

The Basics of Shōgi 「将棋」

Disclaimer: all rules are based off the ruleset used on lishogi.org. There are several iterations of Shōgi, with varying rulesets. To my knowledge, this is the most accepted and standardized ruleset.

Shōgi is very similar to Chess, so if you have a basic understanding of chess, then you'll have a decent understanding of Shōgi right out the door, and can skip to the next section. If you don't, then you'll have to understand some basic concepts:

- The game is played one turn at a time, with players moving exactly 1 tile, or summoning a tile from their repository. The Jeweled king is always the challenger, and always goes second. Who gets to play which side is usually determined before the match, or by the computer if the players can't choose.
 - In real matches of Shōgi, players toss a handful of pawn tiles, and decide who gets to go first/second depending on how many of each side are showing (think: Heads or Tails)
- The game ends when a player checkmates their opponent, or when their opponent forfeits.
 - A check is when your, or your opponent's, king is put into a position in which the immediate next move would capture them. If this happens, the player has to do everything in their power to legally get themselves out

of check. If they can't do this, then their king is in check, and loses.

	<p>In this example, the Dragon has put the King into check. In this situation, the only legal move to protect the king, would be to move the Gold General upward to block it's path.</p> <p>However, doing this will allow the Bishop to immediately put the King back into check. This results in a checkmate, winning the game.</p>
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Where Shōgi and Chess depart

When capturing an opponent's piece, you place it into a repository outside the playing field. These pieces are automatically converted to your side, and can be utilized as you see fit.

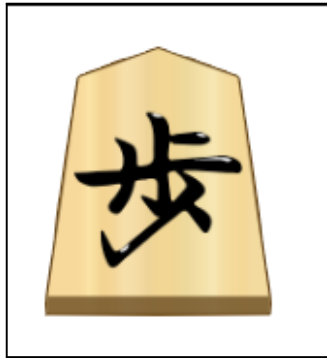
Shōgi has more pieces than Chess, with a comprehensive list being found [here](#).

Note: Yes, the: Tokin, Promoted Lance, Promoted Knight, and Gold General all share the exact same movement, and subsequent descriptions

Name

Description

Movement

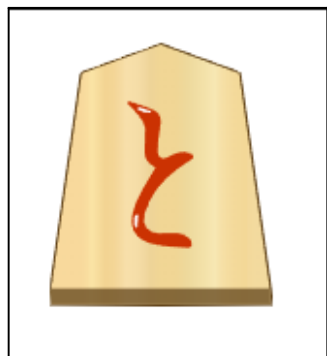
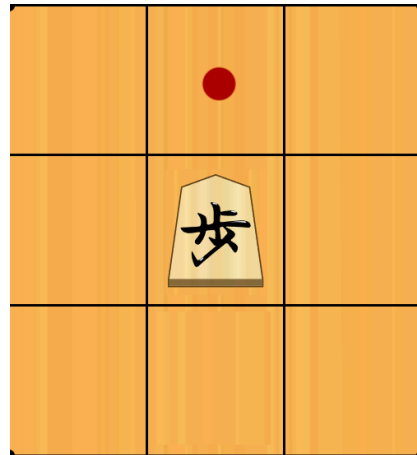


Pawn「歩兵」

Promotes to Tokin

The Pawn can only move upward in one direction.

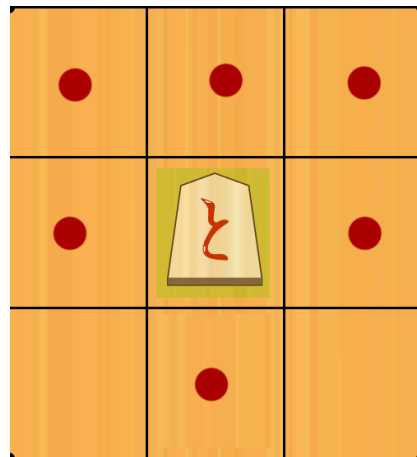
Captures pieces directly in front of it, and only those in front of it.



Tokin
「と金」

The Tokin can move in the upward surrounding 6 tiles, and one tile to the back.

This piece is very vulnerable when approached from a downward angle.

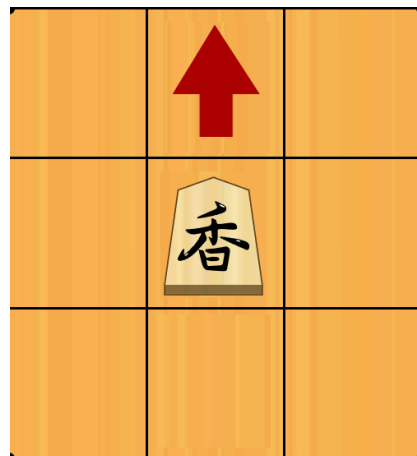


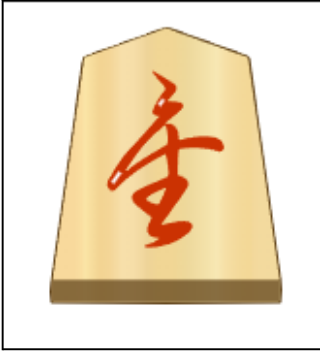
Lance「香車」

Promotes to P. Lance

The Lance can move infinitely upward, until reaching the border.

This piece can be incredibly powerful when utilized correctly, but is very vulnerable from all angles but head-on.

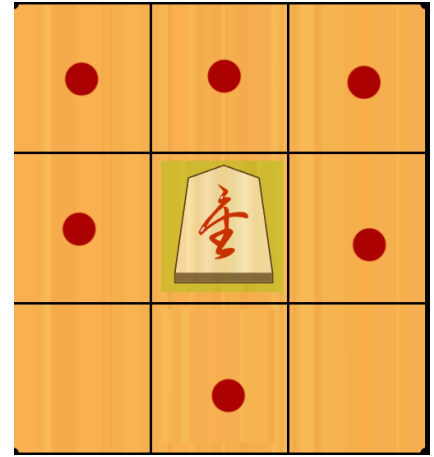




Promoted Lance
「成香」

The Promoted Lance can move in the upward surrounding 6 tiles, and one tile to the back.

This piece is very vulnerable when approached from a downward angle.

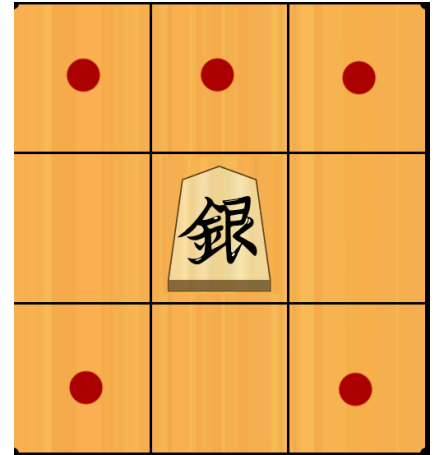


Silver General

No promotion

The Silver General can move in the upward surrounding 3 tiles, and one tile in either ordinal direction adjacent to it.

This piece is very vulnerable when approached from cardinal directions.

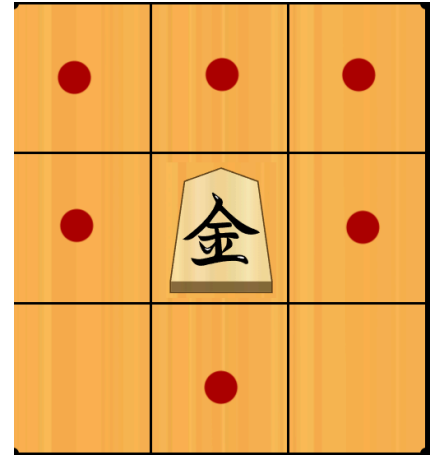


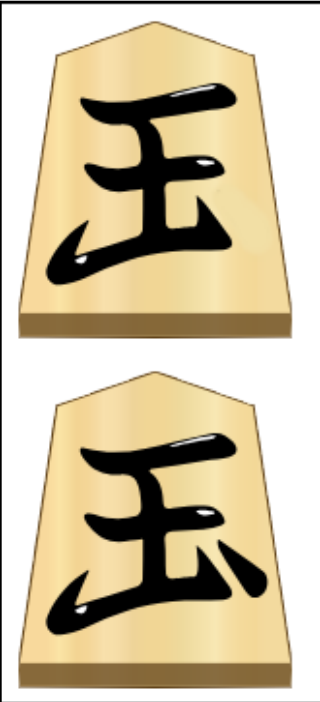
Gold General

No promotion

The Gold General can move in the upward surrounding 6 tiles, and one tile to the back.

This piece is very vulnerable when approached from a downward angle.

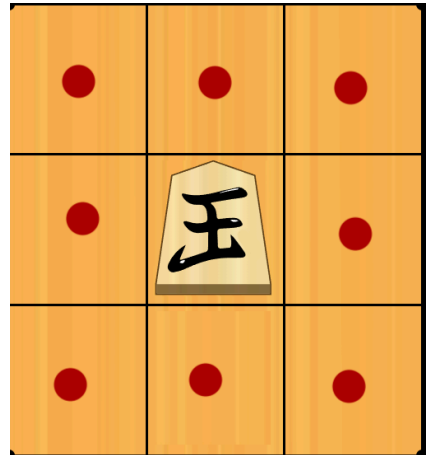




King 「王将」
Jeweled King 「玉将」

No promotion

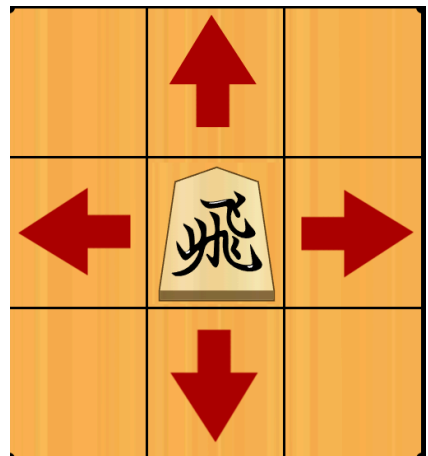
The King can move to all 8 surrounding directions.



Rook 「飛車」

Promotes to Dragon

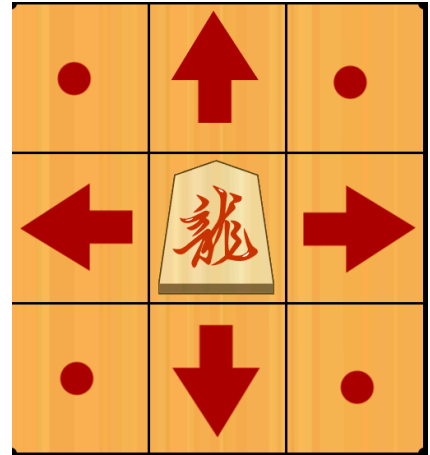
The rook can move infinitely in all cardinal directions, until reaching the border.





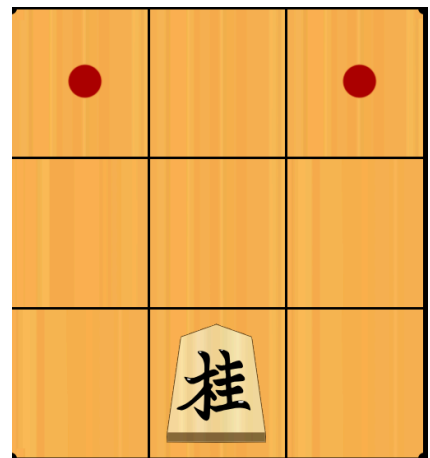
Dragon 「龍王」

The rook can move infinitely in all cardinal directions, and the immediately surrounding 8 tiles.



Knight 「桂馬」

The knight can move in a steep “V” shape. Always two up, and one to either the left, or right.



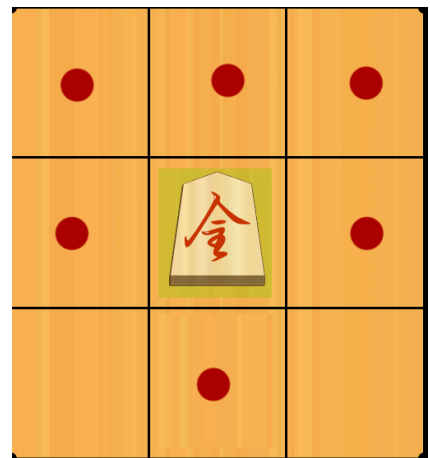
Promotes to P. Knight


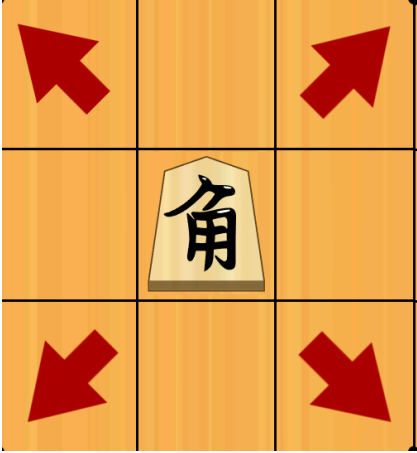
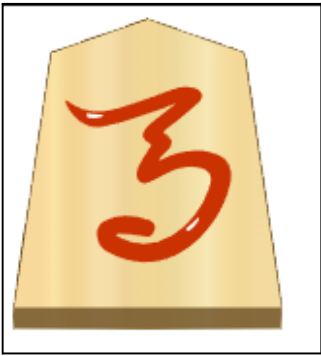
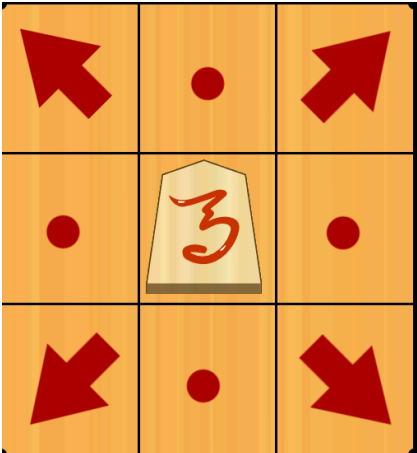


Promoted Knight 「成桂」

The Promoted Knight can move in the upward surrounding 6 tiles, and one tile to the back.

This piece is very vulnerable when approached from a downward angle.

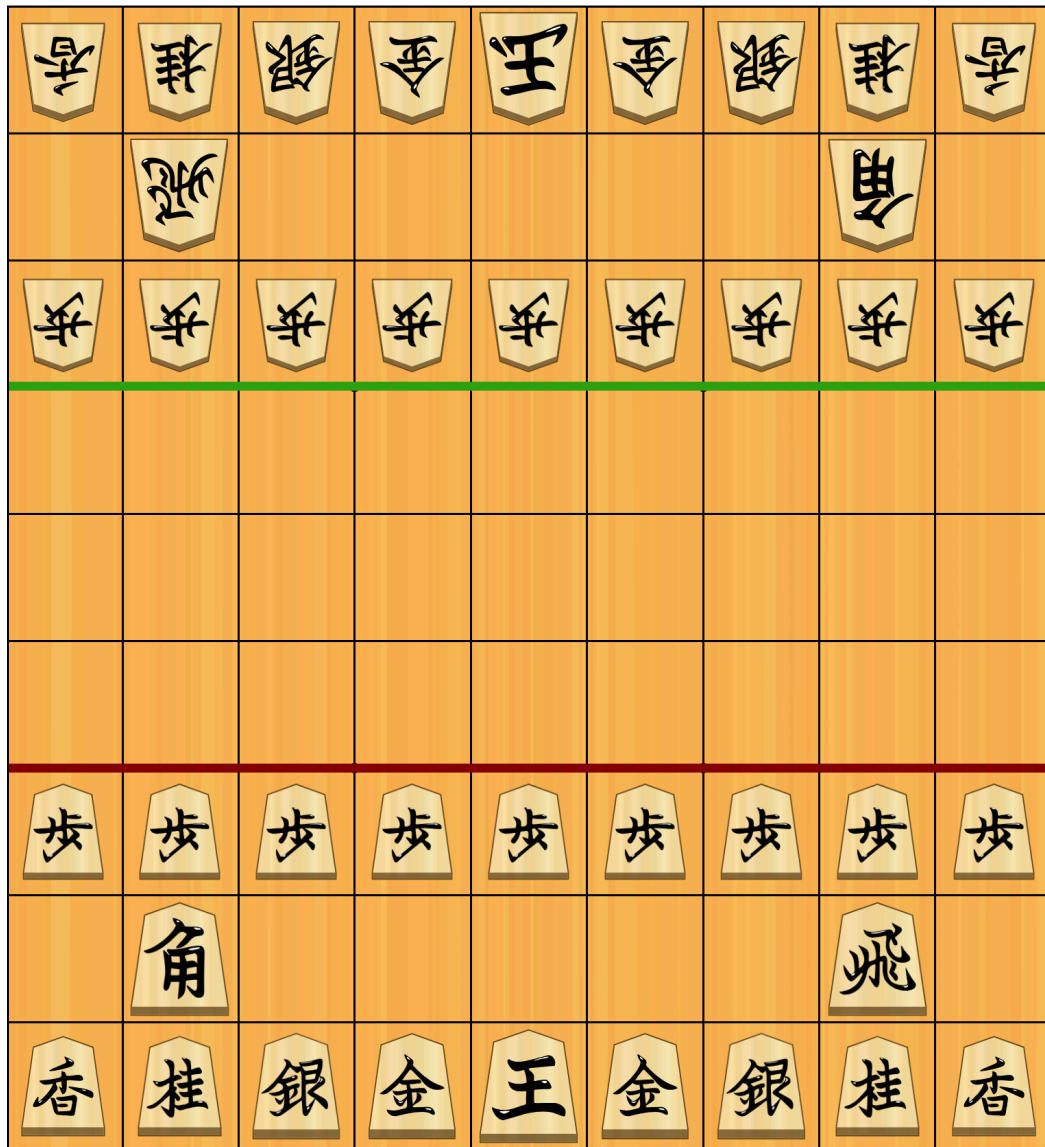


 <p>Bishop 「角行」</p> <hr/> <p>Promotes to Horse</p>	<p>The Bishop can move infinitely in all ordinal directions until reaching the border.</p>	
 <p>Horse 「龍馬」</p>	<p>The Horse can move infinitely in all ordinal directions, and the immediately surrounding 8 tiles.</p>	

Promotions and how they work

Promotions in Shōgi are when your piece “upgrades” to a separate piece, always done once a piece reaches the 2/3rds mark of the board, highlighted below (Green for what would be “your” 2/3rds mark, and red for “your opponent’s” 2/3rds mark.)

Promotions can be ignored if you feel that your basic piece can do the job, with the ability to promote being available to you on every subsequent turn if you so choose. However, a promotion is permanent, and can't be undone once you've decided a piece is going to rank up.



In real Shōgi, promotions are done by rotating a piece, with the promotion printed on the underside.

Dropping captured pieces

Pieces you've captured, and subsequently placed into your repository, can be dropped back into the board and is automatically converted to your side (This is why the pieces aren't colored in the way they are in Chess)

Any captured piece can be played on any position on the board, with some very slight nuances that most computer programs account for automatically (I'm not entirely sure what they are, and will update this guide to include them all once I do)

The general rules outside of the aforementioned are as follows:

- A piece can only be dropped in it's basic form (black, unpromoted side)
 - These pieces will be given the opportunity to be promote on their subsequent move.
- A piece can be summoned to cancel a check.
- Pawns cannot be dropped into a column (the numbered row, rather than the alphabetical row) that houses another pawn you own.
- Dropped pawns cannot give an immediate checkmate, however, every other piece can.

- A dropped pawn can checkmate on any subsequent move.

END OF GUIDE

Written by decapitatedDog, assets taken from lishogi.org

