

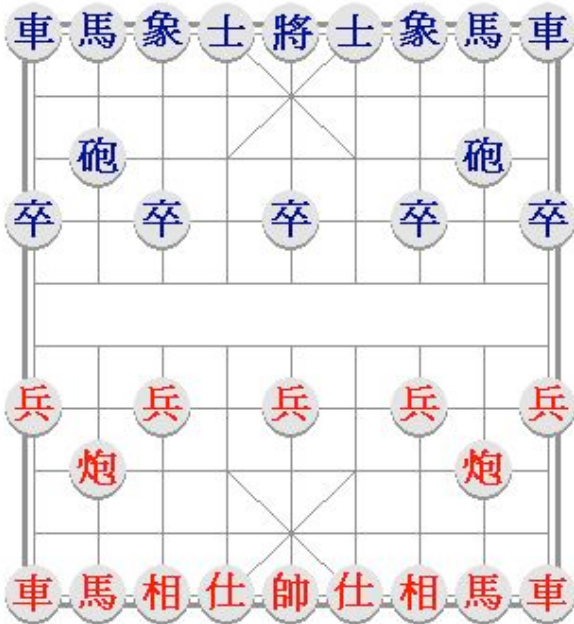
XIANGQI

Chinese Chess

The Board & Initial Set-Up

The Xiangqi board is made up of ten horizontal lines and nine vertical lines. The verticals are interrupted by a central horizontal void called the river. Two palaces are positioned at opposite sides of the board; each is distinguished by a cross connecting its four corner points.

NOTE: Xiangqi pieces are played on line intersections which are called points.



The Pieces

Each player has the following pieces:

- 1 General
- 2 Guards
- 2 Elephants
- 2 Horses
- 2 Chariots
- 2 Cannons
- 5 Soldiers

From left to right on the bottom and top rows, you see: a Chariot, a Horse, an Elephant, a Guard, a General, a Guard, an Elephant, a Horse, and a Chariot. On the third rows you see the Cannons; on the fourth rows you see the Soldiers.



General

1 Point orthogonally within the palace only. Not allowed to 'see' the enemy General on an open file due to the 'Look of Death,' a very powerful, yet dangerous, technique.



Guard

1 point diagonally within the palace only.



Elephant

2 points diagonally. Cannot 'jump' pieces or cross the river.



Horse

1 point orthogonally, then one point diagonally. Cannot 'jump' pieces.



Chariot

Any distance orthogonally.



Cannon

Moves like a Chariot. To capture, it must first leap over an intervening piece of either color (the 'Forward Observer' rule).



Soldier

1 point straight forward. Once across the river, can also move 1 point sideways instead.

Other rules

1. Red, being most auspicious, moves first.
2. The game is won by checkmating or stalemating the enemy General.
3. Perpetual check is forbidden. You cannot check your opponent more than three times in a row with the same piece and same board positions.
4. You cannot force an enemy piece to move to and from the same two points, indefinitely, in order to avoid capture. If you move a Chariot to e5, threatening a Cannon on e6, and your opponent's only viable move is Cannon to f6, then you cannot force that Cannon to and from e6 and f6 by moving your Chariot to and from e5 and f5, indefinitely. The purpose of this rule (and the above rule) is to avoid perpetual-check draws. Some of these situations are complicated, but the person who is forcing the perpetual move must usually break it off.
5. The game is a draw when neither side can force a checkmate or a stalemate.



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