

CHESS · VARIANT 89 OF 153

Makruk

8×8

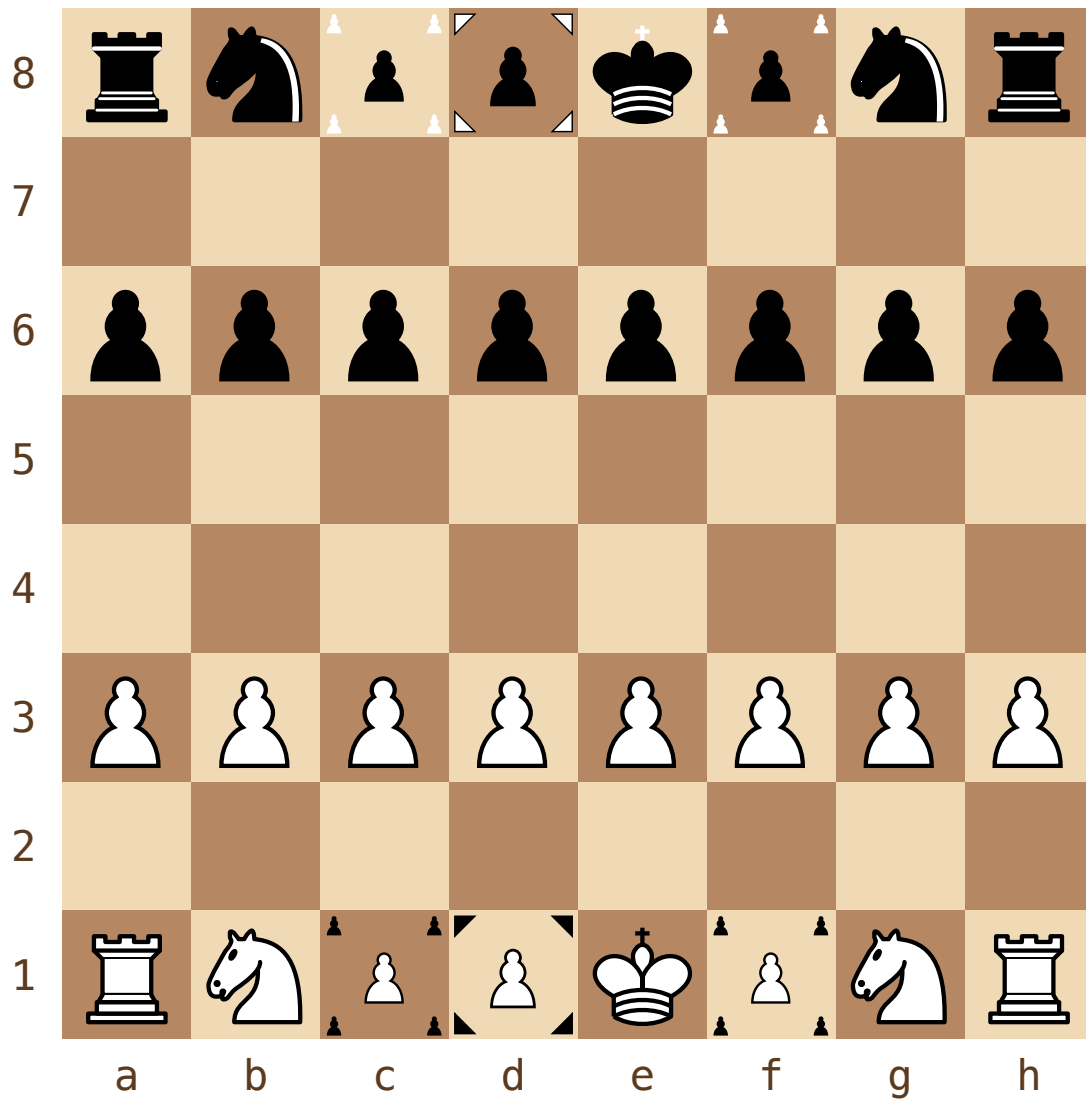
BOARD

2

PLAYERS

MAKRUK (THAI CHESS)

The traditional chess of Thailand, played since the 16th century. Features a weaker promoted piece and no castling.



Makruk – starting position

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

SETUP

Board: Standard 8×8.

Setup: Pawns start on the 3rd rank (not 2nd). Back rank: Rook, Knight, Silver General (Met), King, Queen (Met equivalent), Silver General, Knight, Rook.

FEN: rngfkgnr/8/pppppppp/8/8/PPPPPPPP/8/RNGFKGNR w - - 0 1

RULES

- ♦ The Met (Silver General) moves one square diagonally in any direction. It cannot move orthogonally.
- ♦ The Queen equivalent also moves as a Met (one step diagonal) — it is a weak piece.
- ♦ Pawns promote on the 6th rank (not the 8th) and always promote to Met.
- ♦ No castling.
- ♦ No en passant.
- ♦ Pawns do not have a two-square initial move.
- ♦ Rooks, Knights, and Kings move as in standard chess.

WIN CONDITION

Checkmate the opponent's King.

STRATEGY

With no Queen and only weak diagonal movers (Met), Makruk is a slower, more positional game than standard chess. Rooks are by far the most powerful pieces. Pawn promotion comes earlier (rank 6) but the promoted piece is weak. Endgames are critical — counting rules force resolution within a limited number of moves when material is low.

ATTRIBUTION

Traditional Thai chess. Played for over 500 years in Thailand. Public domain.