

# Hnefatafl - The viking game

## Instructions\*

**Objective:** The attackers (black) have to capture the king. The defenders (white) must protect the king and get him to safety.

- 1 The game consists of 24 attackers (black) against the king and its 12 defenders (white).

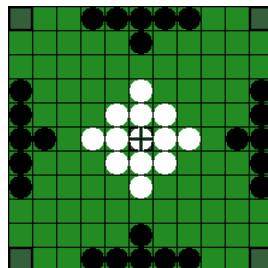


Figure 1: Initial position. Black pieces are the attackers and white pieces are the deffenders.

- 2 The attackers move first, and the players then take turns.
- 3 All pieces move any number of empty squares along a row or a column.

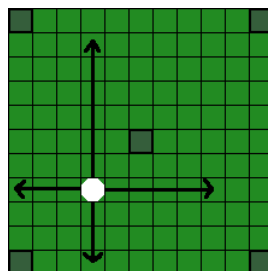


Figure 2: All pieces move like rooks in chess. They **can't** jump over neither enemy nor ally pieces.

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\*[http://aagenielsen.dk/fetlar\\_rules.en.php](http://aagenielsen.dk/fetlar_rules.en.php)

- 4 All pieces except the king are captured if sandwiched between two enemy pieces, or between an enemy piece and a restricted square. The two enemy pieces should be on the square above and below or on the squares left and right of the attacked piece, i.e. not diagonally.

A piece is only captured if the trap is closed by the aggressor's move, it is therefore permitted to move in between two enemy pieces. The king may take part in captures.

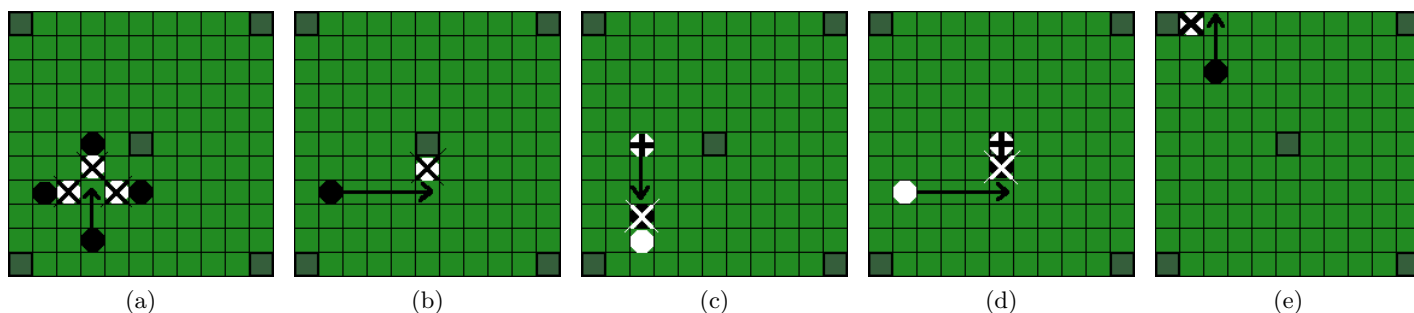


Figure 3: Capture of pieces.

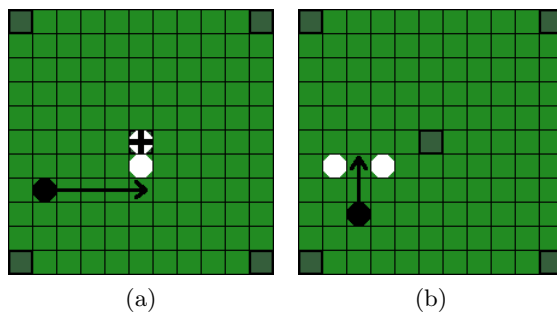


Figure 4: The piece is **not** captured.

- 5 Restricted squares may only be occupied by the king. The central restricted square is called the throne. It is allowed for the king to re-enter the throne, and all pieces may pass through the throne when it is empty. The four corner squares are also restricted, just like the throne. The board edge is not hostile. Restricted squares are hostile, which means they can replace one of the two pieces taking part in a capture. The throne is always hostile to the attackers, but only hostile to the defenders when it is empty.

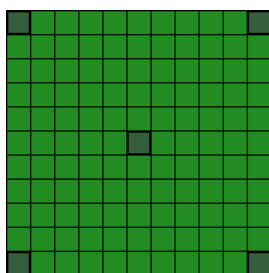


Figure 5: Five restricted squares.

- 6 If the king reaches any corner square, the king has escaped and his side wins.

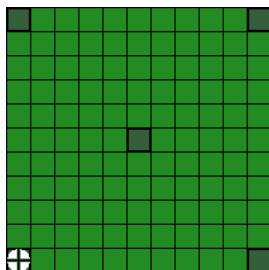


Figure 6: White player wins.

## 7 Attackers win

- 7.1 The attackers win if they can capture the king. The king is captured when the attackers surround him on all four cardinal points, except when he is next to the throne. If on a square next to the throne, the attackers must occupy the three remaining squares around him. The king cannot be captured on the board edge, unless he is the only white piece remaining on the board and is completely surrounded by black (i.e. rule 8).

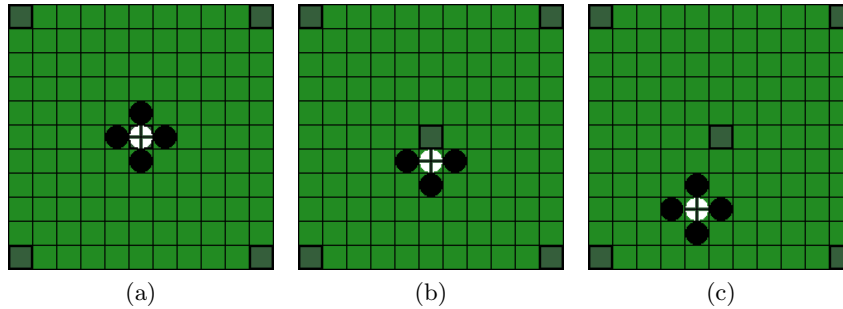


Figure 7: The king is captured.

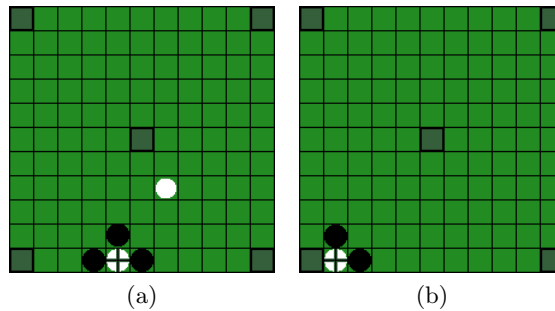


Figure 8: The king is **not** captured.

- 7.2 If the attackers surround the king and **ALL** remaining defenders, then they win, as they have prevented the king from escaping.

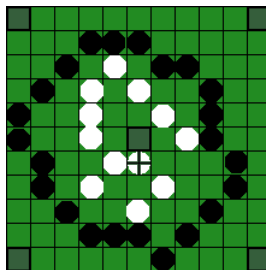


Figure 9: The attackers win by encircling all the remaining defenders.

- 8 If a player cannot move, he loses the game.
- 9 If it is not possible to end the game, fx. because both sides have too few pieces left or because of repetitions, it is a draw.