

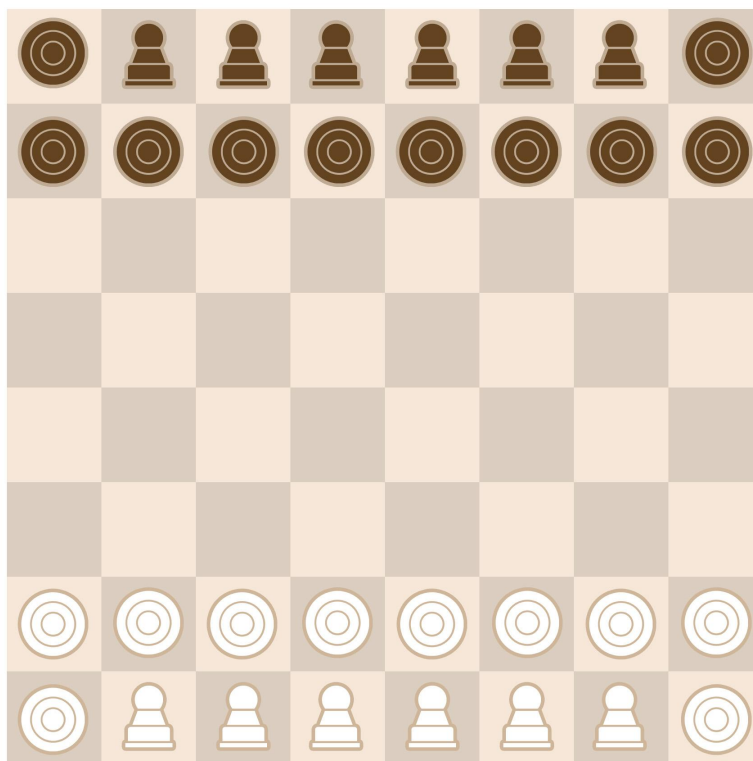


**Welcome!** This is an open beta version of *Hens and Chicks*, a companion game for *The Game of Fist*. *Fist* is the game featured in Alysa Wishingrad's upper middle-grade novel, [The Verdigris Pawn](#) (HarperCollins, 2021). *Hens and Chicks* doesn't appear in the novel, but it's meant to be a simpler game from the same universe, with some of the same rules.

You can make your own *Hens and Chicks* set using chess pawns and checkers.

**Summary:** If *Fist* is *The Land*'s allegory for chess, then *Hens and Chicks* is their version of checkers. Each side begins with the same set of game pieces: six hens (pawns) and ten chicks (checkers). The object is to move one of your pieces all the way across the board.

**Board and Pieces:** The board is an 8x8 checkerboard. Each player has six hens (pawns) and ten chicks (checkers). Opening setup is shown below.

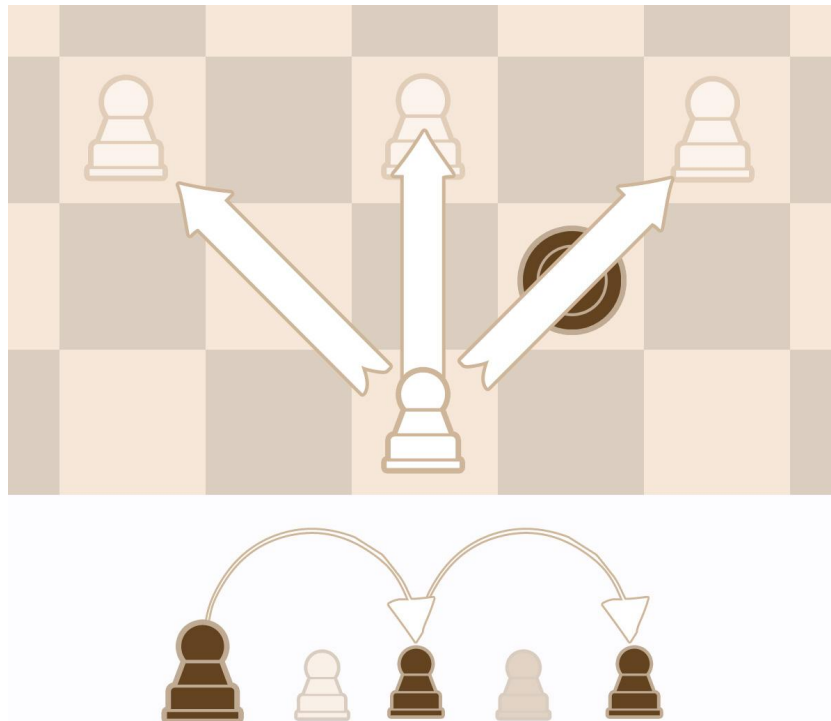


*Hens and Chicks, Opening Setup*

**Gameplay:** Players take turns, moving pieces and sometimes capturing enemy pieces. If this is your first game, choose randomly who goes first. In subsequent games, alternate who goes first.

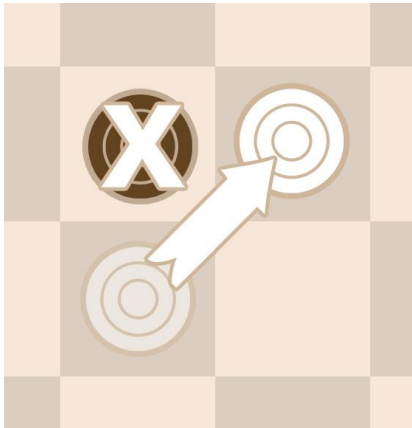
**Objective:** The goal is to move any single piece into your opponent's first row. You can also win by capturing all of your opponent's hens.

**Rules:** On each turn, you will move one piece. Sometimes, you will capture one of your opponent's pieces, removing it from play. The rules for movement and capture are as follows:



- **Hens:** These pieces can move up to two spaces forward, either directly or diagonally, or they may jump over pieces (allies or enemies) in those same directions. They can jump up to twice, changing directions if they choose. However, they cannot move and jump in the same turn.
- The diagram above shows all directions that a hen can move and jump:
  - Moving directly or diagonally forward, 1 or 2 spaces; or
  - Jumping in these same directions, but only if there is a piece to jump over (ally or enemy), and an empty space to land.
  - Enemy pieces are captured (removed from play) when a hen jumps over them. Allies are not.

- **Chicks:** These pieces move only diagonally, but can go any distance, similar to a bishop in chess. Like hens, they can only move forward. Chicks cannot jump or move through other pieces. Chicks capture enemy pieces by “pinning,” which works as follows:



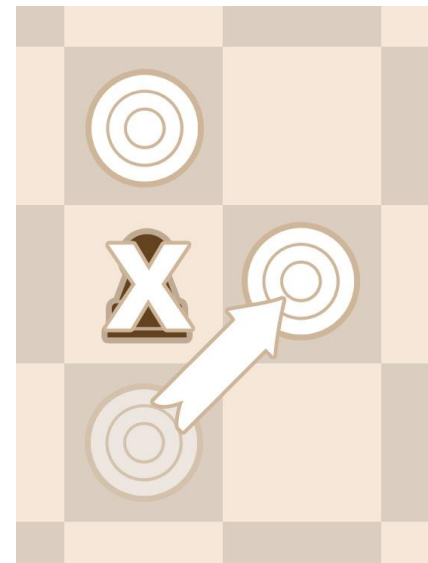
**How to Pin:** To pin an enemy piece, the chick must make a move of at least one space, and stop on a space that is horizontally adjacent to the target piece. This means that the two pieces are in the same rank, on spaces that are touching.

**Example of a Pin:** The chick in the diagram above moves adjacent to the enemy piece, and on the same row, and captures it with a pin.

**Help from Allies:** If the target of the attack is another chick, as shown above, the attacker can succeed without help. However, if the target is a hen, then there must be at least one ally of the attacker *already touching the target*. Without help from an ally, a chick cannot trap a hen.

In the diagram at right, the attacking chick gets help from the other chick that is already touching the hen. Without an ally in place, the chick could not trap the hen.

For allied help, “touching” includes any orthogonally connected space, not just spaces in the same row.



**Divided Attention:** If a chick stops directly between two potential targets, then its attention is divided, and it cannot capture either of them *no matter how many other pieces are helping*.

**Winning:** The object of the game is to move any one of your pieces into the last row (that is, into your opponent’s first row). You can also win by eliminating all of your opponent’s hens.

**Strategy:** It is common in the first few moves to see a lot of capturing, as pieces rapidly jump and trap each other.

Look for openings in your opponent’s line, and try to get your pieces into position to win. It takes only one piece, and you can usually move into position fairly quickly. So watch for any opening, don’t leave too many gaps of your own!

**Design:** *Hens and Chicks* was designed by James Ernest as a companion game for *Fist*, the game described in *The Verdigris Pawn*.

This game is still in the early stages of development, and still needs lots of playtesting! We'd love to hear your feedback if you get the chance. Look for the feedback form at the Verdigris Pawn page at [Crab Fragment Labs](#).