

## Dragon 100

# Dragonchess

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Artwork by Dennis Kauth

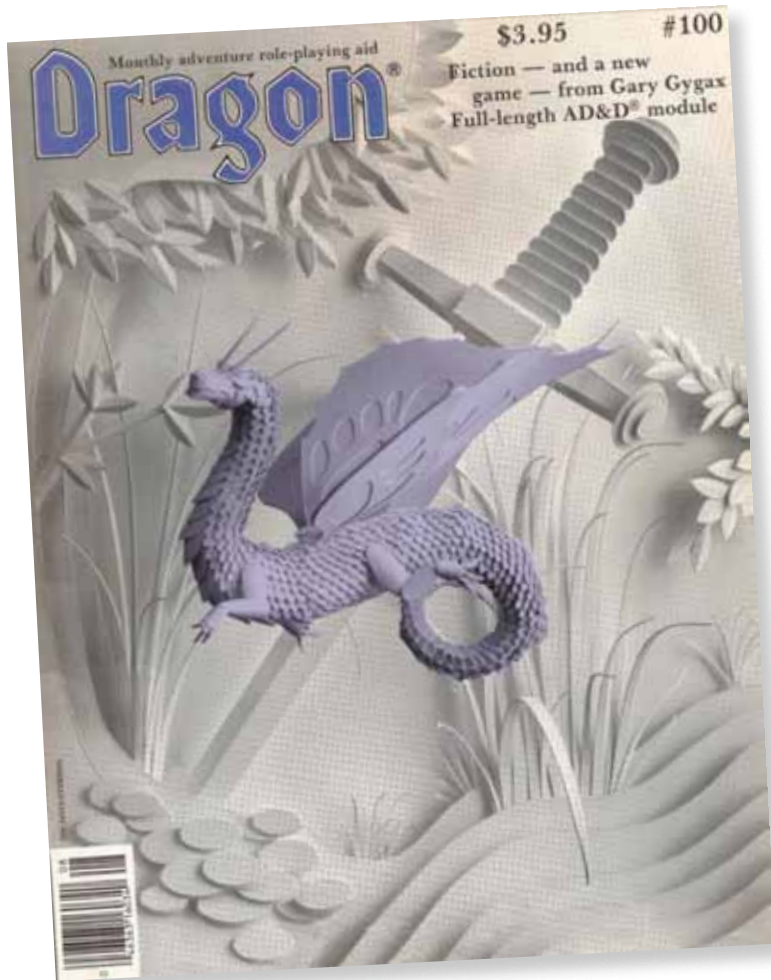
Illustration by Russel Roehling

The DRAGONCHESS game is a fantasy-based variation of chess, in which the object of the game (as in standard chess) is to checkmate the opposing King. An understanding of the rules of chess is helpful in order to understand how DRAGONCHESS is played.

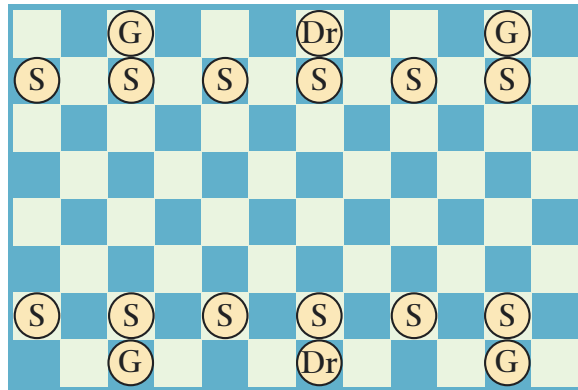
The playing surface for DRAGONCHESS is a three-tiered structure of rectangular boards, with each board composed of a grid 12 squares wide and 8 squares deep. The squares are alternately colored light and dark (or other color tones that contrast with each other), configured so that a light-colored square is in the near right-hand corner when the board is viewed from the longer side. The upper board represents the air, the middle board the land, and the lower board the subterranean world. To simulate the various environments, it is suggested that the squares on the upper board be colored light blue and white; on the middle board, light green and amber; and on the lower board, red and brown. Each board is the starting place for pieces particular to its environment; some pieces cannot move up or down off the board they begin on, but other pieces can travel between two or even all three boards. The opposing forces are designated as Gold and Scarlet, with Gold always moving first.

## SETTING UP

At the start of the game, each player's pieces are positioned as shown in the accompanying diagram. Each force on the upper board consists of six Sylphs, two Griffons, and one Dragon. On the middle board, each side possesses one King, one Mage, one Paladin, one Cleric, two Heroes, two Thieves, two Unicorns, two Oliphants, and twelve Warriors. Each side's force on the lower board is made up of six Dwarves, two Basilisks, and one Elemental. In all, there are 42 pieces per side, or a total of 84 pieces in the game.

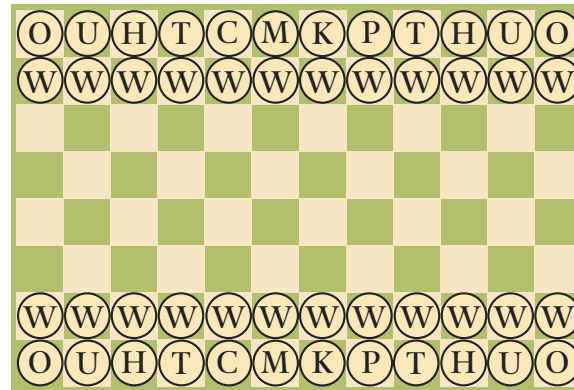


Starting Position, Upper Board  
Scarlet



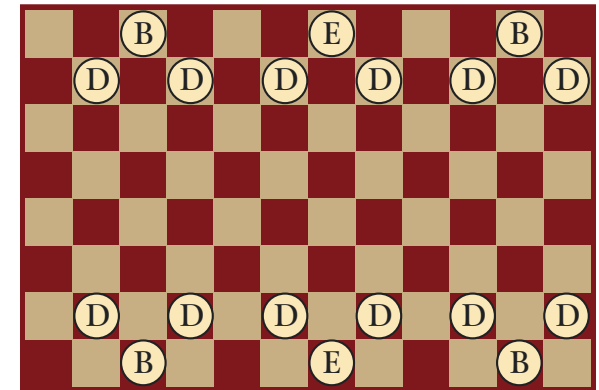
Gold

Starting Position, Middle Board  
Scarlet



Gold

Starting Position, Lower Board  
Scarlet



Gold

## NOTATION AND TERMINOLOGY

In the following descriptions of how pieces move and capture, squares on the board(s) are described in algebraic notation, with files (columns) labeled “a” through “l” reading left to right from Gold’s viewpoint, and ranks (rows) numbered 1 (nearest to the Gold player) through 8 (nearest to the Scarlet player). A numerical prefix of 1 (upper board), 2 (middle board), or 3 (lower board) designates the board on which a certain square is located. Thus, “1a1” is the square in the near left-hand corner of the upper board, as viewed from the Gold player’s position, and “3l8” is the square in the far right-hand corner of the lower board. Each piece is identified by the initial letter of its name (“S” for Sylph, etc.) except for the Dragon, which is identified by “Dr” to distinguish it from a Dwarf piece.

In all other respects, movement and capture notation is essentially the same as for standard chess. A full description of this notation is given near the end of this text.

Standard chess pieces are referred to frequently in the descriptions of how DRAGONCHESS pieces move and capture: in such cases, their names (king, rook, etc.) are not capitalized, while the names of DRAGONCHESS pieces are always capitalized. In the diagrams of movement that accompany the description of each piece, “O” designates a square that a piece can move into, if that square is unoccupied (i.e., no capture is permitted); “★” designates a square that can be occupied only if a capture is involved; and “\*” designates a square that can be occupied either by a capturing or a non-capturing move.

Because many pieces can move in three dimensions, nomenclature for movement between squares has been standardized as follows: “horizontal” refers to a side-to-side move as viewed by the player moving the piece; “vertical” is a move forward (toward the opponent’s side of the board) or backward (toward one’s own side) along the file occupied by the piece; and “up” and “down” refer to movement from one board to another.

## THE UPPER BOARD

### Sylph

The Sylph has a move on the upper board that is essentially the converse of that of a pawn. It moves forward only, one square diagonally either to the left or right, and it can capture a piece on the upper board which lies directly ahead of it by moving forward into that square and supplanting the opposing piece that was located there. Thus, every time a Sylph makes a capture on the upper board, it changes the color of the diagonal along which it makes further (non-capturing) moves, from dark to light or vice versa. Gold’s Sylphs begin the game on the light-colored squares of the second rank, while the Sylphs of the Scarlet side start on the dark-colored squares of the seventh rank.

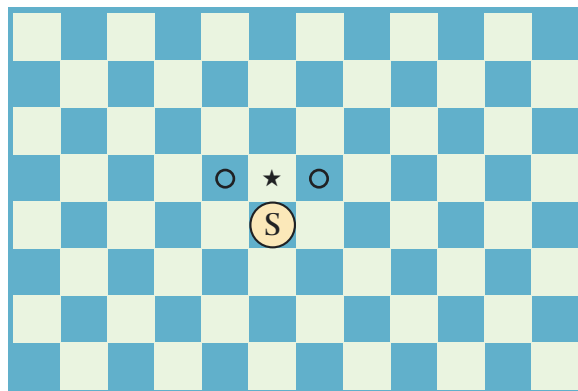
In addition to its movement and capture powers on the upper board, the Sylph can capture an opposing piece on the middle board that lies directly below it. This is the only way in which the Sylph can move to the middle board. It cannot move to, nor make a

capture upon, the lower board. Once located on the middle board, the Sylph cannot move except to return to the upper board. It may do this by moving directly upward to the square it previously occupied, or by moving upward to any of the six starting squares for Sylphs of the appropriate color. A Sylph cannot capture by means of an upward move; it must return to the upper board by moving into an unoccupied square.

A Sylph located at 3c4 can move to 3b5 or 3d5. It can occupy 3c5 or 2c4 by capturing an opposing piece, if one is located on either of those squares. After making a capture at 2c4, the Sylph can move back to 3c4 on a subsequent turn, if that square is empty, or it can move up to any unoccupied starting square. For a Gold Sylph, the legal destinations are 3a2, 3c2, 3e2, 3g2, 3i2, and 3k2.

A Sylph that reaches the eighth rank on the upper board can move no farther on that board, but retains the power to capture downward. If such a capture is accomplished, the Sylph can regain mobility on the upper board by moving up into one of the starting squares for Sylphs of the appropriate color.

Sylph (Upper Board)



## Griffon

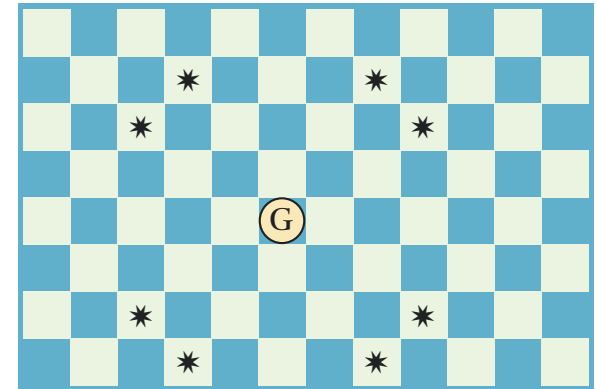
Starting squares for the Gold Griffons are 3c1 and 3k1; the Scarlet Griffons begin at 3c8 and 3k8.

When on the upper board, a Griffon moves along a path that runs one square horizontally or vertically and two squares diagonally in the same direction. Like the knight, it vaults over intervening squares (even if they are occupied) and only exerts control over the destination square, not the intervening ones. (This is identical to the move of the elephant in Korean chess.) A Griffon at 3d4 can move to or capture a piece at 3a2, 3b1, 3f1, 3g2, 3g6, 3f7, 3b7, or 3a6.

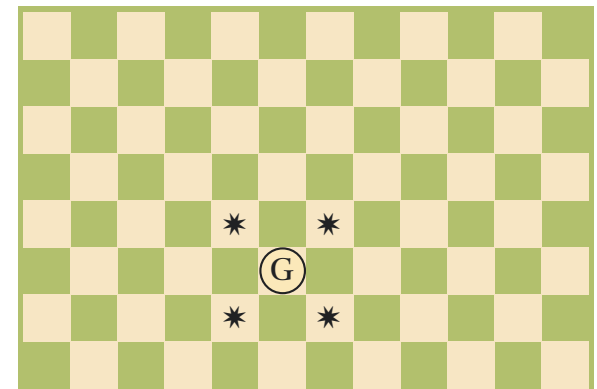
In addition, a Griffon may occupy the middle board by a move down to one of the four squares on the diagonal from the upper-board square it started from. (Note that a Griffon located on the edge of the upper board only commands two squares on the middle board instead of four.) A Griffon returns to the upper board by moving to any of the four (or two) squares diagonally above the Griffon. It can move between the upper and middle boards whether or not a capture is involved. A Griffon at 3d4 can move to or capture at 2c5, 2c3, 2e3, or 2e5.

While a Griffon is on the middle board, it forfeits the power of flight, and as such it can only move and capture in the squares diagonally adjacent to it. A Griffon located at 2e5 commands all of the following squares: 2f6, 2f4, 2d4, 2d6, 3f6, 3f4, 3d4, and 3d6.

Griffon (Upper Board)



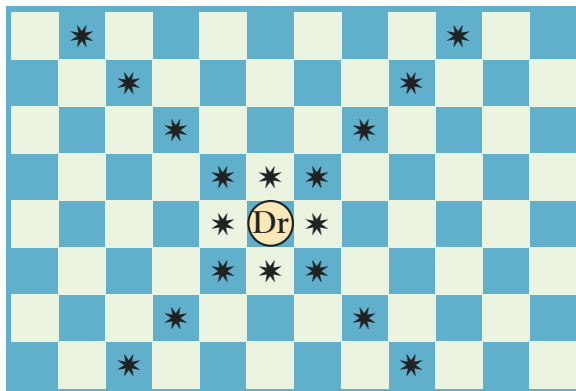
Griffon (Middle Board)



## Dragon

The starting square for the Gold Dragon is 3g1, and the Scarlet Dragon begins at 3g8. A Dragon's movement and capture powers on the upper board are a combination of the moves of the king and the bishop: unlimited along the diagonals, or one square in any horizontal or vertical direction. While the Dragon cannot move downward, it does have the unique ability to capture an opposing piece on the middle board that lies in the square directly beneath it or on any of the squares horizontally or vertically adjacent to that square. The captured piece is removed from the middle board, but the Dragon remains on the upper board. A Dragon at 3c4 could capture "from afar" an opposing piece located at 2c4, 2c5, 2d4, 2c3, or 2b4.

Dragon (Upper Board)

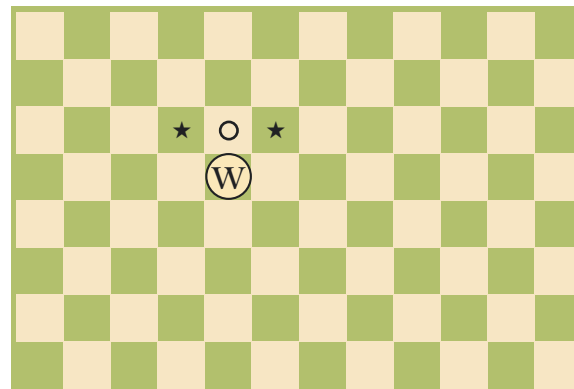


## THE MIDDLE BOARD

### Warrior

At the start of the game, the twelve Gold Warriors are positioned along the second rank, and their Scarlet counterparts begin on the seventh rank. (The diagram below depicts a Gold Warrior moving toward Scarlet's side of the board.) The move of the Warrior is identical to that of a pawn, except that a Warrior cannot advance two squares on its first move. The Warrior can move into an unoccupied square vertically ahead of its location, and it can capture an opposing piece located on either adjacent diagonal square ahead of it. The Gold Warrior that starts the game at 2c2 can move to 2c3, or it can occupy either 2b3 or 2d3 by capturing an opposing piece located on one of those squares. A Warrior that reaches the opponent's back rank is promoted to a Hero, in the same fashion that a pawn is promoted. However, unlike standard chess, the owning player does not have a choice: a pawn can be promoted to a queen, bishop, knight, or rook, but a Warrior can only become a Hero. A Warrior cannot move to or capture pieces located on the upper or lower boards.

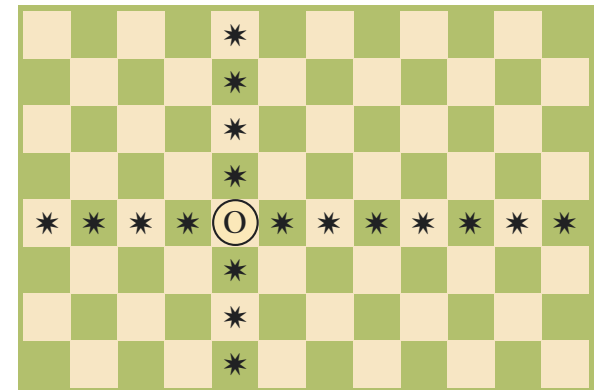
Warrior (Middle Board)



### Oliphant

The Oliphants for each side start on the corner squares of the middle board—2a1 and 2I1 for Gold, 2a8 and 2I8 for Scarlet. The move of an Oliphant is identical to that of a rook—that is, as many squares horizontally or vertically as desired, as long as no piece interferes with its path of movement. An Oliphant cannot move to or capture pieces located on the upper or lower boards.

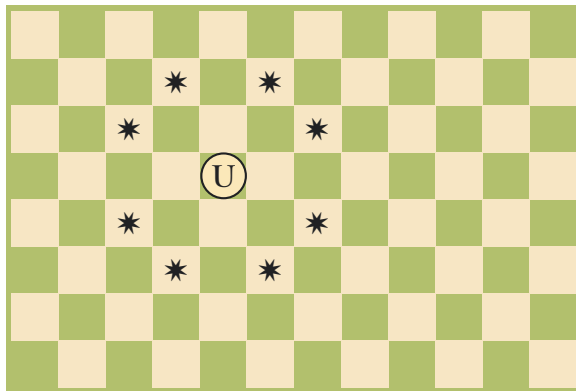
Oliphant (Middle Board)



## Unicorn

The Unicorns for each side start on the squares horizontally adjacent to the Oliphants—2b1 and 2k1 for Gold, 2b8 and 2k8 for Scarlet. A Unicorn moves and captures in the same way as a knight, including the ability to vault over pieces on intervening squares. It cannot move to or capture pieces located on the upper or lower boards.

Unicorn (Middle Board)



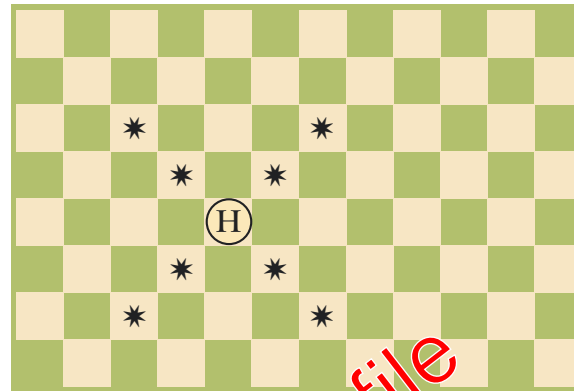
## Hero

The Heroes for each side start adjacent to the Unicorns—2c1 and 2j1 for Gold, 2c8 and 2j8 for Scarlet. On the middle board, a Hero moves either one or two squares in any diagonal direction, with the ability to vault over an intervening piece on a two-square move. Capture is accomplished in the same manner.

A Hero can also move up or down one board at a time, going to any square diagonally adjacent to the square directly above or below its former location. A move back to the middle board is accomplished the same way. When located on the upper or lower board, a Hero's only move is to return to the middle board; it cannot travel to any square other than the one to which it ascended or descended. A move

from one board to another can involve a capture if so desired.

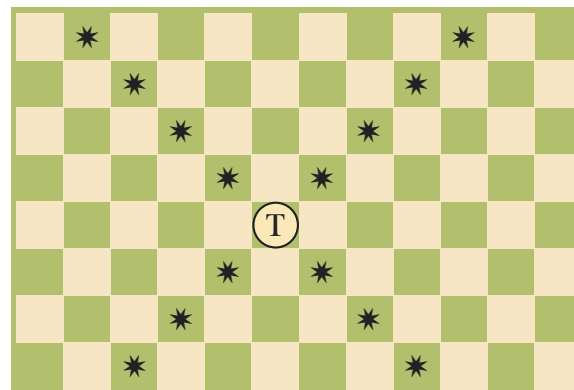
Hero (Middle Board)



## Thief

The two Thief pieces for each side start the game adjacent to the Heroes—2d1 and 2i1 for Gold, 2d8 and 2i8 for Scarlet. A Thief moves and captures exactly as a bishop, going any number of squares diagonally as long as no piece interferes with its path of movement. It cannot move to or capture pieces located on the upper and lower boards.

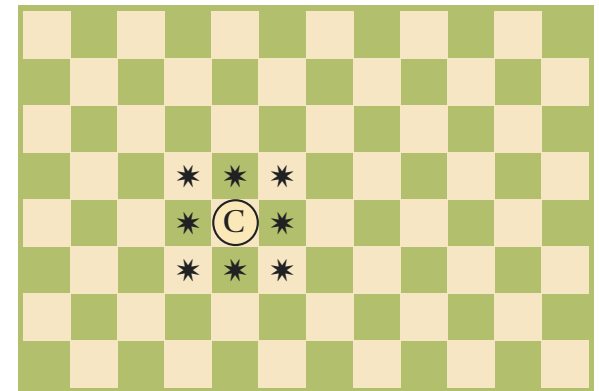
Thief (Middle Board)



## Cleric

The Gold Cleric starts on 2e1, the Scarlet Cleric on 2e8. The basic, two-dimensional move of a Cleric is the same as that of the king: one square in any direction. In addition, a Cleric can move one square directly up or down, and retains its full movement (and capture) abilities on both the upper and lower boards.

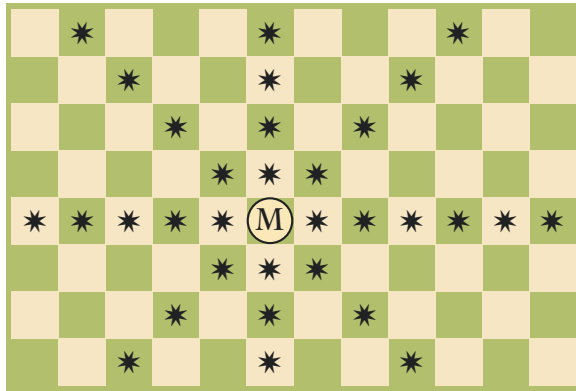
Cleric (Middle Board)



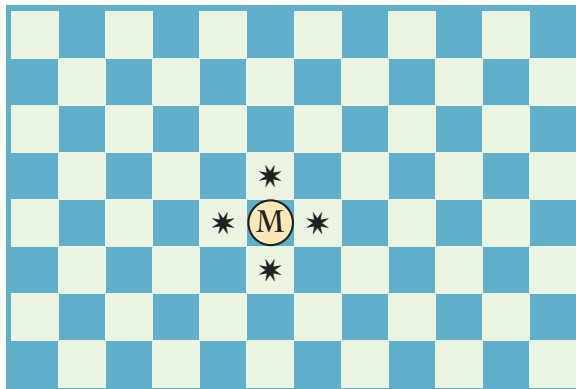
## Mage

The Mage for each side starts on the square adjacent to the Cleric—2f1 for Gold, 2f8 for Scarlet. On the middle board, a Mage moves and captures in the same way as the queen, able to follow an unobstructed path in any horizontal, vertical, or diagonal direction. In addition, a Mage can move (and capture, if applicable) directly upward or downward across one or more boards. However, a Mage on either the upper or lower board is limited to a move of one square in a horizontal or vertical direction. A Mage located at 2c4 move up to 3c4, and on its next move could go downward two boards to 1c4. If the Mage then remained on the lower board, it could only move to 1c5, 1d4, 1c3, or 1b4.

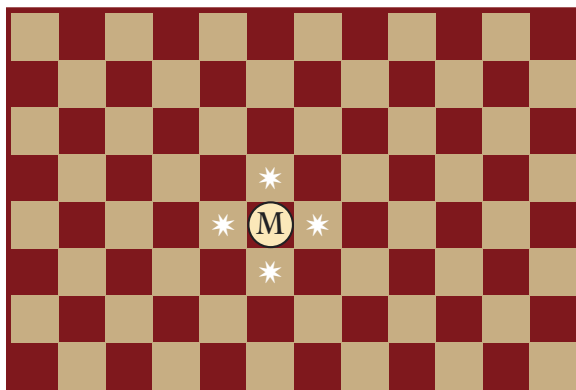
Mage (Middle Board)



Mage (Upper Board)



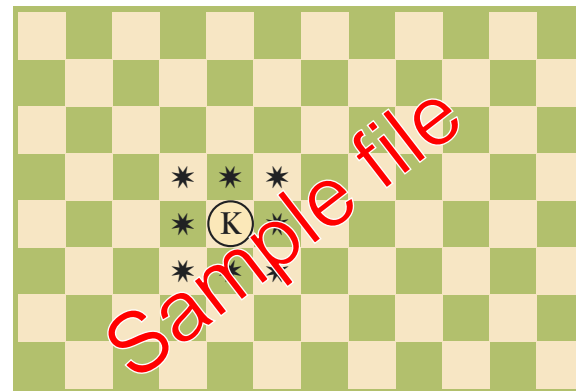
Mage (Lower Board)



## King

The King for each side begins on the square adjacent to the Mage—2g1 for Gold, 2g8 for Scarlet. The King moves and captures similarly to a king in standard chess. In addition, the King may move (and capture) by shifting one square directly up or down. A King that has moved to the upper or lower board cannot move upon those boards, and must return to the middle board before it can again move and capture normally.

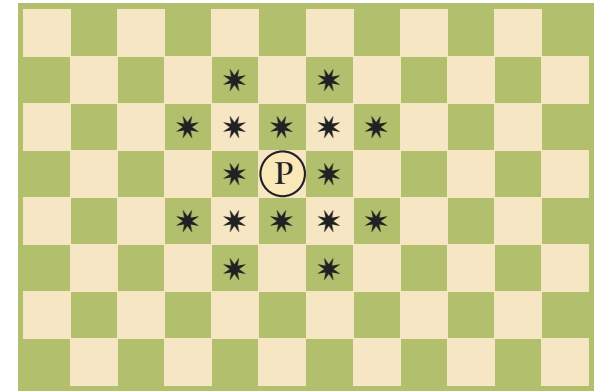
King (Middle Board)



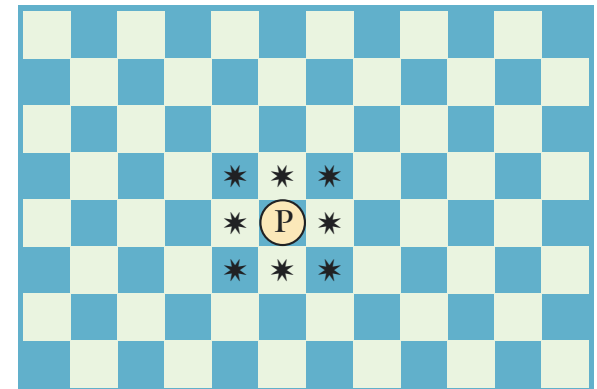
## Paladin

The Paladin for each side begins in the square adjacent to the King—2h1 for Gold, 2h8 for Scarlet. On the middle board, a Paladin's movement and capture abilities are a combination of those of a king and a knight. It can also move upward or downward with a knight-like move, i.e. one board up and two squares horizontally or vertically, or two boards up and one square horizontally or vertically, and it can vault over intervening pieces with this sort of move, just as if the move did not involve a change of boards. Upon the upper or lower board, the Paladin is limited to a king-like move (and capture) of one square in any direction. A Paladin located at 3c4 can move between boards to any of the following squares: 2c6, 2e4, 2c2, 2a4, 1c5, 1d4, 1c3, or 1b4.

Paladin (Middle Board)



Paladin (Upper Board)



Paladin (Lower Board)

