

SHOGI · VARIANT 23 OF 24

Wa Shogi

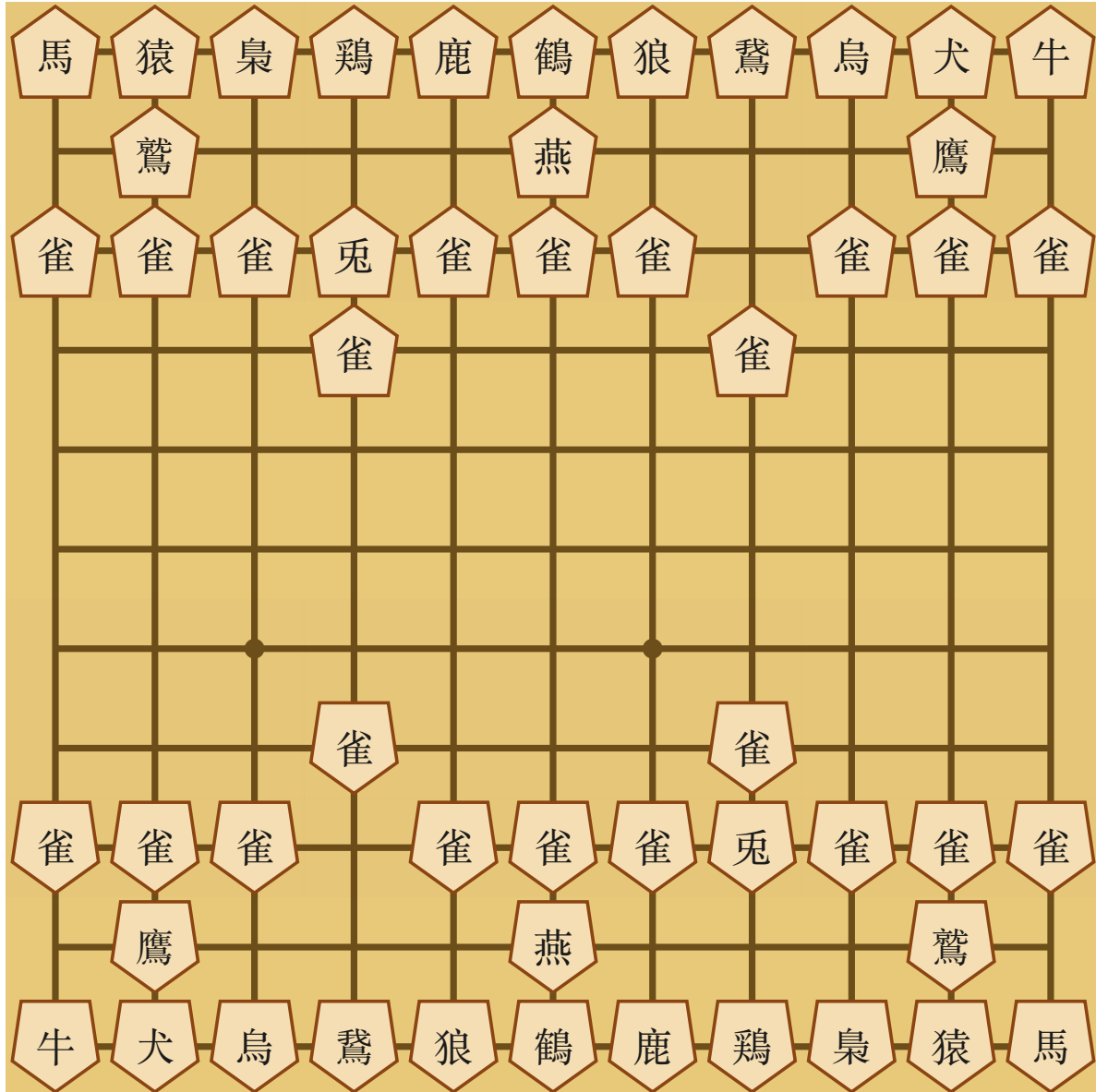
11×11
BOARD

2
PLAYERS

Wa Shogi

Historical Japanese Shogi variant on an 11×11 board. Played both with and without drops in modern practice.

OVERVIEW



Wa Shogi — starting position

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

Wa Shogi uses an 11×11 board. All pieces except the Pawns are of unique types, and they are generally weaker than Shogi pieces, making the game well-suited to drops. Historical rules make no mention of drops, however, so the game is today played in two forms: with or without drops.

Win condition: Capture the opponent’s Crane King. No check restriction.

STARTING SETUP

Pieces are listed by file (a–k from left to right, White’s perspective) and rank.

RANK 1 (BACK RANK)

FILE	PIECE	MOVEMENT (BETZA)
a1	Oxcart	fR (forward Rook slide)
b1	Blind Dog	fFbsW (fwd diagonal; back/side step)
c1	Strutting Crow	fWbF (fwd step; bwd diagonal)
d1	Flying Goose	fFvW (fwd diagonal; vert. step)
e1	Violent Wolf	WfF (orthogonal step; fwd diagonal)
f1	Crane King (royal)	K (one step any direction)
g1	Violent Stag	FfW (diagonal; fwd orthogonal)
h1	Flying Cock	fFsW (fwd diagonal; side step)
i1	Swooping Owl	fWbF (fwd step; bwd diagonal)
j1	Climbing Monkey	fFvW (fwd diagonal; vert. step)
k1	Liberated Horse	fRbW2 (fwd Rook slide; 2-sq bwd step)

RANK 2

SQUARE	PIECE	MOVEMENT (BETZA)
b2	Flying Falcon	BfW (diagonal slide; fwd step)
f2	Swallow’s Wings	sRvW (side Rook slide; vert. step)
j2	Cloud Eagle	vRsWfF3bF (vert. Rook; side step; 3-sq fwd diag; bwd diag step)

RANKS 3–4 (PAWNS AND SPECIAL PIECES)

SQUARE	PIECE	MOVEMENT
a3, b3, c3, e3, f3, g3, i3, j3, k3	Sparrow Pawn	fW (fwd step)
d3	Treacherous Fox	FAvWvD (diag step; Alfīl; vert. step; Dabbaba)
h3	Running Rabbit	FfRbW (diag step; fwd Rook; bwd step)
d4, h4	Sparrow Pawn	fW (fwd step)

Total: 23 pieces per side (1 King, 2 special, 9 back-rank, 3 rank-2, 8 pawns).

PROMOTION

The **promotion zone** is the last 3 ranks (ranks 9–11 for White). Promotion is **optional** at the end of a turn when the move starts or ends in the zone. Each piece has a fixed promoted form:

PIECE	PROMOTES TO	PROMOTED MOVEMENT
Sparrow Pawn	Golden Bird	WfF
Running Rabbit	Treacherous Fox	FAvWvD
Flying Falcon	Tenacious Falcon	BvRsW
Swallow's Wings	Gliding Swallow	R (Rook)
Violent Wolf	Bear's Eyes	K
Violent Stag	Roaming Boar	FfsW
Flying Goose	Swallow's Wings	sRvW
Climbing Monkey	Violent Stag	FfW
Blind Dog	Violent Wolf	WfF
Flying Cock	Raiding Falcon	vRfFsW
Liberated Horse	Heavenly Horse	vN (vertical Knight)
Oxcart	Plodding Ox	K
Strutting Crow	Flying Falcon	BfW
Swooping Owl	Cloud Eagle	vRsWfF3bF

Non-promoting: Treacherous Fox, Cloud Eagle, Crane King.

Note: Swooping Owl and Strutting Crow move identically (fWbF) but promote differently. Flying Goose and Climbing Monkey also move identically (fFvW) but promote differently.

RULES

Repetition: If the same position with the same player to move occurs a 4th time, the game is a draw. Exception: if one side has been delivering check on every move, that side loses.

Impasse (drops only): If both Crane Kings reach their respective promotion zones, the game is drawn.

Drops: When played with drops, captured pieces revert to their unpromoted form and cannot be promoted immediately upon being dropped, even when dropped inside the promotion zone.

Source: chessvariants.com/rules/wa-shogi (H.G. Muller)