

Checkers

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Checkers or **draughts** is the name of several different board games. All of these games are similar. In every kind of checkers, the other player's pieces can be taken by being "jumped" over.

"Checkers" is the American name. In British English, and in various other English-speaking nations, these games are called "*draughts*."

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Men playing checkers

History

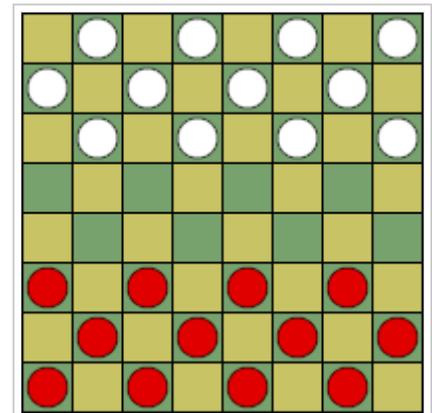
Checkers comes from a very old game called Alquerque. Alquerque was played on a different kind of board. Around the 12th century, a French person used a chess board to play Alquerque. Later, maybe in 1535, a new rule was added: when a player can jump, he must jump.

Rules

In most games of checkers, there are two players. The players are at opposite ends of the board. One player has dark pieces, and one player has light pieces. They take turns moving their pieces. Players move their pieces diagonally from one square to another square. When a player jumps over their *opponent's* (the other player's) piece, he takes that piece from the board.

English checkers

Most English-speaking people call English checkers, "draughts." English 'checkers' is played on an 8x8 chess board. Only the dark squares are used (the light squares are never used). For that reason, good players play differently in the left and right corners.



Pieces when game starts

- **Pieces** The pieces are flat and round. They are usually colored red and white. For this reason, the darker pieces are always called "Red" and the lighter pieces are always called "White." Some checkers sets have red and black pieces. Then the red pieces are called "White" and the black pieces "Red." And many sets simply use black and white draughts. There are two kinds of pieces: plain (single) pieces and "kings". A king is made by putting one plain piece on top of another. A single piece is not allowed to jump a king.
- **Starting Position** Each player starts with 12 pieces on the three rows closest to their own side. The row closest to each player is called the "King Row". The darker colour moves first.
- **How to Move** A player can move in two ways. A piece can be moved forward, diagonally, to the very next dark square. But if one player's piece, the other player's piece, and an empty square are lined up, then the first player must "jump" the other player's piece. In this case, the first player jumps over the other player's piece onto the empty square and takes the other player's piece off the board. A player can use one piece to make multiple jumps in any one single turn, provided each jump continues to lead immediately into the next

jump. Sometimes a player may have the option or a choice of which opponent piece he must jump. In such cases, he may then choose which to jump.

- **Kings** If a player's piece moves into the King Row on the other player's side, it becomes a king. It can move forward and backward. (Regular pieces can only move forward.) A king cannot jump out of the King Row until the next turn.
- **How the Game Ends** The first player who cannot move is the loser. So if a player loses all of his pieces, he loses the game. And if he cannot move, he loses (even if he has pieces). A player may also *resign* (choose to lose). If nobody can lose, the game is a *draw*.

Other websites

- World Draughts Federation
- World Mind Sports Games



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