

CHESS VARIANTS

50 variants on the game of chess

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One by one.

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Preface

Stimulate your brain and enjoy each variant.

When you hear the term ‘chess variants’, you may think we are talking about opening variations. In this book we present something entirely different. Perhaps a better term would be Fairy Chess, but that sounds a little dreamy. By the way, there was a Dutch Fairy Chess Championship held a few years ago. In 2013 this was followed by the Dutch Freestyle Chess Championship.

In this book, with chess variants we mean variations on the ‘normal’ chess game. The pieces may be different, as in Amazon Chess. The way the men move may be different, as in Ultima. Or the board may have a different shape, as in the various forms of Three-Handed Chess. And sometimes it is a combination of all three, as in Arnhem Chess.

Most of the chess variants in this book you can play immediately, without having to change the shape of the board. Sometimes you need an extra attribute, like a coin in Imitator Chess, or a ‘swamp’ (a piece of paper of 2 by 2 squares’ size) in Swamp Chess.

My first aim with this book is to create a reference work for players who like to play a variant from time to time, but do not know the various rules. The book may also serve as a manual for chess clubs who want to organize a tournament featuring, for instance, five rounds with different variants.

A secondary aim is that a reader can wrack his brains on a variant like Legan’s Chess, setting aside his normal chess thinking and entering a completely new world.

A third aim is to offer help to chess trainers who want to make youth players think about the way the pieces move by showing them, for example, a variant like Lambeth Conference.

But my chief aim is to stimulate the enjoyment of chess. If a chess player looks at a chess variant once in a while and plays it, he will also realize how much fun orthodox chess is!

I would like to thank the people who have helped me with the realization of this book:

Arjen Schuurman Hess, for his inspiration and ‘the big stick’.

Cissy Caljé-Ong, my wife, source of inspiration, motivator and critical reader.

Fong Li Caljé and **Ming Dao Caljé**, my children, for trying out and discussing many variants.

Hugo Nieuwenhuis[†], an inspiration and a good friend.

Eduardo Comoglio, Argentinian artist, who turned my rough sketches into beautiful drawings.

Aart Rietveld, **Julius Grainger** and **Richard Brookes** for their corrections and suggestions.

The inventors of chess variants, such as **Hans Bodlaender** and **João Pedro Neto**, and all others who have cooperated.

And all the chess players who have shared their experiences with me.

Voorburg, May 2013,

Adrey Caljé

Introduction

How is this book organized?

First you will find a description of the orthodox chess game; for those who do not yet know the rules, or who want to check something. With this knowledge as the basis, you will then find the variants arranged in alphabetical order.

With each variant, the starting position, movements, captures and other characteristics are described.

A number of variants feature some explanatory remarks by the inventors, chess players or trainers.

If you want to share your experiences with chess variants or comment on the book, you can visit the book's website at:

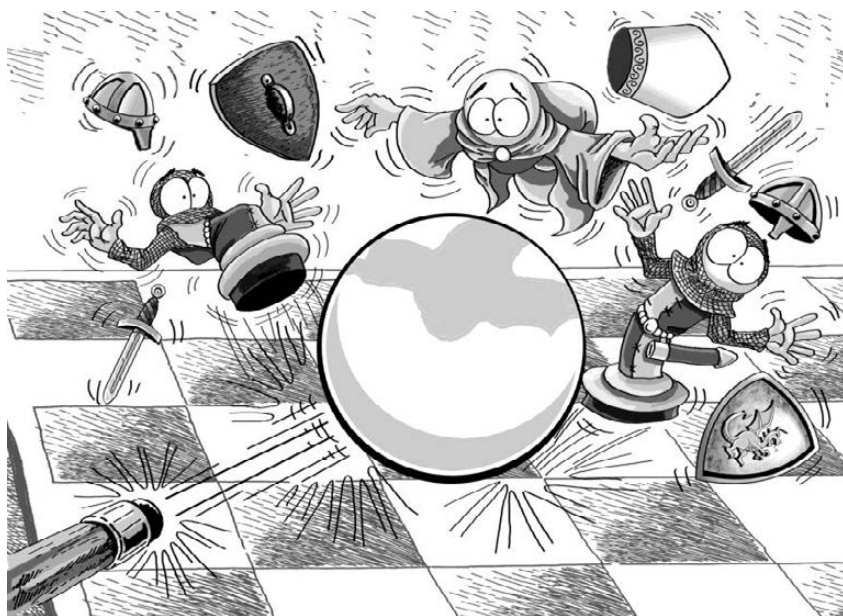
www.schaakvarianten.nl.



Lambeth Conference

The edges of the board turn the bishops into billiard balls.

Lambeth Conference refers to a decennial convocation of Anglican bishops. In this variant, the bishops act like billiard balls when they reach the edges of the board. There is also a variant called Billiards Chess, where all the pieces bounce back from the edges, and a variant where only the queens and bishops bounce back; this is called Dutch Billiards Chess or Pocket Chess.



Starting position

The same as in orthodox chess.

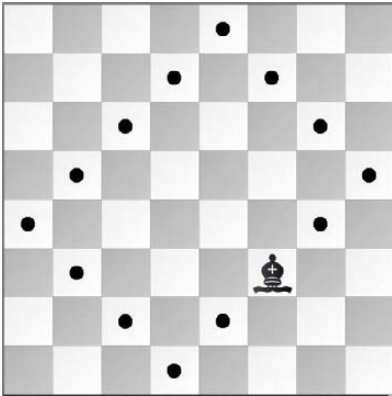
Aim of the game

The same as in orthodox chess.

Movement

If the bishops reach a rank or file at the edge of the board, they may move on at a 90-degree angle. This applies to the sides as well as the top and the bottom of the board. Thus, the bishop can go from f3 to g6. Of course, this is not possible if one of your own or your opponent's men is standing in the way.

In this variant, all the other men behave normally and cannot rebound from the edges.



Movement of the Lambeth Conference bishop.

Capturing

Also here the bishops can use the board edges.

Fragment of a game of Lambeth Conference

- | | |
|--------|------|
| 1. e4 | e5 |
| 2. f3 | c6 |
| 3. d4 | exd4 |
| 4. xd4 | xd4 |
| 5. xd4 | d6 |
| 6. xg7 | ... |



Move 6. xg7

The bishop bounces back via h6. Black is in trouble: xg7, xg7, and Black will lose a rook.