

Rules of Fetlar Hnefatafl 11x11 *

Edoardo De Angelis

23/01/2025

*All the texts and the images are property of aagenielsen.dk; the following PDF was realized in order to be print with ease.

1 Players and Setup

Two players, the king's side vs attackers. There are twice as many attackers as defenders. The attackers' side moves first, the players then take turns.

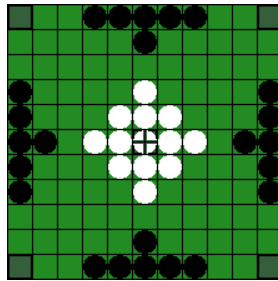


Figure 1: Initial Setup

2 Objective

The dark pieces (attackers) lay siege, their goal, to capture the king. The light pieces (defenders) must break the siege and get their king to safety.

3 Moving a Piece and Capture

3.1 Moving

All pieces move any number of vacant squares along a row or a column, like a rook in chess.

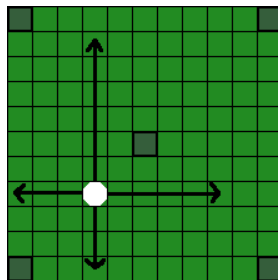


Figure 2: How to move

3.2 Capture

All pieces except the king are captured if sandwiched between two enemy pieces, or between an enemy piece and a restricted square. The two enemy pieces should be on the square above and below or on the squares left and right of the attacked piece, i.e. not diagonally.

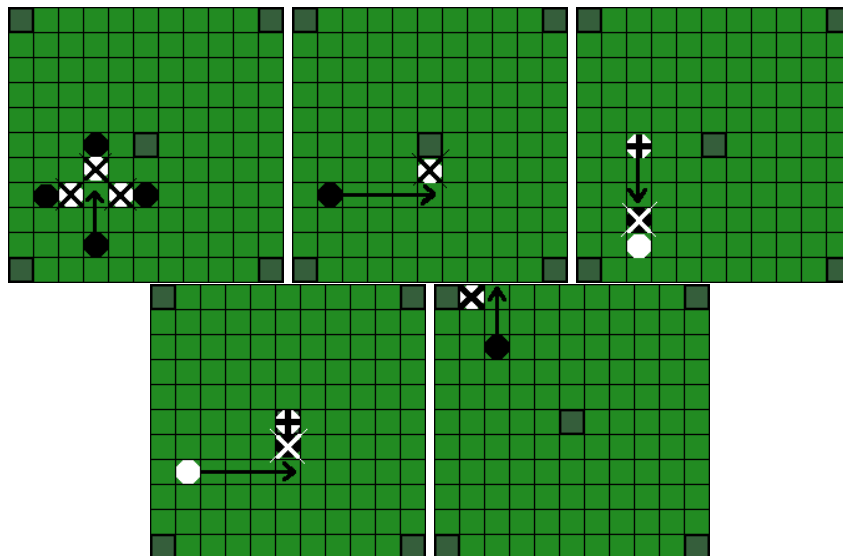


Figure 3: Capture of pieces

A piece is only captured if the trap is closed by the aggressor's move, it is therefore permitted to move in between two enemy pieces. The king may take part in captures.

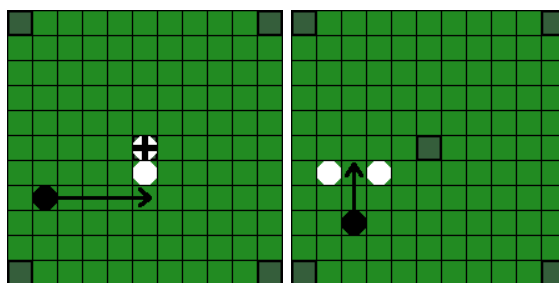


Figure 4: the piece is **not** captured

4 Restricted Squares

Restricted squares may only be occupied by the king. The central restricted square is called the throne. It is allowed for the king to re-enter the throne, and all pieces may pass through the throne when it is empty.

Restricted squares are hostile, which means they can replace one of the two pieces taking part in a capture. The throne is always hostile to the attackers, but only hostile to the defenders when it is empty.

The four corner squares are also restricted and hostile, just like the throne. The board edge is **NOT** hostile.

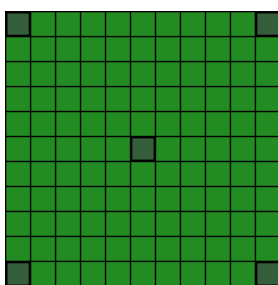


Figure 5: Five restricted squares

5 Winning Conditions

5.1 King's Side Win

If the king reaches any **corner square**, the king has escaped, and his side wins.

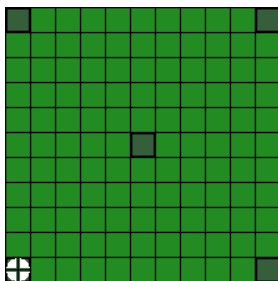


Figure 6: King's side win

5.2 Attackers Win

5.2.1 Capture the King

- The attackers win if they can capture the king
- The king is captured when the attackers surround him on all four cardinal points, except when he is next to the throne.
- If on a square next to the throne, the attackers must occupy the three remaining squares around him.

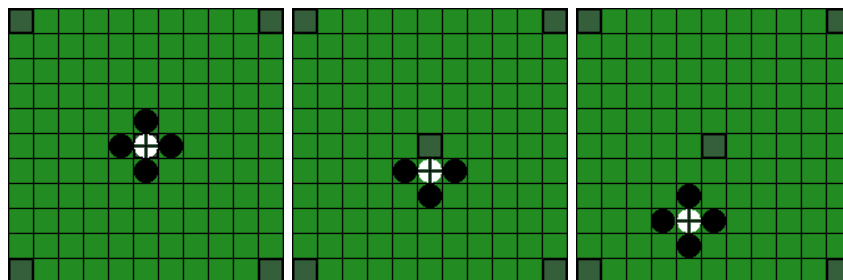


Figure 7: The king is captured

- The king cannot be captured on the edge of the board **unless he is the only white piece remaining** on the board and is completely surrounded by black.

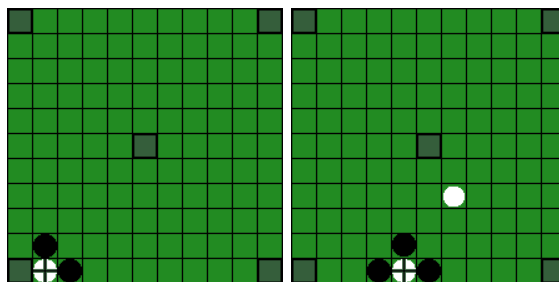


Figure 8: The king is **not** captured

5.2.2 Encirclement

If the attackers surround the king and **all remaining defenders with an unbroken ring**, then they win, as they have prevented the king from escaping.

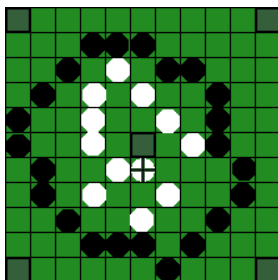


Figure 9: Example of encirclement, black wins

5.3 Other losing conditions

5.3.1 Loss by Inaction

If a player cannot move, he loses the game.

5.3.2 Draw

If it is not possible to end the game, e.g., because both sides have too few pieces left or because of repetitions, it is a draw.