

# RULES TO MORTAL CHESS

## Initial Setup

Mortal Chess is played on a transdimensional board with 22 playing pieces. The board is comprised of a large number of ethereal vortex planes which intersect using quasispectral energies.

Tape is not required in the assembly of a Mortal Chessboard. Its use, however, is tolerated, and should not prove problematic, unless used to join two ethereal vortex planes that are not neighbors.

Two spaces are “orthogonally adjacent” if their ethereal vortex planes intersect. Two spaces are “diagonally adjacent” if their ethereal vortex planes are *not* orthogonally adjacent but still meet at a small, kite-shaped vertex.

The kings are placed on opposite pentagrams; these spaces are known as the “white” and “black” poles. They are surrounded by 5 pawns occupying five diagonally adjacent spaces, and, in (clockwise for white, counterclockwise for black) order, 1 queen, 1 knight, one bishop, one rook, and 1 knight, in the adjacent orthogonal squares.

Death always plays black, and moves first.

## Rules of Motion

**Pawns:** Pawns may only move one space at a time to any orthogonally adjacent space in the direction of the opposing pole (the move may also include some lateral motion, but it *must* reduce the distance to the opposing pole). Pawns are unable to capture opposing pieces. Pawns may transcend their servile existence by reaching the opposing pole, at which point they metamorphose into queens.

**Bishops:** Bishops move only in tight orbits around a pentagram. They may move from any space adjacent (orthogonally or diagonally) to a pentagram to any other space adjacent to that same pentagram. They may not pass through other pieces in doing so, and *never* tread on pentagrams. If a bishop's destination is occupied by an enemy piece, that piece is captured and consigned to a frozen crypt outside time.

**Rooks:** Being more aloof than their zealous brethren the bishops, rooks travel in larger orbits around pentagrams, and are even allowed to tread on them. Consider a bishop's orbit, which clearly has an interior (the pentagram) and an exterior (all spaces orthogonally adjacent to spaces in the orbit). A rook may move freely along the spaces in the exterior of any one bishop's orbit (the orbit in question need not have an actual bishop in it). Rooks can also capture enemy pieces in reachable squares. Like bishops, rooks cannot pass through other pieces.

**Knights:** Knights always move one square orthogonally, then one square diagonally, never finishing in a square adjacent to the start of their move. They may move even if the spaces between them and their destination are occupied.

**Queens:** Being the Keepers of the Ethereal Secret, within a single move queens may move and/or capture as bishops, or as rooks, at their discretion.

**Kings:** Guardians of the Knowledge of All that is Eternal (and a Handful of Less Important Temporal Things), kings are understandably heavily burdened and thus incapable of moving great distances. In a given move, a king may only move one space in any *orthogonal* direction. If that space is occupied by an enemy piece, that piece is captured.

A winning move is celebrated by indexing into the words traversed thereby.

1-7-2-5-5-6-3-4