

CHESS · VARIANT 8 OF 153

Almost Chess

8×8

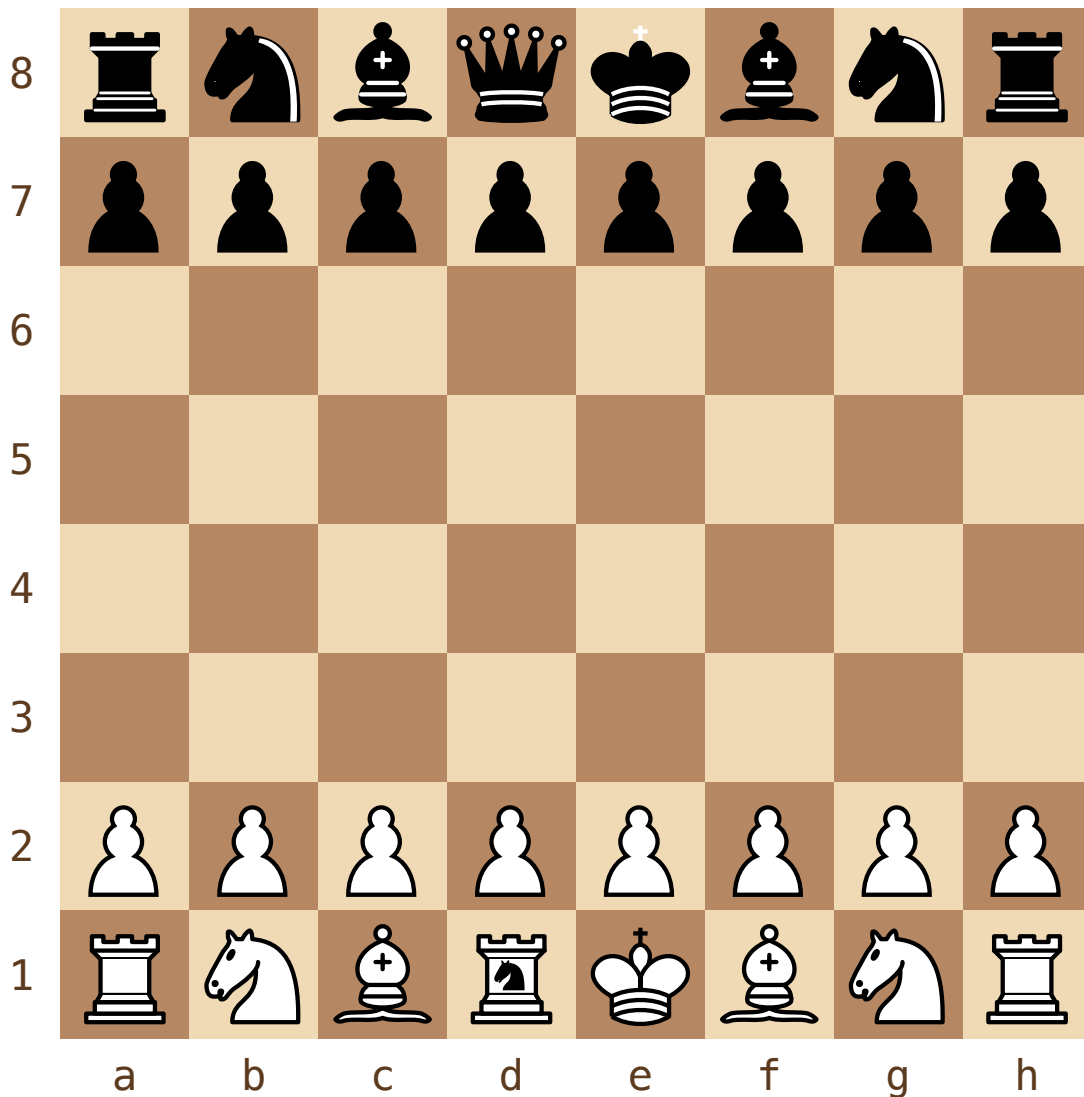
BOARD

2

PLAYERS

ALMOST CHESS

One Queen is replaced by a Chancellor (Rook + Knight compound). "Almost" standard chess – one piece different, but the implications ripple through the entire game.



Almost Chess – starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=chess&variant=almost-chess>

SETUP

Board: Standard 8×8.

Setup (FEN): rnbqkbnr/pppppppp/8/8/8/8/PPPPPPPP/RNBCKBNR

White: Rook, Knight, Bishop, Chancellor, King, Bishop, Knight, Rook (+ 8 pawns). Black: Standard setup (with Queen).

PIECES

Pieces:

- ♦ **Chancellor** ♖ — combines Rook and Knight movement. Can slide along ranks/files like a Rook OR jump in L-shapes like a Knight. Placed on d1 (where White's Queen normally sits).

RULES

All standard chess rules apply. The Chancellor replaces White's Queen only. Black retains their standard Queen.

WIN CONDITION

Checkmate, same as standard chess.

STRATEGY

The Chancellor is slightly weaker than a Queen (no diagonal sliding) but has the Knight's forking ability combined with Rook-length reach. White lacks diagonal firepower from d1 and must rely more on Bishops. The Chancellor excels at forks — combining Rook pins with Knight threats. Black's Queen gives them an advantage on open diagonals.

ATTRIBUTION

Ralph Betza, 1977. Public domain.