

CHESS · VARIANT 87 OF 153

Maharaja & Sepoys

8×8

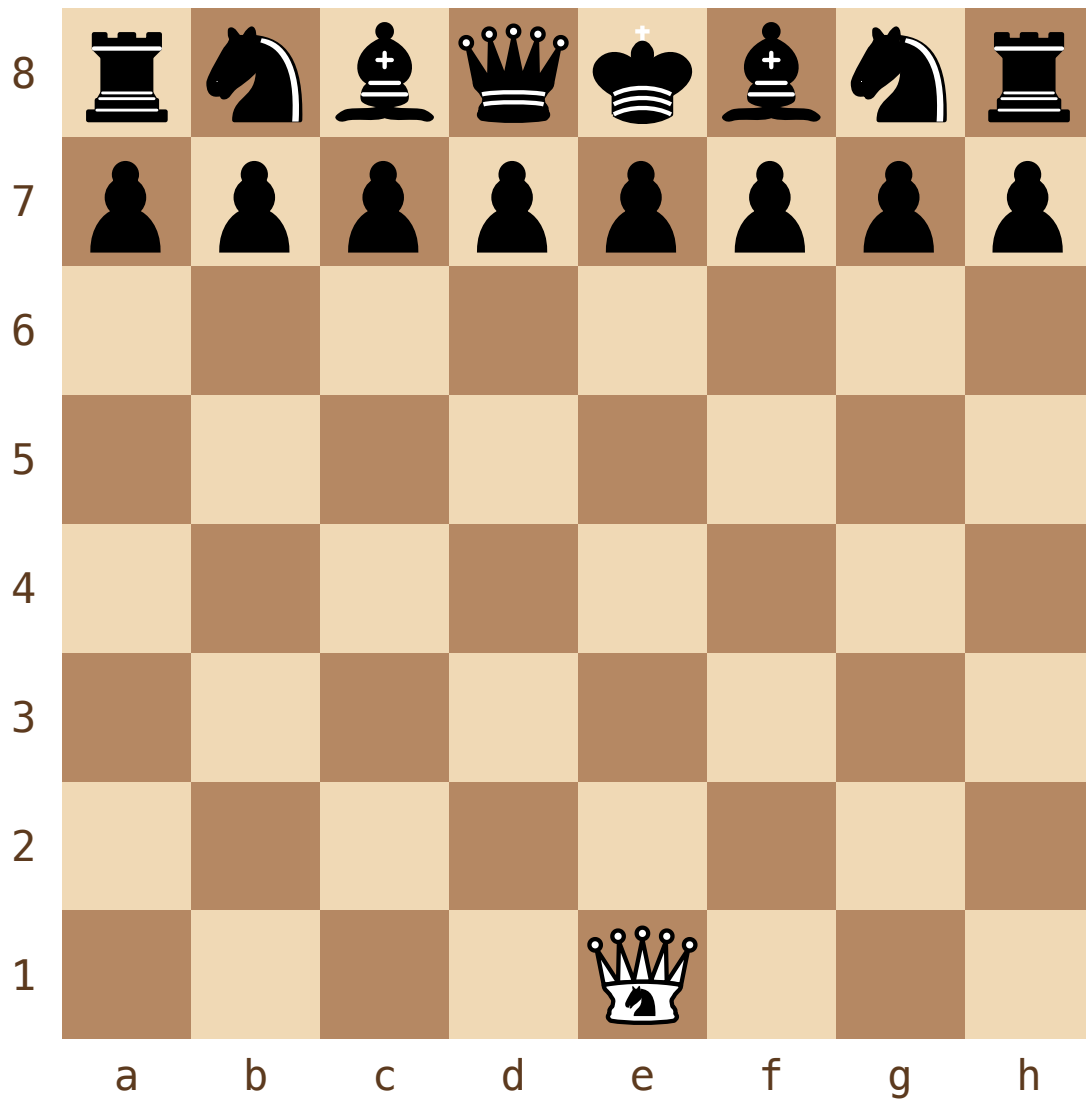
BOARD

2

PLAYERS

MAHARAJA & SEPOYS

One Queen+Knight super-piece (the Maharaja) vs a full standard army. The ultimate asymmetric challenge.



Maharaja & Sepoys – starting position

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

SETUP

Board: Standard 8×8.

Setup:

FEN: rnbqkbnr/pppppppp/8/8/8/8/4M3 w kq - 0 1

- ♦ **Black (Sepoys):** Full standard chess army on ranks 7-8. Pawns on rank 7.
- ♦ **White (Maharaja):** A single piece – the Maharaja – placed on any square of rank 1. No other pieces.

The Maharaja:

- ♦ Moves like a Queen AND a Knight combined (can slide any distance orthogonally/diagonally, or jump in an L-shape).
- ♦ It is the only piece White has. It is royal – if captured or checkmated, White loses.

RULES

- ♦ Standard chess rules apply to Black's army (including castling and pawn promotion).
- ♦ White has only the Maharaja – every turn, White moves it.
- ♦ The Maharaja cannot castle.
- ♦ If the Maharaja is checkmated (surrounded with no legal escape), Black wins.

WIN CONDITION

- ♦ **Black wins:** Checkmate or capture the Maharaja.
- ♦ **White wins:** Checkmate Black's King using the Maharaja alone.

STRATEGY

The Maharaja is incredibly powerful but alone. Black must coordinate pieces to trap it in a net. White must pick off Black's pieces one by one while avoiding getting cornered. In practice, a well-played Black army wins – but careless play lets the Maharaja dominate.

ATTRIBUTION

Traditional Indian variant ("Maharaja and the Sepoys"), 19th century. Public domain.