

CHESS · VARIANT 40 OF 153

Crazy 38's

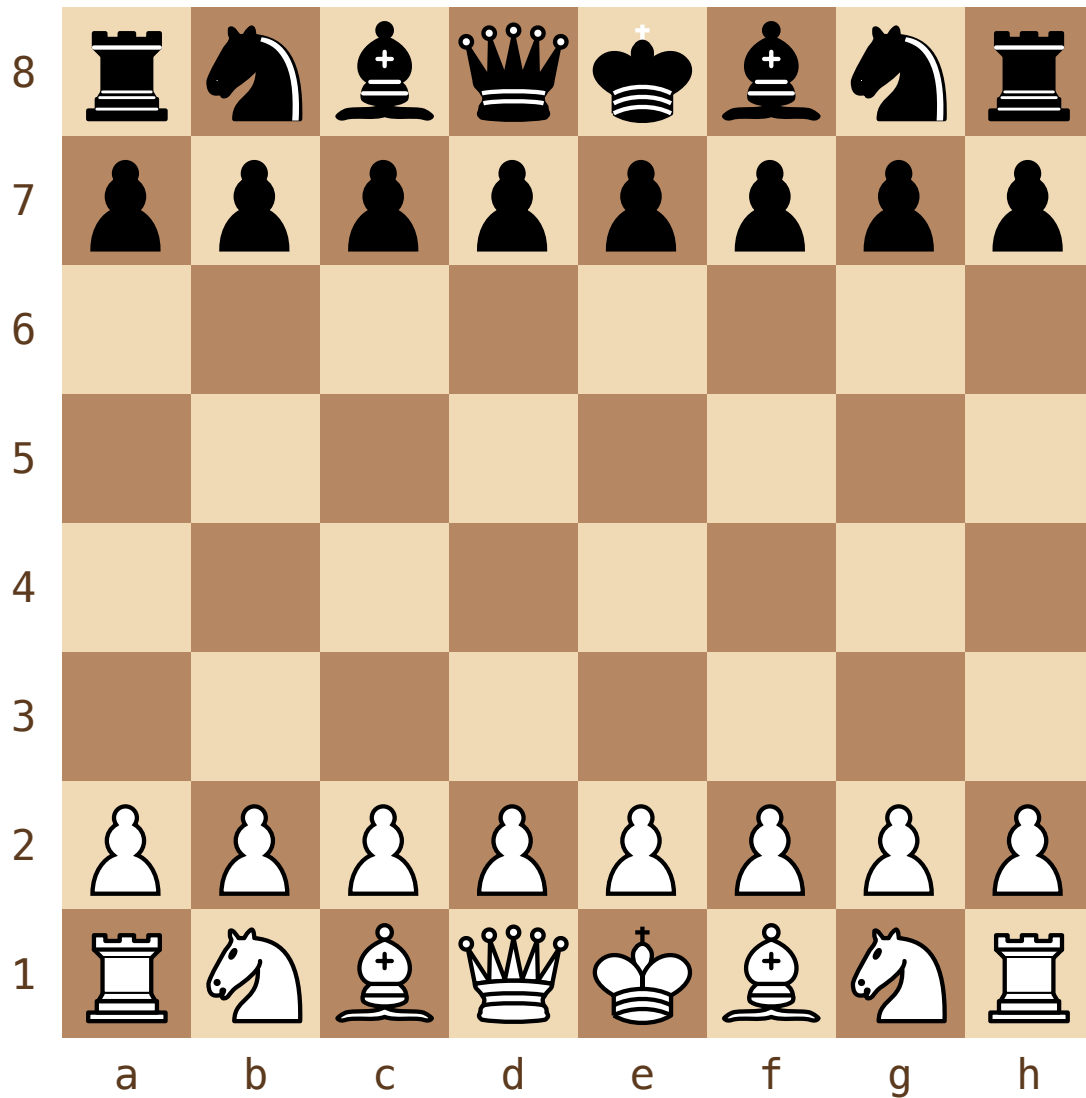
38-square loop board

BOARD

2

PLAYERS

CRAZY 38'S



Crazy 38's – starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=chess&variant=crazy-38s>

Crazy 38's is a chess variant by Ben Good, invented as an entry for Hans Bodlaender's 38 Squares Contest (submission deadline January 31, 1998). It plays on a 38-square board with a built-in loop connection and uses Shogi-style drops.

THE BOARD

A 38-square checkered board. Notation uses letters a–h for rows (running down one side) and numbers 1–8 for columns (running up the other side); not every letter–number combination corresponds to an existing square. The board has a **loop-effect**: one edge of the board connects to another, enabling pieces (especially the Rook) to travel continuously around the loop.

Home Square: The square a King occupies at the start of the game is that player's **Home Square**. Home Squares are permanent reference points for pawn promotion and the alternative win condition.

STARTING POSITION

Each player begins with the following pieces:

PIECE	QUANTITY
King	1
Rook	1
Bishop	1
Knight	1
Silver General	1
Gold General	1
Pawn	4

PIECE MOVEMENTS

King — moves to any adjacent square (orthogonal or diagonal).

Rook — slides any number of squares orthogonally as long as the path is unblocked. Can exploit the board's loop connection to travel around the board.

Bishop — slides any number of squares diagonally as long as the path is unblocked. Additionally, may step one square orthogonally, provided: (a) the Bishop is adjacent to a friendly piece, and (b) the orthogonal step would not capture an enemy piece.

Knight — moves to any square reached by first stepping one square diagonally, then one square orthogonally outward from the starting square. The move is unblockable (leaps over intervening pieces).

Silver General — moves to any adjacent square **except** the squares diagonally ahead (forward diagonals) and diagonally behind (backward diagonals). Effectively moves to the four orthogonal squares plus the two lateral diagonal squares.

Gold General — moves to any adjacent square **except** the squares diagonally to either side. Note: Gold and Silver Generals have movements distinct from their Shogi counterparts.

Pawn — moves exactly one square in any orthogonal direction **away from the player's own side** of the board (forward and/or lateral, but not backward toward the player's own starting edge). A Pawn promotes to **Queen** only when it moves to the **opponent's Home Square** specifically. The Queen has the combined movement of Rook and Bishop. A Queen that is captured is demoted back to a Pawn before being added to the capturing player's hand for future drops.

DROPS

Crazy 38's uses Shogi-style drops: instead of making a normal move, a player may drop any piece from their hand onto any vacant square, with the following restrictions:

- ♦ A Pawn may not be dropped onto the opponent's Home Square.
- ♦ A Pawn may not be dropped in a position that immediately checkmates the opponent's King.

WIN CONDITION

A player wins by either:

- 1 **Checkmating** the opponent's King, **or**
- 2 **Moving their own King** onto the opponent's Home Square.

ATTRIBUTION

Crazy 38's was designed by Ben Good. Entry submitted to the 38 Squares Contest, January 1998. Source: chessvariants.com/38.dir/crazy/crazy38s.html