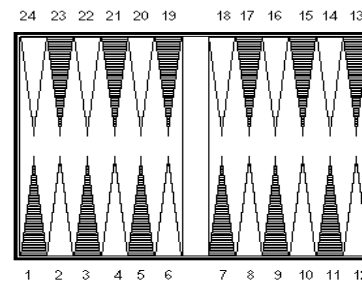


**Play:** Unlike later Tables games, both players start and end at the same place on the

board, and their pieces travel in the same direction. Pieces enter at point '1' and move around the board, coming off at point '24'.

Three dice are thrown; a player can move 1, 2 or 3 pieces. Any part of a throw that cannot be used (e.g. no piece can be moved without landing on protected opposition pieces) is forfeited; there is no forced capture. However, if a player can move pieces using the whole throw, they *must* move, i.e. a player cannot move two pieces and forfeit the third number rolled by the dice if one piece could move all three rolls.

Neither player can enter the second half of the board (points 13-24) until all the pieces are on the board for both players. Neither player can begin bearing pieces off until all the pieces are in the last quarter (19-24). This means that capturing an opponent's piece in the last quarter of the board freezes play for a player until their opponent has brought that piece back around the board. However, because pieces *must* move if they can, capture can occur in the last quarter, although it should be avoided.

**Capturing:** is the same as for backgammon. Forced Capture is not used.

**Winning:** The first player to bear off all their pieces wins.

## Trictrac

Trictrac is a French game developed around 1500. Like other Tables games, each player has 15 counters which are moved according to rolls of the dice; unlike other Tables games, racing is only part of the game play. A score will need to be kept.

**Pieces:** each player needs 15 pieces for playing. In addition, there will need to be 5 extra