

POLIS

Goal of the Game

Race your chariot to the opponent's side of the board to win!

Setup

Polis is played on an 8×8 board. Each player controls:

- **15 Dogs** - Your main pieces
- **1 Chariot** - Your key piece that can win the game

Starting Position:

BC	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD
BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD
RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD
RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RD	RC

BC/BD = Blue Chariot/Dog | RC/RD = Red Chariot/Dog

The chariots start in opposite corners. Blue's chariot is in the top-left; Red's is in the bottom-right.

How to Win

Get your chariot to the opponent's back row (the row where their pieces started). The game ends immediately when a chariot reaches the final rank.

Taking Your Turn

Players alternate turns. On your turn, you **must** move one piece. You cannot skip your turn.

Movement

All pieces move **one square in any direction**:

- Up, Down, Left, Right
- Diagonal (up-left, up-right, down-left, down-right)

The Hopping Mechanic

This is the core mechanic of Polis! After you move a piece, **all adjacent pieces hop to the opposite side** of the piece you just moved.

Example:

BD	BD		
BD			
		RD	

↓ Blue moves top-left dog to center ↓

RD			
	BD	BD	
	BD		

What happened:

- Top-center Blue dog hopped down
- Middle-left Blue dog hopped right
- Bottom-right Red dog hopped to top-left

When Pieces DON'T Hop

There are important exceptions to the hopping rule:

Exception 1: Blocked Destination

A piece won't hop if the target square is **occupied** or **off the board**. The piece stays in place instead.

Exception 2: Defended Enemy Pieces

An enemy piece won't hop if there's another enemy piece on the opposite side **along the same axis**.

Defended (piece stays):

| RD | RD | BD ← |

The middle Red dog is anchored by the left Red dog, so it won't hop.

Not defended (piece hops):

		RD			
	RD		BD	←	

The Red dogs aren't on the same axis, so the bottom Red dog hops right.

Exception 3: Stunned Chariots

Stunned chariots don't hop (see Chariots section below).

Capturing Pieces

After all hops are resolved, check for captures:

A dog is captured if it's surrounded by two enemy pieces on opposite sides along the same axis (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal).

Safe (not captured):

	RD		BD		
		RD			

The Blue dog is NOT on the same axis as both Red dogs.

Captured:

	RD				
		BD			
			RD		

The Blue dog is surrounded on a diagonal axis - it's captured!

Important: Captures happen **simultaneously**. Both pieces can capture each other in the same turn.

| RD | BD | RD | BD |

Both center pieces get captured!

Chariots - The Special Piece

Chariots move like dogs but have special properties:

Chariot Rules

- **Cannot be captured** - Instead, they get *stunned*
- **Win condition** - Reaching the opponent's back row wins instantly

Stunned Chariots

When a chariot is surrounded by enemy pieces on the same axis, it becomes **stunned**:

- **✗** Cannot be moved by its owner
- **✗** Does not hop when adjacent pieces move
- **✗** Does not count for capturing enemy dogs

| RD | BC | RD | BD |

The Blue chariot is stunned. The middle Red dog is SAFE because the stunned chariot doesn't count as a surrounding piece.

Illegal Moves

You cannot move a piece to a square where it would immediately be captured or stunned.

However, you CAN make a move that causes your allied pieces to hop into danger.

Strategy Tips

💡 Control Territory

Capture enemy pieces to gain numerical advantage. More pieces means more control!

💡 Stick Together

Lone dogs are easy targets. Groups of dogs are much harder to capture and can threaten enemy pieces.

💡 Create Capture Opportunities

Look for two of your pieces on the same axis with one empty space between them:

| RD | RD → | | BD |

Moving the right Red dog will hop the Blue dog between them for a capture!

💡 Use "Death Squares"

Position pieces one space apart to create traps:

| RD | | |
| | 🦴 | |

| | | RD |

Any piece hopped into the center will be captured! Works on diagonals too.

Advance Groups Backward

Counter-intuitively, moving your frontmost piece backward hops your other pieces forward while keeping your formation together.

Protect Your Chariot

Chariots can advance quickly but can be hopped backward by enemies. Keep allied dogs behind your chariot to block enemy hops and provide support if it gets stunned.

Polis - A game of tactical positioning and dynamic board control