

# Cyngesheall

Version 0.3

## Overview

**Cyngesheall** is a free libre open source abstract strategy game where players try to capture the opposing king while trying to reach the opposite corner with their own king.

## Objective

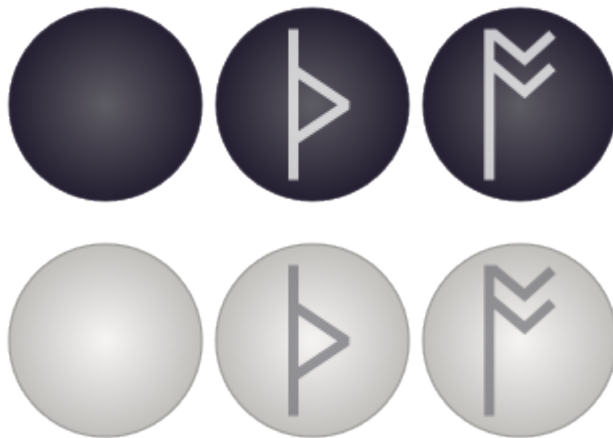
Players maneuver their pieces to achieve one of two endgame states:

- Their king (*wóden-stán*) reaches the corner opposite the starting position.
- The opposing king is captured

## Components

- Game board (*tæfl*) with a 7x7 grid on it
- Approximately 16 unmarked stones (*stánas*) or tokens, split evenly between two colors
- 1 stone of each color marked in some manner (traditionally a *Þorn*, or “thorn” rune - þ) to designate it as a *Þunor-stán* (“thunder-stone”).
- 1 stone of each color marked in some manner (traditionally a *ós*, or “god” rune - ǫ) to designate it as a *wóden-stán* (“Woden-stone”).

## Example stones



## Setup

- Each player's king (*wóden-stán*) is placed in a corner opposite the other
- The “commander” (*Þunor-stán*) is placed one square diagonally from the king
- The remaining 8 stones of each color fill the corners to make a triangle

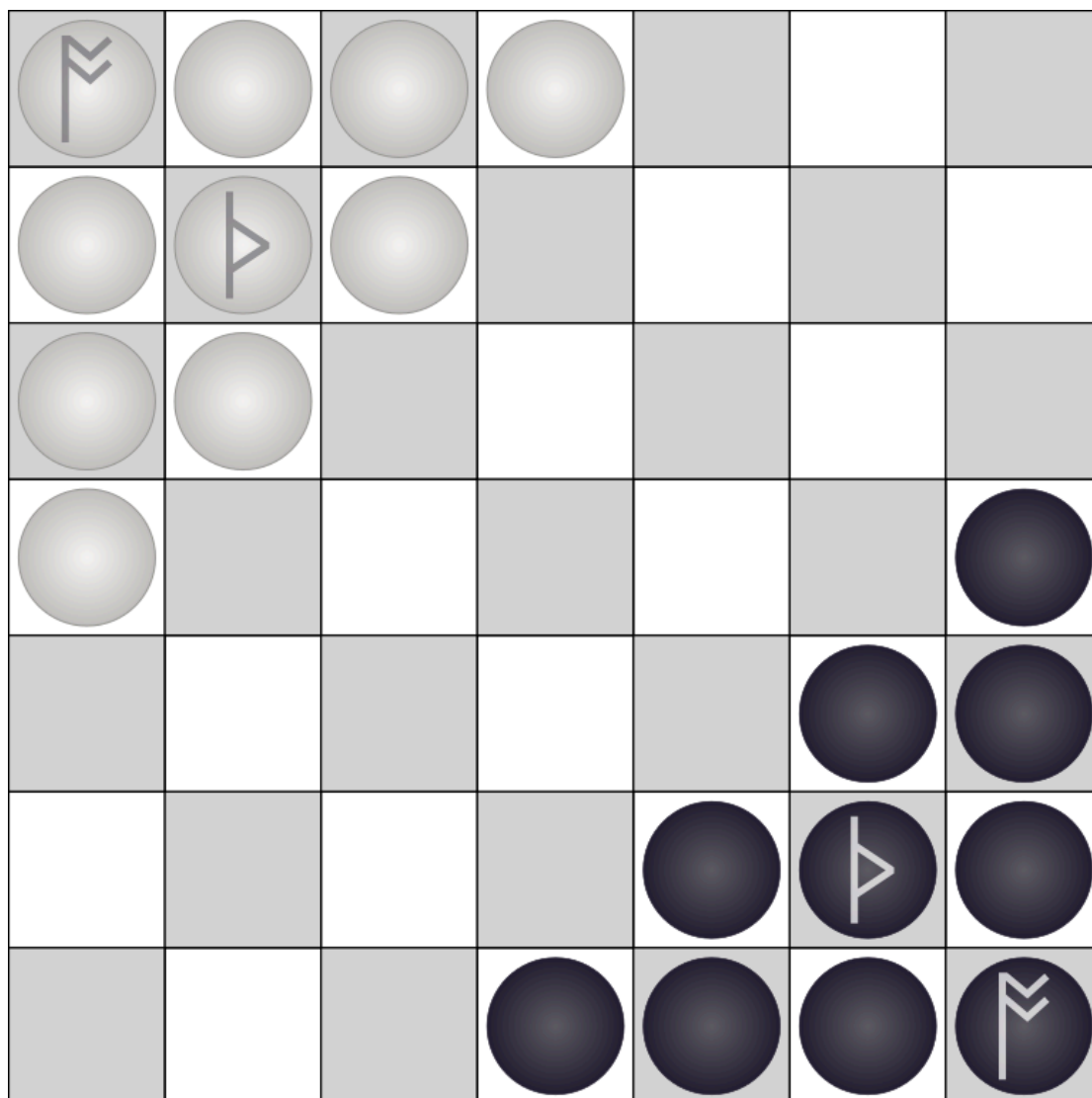


Figure 1: Initial setup

## Playing the game

Traditionally, the player using the darker colored stones plays first. Players then alternate taking turns.

### Moving

- Kings and regular stones may move any number of vacant spaces orthogonally, like rooks in chess or like pieces in hnefetafl
- Commanders may move any number of vacant spaces in any direction, including diagonally, similar to a chess queen
- No piece may pass over another piece in its path

### Capturing

- A player captures an enemy piece and removes it from the board by moving a piece so that the enemy piece becomes surrounded on two opposite sides (horizontally or vertically – not diagonally) by two friendly pieces. The king is also captured in this way.
- A piece may move between, or stop in-between, two enemy pieces without being captured.

## Winning the game

The player who captures the enemy king or guides their own king to the opposing corner is declared the winner.

## Notation

### Moves

- **Move (standard stone / “man”):** A1 - A4
- **Move (king):** KA1 - A4
- **Move (“commander”):** CA1 - D4

### Captures

- When a piece is captured, follow the move with an x and the position that was captured: A1 - A4xA5
- If multiple pieces are captured as a result of the move, followed each position with a / and then additional position: A1 - A4xA5/B4

### Endgame

Endgame moves, such as when the king escapes or is captured, should be appended with an !:

- **Escape:** KA5 - A1!
- **Capture:** A1 - A4xKA5!

## Credits

**Cyngesheall** was conceived by John Beers in 2024 as a quasi-historical boardgame similar to both **Oferhlýp** and **Mærstánas** and uses the same 7x7 grid. However, instead of “checkers with hit points” or making connections with stones, **Cyngesheall** take more direct inspiration from Hnefatafl. Aside from the setup, the primary differentiation is that the number of player pieces is even instead of asymmetrical, and each player has a king, which must reach the opposite corner rather than an edge.

The word *cyngesheall* is an Anglo-Saxon (Old English) compound word meaning “king’s hall”. ([Source 1](#), [Source 2](#))

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### **Find out more**

More information on **Cyngesheall** and “living rules” can be found at: <http://codeberg.org/jaerrib/cyngesheall>