

BOARD GAME

TANK CHESS

RULEBOOK

Game Components



- Two boards (16×16 squares and 20×20 squares)
- Set of custom obstacles and border surfaces
- 16 white and 16 black playing pieces (tanks)
- Set of antennas and flags
- Two reference sheets with tank characteristics
- 10 info cards
- Move counter and notepad
- Rulebook and Brochure

Each **board** has one side with printed **obstacles** (dark shapes covering some squares) and starting position marks for different piece types, which is called the **basic setup**.

Custom obstacles can be placed on the blank side of each board, according to the schemes given in the Brochure or an improvised idea (*new schemes can be sketched on the blank schemes in the Brochure*). The board size can be reduced by using **surface borders** (for example, 16×16 board can be reduced to 12×12 squares, or 20×20 board to 20×16 squares).

Pieces represent tanks (armored vehicles) of different categories. Their marks are:



The set contains a couple of black and white antennas () and flags (). Antennas mark the Command tanks, and flags are used in some of the special game mods.

All piece characteristics (speed, armor and armament) are shown on **reference sheets** and **info cards**.

Move counter and **notepad** are not required for playing the game, but can be used for tracking the number of moves played and for recording games.

Brochure features schemes for alternative board setups and blank sheets for drawing custom obstacle schemes.

BASIC RULES

It is recommended to play the first few games on the 16×16 board, with the basic obstacle setup.


Before the start of a game, pieces are placed on their marks on the board, directed towards the opposite side of the board.

One piece in each color is a **Command tank**, marked by an antenna in the opposite color. A letter 'C' is added in front of the piece abbreviation. In most setups, a Light Tank is the Command tank (CLT).



Command Light Tank (CLT)



If a different piece type is the Command tank, its abbreviation is printed next to the mark on the board (e.g. ' _{CLT} ').

Player with white pieces plays first. A **single piece** is moved in each turn, alternating between players. After moving a piece, **only the moved piece may fire** at an opponent's piece (if it is in a suitable position).

The three basic characteristics of each armored vehicle are: speed, armament and armor.

Speed

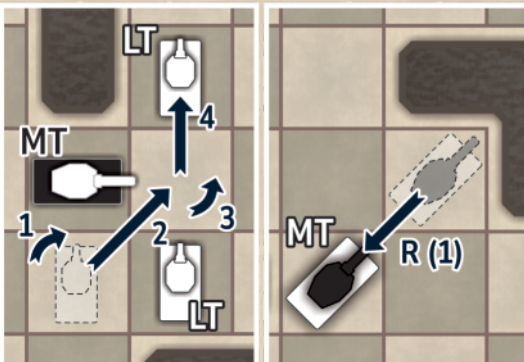
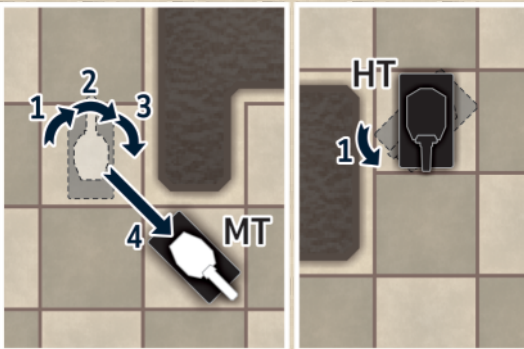
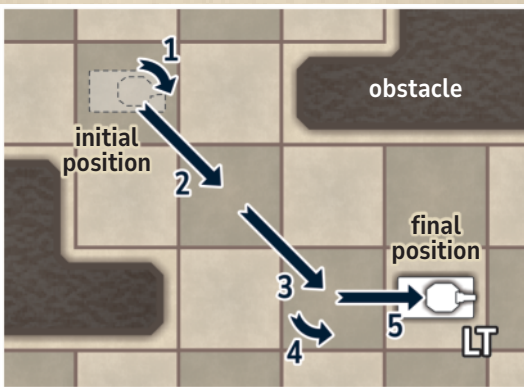
Pieces can move straight ahead, rotate in place by 45°, or a combination of both. Each 45° rotation and each movement to a neighboring square counts as one **step**.

Speed determines the maximum number of steps a tank can make in a single move, see the chart:

Speed	LT	MT	HT	TD	HM
	5	4	3	4	3

Any piece may move in reverse, but only a single square, and not in a combination with rotating.

Pieces may only move over empty squares, never over obstacles or other pieces. Additionally, rotating a piece left then right, returning it to the same position and direction from where it began, does NOT count as movement. Examples:



Armament

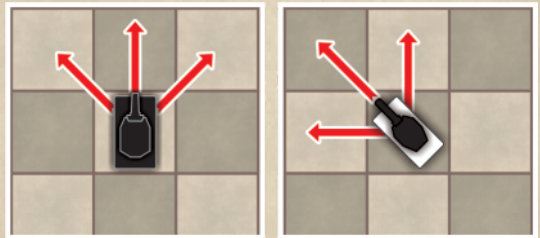
Each category of armored vehicle has its firepower value, see the chart:

Firepower	LT	MT	HT	TD	HM
	I	II	III	IV	V

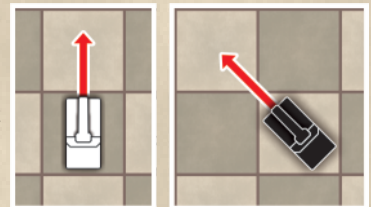
Depending on the type of armament, some pieces fire directly (guns), and some fire parabolically (howitzers and mortars).

Gun

Tanks have turrets so they can fire in three directions: straight ahead, diagonally left or diagonally right.

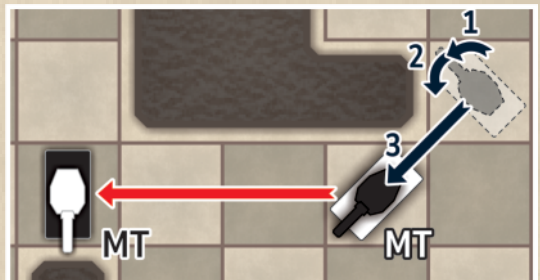


Tank Destroyer does not have a turret, so it can only fire straight ahead.

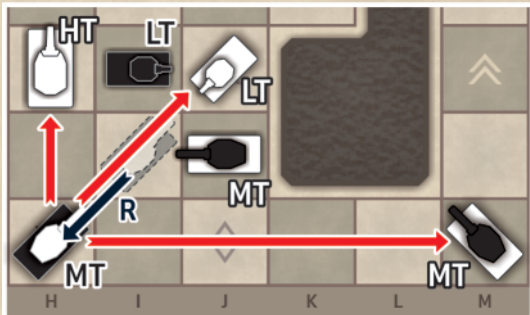


When firing from a gun, the firing piece must have an unobstructed straight line of sight between itself and the target (with no other pieces and obstacles in between).

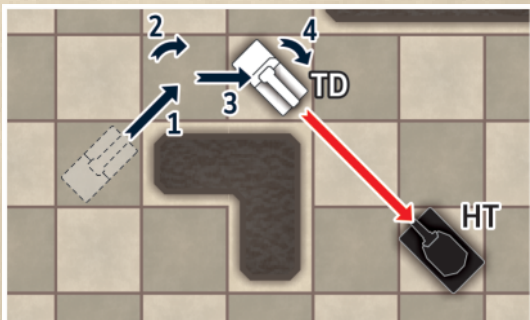
Guns have unlimited range, but there must be **at least one empty square** between the firing piece and the target. Examples:



In the diagram above, white Medium Tank moves into a position to fire at an opponent's tank.



In the diagram above, black Medium Tank moves in reverse and comes into a position to fire at three white tanks. The player must choose only one target.



In the diagram above, white Tank Destroyer moves into a position to fire at black Heavy Tank.



In the diagram to the left, white Heavy Tank cannot fire at black Light Tank, because there are no empty squares between them.

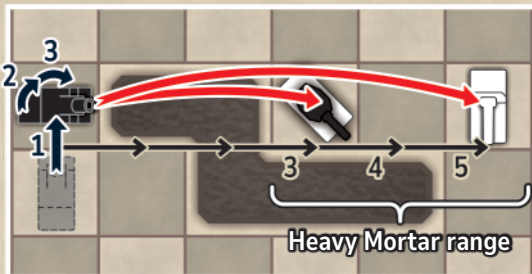
Howitzer / Mortar

The main feature of howitzers and mortars is the ability to fire at targets behind obstacles or other vehicles. In this set, only Heavy Mortar has this type of armament.



Heavy Mortar can only fire straight ahead.

Howitzers and mortars have limited minimum and maximum firing range. Heavy Mortar can fire at targets at a distance of 3, 4 or 5 squares.



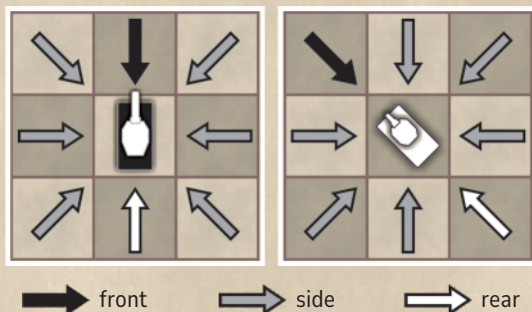
In the example above, black Heavy Mortar comes into a position from where it can fire at white Medium Tank (at a distance of 3 squares) or Tank Destroyer (5 squares away). It can only destroy one target.

Armor

Tanks and other armored vehicles have different armor values on each side of the vehicle. Most vehicles have the strongest armor on the front, weaker on sides and the weakest on the rear. See the chart:

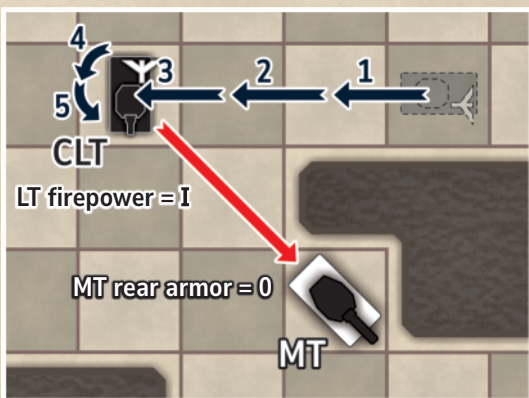
Armor	LT	MT	HT	TD	HM
Front	I	II	III	II	I
Side	0	I	II	I	0
Rear	0	0	I	0	0

Front armor is hit only if the firing vehicle is located directly in front of the target (black arrow). Likewise, rear armor is hit only if directly behind the target (white arrow). Side armor is hit from any other direction (grey arrows).

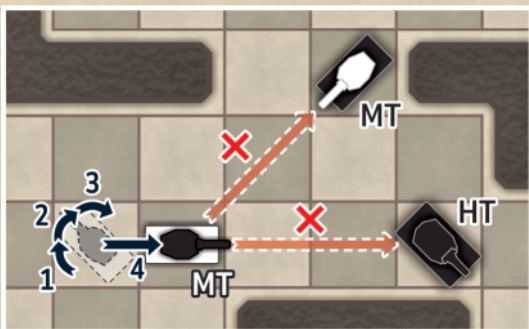


front
 side
 rear

To destroy an opponent's piece, the firing piece's **firepower value must be higher than the armor value** (front, side or rear) of the target. *If the armor value is '0', that side of the tank does not provide any protection from the opponent's tanks.*



In the diagram above, black Command tank (CLT) destroys white Medium Tank by a hit to the rear armor.



In the diagram above, white Medium Tank comes into a position to fire at two black tanks, but it cannot destroy either of them, because its firepower value (II) is not greater than armor values of the black tanks (Medium Tank front armor = II, or Heavy Tank side armor = II).

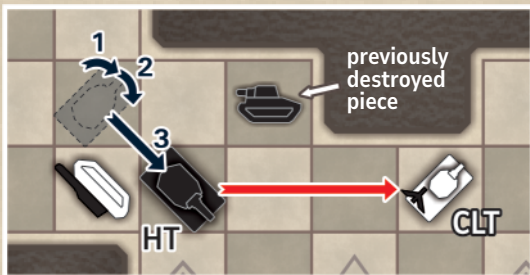
A destroyed piece is **flipped on its side and remains in place on the board**. Destroyed tanks become obstacles through which firing or moving is not possible.

Game Goal

Victory can be secured in two ways:

- 1) Destroying your opponent's Command tank.
- 2) Escaping with your own Command tank, by exiting the board on the edge opposite from the initial position.

The winner is the player who first achieves either of the two goals.



In the example above, black Heavy Tank comes into a position to fire and destroys the white Command tank. This is the end of game and the Black player wins.



In the diagram above, white Command tank exits the board on the opposite side (in its fourth movement step). The game is over and the White player wins.

However, the Command tank cannot exit the board diagonally through the corner of the board.



Because of this, in the diagram to the left, black Command tank cannot exit the board in this move.

'Check' and 'Escape' Announcing

Tank Chess can be played in a way similar to the classic game of Chess, where the final winning move is not played. Instead, the goal is to either 'checkmate' or 'escapemate' the opponent:

1) If the opponent's Command tank is threatened (the situation on the board is such that it could be destroyed in the next move), **the player is obliged to announce CHECK** after moving their piece. This way the opponent is warned and they must make a move that will save their Command tank. Any move that does not protect the Command tank is not permitted (if played falsely, the move is simply undone). **If the opponent is not able to prevent the destruction of their Command tank, it is a CHECKMATE and victory.**

The opponent's Command tank can be threatened directly, by moving a piece to a position from where it will be able to come into a firing position in the next move, or indirectly, by moving one piece which opens a path for another piece to destroy the Command tank in the next move.

A player is also not permitted to play a move that enables the opponent to destroy their Command tank immediately in the next move (e.g. moving the Command tank to a 'dangerous' square, or moving another piece and opening a line of sight or a path for the opponent to destroy the Command tank).

2) Similar to the above, if the situation on the board is such that the Command tank will be able to escape in the next move (to exit the board through the opposite edge), **the player is obliged to announce ESCAPE** after moving their piece. In the following move, the opponent is obliged to prevent the escape, and any move that does not prevent it is not permitted. **If the opponent is not able to prevent the escape of the Command tank, it is an ESCAPEMATE and victory.**

Also, any move that would enable the opponent's Command tank to escape immediately in the next move is not permitted (by opening a path).

Alternatively, **it can be played without mate and check/escape announcing, but until the actual destruction of the Command tank or the escape.** This way the game becomes more tense, because it can easily happen, for example, to lose the Command tank unexpectedly due to a small oversight, despite having a

better situation on the board. If a fast game is played (with a chess clock), the character of the game changes, as quick spotting of firing directions becomes more important than strategy.

Notes

- Draws are extremely rare, and unexpected winning from an unfavorable situation is often possible if the opponent isn't careful.

- All pieces are equally important. At first glance, Heavy Tanks are more valuable, but in the end game the Light Tanks' speed is much more useful than strong firepower and armor.

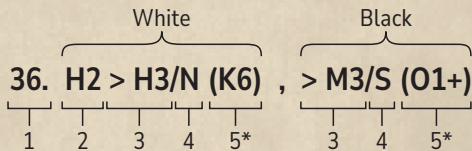
- Heavy Mortars significantly influence the game, as they eliminate 'safe' squares behind obstacles.

- The ratio of obstacles and empty squares is balanced in the basic setups, with open directions for long distance firing but also with enough cover. Different obstacle schemes given in the Brochure provide various conditions, with extremes such as 'Open Field' (few obstacles) and 'Old Town' (many obstacles).

- A chess clock can be used when playing. The advised time for the 16x16 board is 30 minutes per player, and 45 minutes each for the 20x20 board.

RECORDING GAMES

Letters and numbers along the board edges are used for determining coordinates of every square (e.g. F11). The center of the board shows a compass that helps determine the cardinal points: N, E, W and S. Using coordinates and piece orientation, it is possible to record the whole game. Before the start of the game, write the board size and obstacle scheme used. The example below shows one whole move recorded:



1 - Move number.

2 - Starting coordinates of the moved piece (omitted if the piece was only rotated in place).

3 - Final coordinates of the moved piece.

4 - Piece orientation in the final position.

5 - In brackets, coordinates of the destroyed opponent's piece and/or one of the symbols:

“ + ” — **check** (the opponent's Command tank can be destroyed in the next move).

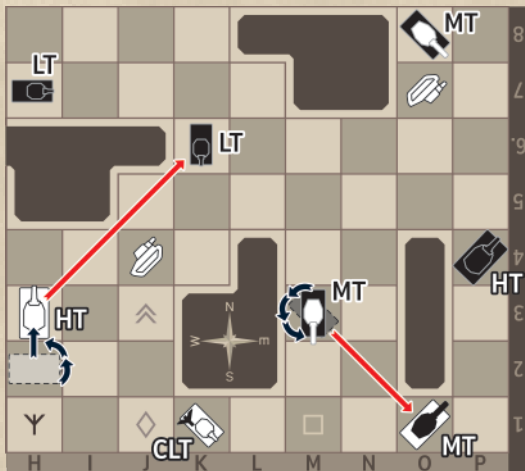
“ # ” — **checkmate** (the opponent's Command tank will be destroyed in the next move, which is the end of the game).

“ - ” — **escape** (your own Command tank is in a position to exit the board in the next move).

“ = ” — **escapemate** (your own Command tank will certainly exit the board in the next move, which is the end of the game).

* Only if a piece was destroyed or one of the described conditions occurred.

The following diagram shows the entire 36th move. In the previous, 35th move, Black moved a Light Tank to square K6 and came in a position to destroy the white CLT in the next move (by moving the LT to square I3). Therefore, this is a check. To defend, White can either move the CLT to a safe square or destroy the black LT. He decides for the second option, by moving an HT to square H3 and destroys the black LT on square K6.

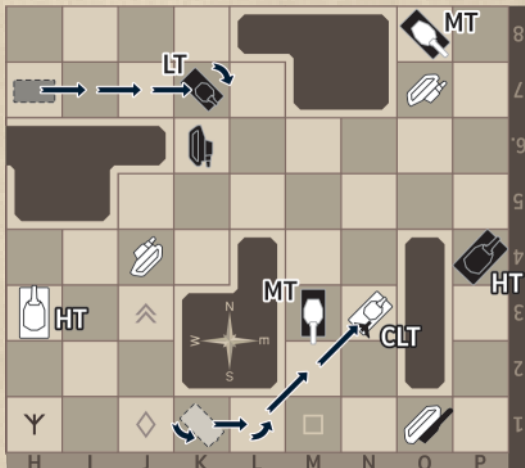


In the same move, Black rotates his MT on square M3 and destroys the white MT on square O1, and again checks the white CLT (in the next move it will be able to reach position M1/SW and destroy the Command tank).

The 37th move is shown in the diagram below.

37. K1 > N3/NE , H7 > K7/SE (#)

To protect the Command tank, White moves it to square N3. This is a bad move however, because Black moves his LT from H7 to K7 and checks the white CLT again. By carefully observing the situation, we come to the conclusion that this is a checkmate and the victory for Black! There is no square for the white CLT to escape to, which is not covered by LT (K7), MT (M3), HT (P4) or MT (O8). There is also no possible way for White to destroy the black piece that threatens the CLT (as in the previous move), nor is it possible for White CLT to be covered by another white piece.



DIFFERENT BOARD SETUPS

As mentioned in the introduction, custom obstacles can be placed in many different ways on the blank side of each board.

Schemes for some of the possible setups are given in the Brochure. Starting position of pieces are marked with appropriate symbols (♯ ♠ ♢ ♣ ♡).

To make the games more diverse, players may agree to play with a free choice of pieces, not according to the schemes. In this case, the total number of pieces and starting positions remain the same, with the difference that the piece type and symbol don't need to match.

Guidelines for Creating Setups

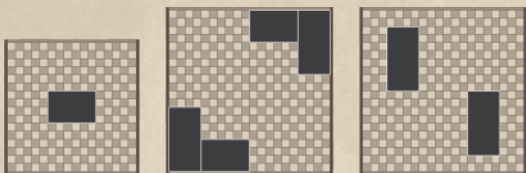
Players can create their own obstacle setups and sketch them on the sheets with blank schemes in the Brochure, according to the following principles and rules:

- Initial positions of white pieces are on the southern, and black on the northern side of the board.
- It is desirable that obstacles and starting positions are placed symmetrically (preferably in central symmetry).
- Obstacles and starting positions must not be placed in such a way to allow the destruction of an opponent's piece already in the first move.

Note: If obstacles are placed as shown in the diagram to the right, pieces can pass between them.



Surface borders are primarily used to reduce the number of squares on the board, e.g. from 16×16 board to 12×12 squares, or from 20×20 to 20×16 squares (there does not need to be the same number of squares in horizontal and vertical direction). Surface borders can also be used as large obstacles, for example:



ALTERNATIVE GAME MODS

The basic game rules are very simple and provide infinitely many unique plays. Beside changing the size and configuration of the board, or the number and choice of pieces, the game goal can also be different – in alternative game mods.

Single Type Pieces

All the pieces can represent a single vehicle category (e.g. all tanks have properties of Medium Tanks), regardless of the piece used. One piece must have the role of the Command tank (marked with an antenna).

If all pieces represent tanks of the same category (light, medium or heavy), then no tank can be destroyed from the front. The most dynamic games are those with all Light Tanks.

If all pieces represent Tank Destroyers or Heavy Mortars, the armor is irrelevant because every piece can be destroyed from any side, so the strategy must be changed significantly.

This mod can be applied to almost any obstacle setup.

Last Tank Standing

This mod can be played on all obstacle setups. The game goal is to destroy all enemy vehicles. There is no Command tank in this mod, and winning by escaping is not possible.

Unlike the basic rules, the game can easily result in a draw (for example, if one player has a Heavy Tank and the other a Light Tank – since LT cannot destroy the HT and HT can never catch up with the LT to fire at it, the game ends with no winner). Because of this, the game can be limited to a certain number of moves, for example 25 (tracked using the move counter), after which the number of surviving vehicles is counted.

This mod is especially suitable for younger players.

Escape of Three Tanks

As in the previous mod, there is no Command tank, and any obstacle setup can be used. The goal of each player is to break through the enemy lines and exit the board at the opposite edge with any three vehicles. The winner is the player who first succeeds in this.

It should be noted that rushing to escape with the first two tanks may not be the best strategy, because less tanks remain in combat. If neither player manages to escape with three tanks, the winner is the one who escaped with more, and the game can end in a draw.

Capture the Flag

This mod can be played on any size of the board and any obstacle scheme that has the four central squares unoccupied (without obstacles). One flag is placed exactly in the middle of the board. The goal of the game is to reach the flag, take it, and then carry it to any square at the starting edge of the board.

When a piece comes to one of the four central squares, it has the option to take the flag, and if the player decides to do so the flag should be attached to the piece. The piece that moved in order to take the flag cannot fire in the same move.

If a piece is destroyed while carrying the flag, another piece from any team can take the flag. In order to take the flag from a destroyed tank, a piece must end its movement on an adjacent square. Also, the flag can be taken from an allied piece by the same rules: the piece holding the flag has to be stationary and the piece taking it must come to an adjacent square at the end of the move. There is no limit on how many tanks can carry the flag during a single game.

As a variation of this mod, there can be an odd number of flags (e.g. three), and the player who captures more wins.

Four Players

Since players must share piece colour, two players have to attach flags to their tanks, with teams being: White, Flag White, Black and Flag Black. The Command tanks are marked by an antenna (White and Black) or by a different-shaped flag (flag teams).

The starting positions and the move sequence are shown in the Brochure, in 'Corner' and 'Four the Glory' schemes.

Everyone plays against everyone and the objective is to destroy as many tanks as possible (win by escaping is not possible).

The game ends when three of four players lose all of their tanks, or when it is not possible to destroy any more pieces, e.g. because some are trapped behind destroyed tanks. Each player counts points: 1 for each of their own surviving piece and 1 for each opponent's piece destroyed by them (one of the players should track the score and write it down during the game). Command tanks can be destroyed as any other tank, only they count as 2 points each. The winner is the player with the most points (*it can happen that the only player with remaining pieces on the board is not the winner, if they destroyed only a small number of opponent pieces*).

Instead of playing until only one player remains, the game can be limited to an agreed number of moves (e.g. count points after each player plays 15 moves).

EXPANSIONS

For players who want more diversity, Tank Chess game has several expansions: Fun Set, Fun Set Plus and Airborne expansion. The expansions bring new types of obstacles (water, hedges, fire, mud, smoke, etc.), as well as new vehicles (Super-heavy Tank, Amphibian, Light and Heavy Howitzer, Flamethrower, Minelaying truck, Anti-Aircraft tank, etc.).

