

DRAUGHTS · VARIANT 18 OF 20

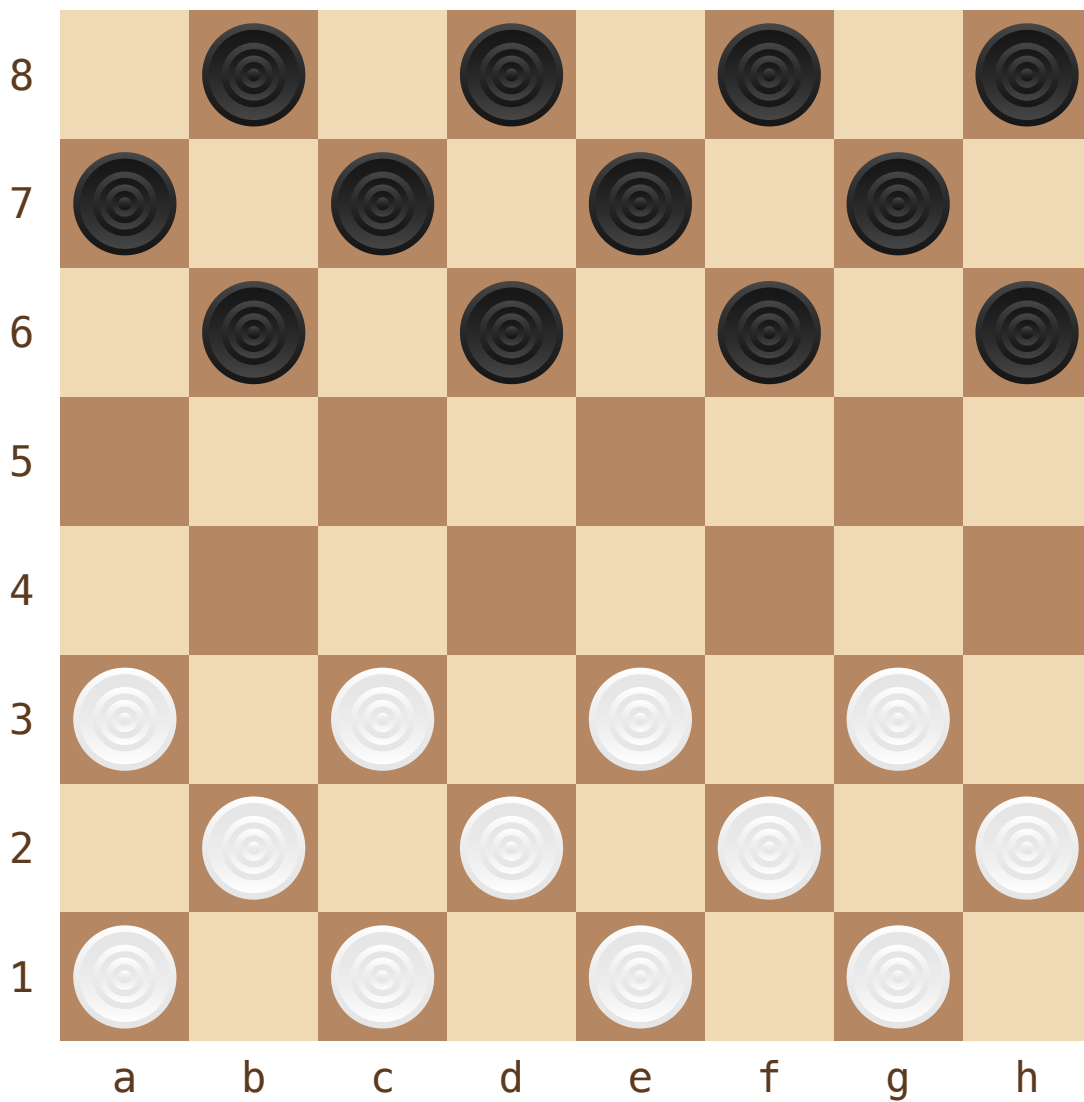
German Draughts

8×8
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

GERMAN DRAUGHTS

Also known as Damenspiel (“lady’s game”), German Draughts is the traditional form of draughts played across Germany. It sits between English and International Draughts in complexity: men capture in all four diagonal directions (unlike English, where men only capture forwards), but there is no majority capture rule (unlike International, where the longest chain is mandatory).



German Draughts — starting position

<https://engine.moddable.games/play/?game=draughts&variant=german>

SETUP

Board: 8×8 checkered board. Orient the board so each player has a dark corner square on their lower left.

Pieces: 12 men per player in two distinct colours, placed on the dark squares of the three rows closest to each player. The two central rows remain empty.

First move: White moves first.

RULES

- ♦ **Men movement:** Men move diagonally forward only, one square at a time, to an unoccupied dark square.
- ♦ **Men capture:** Men capture by jumping diagonally over an adjacent opponent piece to the vacant square beyond. Unlike English Draughts, men can capture both **forwards and backwards**.
- ♦ **Mandatory capture:** If a capture is available, it must be taken.
- ♦ **Free choice:** When multiple capture sequences are available, the player may freely choose which to take. There is no majority rule; the longest chain is not required.
- ♦ **Multi-capture:** After completing a jump, if another capture is immediately available with the same piece, the sequence must continue until no further capture is possible.

KING PROMOTION

When a man reaches the opponent's back row, it stops immediately and is promoted to a Dame (queen/flying king). A second piece is placed on top to mark it.

- ♦ **Promotion ends the turn:** If a man reaches the back row during a multi-capture sequence, it is promoted immediately and the turn ends. The new king cannot continue capturing in the same move.
- ♦ **Flying kings:** A Dame moves any number of unoccupied squares diagonally in any direction.
- ♦ **King capture:** A Dame captures by jumping over a single opponent piece at any distance along a diagonal, landing on any empty square beyond the captured piece.
- ♦ **No majority rule for kings either:** Even when multiple king captures are available, the player may freely choose which sequence to take.

WINNING

A player wins when their opponent has no legal move:

- ♦ All opponent pieces have been captured, or
- ♦ All remaining opponent pieces are completely blocked from moving.

DRAWS

The game is drawn when:

- ♦ Both players agree to a draw.
- ♦ The same position occurs three times with the same player to move.
- ♦ Neither player can force a win.

HOW IT DIFFERS FROM OTHER 8×8 VARIANTS

RULE	ENGLISH	GERMAN	RUSSIAN
Men capture backwards	No	Yes	Yes
Flying kings	No	Yes	Yes
Majority capture rule	No	No	No
Mid-sequence promotion continues	No	No	Yes

German Draughts occupies a distinctive position: its flying kings give it more endgame depth than English, while the absence of a majority rule keeps the midgame more intuitive than International Draughts.

ATTRIBUTION

Traditional variant. Public domain. Rules documented in Parlett, D. (1999) *The Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 252. Sources: Ludeme/Ludii — Damenspiel.lud (SHA 47b7ccc6, Maastricht University Ludii Project); Checkers & Draughts Wiki — Deutsches Damespiel article.