



Ramparts

A game from Wales for two players

Ramparts was designed in 1893 by Martin Wilson of Llandudno and produced for sale by a Liverpool firm. There were, in fact, two versions of the game: the one shown here, using an 11×11 board, and a 12×12 variant employing slightly different rules.

The black squares on the board are known as the "ramparts" while the space between them is called the "open field". Each player has twelve pieces; the diagram shows their positions at the start of play.

Rules

1. The object is to get as many of your men as possible on to the enemy's starting line where they must remain.
2. The moves in the open field are precisely the same as for the pawns in chess. Men can move straight forward, one square at a time, and can take diagonally.

In taking, the enemy piece is removed and the capturing piece enters its square.

3. Within its home ramparts a piece can move straight forward or diagonally and can capture in either way.
4. When standing on its home ramparts, a piece may move or take diagonally *on* them. It may also capture straight forward or diagonally *off* them. When there is no piece of the enemy's to capture, a man standing on its home rampart can move off the rampart in a straight forward direction. A piece cannot be captured while standing on its own rampart.
5. When on the enemy's rampart, a piece cannot take – but it may be taken. A piece can cross the enemy rampart only by taking a straight forward move.
6. After passing the enemy rampart, a piece may move or take as if it were behind its own rampart. That is, it can move straight forward or diagonally and can capture in either way.
7. No piece may ever move sideways or backwards.
8. A piece may move two squares straight forward for its first move – the same as the pawn in chess – if the squares in front are vacant. If the intervening square is commanded by an enemy piece, this two-square move is expressly forbidden.
9. There is no compulsion to capture at any stage of the game – therefore, no "huffing".

Note that no square of the home ramparts can be commanded by an enemy piece, as he can't take any piece standing on such a square. Likewise, any piece of the enemy's standing on the home rampart is powerless to command any square within the home ramparts. This means that the two pieces at the extreme left and the two at the right have the power to leap the ramparts in front for their first move. In every other case, neither the home nor the enemy ramparts may be passed without the piece having first gained one of the dark squares of the ramparts.

The game continues until one of the players finds it impossible to move. The score is now added for each player:

3 points for every man you have on the enemy starting line,
2 points for every man you have within the enemy's rampart,
1 point for every man you have left on the board.

Alternatively, there is a way to continue the game if you do not wish to add the score at this point. The player who is free to move takes any blocked piece of the enemy's and swaps its position with the piece that is blocking it. In other words, each piece takes the square previously occupied by the other.