Learn How To Play Chinese Chess
This page is designed for both native and non-native Chinese speakers. I have prepared an alternative set of Chinese Chess pieces that are represented by pictures instead of Chinese characters, so you don't have to understand Chinese characters in order to learn how to play this game.

The goal of this page is to help you get started in playing Chinese Chess. Once you are familiar with the basic moves and rules of the game, you might want to start learning deeper strategies and tactics for the game. To do that, I suggest you visit the tutorial section of a site called i.am/echess.

Introduction
Chinese Chess is a traditional board game that has been around for thousands of years. Like Western Chess, it has a total of 32 pieces, it is played by 2 players, and the goal of the game is to capture your opponent's most important piece: the General or the King. Unlike Western Chess, Chinese Chess has 7 classes of pieces (General, Advisor, Elephant, Horse, Chariot, Cannon, and Pawn); whereas Western Chess has 6 classes of pieces (King, Queen, Bishop, Knight, Rook, and Pawn). Also, Western Chess is played on a larger board.

The Pieces
The pieces in Chinese Chess are represented by Chinese characters. Also, some pieces of the same class for both sides are sometimes represent by different characters. If you don't understand Chinese characters, I hope the picture set that I have prepared are easy to recognize and make sense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>帅 将</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Command HQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>仕 士</td>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>相 象</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td>Surface-To-Air Missile (SAM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>马 马</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>Attack Helicopter (Gunship)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Board

This is the Chinese Chess board. It is made up of 10x9 grid lines, and the pieces is placed on the intersections of the lines; this count for 90 possible positions on the board.

The board is divided into two zones. Top half of the board is your opponent's zone (enemy zone), and the bottom half of the board is your zone (friendly zone).

Some of the intersections are surrounded by wedges, which serve as indicators for the starting position of the Cannon (Bomber) and Pawn (Transport) pieces.

Notice at the baseline center of both zones there is a 3x3 grid linked by a cross, that is yours and your opponent's palace (base).
Setting Up The Board
The following diagram shows the setup of the board at the beginning of a game. The top half of the board is setup using the character piece set, the bottom half of the board is setup using the picture piece set.

The Moves
Basic Movement
All piece can either move horizontally/vertically, diagonally, or a combination of the two. No pieces can ever move through another piece except Cannon (Bomber).

Capturing
You can capture and opponent's piece by moving one of your pieces into the position that is currently occupied by that opponent's piece.
Note: **Cannon (Bomber)** has special way of capturing pieces.

**Blocking**
Sometimes a piece may not complete a certain move because another piece (either friend or foe) is blocking its way.

**Checking**
Checking occurs when the **General (Command HQ)** of one side is being threatened by the opposing side.

**General (Command HQ) Face-off Restriction**
You cannot make a move that will result in what's called a **General Face-off** situation. This situation is true if you can draw a straight vertical line that intersects both sides' **General (Command HQ)** and with no other pieces in-between the two **Generals** (Command HQs).

![Diagram](image)

**General / Command HQ**

![Symbol Image]

**Description**
This is the most important piece of the game. When you lose this piece, you lose the game.

**Movement**
Move horizontally or vertically one unit at a time. Also, it can never move out of the palace (base).

![Diagram](image)

**Advisor / Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA)**

![Symbol Image]

**Description**
This is a defensive unit. It provides close defensive support for the General (Command HQ).

Movement
Move diagonally in any directions one unit at a time. Like the General (Command HQ), it can never leave the palace (base).

Elephant / Surface-To-Air Missile (SAM)

Description
This is also a defensive unit. It provides defensive support for the General (Command HQ).

Movement
Move diagonally in any directions two units at a time. It can never move into your opponent's zone. The Elephant (SAM) can be blocked by a piece in-between its current position and its intended destination.

The diagram at the upper right corner illustrates that the Elephant (SAM) piece on the left could not make a move to its destination marked by X because it is blocked by another piece.

The square symbols in the diagram indicates the other two positions where the Elephant (SAM) could possibly move to.

Horse / Attack Helicopter (Gunship)

Description
This piece is similar to the Knight in Western Chess.

**Movement**
Move horizontally or vertically in any directions by one unit, then immediately follow by a move diagonally one unit toward the direction away from its original position.

If there is a piece immediately adjacent to the **Horse (Gunship)**, then it cannot move toward that direction.

The diagram at the upper right corner illustrates that the **Horse (Gunship)** piece on the left could not make a move to either of its destinations marked by X because it is blocked by a piece immediately adjacent to it.

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**Chariot / Interceptor**

| ![Chariot Icon] | ![Interceptor Icon] |

**Description**
This piece is similar to the Rook in Western Chess.

**Movement**
Move horizontally or vertically in any directions by any number of units, provided that it doesn't move through another piece.

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**Cannon / Bomber**

| ![Cannon Icon] | ![Bomber Icon] |

**Description**
This is a unique piece that can be very interesting to play.

**Movement**
Move horizontally or vertically in any directions by any number of units, provided that it doesn't move through another piece.

**Special Capturing Rule**
To capture a piece, a **Cannon (Bomber)** must jump over one piece that is in-between itself and its intended target. The diagram in the upper right corner illustrates that a **Cannon (Bomber)** is jumping over a **piece** in order to capture another **piece**.

![Diagram of Cannon (Bomber) capturing a piece](image)

**Pawn / Transport Helicopter (Transport)**

**Description**
They are slow, but don't ignore them.

**Movement**
Move forward one unit at a time. After a **Pawn (Transport)** crossed over into **enemy zone**, it can also move left or right one unit at a time. It can **never** move backward.

The diagram on the upper right corner illustrates that the two **Pawns (Transports)** on the left can only move forward one unit at a time, while the **Pawn (Transport)** on the right has made its way into **enemy zone**, and so it has the option to move left or right in addition to moving forward.