The aim of the game is simple: capture the King. But between the beginning and end are infinite possibilities on how to play strategically. Capture opponent pieces by occupying their square with your own piece. And remember to protect your King at all times!

**#1**

Each side has 16 pieces, separated by colors. Traditionally, the white or lighter-colored pieces have the first move.

8 Pawns are lined up in the front rank. Behind them stand the Rook (castle), the Knight (horse), the Bishop (pointy hat), King (cross) and the Queen (crown). **NOTE:** The queen always starts on her color, so the position of the Queen and King are reversed for the black pieces.

After the Queen, the remaining pieces mirror the left side, with the Bishop, the Knight, and the Rook.

**In-Between**

An easy way to understand the movement of Chess pieces is to break them down into 3 categories; the single movers with special powers, the straight shooters, and the weirdos.

**#2**

The King and Pawn are the most important and (arguably) least powerful characters. They can only move one square per turn with some tricky, strategic exceptions.

The King’s special power is his responsibility of the game rests on his shoulders. If he is trapped by the opponent **(CHECK)**, he MUST either move or have another piece prevent his capture. No other moves are allowed until he is out of danger. If the King cannot move and no other piece can save him, game over **(CHECKMATE)**.

The Pawn’s special power is his ability to change into any character on the board (except for the King) once he reaches the opponent’s last row. Most players turn their Pawn into a Queen, but any other character is available.

**#3**

The Bishop and Rook are simple to understand. They are here to fight!

The Bishop can move diagonally across the board as far as he wants if he is not blocked by another piece.

The Rook can move horizontally or vertically across the board as far as he wants if he is not blocked by another piece.

**#4**

The Knight is weird because he moves 3 spaces in the shape of an ‘L’ no matter which pieces lie in his path. If a piece of his same color is on his final square, he cannot make that move. However, if an opponent is on that square, he can take that square and remove that piece.

The Knight can move 2 squares either vertically or horizontally, then one square perpendicular, either side.

The Queen is the most mobile piece on the board, and arguably the most valuable aside from the King. She can move horizontally, vertically, or on a diagonal if she is not impeded by another piece.