



Spartan Chess

*different armies
different strategies*



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1.0 Introduction

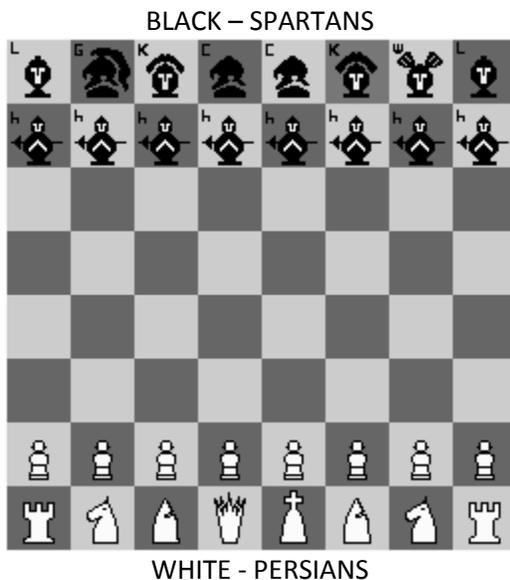
Spartan chess is a chess variant played on a standard 8x8 chess board. The two sides have pieces and pawns with different characteristics and capabilities. Such differences you would expect between opponents on an actual ancient battlefield.

The Black side represents the Spartans and the White the Persians. The Persians have pawns, pieces, an initial placement, and move in accord with the rules of orthodox chess. The Spartans have two Kings and with the exception of their Kings, every Spartan playing piece moves differently from any piece found in orthodox chess.

2.0 Initial Setup

The Persian (White) is set up just as does White in orthodox chess: King e1; Queen d1; Rooks a1, h1; Knights b1, g1; Bishops c1, f1; Pawns a2, b2, c2, d2, e2, f2, g2, h2.

The Spartan (Black) is set up: Kings c8, f8; General b8; Warlord g8; Captains d8, e8; Lieutenants a8, h8; hoplites a7, b7, c7, d7, e7, f7, g7, h7.



2.1 Using Non-Orthodox Chess Sets

If you have a Capablanca, Embassy or Gothic chess set you can use the

Chancellor to represent the General and the Archbishop to represent the Warlord. Other styles of Bishops, Knights, Rooks and pawns, from a second and different style set, can help to distinguish the Spartans from the Persians and remind players of their different characteristics.

2.2 Using an Orthodox Set

Spartan Chess can be played with an orthodox chess set. When using an orthodox chess set substitute orthodox pieces for Spartan pieces as follows:

Orthodox Piece	Spartan Piece
Knights	Spartan Kings
King	General
Queen	Warlord
Bishops	Lieutenants
Rooks	Captains
pawns	hoplites

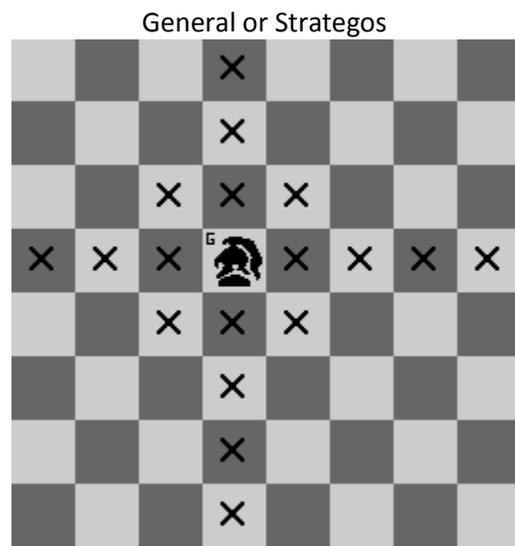
3.0 Spartan Pieces

The Spartan pieces move as described in this section.

See section "5.0 Notes" for explanation of symbols used in the following diagrams.

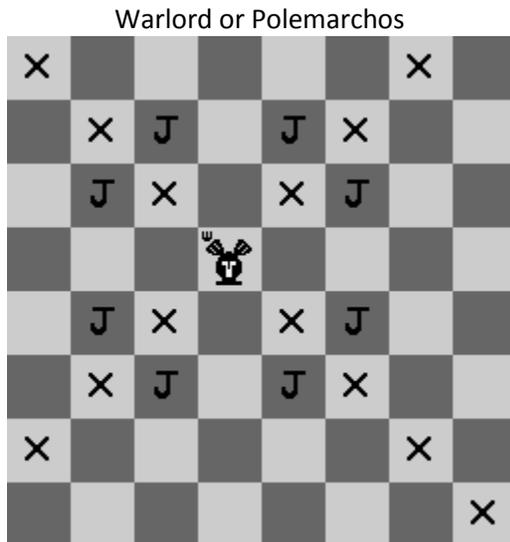
3.1 Spartan General or Strategos

The General may move as a Rook or jump as King.



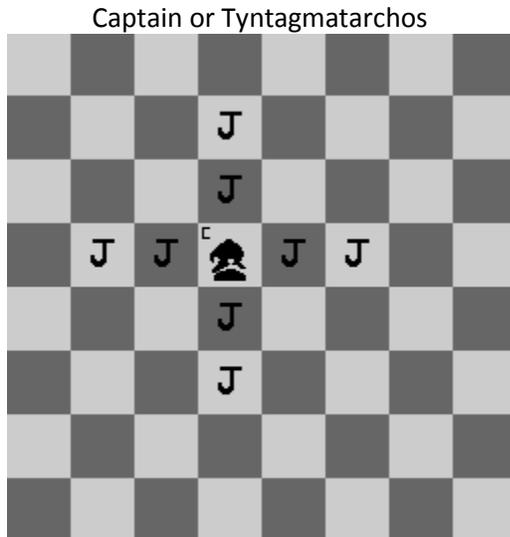
3.2 Spartan Warlord or Polemarchos

The Warlord may move as a Bishop or jump as a Knight.



3.3 Captain or Tyntagmatarchos

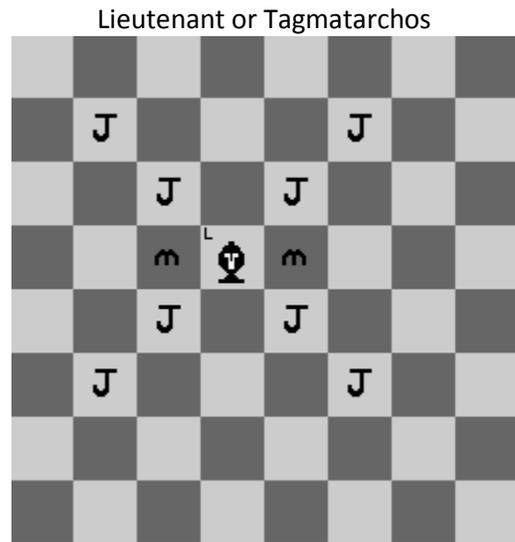
The Captain jumps to move or capture one or two squares horizontally or vertically.



If the first square is blocked by a friendly or enemy piece, then the Captain may jump over the first square to the second square to capture or move.

3.4 Lieutenant or Tagmatarchos

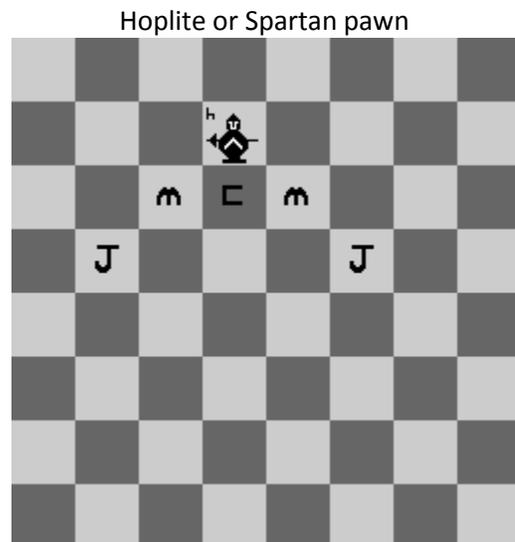
The Lieutenant jumps to move or capture either one or two squares diagonally or can move one square horizontally.



If the first square diagonally is blocked by a friendly or enemy piece, then the Lieutenant may jump over the first square to the second diagonal square to capture or move.

3.5 Hoplite or Spartan pawn

Hoplites move differently than pawns, illustrated and explained as follows:



3.51 Hoplite Movement – The hoplite may move one square forward diagonally and captures one square directly ahead. Hoplites may not move backwards.

3.52 Hoplite First Move - A hoplite may move one or two squares diagonally on its first move and on this first move may jump over the first square to the second. Hoplites may not capture by jumping.

4.0 Rules

All rules of orthodox chess apply except as amended by these rules.

4.1 Winning

The Spartan and Persian have different victory conditions.

4.11 Spartan Victory - The Spartan wins when the Persian King is checkmated as in orthodox chess.

4.12 Persian Victory- The Persian wins once one of the Spartan Kings is captured and the remaining Spartan King is checkmated or when both Spartan Kings are placed under simultaneous attack (duple-check) and neither King can be removed from attack on the Spartan's next move.

4.2 First Move

The Persians, being the aggressors historically and White, always move first.

4.3 Check Immunity

When the Spartan has two Kings in play a Spartan King is immune from check. Thus, the Spartan **may** move a King onto an enemy attacked square, leave a King under attack or move a piece that would expose a King to attack.

4.4 Duple-Check & Checkmate

If both Spartan Kings are placed under simultaneous attack this is a form of check called duple-check. It is illegal for the Spartan to make a move that will place both of his Kings under attack. With both Kings under attack, the Spartan loses if on his move he is unable to remove at least one King from attack. In such case the game ends in checkmate.

4.5 Hoplite Promotion

A hoplite, upon reaching the 8th rank, may promote to any Spartan piece including a King but only if the Spartan has only one king in play.

4.6 Capturing en passant

There is no capturing en passant in Spartan Chess.

4.7 Castling

Spartan Kings may not "castle".

5.0 Notes

When recording or illustrating Spartan Chess games, orthodox chess notation is used as extended by the following.

5.1 Recording Games

Use an accepted orthodox set of notation to record Spartan Chess games plus these symbols.

G	General
W	Warlord
C	Captain
L	Lieutenant

5.2 Symbols Used in Illustrations

The following characters are used in the accompanying diagrams:

- X - A square to which a piece may move or capture if the movement path is not blocked.
- J - A square to which a piece may move or capture ignoring the presence of intervening pawns or pieces.
- c - A square to which a a playing piece may capture but may not move.
- m - A square to which a playing piece may move but not capture.

6.0 Playing Tips

With different armies different strategies are effective for Persian and Spartan.

6.1 Spartan Strategy

Closed Game - With so many pieces that can jump a closed game favors the Spartan. It's often best to avoid exchanges when possible.

Hoplite Mobility - Use the hoplite's superior mobility over pawns to dominate a section of the board.

Phalanxes - When two are more hoplites are in a column, one behind the other, this is a phalanx. One or more phalanxes can be powerful and the bulwark of a Spartan position.

Patience - With more Spartan pieces "afoot", the Spartan has more short range pieces. Be patient, develop and advance all your pieces.

King's Attack - When you have 2 Kings in play, advance and attack with them too. Kings can be a powerful addition to an offensive.

Check Immunity - Keep both Spartan Kings in play as long as you can to preserve the Spartan advantage of check immunity.

Quick Victory - A quick, early and long range victory is sometimes possible when your General and Warlord combine in an attack.

6.2 Persian Strategy

Open Game - Having more long range pieces an open game favors the Persian. Seek favorable exchanges to open the board and exploit your pieces' superior mobility.

Attrition - With the Spartan having two Kings a quick victory is seldom if ever possible. Wear the Spartans down.

Maneuver - Always look for open lines where your superior mobility can be exploited.

Neutralize hoplites - Hoplite mobility can often be neutralized by placing a piece on both diagonals in front of them.

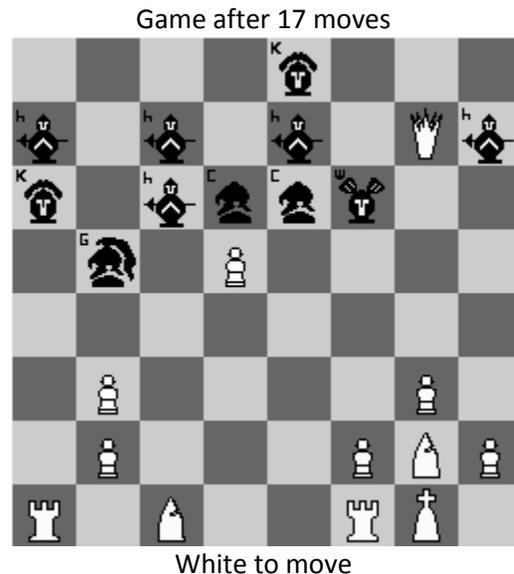
Regicide -Look to exchange a minor piece for a Spartan King as early as possible ending Spartan check immunity.

Counter-Punch - Wherever the Spartans advance look to counter attack and force favorable exchanges. Then look for an open flank and rush your Rooks and Queen there.

7.0 Sample Game

Spartan Chess game after 17 moves recorded using reversible algebraic notation.

No.	White	Black
1	g2-g3	Ce8-e6
2	d2-d4	b7-d5
3	Ng1-f3	Lh8-f6
4	c2-c3	La8-c6
5	Nb1-d2	h5xh4
6	c3xd4	f7-d5
7	e2-e3	d5xd4
8	Nf6xd4	Lf6xd4
9	e3xLd4	Lc6d5
10	Nd2-b3	Ld5xNb3
11	a2xLb3	Kb7
12	Qd1-f3 +	Kf8-e8
13	Bf1-g2	d7-c6
14	0-0	Cd8-d6
15	Qf3-c3	Kb7-a6
16	d4-d5	Gb8-b5
17	Qc3xg7	Wg8-f6



8.0 History of Spartan Chess

Some people count sheep to get to sleep...

Having played tournament chess when I was in college, back when Bobby Fisher was winning a World Championship, a few years ago I started thinking about creating a chess variant. The variant needed to have two completely different sides with different strategies while still being fun and balanced. Chess with different sides is unusual but not unheard of. So, my variant needed to be more unusual than all the rest. What to do, what to do? I would go to bed, think of chess, would soon be asleep and would dream of variants. Progress was slow.

Then I awoke one morning to a voice that whispered to me "Two Kings. The Spartans had two Kings!" "Would that even work; chess with two Kings on one side?" I asked myself. Well it would certainly be unusual, maybe even unique.

History continued

After some design, some research, several rules reworks and a lick of play testing version 1.09 of Spartan Chess arrived. "Looks like that version works and its fun" the play testers said!

Spartan Chess has been the stuff of dreams, a small labor of love, and it's been fun. Hope its fun for you too.

I need a new project to dream about because counting sheep does not work for me.

Spartan Chess was invented in the year 2010.

9.0 Contact

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SpartanChessOnline.com