

CHESS · VARIANT 85 OF 153

Los Alamos Vierschach

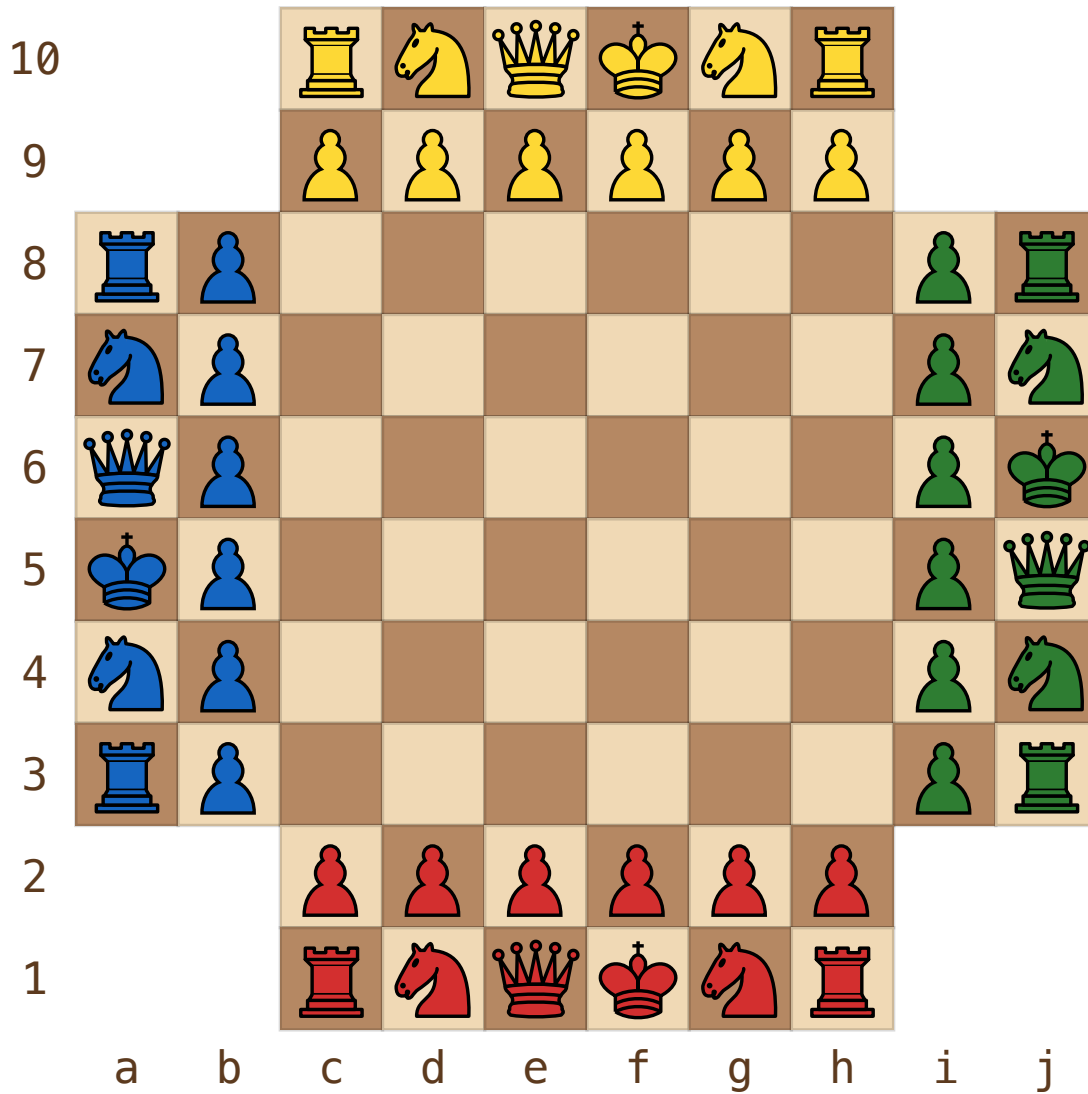
**84-square cross (6×6 core + 2×6
extensions)**

BOARD

**4 (2 teams
of 2)**

PLAYERS

LOS ALAMOS VIERSCHACH



Los Alamos Vierschach – starting position

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

Los Alamos Vierschach is a 4-player chess variant by Jörg Knappen combining **Los Alamos Chess** (the famous 6×6 variant developed at Los Alamos National Laboratory in the 1950s) with the **Vierschach** 4-player format. It was submitted as a non-competing entry to the 84 Squares Contest.

THE BOARD

The board consists of a 6×6 checkered grid extended by 2×6 squares on each of the four sides. This gives:

- ♦ Central 6×6 area: 36 squares
- ♦ Four 2×6 arms (one per side): $4 \times 12 = 48$ squares
- ♦ Total: 84 squares

This board is identical to the one used in Quintessential Chess. The lower-left corner is a dark square.

TEAMS AND ARMIES

Four armies, two allied teams — arranged as in Vierschach: allies play from adjacent sides (not opposite sides). Each player commands a Los Alamos Chess army.

Los Alamos Chess piece set (per player):

- ♦ 1 King
- ♦ 1 Queen
- ♦ 2 Rooks
- ♦ 2 Knights
- ♦ 6 Pawns
- ♦ No Bishops (Los Alamos Chess omits Bishops)

Players are notionally: North, East, South, West. Adjacent pairs are allied per Vierschach convention.

STARTING POSITION

Each player's army is set up in their arm of the cross-shaped board, as in Vierschach:

- ♦ Back rank (innermost row of the arm): Rook, Knight, Queen, King, Knight, Rook
- ♦ Front rank: 6 Pawns

Pawns advance toward the centre of the board.

RULES

All Vierschach rules apply, combined with Los Alamos Chess rules:

From Los Alamos Chess:

- ♦ No Bishops
- ♦ No castling
- ♦ Standard FIDE movement for all other pieces

From Vierschach:

- ♦ 4 players take turns in sequence
- ♦ Allied teams: checkmating one of the two opposing Kings does not immediately end the game – both opposing Kings must be checkmated for a team to win
- ♦ A player whose King is checkmated is eliminated

Modified for the extended board:

- ♦ **Pawns have an initial double-step move** (the path to promotion is longer than in 2-player Los Alamos Chess, so the double-step is added to compensate)
- ♦ **En passant** is possible

WIN CONDITION

A team wins by checkmating **both** opposing Kings.

NOTES

The combination is natural: Los Alamos Chess provides a compact, fast-playing piece set well suited to the extended 84-square cross board; Vierschach provides the 4-player relay format. The cross-shaped board accommodates 4 armies without requiring an unusually large grid.

ATTRIBUTION

Los Alamos Vierschach was designed by Jörg Knappen as a non-competing entry to the 84 Squares Contest. HTML by Hans Bodlaender. Source: chessvariants.com/large.dir/contest84/losalamos4.html