What is shogi?

Shogi is a Japanese strategy board game, often referred to as Japanese chess. It is similar to chess but with unique rules that make it distinct. The game is played between two players, each with a set of 20 pieces, and the goal is to checkmate the opponent's king.

There are many popular variants of Shogi, the standard being played on a 9x9 board.

Key Rules:

1. **Piece Movement**: Each type of piece moves in specific patterns:

   - **King**: Moves one square in any direction.
   - **Rook**: Moves horizontally or vertically any number of squares.
   - **Bishop**: Moves diagonally any number of squares.
   - **Gold General**: Moves one square in any direction, except diagonally backward.
   - **Silver General**: Moves one square in any direction, except directly backward and sideways.
   - **Knight**: Moves like a "L" shape, jumping over other pieces.
   - **Lance**: Moves forward any number of squares.
   - **Pawn**: Moves forward one square, but can promote into a Gold General when reaching the opponent's third row.

2. **Capturing Pieces**: When a piece lands on a square occupied by an opponent's piece, it is captured. However, captured pieces are not removed from the game. Instead, the player can drop a captured piece onto the board as their own.

3. **Dropping Pieces**: A unique feature of Shogi is that captured pieces can be used by the opponent as their own. When a player drops a piece onto the board, it is placed on an empty square and can be used in the game.

4. **Promotion**: Most pieces (except the King and Pawns) can be promoted when they enter the promotion zone (the last three rows of the opponent's side). Promotion changes a piece's movement pattern, making it stronger. For example, a Silver General promoted becomes a Gold General.
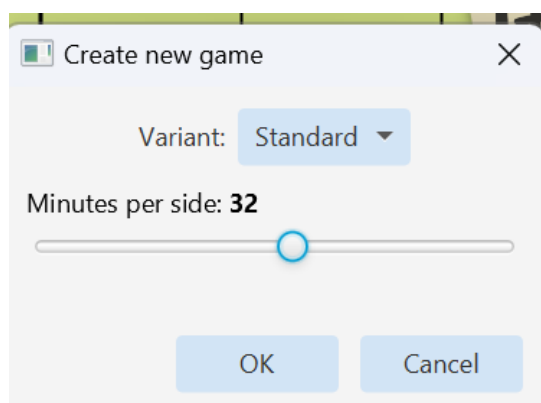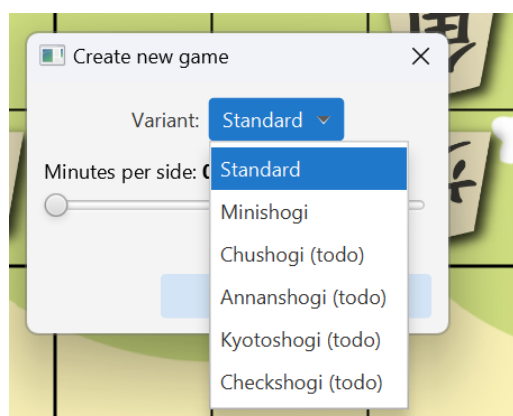
How to play?

Create new game

By default, the game will load a standard shogi game with no timers.

You can create a new game by selecting the "New Game" option in the "Game" menu.

After pressing the menubutton a dialog will appear in the middle of the screen. Here you can choose the variant of the new game, as well as the time per side. Leave the time slider at 0 for no timer.


Press OK to create new game.

Save game

By default, the program will save the last active game and reload it on launch, but if you want to save a game manually you can do so via the "Save Game As…" menu button. This will bring up a file manager for you to save a .json save file anywhere on your system.
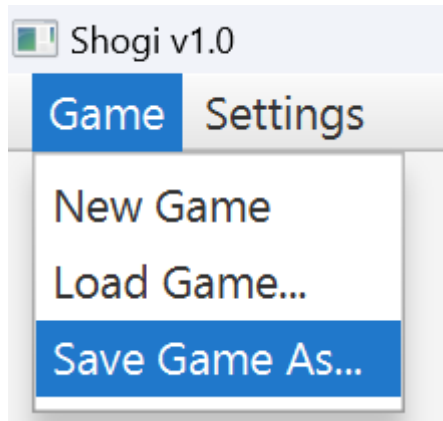
Load game

Once a game has been saved, you can manually load it via the "Load Game" menu button. This will bring up a filechooser, select the save file created via the "Save Game As…" button.
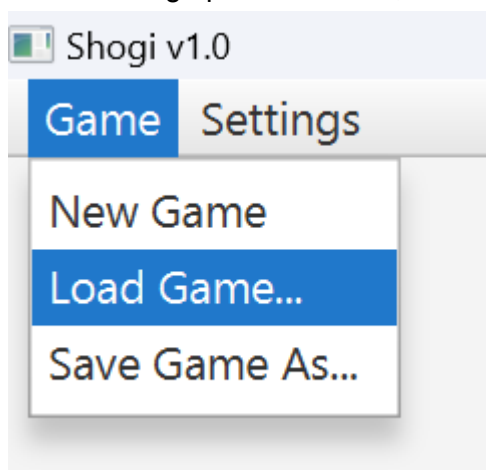

Change settings (appearance and sound)

To change the visual settings for the game, which is the board theme, piece set, and sound, you can press the Settings tab next to the Game tab in the top-menubar. A dropdown menu will appear, showing the different settings that can be changed, with additional submenus when choosing which setting you want to change (see image below). These settings will be saved on quit, and loaded on subsequent launches.

OBS
Currently, the piece set submenus "CHU" and "KYO" remain unused as we did not have time to implement the shogi variant that would use them, so you will only see change in piece appearance when changing the "STANDARD" piece set.
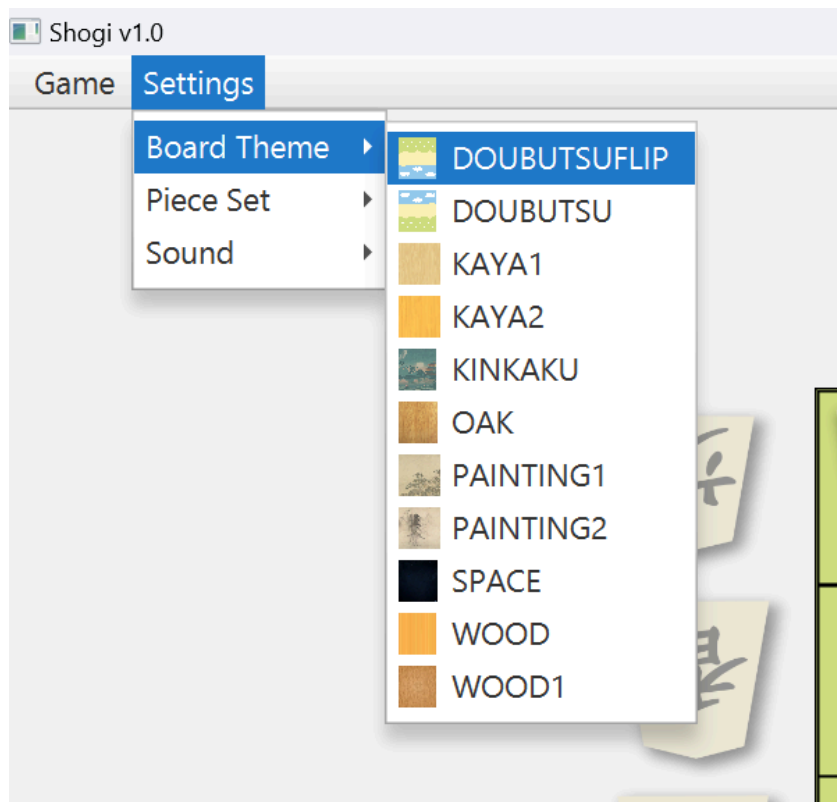
Move piece

To move a piece, select a piece on the board with left mouse click, this will display the piece selected with a green square highlighting and valid moves with red square highlighting. You can only move the piece of the side whose turn it currently is (start as "bottom" player). There is currently no way to see which players turn it is unless you are playing with a timer, in which case the players whose turn it is will have an "active" clock (highlighted blue).

Play hand

A player with a captured piece can place it on the board on its turn. You do this by choosing a piece from your captured piece board to the right or left depending on which side you are. This will display the tiles you can place the captured piece on. After that, it is just like moving a piece, which is choosing the tile that you want to place the piece on.
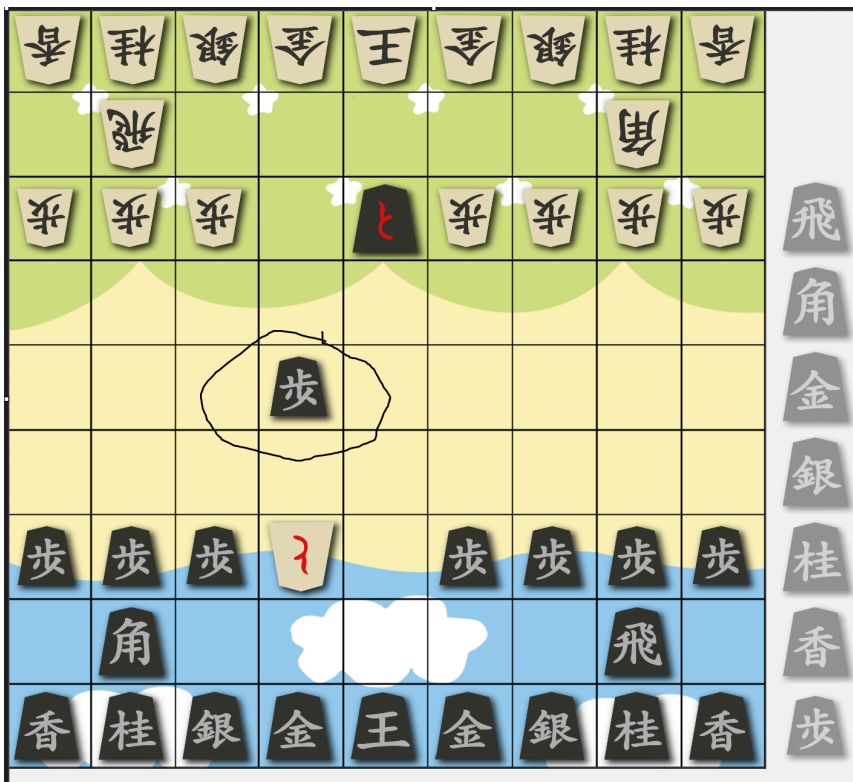
Promote a piece:

To promote a piece, you will need to have a promotable piece in the promotion zone, which is the three last rows away from you (Look at image below for clarification.) When these requirements are followed, a piece can be promoted by right-clicking the piece, changing its behaviour and image.

Currently it is technically possible to do illegal "moves" via piece promotions. A piece is only supposed to be promotable AFTER a move in which it is within the promotion zone.

History (move list)

On the right of the board you will see a white rectangle, when you make a move a list item will appear here which you can select to view a previous move/state of the game. You can either click directly on an item or use the arrow button on the bottom to step backwards and forwards. The middle button will "undo" a move.

OBS

There is currently a bug in the history in which piece promotions won't be undone via "undo" or viewing previous moves.