

Chess is a [board game](#) played between two [players](#). It is sometimes called **Western chess**, or **International chess** to distinguish it from [related games](#) such as [xiangqi](#) and [shogi](#). The current form of the game emerged in [Southern Europe](#) during the second half of the 15th century after evolving from a similar, much older game^[a] of [Indian](#) origin. Today, chess is one of the world's most popular games, played by millions of people worldwide.

Chess is an [abstract strategy game](#) and involves [no hidden information](#). It is played on a square [chessboard](#) with 64 squares arranged in an eight-by-eight grid. At the start, each player (one controlling the white pieces, the other controlling the black pieces) controls sixteen [pieces](#): one [king](#), one [queen](#), two [rooks](#), two [knights](#), two [bishops](#), and eight [pawns](#). The object of the game is to [checkmate](#) the opponent's king, whereby the king is under immediate attack (in "[check](#)") and there is no way for it to escape. There are also several ways a game can end in a [draw](#).

Organized chess arose in the 19th century. Chess competition today is governed internationally by [FIDE](#) (International Chess Federation). The first universally recognized [World Chess Champion](#), [Wilhelm Steinitz](#), claimed his title in 1886; [Magnus Carlsen](#) is the current World Champion. A huge body of [chess theory](#) has developed since the game's inception. Aspects of [art](#) are found in [chess composition](#); and chess in its turn influenced [Western culture](#) and art and has connections with other fields such as [mathematics](#), [computer science](#), and [psychology](#).