

S H 将 O G I

All of the world's variations of chess were derived from the ancient game of chaturanga, which began in India and spread throughout the world in its many incarnations (shogi in Japan, xiangqi in China, janggi in Korea, makrul in Thailand, and chess in the West).

Objective

Shogi is played until one of the opposing kings is captured, or until mate when capture is inevitable.

Gameplay

Two players, black (*sente*) and white (*gote*) alternate turns moving and placing pieces (*koma*) on a board (*shogi-ban*) of nine ranks (rows) and nine files (columns).

The terms black and white refer only to the titles of each player and not to any physical difference between pieces. Aside from the kings, each player is given identical pieces to use, allowing players to drop captured pieces back onto the board as one of their ranks (see Capture and Drops, below).

Play begins with each player setting their playing pieces on the board as follows:

歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵	歩兵
	角行						飛車	
香車	桂馬	銀將	金將	玉將	金將	銀將	桂馬	香車

19	17	15	13	12	14	16	18	20
	10						11	
8	6	4	2	1	3	5	7	9

Traditionally, koma are initially placed on the board in a specific order dictated by one of the following conventions, *ohashi* (left) or *ito* (right).

8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	19						20	
17	6	4	2	1	3	5	7	18

Player Turns

On his turn, a player may either move one piece (which may be promoted after moving), or drop one piece onto the board in any unoccupied space. The *sente* player (playing the challenging king) takes the first turn. A player may not pass his turn.

Movement

Each type of piece has its own style of movement as follows (note that only the knight may ignore intervening pieces):

Name	Koma	Move	Promoted Name	Koma	Move
Reigning King (<i>osho</i> —royal general)					
Challenging King (<i>gyokusho</i> —jeweled general)					
Bishop (<i>kakugyo</i> —angle mover)			Horse (<i>ryuma</i> —swift horse)		
Rook (<i>hisha</i> —flying chariot)			Dragon (<i>Ryuo</i> —dragon king)		
Gold General (<i>kinsho</i>)					
Silver General (<i>ginsho</i>)			Promoted Silver (<i>narigin</i>)		
Knight (<i>keima</i> —cassia horse)			Promoted Knight (<i>narikei</i> —promoted cassia)		
Lance (<i>kyosha</i> —incense chariot)			Promoted Lance (<i>narikyo</i> —promoted incense)		
Pawn (<i>fuhyo</i> —foot soldier)			Promoted Pawn (<i>token</i> —reaches gold)		

Promotion

All pieces but the kings and gold generals have two sides to them; a black unpromoted side that begins the game face up and a red promoted side that may be turned face up to indicate that a piece has been promoted. Note that kings and gold generals may not be promoted.

A player may, at the end of his turn, promote a piece that moves into, out of, or wholly within the promotion zone (three ranks farthest from him) in that turn. That piece is turned to show its promoted (red) side.

Promotion is optional. A piece must earn promotion in the turn in which it is to be promoted. Once promoted, a piece may not be demoted until it is captured.

When a piece has no legal moves (when a pawn or lance reaches the farthest rank or a knight reaches either of the two farthest ranks), it must immediately be promoted.

Capture and Drops

Pieces are captured by displacement. A player may move one of his pieces so that the destination of its move causes it to land on a space occupied by an opposing piece. The opposing piece is displaced and removed from the board.

Captured pieces are said to be “in hand” and must be kept in full view of both players. Traditionally, a player’s pieces in hand are displayed *in their unpromoted state* off to the lower right of the board as he views it.

A player may use his turn to drop a captured piece back onto the board—that is a captured piece may be added to the forces of the capturing player. He places the captured piece onto any unoccupied space *with its unpromoted side facing up*.

A player dropping a piece into his promotion zone (farthest three ranks) may then promote that piece as usual in a future turn.

The following restrictions must be observed when dropping a piece:

- A pawn, lance, or knight may not be dropped in a rank that leaves no possible moves.
- A pawn may not be dropped so that it gives immediate checkmate, though other pieces may be so dropped.
- A player may not drop a pawn into a file containing another of his unpromoted pawns.

Check and Checkmate

If a player’s king is in danger of being captured on his opponent’s next turn, then his king is in check. If a player is in check and is unable to move in a way that relieves his situation, then the position is checkmate and he loses the game.

A player is forbidden from putting his opponent in perpetual check.

Winning

If a player has no legal moves, then he must resign. One such situation is a player in checkmate. A player may also resign if checkmate is inevitable.

If a player makes an illegal move, then he automatically loses.

A game may also end with no winner by either repetition or impasse.

Repetition occurs if the same board situation (including the same pieces held in hand by each player) recurs four times. Perpetual check is the exception, with the offending player (the one pushing perpetual check) losing the game.

Impasse occurs when both players' kings have been advanced to their respective promotion zones, and neither player is capable of winning. In the case of impasse, pieces are given point values as follows: A player receives 5 points for each rook or bishop in his possession and one point for each other non-promoted piece. Kings and promoted pieces are worth nothing. A player with less than 24 points automatically loses. If both players' scores exceed 24 points, then the game ends in a draw.

In the case of an impasse, players may immediately replay the game with colors switched.

Player Ranks

As in go, players are ranked by their respective skill level. Ranks are from 15 *kyu* to 1 *kyu*, then from 1 *dan* up to 9 *dan* with an offset between amateur and professional dan level players.

Handicap

Players of unequal strength may use a handicap to equalize the difference in strength. For one rank difference, the lower ranked player plays black. Beyond that, the stronger player begins the game with fewer pieces in the following order:

- Left lance
- Bishop
- Rook
- Rook and left lance
- Rook and bishop
- Rook, bishop, and both lances
- Rook, bishop, both lances and both knights

Note that many handicapping systems are currently in use, this is only a suggestion for handicapping.