

Questions and Answers

1. What is Chpok?

Chpok is a novel game combining the best elements of Chess with the essential part of card games with bidding, like Poker and Bridge. Players bid in turn for four targets, two of which are vital for playing Chess: Time Control, and Who Plays White. The other two targets can make the board phase barely resemble Chess, but their initial state is such that the board game is very similar to Chess, except that the rules are much simpler. See Chpok Rules below.

2. How are Chpok rules simpler than Chess rules?

In short, all Chess rules related to draws are discarded, and the Chess rules related to Castling are radically simplified. Also, you are allowed to make some moves that are forbidden in Chess, namely the moves that allow your opponent to capture your King immediately. Basically, almost all you must remember is **how Chess and Chpok pieces move**: here there's no difference between Chess and Chpok, except for Castling and Promotion moves.

3. Who is developing Chpok?

We are a small team of refugees from Ukraine. None of us is as good in English language as a native speaker, or somewhat close to that.

We are trying to navigate into a future where people resolve big conflicts via negotiations, sports, and games like Chess, Poker, and Chpok. **Will you join us?**

4. Will you ever modify Chpok Rules?

Yes, we are eager to hear your suggestions, we will try to understand what would be better, and why, and how to achieve the desired improvements with minimal amendments to rules.

5. Do you believe Chpok can become as popular as Chess and Poker?

Yes, there are a few reasons to think so. First, Chpok requires a wider range of skills: your opponent can win by winning the bidding phase and then making just a few memorized moves in the board phase. Or she can win by playing better in the board phase. So, to win for sure, you must be better in **both** Chpok phases.

Second, rules of the board phase are much simpler than in Chess. Bidding rules are simple too.

Third, the chances of a draw outcome are pretty small. You either win, or learn (after losing).

Fourth, to play Chpok better than others (including the World Chess Champion) you don't have to memorize lots of Chess debut traps and *supposedly best* moves from [Chess Debut Theory](#).

Besides, unlike with Chess, in 2023 **there are no robots playing Chpok better than humans**, and given the problems the world is facing, it is unclear how soon such robots may appear. So, when playing Chpok on our site you can go into a variant such that you can be sure that your opponent is not cheating by using a Chess engine (robot). Remember that the draw rules in Chess and Chpok are totally different, the Castling and Promotion rules are different, so **even when the board phase looks very similar to Chess**, the potential benefit from using a Chess engine is still questionable and uncertain.

Please send us your comments, questions, ideas, hints, suggestions: https://t.me/c_h_p_o_k or https://twitter.com/www_chpok_org or [chpok.team\(at\)gmail](mailto:chpok.team@gmail.com).

Chpok Rules

1. Chpok is a game for two players that consists of two phases: the bidding phase, and the board phase, which is played on a board divided into a grid of 8xW cells of alternating color, where width W is between 6 and 10 inclusive. Players bid in turn. When bidding, a player first chooses one of the four targets, then adds one or more chips to bid for it, and then modifies the outcome. During the board phase players make moves in turn, with the player having White pieces making the first move.

2. The object of the game is to have more points than your opponent when the board phase is over.

The points are calculated during the board phase, and/or after it, as follows:

+1000 for capturing an opponent's King;

+4 for placing your piece on a cell in row 8 from your Home Row (that is, to the opponent's Home Row) when making a move;

+3 for placing your piece on a cell in row 7 from your Home Row;

+2 for placing your piece on a cell in row 6 from your Home Row;

+1 for placing your piece on a cell in row 5 from your Home Row;

-5000 for running out of time during the board phase.

3. The game is over as soon as at least one of the following five conditions is met:

3.1. A player resigns.

3.3. A player captures the last King of the opponent.

3.2. A player runs out of time during either the bidding phase or the board phase.

3.4. A player claims a win, and there is indeed a win according to the rules, see 4.2. below.

3.5. A player claims a draw, and there is indeed a draw according to the rules, see 4.1.

3.6. Also, with X-Features enabled, a game can end as described in paragraphs 7.6 and 7.7.

4. A player may claim a win, or a draw, if the conditions described below are satisfied.

4.1. A player may claim a draw, and the game ends with a draw, if the difference between accumulated points of players has been equal during the last 20 moves.

4.2. A player may claim a win, and the game ends in her favor, if the difference between points is in her favor, and it has never decreased during the last 20 moves.

4.3. In both cases, 4.1 and 4.2, the difference is calculated after each move of Black.

5. Bidding phase.

5.1. Players make bids in turn, each time for just one of the targets, starting with the player who challenged her opponent. The targets are as follows:

-- Who will play White during the board phase *and make the first move*.

-- How many **minutes** each player has *for the board phase*, and **bonus seconds** *for each move*.

-- The order of pieces in the Home Row; *at least one of them must be a King*.

-- Extraordinary Features aka X-Features; *their list is below, in paragraph 7 of the Rules*.

5.2. In the bidding phase the time limit is 100 seconds initially, plus **100** seconds after each bidding (**20** seconds, if opponent has no chips); the accumulated seconds cannot exceed 200.

5.3. When making a bid, a player can make either a "match" bidding, or a "raise".

5.3.1. In case of a "match", player must deposit as many chips as the gap between the amount she has deposited to the target earlier in the bidding phase, and the amount deposited by her opponent earlier. For example, if before her bidding turn the numbers were 8 and 10, that is, 8 chips were deposited by herself, and 10 by the opponent, then she must deposit 2 more chips to match, if she has 2 or more available.

If the target of current bidding is either **Who Plays White** or **Time Control**, then the outcome is randomized (and made visible to players) immediately after the match-bidding has been made. If the target is either **Home Row** or **Extraordinary Features**, the outcome is reset to "Standard Order in Home Row" or "All X-Features are disabled" respectively.

5.3.2. In case of a "raise", player must deposit more than the gap. Or at least one chip, if the balance is already in her favor. For example, if the balance was 8 vs 10, then she must deposit at least 3 chips to raise. After depositing chips, the player modifies the outcome of the target as she wishes (except the **Who Plays White** target, it is modified automatically), and she can do so until her time is over: when time is over, the player loses immediately.

5.4. The bidding phase is over after both players have deposited all their chips (for example, *on our site* each player has 15 chips when bidding starts). When the bidding phase is over:

5.4.1. If no bidding has been made for the target **Who Plays White**, then the outcome is randomized at this moment. Same with the **Time Control** target.

5.4.2. Outcomes of targets for which at least one bidding has been made: they are exactly as specified during the last bidding for that target.

6. Board Phase.

Players make moves in turn, with the player having White pieces making the first move. Rows are marked 1...8, and columns are A, B, C... Cell A1 is in lower-left corner of Whites.

6.1. At the beginning of the board phase, each player has $2 \cdot W$ pieces, that is, 16 if the width of board is $W=8$. Initially the pieces are arranged as follows:

- Eight Pawns in row 2;
- Eight of any pieces (possibly including Pawns) in row 1, which is called Home Row. No restrictions except that Home Row must contain at least one King.

The opponent's pieces are all placed symmetrically: Pawns in row 7, same pieces in row 8 as in row 1, for each column. For example, if cell B1 has a white Rook, then cell B8 must have a black Rook.

6.2. The pieces move and capture opponent's pieces [exactly as in Chess](#), including the *en passant* rule. Unlike in Chess, a piece may make a move that allows opponent to capture a King.

6.3. The only piece not described in [Chess rules](#), namely Dragon, moves by "jumping over" like a Knight in Chess, but strictly left/right or up/down, and like a Bishop limited to distance=1. For example, the possible moves of Dragon from cell E4 would be: E2, E6, C4, G4, and D3, D5, F3, F5.

6.4. Promotion. If a player advances a Pawn to its 8th row, the Pawn is then *promoted* (converted) to a King, Queen, Rook, Bishop, Dragon, or Knight of the same color at the choice of the player.

6.5. Castling. If a player has a King and a Rook in the Home Row, and the cells between them, if any, are empty, then a Castling is possible: if the King and Rook are on adjacent cells, then they swap their positions; otherwise the Rook is put next to King on the side where it was before castling, and then King is put on the other side from that Rook, exactly as in Chess (but all other Chess rules related to Castling do not apply). The number of Castlings per game is 1 by default, *but it is one of the X-Features defined in paragraph 7.5*.

7. Extraordinary Features and their associated rules are as follows:

7.1. Width of board: 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10. The default value is 8, as in Chess.

7.2. Limit the game to the specified number of moves. After each player has made L moves, the board phase ends automatically, regardless of anything. On our site $L \geq 10$, and by default it is 888.

7.3. Undo. Up to N times per game, where $N=0\dots5$ is the number specified during bidding, a player can undo/cancel her last move (and the opponent's last move) and return to the position right before it. It is impossible to apply undo after the game ends. $N=0$ by default.

7.4. Extra points for moves, depending on which type of piece made a move. Seven integers specified by players in the bidding phase, and applied to each move in the board phase. Values are limited to $0\dots9$. For example, Pawn +1 point, Rook +2, Queen +3, King +4, Bishop +5, Knight +6 points, in addition to the points for rows 5...8 as specified above in paragraph 2 of the Rules. Disabled (all zeros) by default.

7.5. The maximum number of Castlings you can do during the game, $M=0\dots5$, the number specified during bidding. It is $M=1$ by default.

7.6. "King Of The Hill": moving your King to one of the Opponent's Board Center (OBC) cells works like capturing all of Kings of your opponent: game ends immediately, and you get $+1000 \cdot K$ points, where K is the number of Kings your opponent had before your last move. There are two OBC cells if width of board is even, but one cell if width is odd. For example, when width=8, for White the OBC cells are D5 and E5.

7.7. "Racing Kings": if you move your King to Opponent's Home Row then you win, as described above in paragraph 7.6.

7.8. "Cruel Kings": Kings can capture (aka remove) own pieces, when moving.

7.9. Queen is extra-powerful: it can additionally make all the moves that a Knight normally can.

7.10. Bishops can move to adjacent cells, and thus "change color", in any of the four corner cells. The destination adjacent cell must be empty or occupied by an opponent's piece.

7.11. Pawns Backwards: Pawns can move back, one cell at a time, if the destination cell is empty. For example, a white Pawn from E4 to E3, a black Pawn from A7 to A8.

7.12. Newborn Pawns: once per game you can declare birth of a new Pawn, either in your Home Row, or in the next row, that is, the "all Pawns" row.

7.13. Remove own piece: instead of making a move, you can remove your own piece, as if it was captured by your opponent, until the end of the board game.

7.14. Skip your move instead of making a move.

7.15. Disable Promotion to King.

7.16. Disable En passant.

The implementation of Chpok on our site - <http://chpok.org> - may slightly differ; for example, paragraph 4 (claim Draw, claim Win) is enforced automatically.

[The End]

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