

CHESS · VARIANT 70 OF 153

Half Chess

8×4

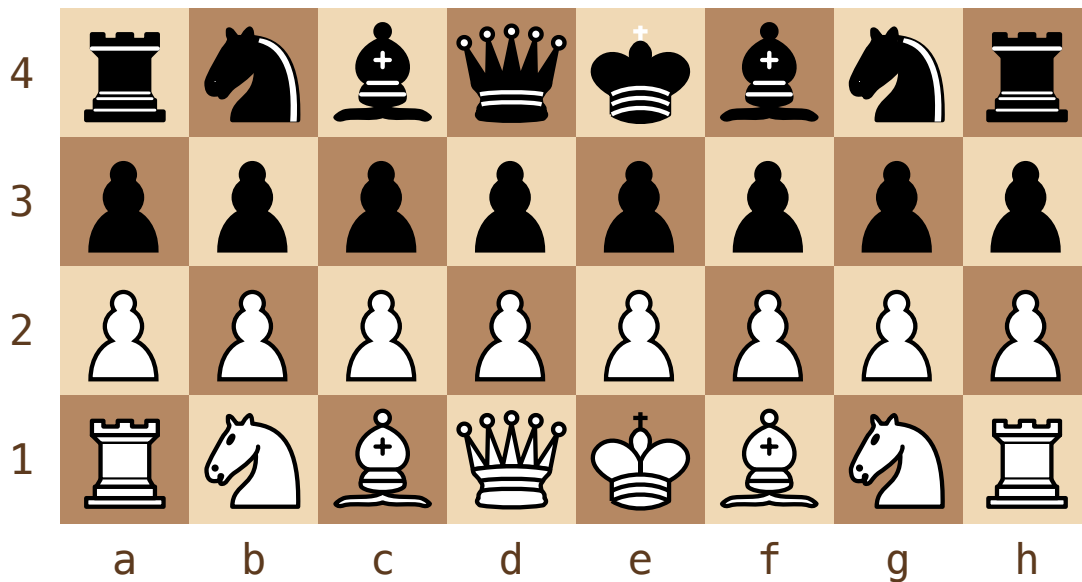
BOARD

2

PLAYERS

HALF CHESS

Standard pieces on a 4-rank board. Armies start adjacent with no gap – contact is immediate and violent.



Half Chess – starting position (8×4)

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

SETUP

Board: 8 files × 4 ranks.

Setup (FEN): rnbqkbnr/pppppppp/PPPPPPPP/RNBQKBNR

- ♦ Rank 4 (Black back rank): r n b q k b n r
- ♦ Rank 3 (Black pawns): p p p p p p p p
- ♦ Rank 2 (White pawns): P P P P P P P P
- ♦ Rank 1 (White back rank): R N B Q K B N R

RULES

- ♦ Standard piece movement applies, constrained by the 4-rank board.
- ♦ Pawns move one square forward only (no double-step – there is no room).
- ♦ No en passant.
- ♦ Castling is allowed (King and Rook are in standard positions).
- ♦ Pawns promote on the far rank (rank 4 for White, rank 1 for Black).
- ♦ Since armies start adjacent, nearly every piece can capture or be captured on move 1.

WIN CONDITION

Checkmate.

STRATEGY

There is no development phase – the game is tactical from move 1. Every pawn trade immediately opens lines to the back rank. The King is extremely vulnerable with only 4 ranks of space. Knights are limited by the board's depth (few useful squares to jump to). Rooks dominate once files open. Games resolve quickly.

ATTRIBUTION

Traditional mini-chess variant. Public domain.