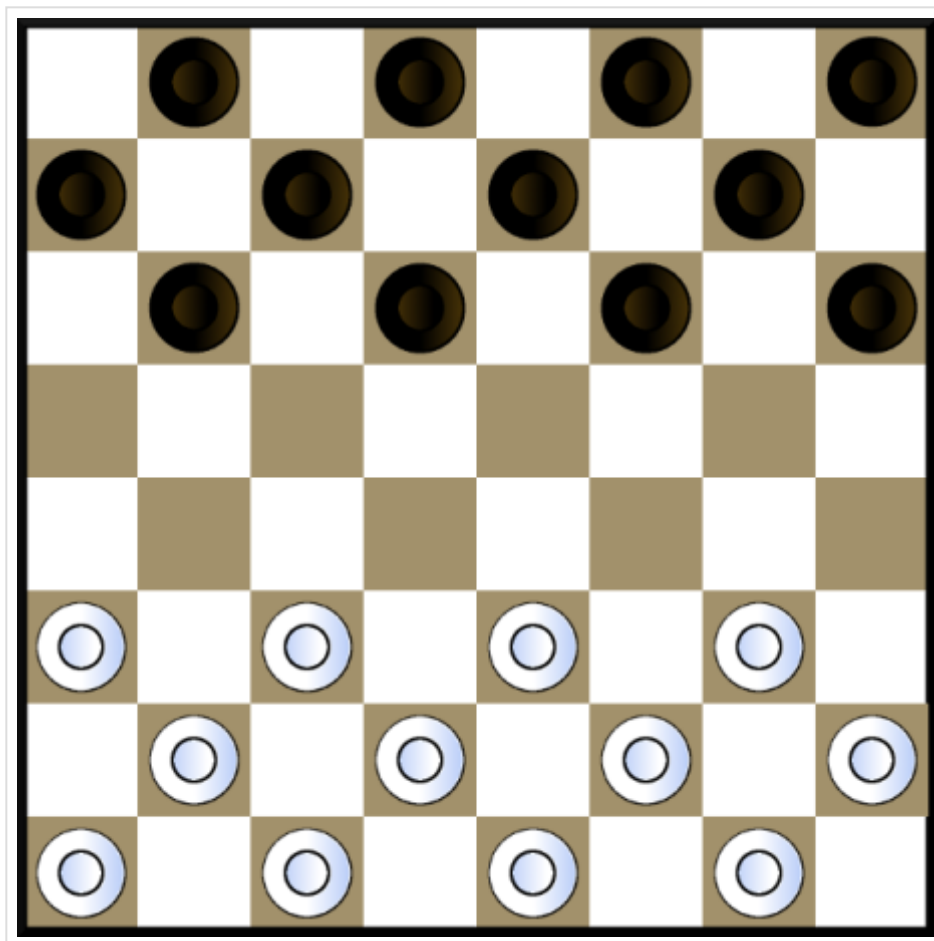


Bashni, Stowby or just Towers

Towers is a game from Russia and we can say it's a [Russian Draughts](#) variant. It's also known as **Bashni** (Башни) or **Stowby** (Столбы). This two words can be translated as "towers".

The game uses an ordinary 64-square chessboard and 24 pieces (12 white and 12 black). The initial setting looks the same as in most of the checkers games on the 64 square board.

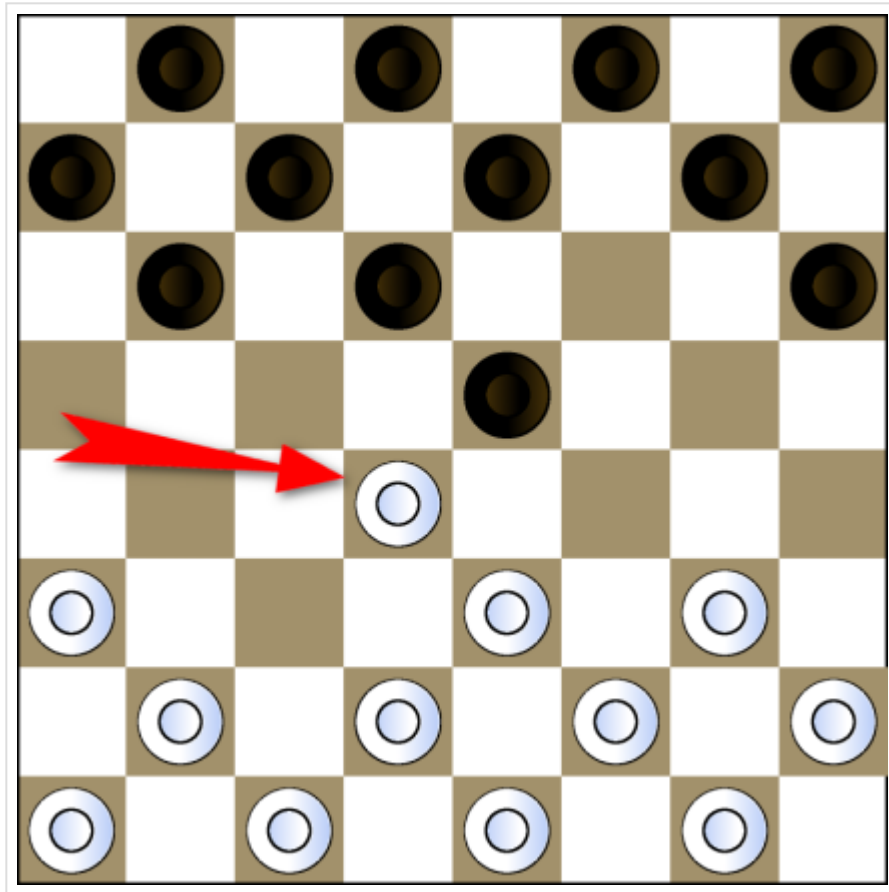


The rules are similar to those in Russian Draughts so...

- normal pieces (men) move one space diagonally forward,
- capturing is made by “jumping” over enemy piece to the empty square behind it,
- captures may be made diagonally forwards and backwards,
- capturing is mandatory,
- multiple opposing pieces may be captured in a single turn if this is done by successive jumps made by a single piece,
- it's not compulsory to capture the maximum amount of the opponent's pieces. The player chooses any sequence.
- Man is crowned just after reaching the last row. If a piece reached the last row during a capture move, it may continue this move as a King (it's immediately crowned and then jumps backwards).

It all looks like ordinary checkers, so where's the difference? Well... **result of capturing** is different. In most draughts games captured piece is removed from the board. In Towers **captured piece is placed under the piece that jumped over it**. Two pieces form a tower (column) consisting of capturing piece on the top and captured piece(s) at the bottom. Top piece is called *commander* while lower piece is called *prisoner*.

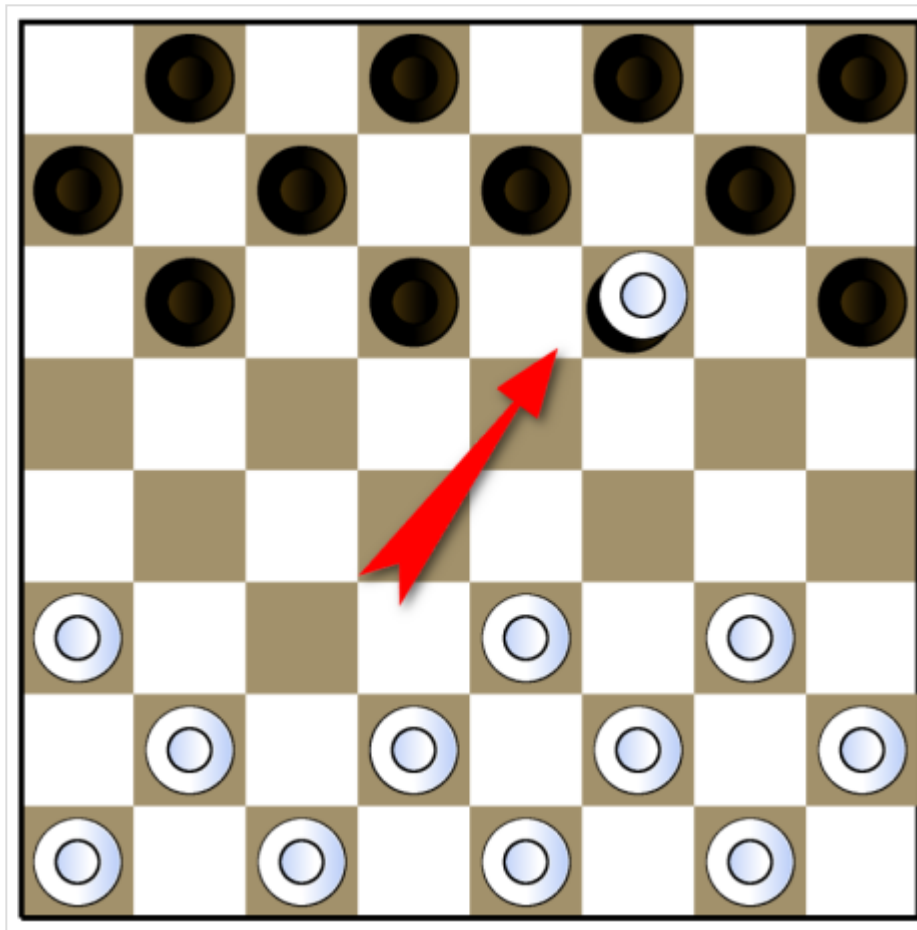
Let's see an example of capturing. In the position shown below White is to move, so he is obliged to capture a black man.



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After the jump a tower is formed. The white man is the commander and the black man is the prisoner.

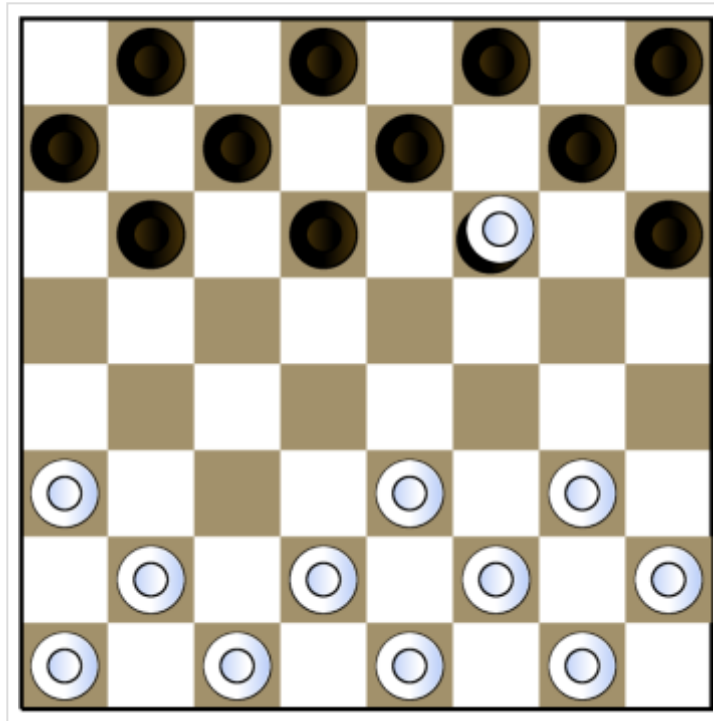


The tower is treated like any other piece. It does not acquire any new powers. It can still move one square diagonally forward and may hit the same way as a regular man BUT **after each jump it takes new prisoner.**

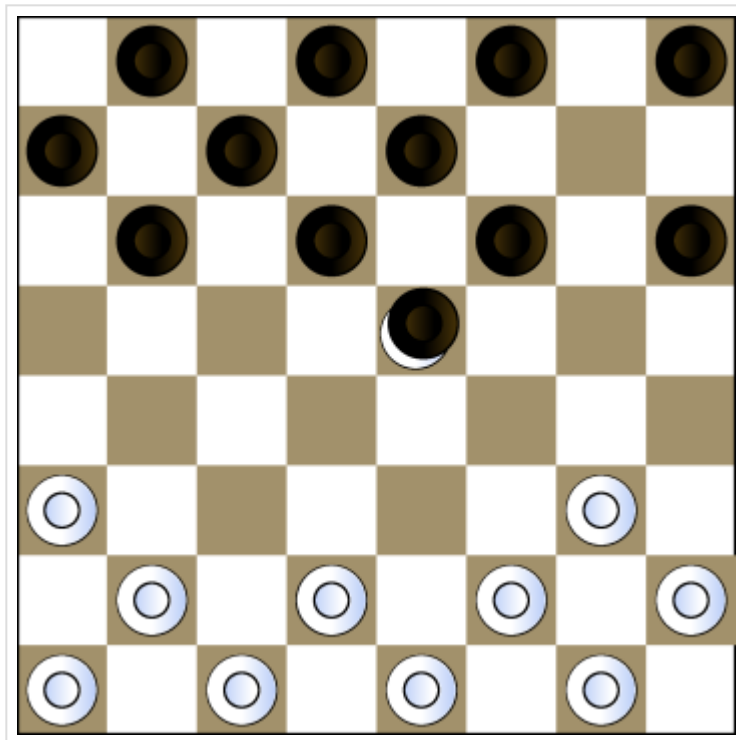
It is important that in Towers **pieces are never removed from the board.** Only higher towers are formed. Each tower belongs to the player, whose man is at the top.

Towers capturing

If man (ordinary piece) captures the tower, then the only top piece of the tower is placed under the capturing piece. Let's get back to the situation where we finished the last example. Black is on the move and he has to capture the tower commanded by White.

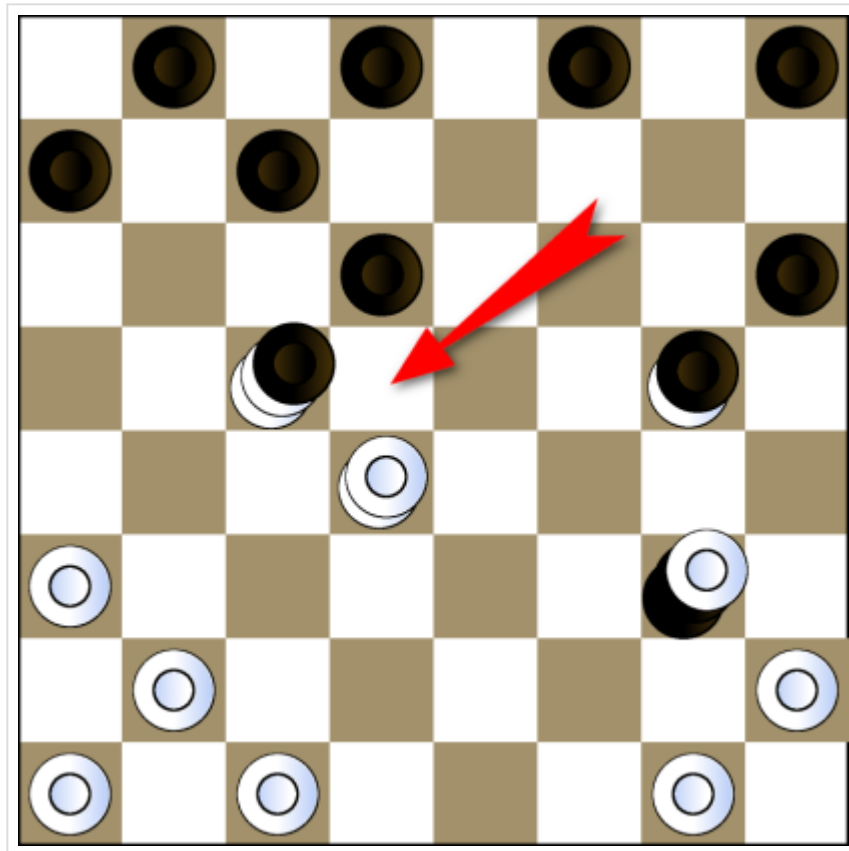


Result of the capture is shown below. The top piece (former towers commander) is placed under the capturing piece. Meanwhile, the previously imprisoned man was “freed” as a result of this move.



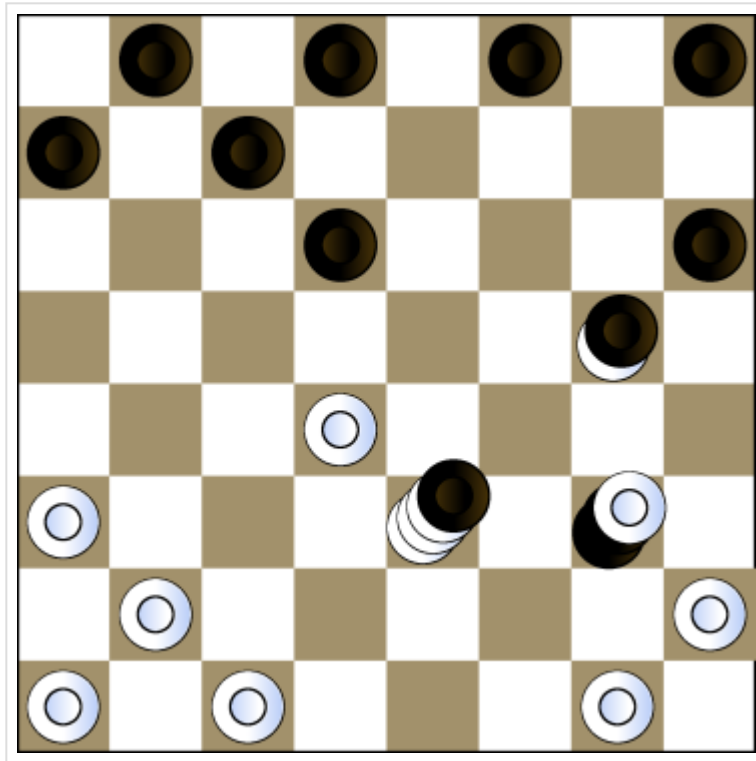
Game will often lead to situations when one tower captures another tower. Again, only top piece of captured tower is removed and placed under the capturing tower, and the remaining part stays on its place (and is now commanded by a man who was just under the commander).

Let's look at the position below. We see a Black's tower (made of two white men and a black one). This tower is obliged to capture another tower made of two white men.



As a result, white tower commander goes to the bottom of Black's tower, but one white man will remain on its place. This is shown on the image below.

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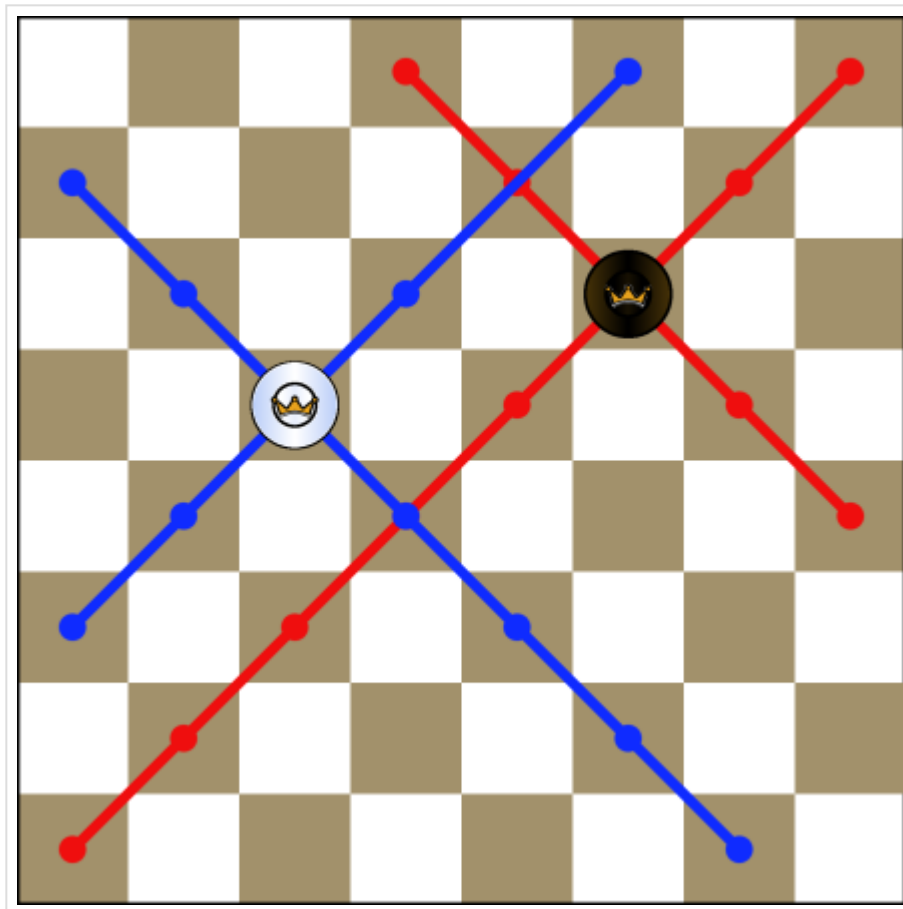
All examples shown above were just single jumps but remember – in Towers multiple jumps are also possible and each jump results with imprisoning one enemy man.

As you can see, the effects of capturing can be surprising. Sometimes capturing cause a sudden increase of your own forces, but sometimes it may increase a number of enemy pieces.

Crowning

A man reaching the last row becomes a **King** (we say it'scrowned). King gains a power to move any number of squares diagonally forwards or backwards (so we have a "flying king" here, just like in [Russian Draughts](#)).

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If a tower reaches the last row, then **only its commander is crowned**. Such tower (commanded by a King) has a rights of King.

Note: In many draughts games King is marked by placing a previously captured piece on a promoted piece. In Towers it would not make sense because two pieces create a tower. So in Towers Kings are marked by placing promoted man upside-down. In this article Kings are shown as men with a crown.

Kings capturing

If a King has been captured, it becomes a prisoner – it's placed under the capturing piece. So if the King has been captured by an ordinary piece, it becomes a part of the tower commanded by ordinary piece.

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The general rule is that **Tower's ownership and rank depends on its commander**. If the commander is White, tower belongs to White. If the commander is a King, the tower has a rights of King. If there is ordinary man on the top of the tower, the tower has the right of ordinary man. Example is shown below.



The first tower from the left belongs to the Black ones and is a King. The second tower from the left belongs to White and has a rights of man (even if all pieces under the commander are Kings). Next there is a white King and a black non-King.

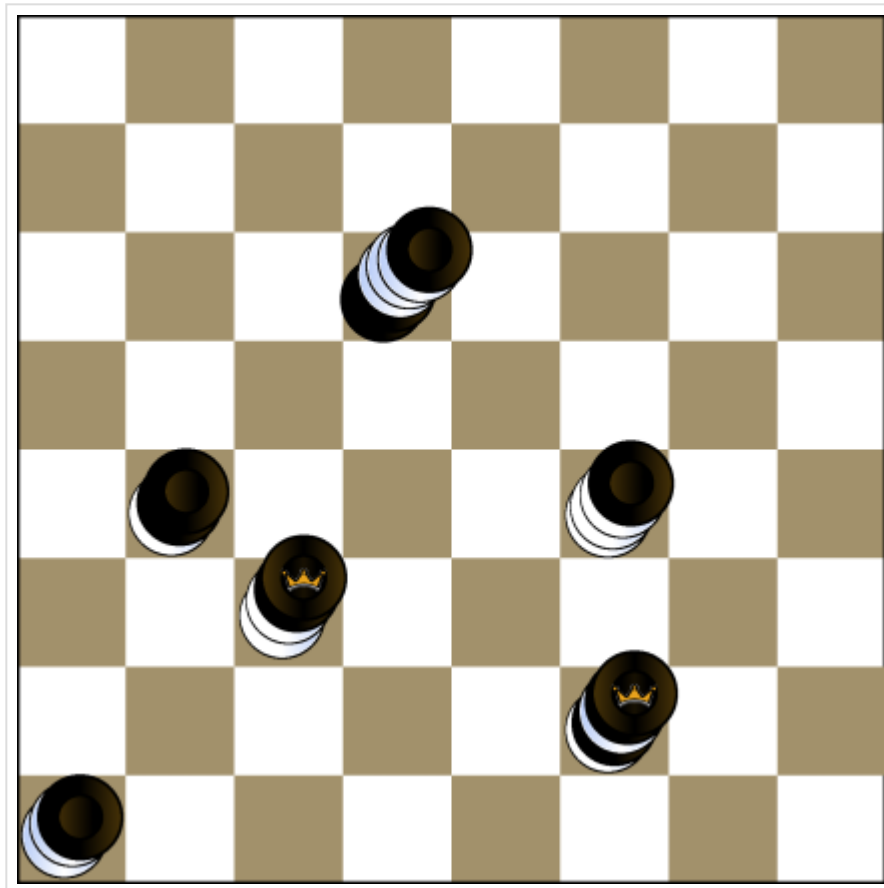
Aim of the game

The aim of the game is to leave your opponent with no valid moves. It can be achieved by “prisoning” all of its pieces or by blocking them.

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Image below shows one possible winning position. Black wins. All white pieces are imprisoned.



This game can be really surprising because one good shot can dramatically change the number of forces on both sides. No pieces are removed from the board, and some may be released at the end of the game.