



checkers 2:

The Sequel to Checkers:
It's About Girls This Time

*a queer dating sim for two players
& a checkers board*



dh
croasdill

acknowledgements

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Many of my design goals were partially inspired by my experience playing *Heaven Will Be Mine* by Worst Girls Games & Pillow Fight Games. I would not have even begun to make this game without their horny, guiding light.

Additionally, Sultan Ratrout's exhaustive work "A Guide to Checkers Families & Rules" provided countless & invaluable insights into the formal & physical structures of checkers.

Playtesting was provided by:

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Hey there

Welcome to the rulebook. Thanks for picking it up.

What is this game?

Checkers 2 is a very short strategy romance-roleplaying game for two players. It can be played with any standard checkers set, pens, paper, & just a bit of tape. You & an opponent will take on the roles of two women who are very attracted to each other as they try to figure out if their attraction is mutual. A single game takes 15–45 minutes to play— things can move as easily or as excruciatingly as you like.

Over the course of the game, you & your opponent will narrate an encounter between your characters, & gain points to reflect the growing overtiness of your character's romantic advances. At exactly 10 points, your character has effectively communicated their interest & can end (or prolong) the encounter

as they wish. However, if you score more than 10 points, your character has come on too strong or awkwardly. This results in your character getting too flustered, frightened, or feckless to initiate anything, & your opponent getting to determine the how the encounter ends (or doesn't).

Checkers 2 is just as much about outmaneuvering your opponent as it is about concealing your own movements. Watch your opponent carefully, you stand to learn more than you might expect by catching sight of a hesitant decision, pursed lips, or a slight tremble.

Before play

Make sure to read the “Flirting” section on page 7 & talk to your opponent about what your boundaries & allowances around play-flirting are. *Checkers 2* is always going to be most fun if you've established these things ahead of time.

Making characters

Before beginning the game, you & your opponent must each create a character which you will be playing as during the game. Each player must give their character a name, pronouns, a profession, & 1–2 additional details (try an age, a sun sign, a D&D alignment, a city of origin, a species). Each player should share their character's traits with their opponent. Then, you'll have to work together to create an event or location which your characters are meeting at.

Turn order

Whoever wants it most goes first.

Setting up

Both you & your opponent will have to pick a color (usually red or black) & retrieve all 12 of the pieces of that color from whichever checkers set you are using. You'll need to assign point-values to each of these pieces by writing a number

Suggested scenarios

Can't think of a set up for your game? Try out one of these scenarios, written to start you off with just the right amount of tension.

- It's 2006, two young women meet eyes in a bar somewhere in the rural midwestern United States & linger just long enough. "I would totally have the guts to ask her out," they each boast to their friends. "I just can't tell if she's into chicks."

- The lead performer at the First Lunar Gala bungles a wink to one of the dishevelled caterers, causing the accomplished singer to flush & immediately retreat to the refreshments table (much to the caterer's amusement & disappointment).

- Two hired swords, one a stalwart paladin & the other an increasingly desperate mercenary, confront each other on a misty hillside. They've been preparing for this moment for weeks, but now that they've finally seen each other, neither knows how to make the first move.

on a small piece of paper & taping it to the bottom of the piece. Each player must have 5 one-point pieces, 4 two-point pieces, & 3 three-point pieces.

Sitting on opposite sides of the board, you & your opponent must then take turns secretly

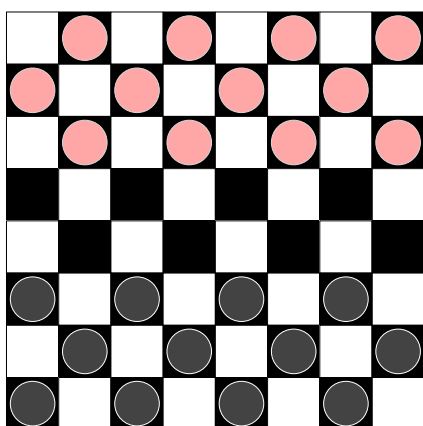


fig 1. board set up

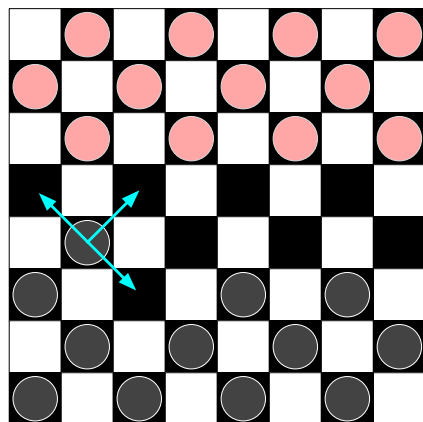


fig 2. three possible moves

arranging your pieces. You can place them in any order you choose across the black spaces of the three rows closest to you on the board. Make sure the side of the piece which has the point value printed on it is facing down. *You must make sure your opponent doesn't know where you've placed each piece! Keep them guessing!*

During the game, you may check the point values of your own pieces any number of times. However, checking certain pieces too often may tip your opponent off about their importance in your strategy.

Movement

You can move any of your pieces into an adjacent black square which does not already have a piece on it. This means that the pieces can always move backwards & forwards, but only ever on a diagonal line.

Reaching the other side of the board

If you ever manage to move one of your pieces

to the furthest row of your opponent's side of the board, you may choose to flip over up to 3 of you opponent's pieces to reveal their point values. When you do this, you may ask your opponent a single, probing question about their character. Your opponent must answer this question, unless you've asked something which makes them very uncomfortable. Which is just like. Why would you do that? What's your deal?

Each player may only perform this move once per game.

Capturing pieces

You can capture one of your opponent's pieces if it is in a black square next to one of your pieces. If there is an unoccupied black space directly on the other side of your opponent's piece, you can place your piece in that square. Once you have jumped over the opponent's piece, that piece is captured. Only one piece may be captured in

a single jump, but multiple jumps are allowed during a single turn, allowing you to capture multiple pieces per turn (should your opponent be so careless, or should you be so reckless).

Scoring points

After you have captured an opponent's piece, flip it over to reveal its point value. Place this piece somewhere near your side of the board where you can see it. Your total points are calculated by adding the point values of all the pieces you have captured from your opponent over the

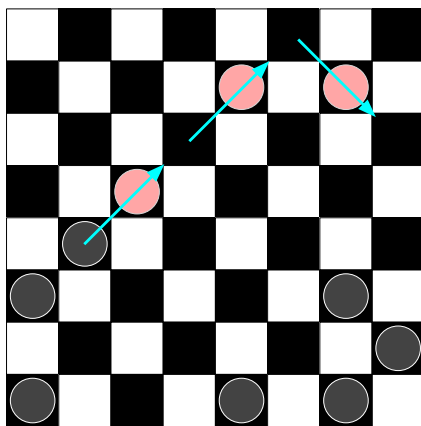


fig. 3 capturing multiple pieces in one turn

course of the entire game.

This is when the flirting begins. Each time you gain points, you will have to describe a brief moment in your character's encounter with your opponent's character. Your opponent can then take the opportunity to respond as they think their character would. Based on the total number of points you have gained that turn, your character is starting the interaction with a different level of intensity or forwardness. In the "Flirting" section below, you'll find suggestions for how to determine this intensity or forwardness.

Flirting

Over the course of *Checkers* 2, you'll have to narrate your character flirting with the opponent's character. On the next page, I've provided what I hope are some mostly-comfortable & fairly conservative suggestions for how to determine

how intense that flirting might be. However, you might want to discuss with your opponent what your personal levels of comfort are around play-flirting. Using the provided table as a rubric, I encourage you to consider making the game more or less sexual/romantic on a case-by-case basis.

Ending the game

If you have captured enough pieces to reach 10 points, you have won the game. However, if your score is ever higher than 10, your opponent has instead won.

Assuming their opponent is still willing & excited, the winning player gets to describe the conclusion of the two characters' encounter.

By the end of the game, if either character has lost interest or if either player has been made uncomfortable by the story, each player simply explains how their character leaves the event separately.

points gained in a single turn	suggested flirt strength	examples
1	Slight interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a joke or passing observation • accidental physical contact
2	Conversing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small talk • getting-to-know-you questions • a general complement (“Wow, you take really good care of this old subaru!”)
3	Hint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “accidental” physical contact • well-meaning teasing • a pointed complement (“Your undercut is really the perfect amount of messy for me.”)
4+	Forward remark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an innuendo • an invitation

That’s it. That’s all the rules to Checkers 2.

That’s all she wrote, folks. Get to it.

Hello, this is a letter from the game designer.

I think you might be able to tell, I began writing *Checkers 2* as a joke. But as with many things in my life, it just kept getting gayer & gayer until all at once the only thing I wanted was to dive in.

As I worked on early drafts of the game & tried to make it a novel experience from the prequel, I wanted to challenge the somewhat masculinized style of competition common to western games, where a winner proves their moral superiority over a loser. In *Checkers 2*, winning & losing are supposed to just be positions in a mutually enjoyable entanglement. I wanted to try to make a game where players will have as much fun losing as they will winning, & to separate loss from failure.

I should say: I do not think that I know how to flirt very well. I had to do a lot of very embarrassing research in order to make this game. I was brought up in a place where my love & my gender were always just barely acceptable. Internalizing this reality, I developed strange, distant, & abrasive ways to deal with my need to express & receive affection. I know plenty of other queer women who have lived similarly, & I built *Checkers 2* to be a space within which the ways we want to love are always present & usual. By using this game as an argument for the structural similarities between classical games & flirting, I mean to both start a generalized discussion about new ways to imagine what competition can look like, & also to completely expose my particular experiences & desires. I want to normalize my bruised love to myself, & to give others that opportunity as well.

I understand that those are high aspirations for a checkers mod about meeting girls, but it's only like 50% of why I made this game. The other half of my thoughts are much less articulate however, mostly things along the lines of "flirting..... fun... girls....., good.... ;)" So I appreciate you listening to me about that other stuff.

Anyways. I hope you enjoy the game, & also flirting with your friends. They're pretty intertwined experiences.

good-
bye