

THREE HANDED CHESS

HISTORY

The game Sanguoqi, 三國棋 Three Kingdoms Chess, is a Xiangqi variant for three players, mentioned in H.J.R. Murray's book "A History of Chess. He cited von Möllendorf who wrote an article in German, titled "Schachspiel der Chinesen", in 1876. One century after, in 1972 Robert Zubrin invented three player chess.

SETUP

Three Handed Chess is a game played between three opponents on hexagonal shaped board containing 96 squares of alternating colors. Each player has 16 pieces: 1 king, 1 queen, 2 rooks, 2 bishops, 2 knights, and 8 pawns. The game is played in Free for All mode, where every player plays for himself.

GAME PLAY

The goal of the game is to take one of the other two kings. Check is when the king is in danger. Checkmate happens when the king is in a position to be captured (in check) and cannot escape from capture. The first who CAPTURES one anothers KING is the WINNER. This is the little difference in Three Handed Chess that makes the game interesting and challenging. Checkmate is not enough as in classic chess, you should take the king. When a player is in a checkmate possitiion he looses his turn. And if somehow he is freed up, he can move again.

HOW THE PIECES MOVE

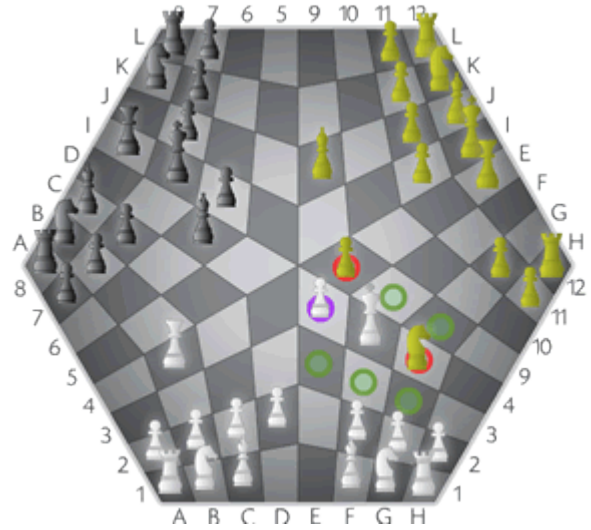
Each of the 6 different kinds of pieces moves differently. Pieces cannot move through other pieces (though the knight can jump over other pieces), and can never move onto a square with one of their own pieces. However, they can be moved to take the place of an opponent's piece which is then captured. Pieces are generally moved into positions where they can capture other pieces (by landing on their square and then replacing them), defend their own pieces in case of capture, or control important squares in the game. On the following examples **red circles** show the figures that can be taken, **green** - where the figure can move and **purple** - which figures block your way.



The king is the most important piece, but is one of the weakest.

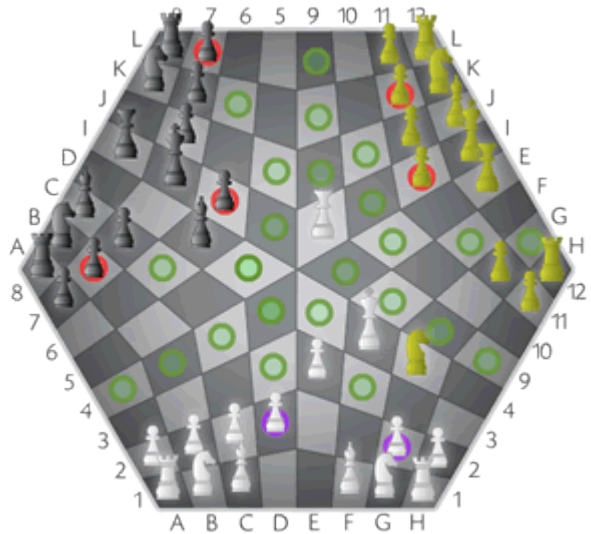
The king can only move one square in any direction - up, down, to the sides, and diagonally.

The king may never move himself into check (where he could be captured).

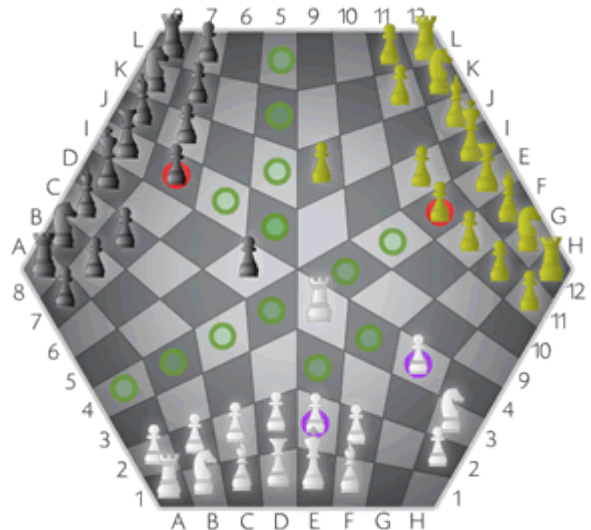


The queen is the most powerful piece. If moved she can move in any one straight direction - forward, backward, sideways, or diagonally - as far as possible as long as she does not move through any of her own pieces.

And, like with all pieces, if the queen captures an opponent's piece her move is over.



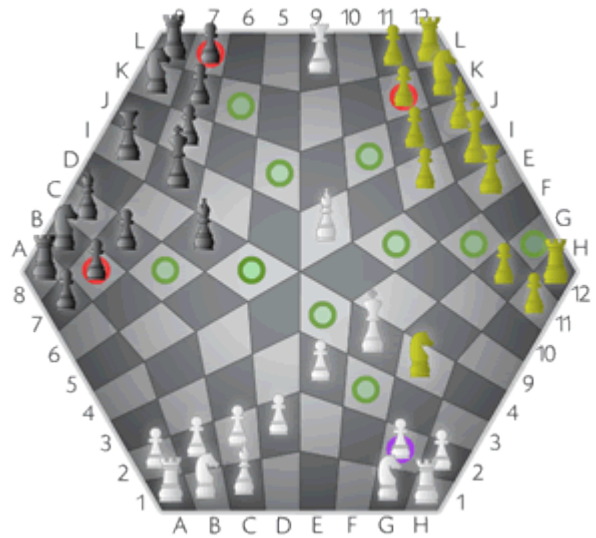
The rook may move as far as it wants, but only forward, backward, and to the sides. The rooks are particularly powerful pieces when they are protecting each other and working together!





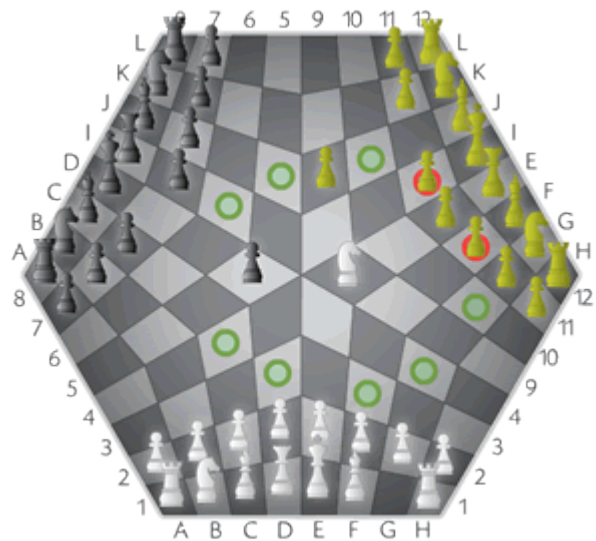
The bishop may move as far as it wants, but only diagonally. Each bishop starts on one color (light or dark) and must always stay on that color.

Bishops work well together because they cover up each other's weaknesses.

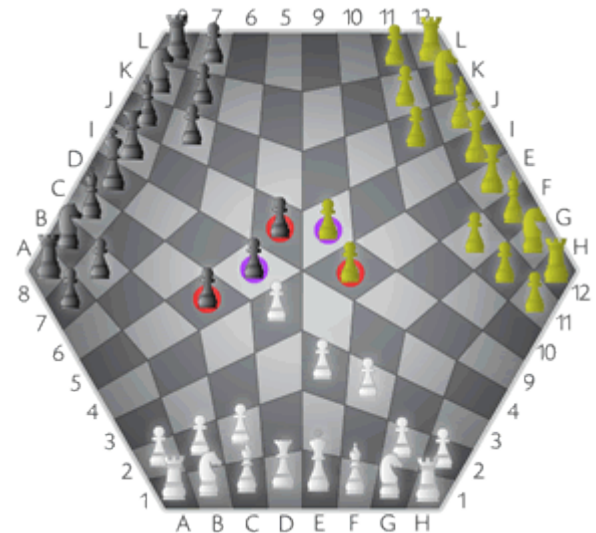


Knights move in a very different way from the other pieces – going two squares in one direction, and then one more move at a 90 degree angle, just like the shape of an “L”.

Knights are also the only pieces that can move over other pieces.



Pawns are unusual because they move and capture in different ways: they move forward, but capture diagonally. Pawns can only move forward one square at a time, except for their very first move when they can move forward two squares. Pawns can only capture one square diagonally in front of them. They can never move or capture backwards. If there is another piece directly in front of a pawn he cannot move past or capture that piece.



An online variant of the game was created and is available on www.ThreeChess.com.