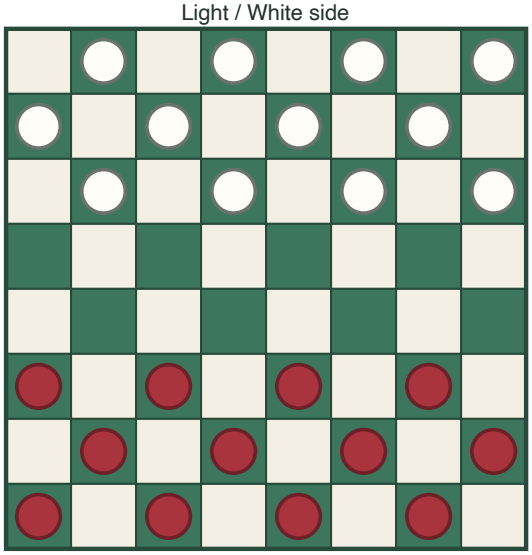
Checkers Rules Printable

Reference | Setup and rules | LETTER

This sheet teaches English draughts (American checkers) using the World Checkers/Draughts Federation rule set on an 8×8 board. It covers setup, movement, captures, and kinging. A man that reaches the king-row completes the turn; if it arrives by a jump, it is crowned but does not continue jumping in that turn. Read the worked example and then complete the four practice tasks.

Light / White side



Dark / Red side (moves first)

Dark near-left corner

Board setup

A checkers board is an 8×8 grid of alternating light and dark squares. Play uses only the dark squares, so each player has 32 playable squares.

Each player starts with 12 pieces placed on the three rows nearest that player, on dark squares only. The two middle rows are left empty. The board is oriented so each player has a dark square in the near-left corner.

Movement

Players alternate turns; the player with the darker pieces moves first. A regular piece moves one square diagonally forward onto an empty dark square.

A capture is made by jumping diagonally over an adjacent enemy piece onto the empty dark square directly beyond it. Captures are mandatory: if a jump is available, the player must take it. Multiple jumps are made in one turn if the piece can continue jumping.

Kinging

When a man reaches the far row (the opponent's king-row), it is crowned a king, marked by stacking a second piece on it, and the turn ends. Under the World Checkers/Draughts Federation English-draughts rules, this applies whether the man reaches the row by an ordinary move or by a jump. If the man reaches the row during a multiple capture, the capture sequence ends there; it does not make another jump as a newly crowned king until the opponent has moved. A king may move and capture diagonally forward and backward on later turns.

WCDF English draughts rules: Articles 1.4, 1.11, 1.15-1.21.

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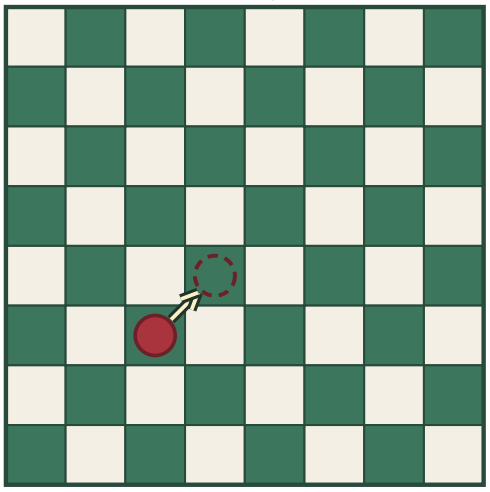
Reference I Worked example I LETTER

Original worked prompt

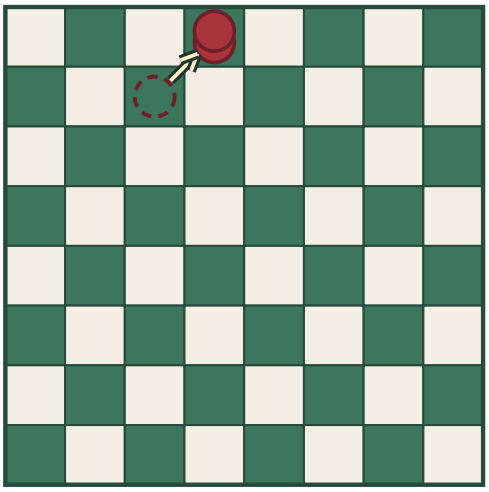
A regular black piece on a dark square has an empty dark square diagonally forward. Show the move, then show what happens when a piece reaches the far row.

1. Ordinary diagonal step



Move one dark square forward

2. Crown on the far row



Stack a second piece; stop

Answer

The piece moves one square diagonally forward to the empty dark square. If that square is on the opponent's back row, crown it with a second piece and end the turn.

Reasoning

Regular men move one square diagonally forward; reaching the king-row crowns the piece and completes the turn.

Check

Confirm the destination is a dark square, diagonally forward, and empty; confirm the far row triggers a stacked king.

Common mistakes

Moving a regular piece backward. Regular pieces move only diagonally forward; only kings move backward.

Declining an available jump. Captures are mandatory; if a jump exists, it must be taken.

Placing pieces on light squares. All play occurs on dark squares only.

Can a newly crowned king continue a jump immediately? Under the WCDF English-draughts rules used here, no. Reaching the king-row completes the turn.