THE
SPENCER'S GAMBIT

This easy-to-assemble paper chess set is part of the Spencer Museum's "Gaming the Winter" series of artful activities and games. "The Spencer's Gambit" features works of art from the Museum's collection as chess pieces.

BOARD SETUP

Chess is a board game for two players. It is played on a square board of 64 alternating or checkerboard squares. Each player starts with 16 pieces: 8 pawns, 2 rooks, 2 knights, 2 bishops, 1 queen, 1 king.

1. Assemble the two pieces of paper to form the board.
2. Assemble your individual pieces.
3. Each player, when facing the chessboard, should have a white square at the bottom right of the board.
4. In the second row of squares from where each player is sitting, assemble the row of eight pawns.
5. In the first row of squares nearest each player, place the two rooks in the corners, like castles protecting the most important pieces.
6. Place the two knights next to the rooks.
7. Place the two bishops next to the knights.
8. Place the queen on the square that matches its color.
9. Place the king in the remaining square.

Created by Emily Kruse and Sabine Rishell, Visitor Experience Student Staff
Image: Artist Unknown, untitled (three court jesters playing chess), early 1900s, pencil, watercolor, Spencer Museum of Art, Gift of Professor Eric Gustav Carlson, 2014.2966

SPENCER
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www.spencerart.ku.edu
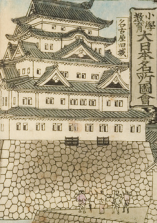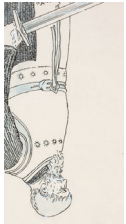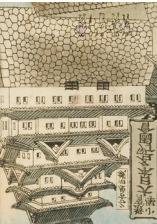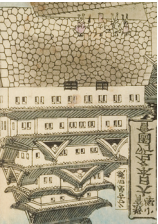
HOW TO PLAY
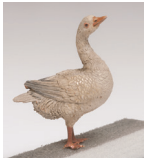
The object of the game is to capture your opponent's pieces, with the ultimate goal of placing their king in "checkmate," which ends the game. Checkmate occurs when a king cannot move in any direction to avoid capture.

1. Players take turns.
2. Pieces cannot move through other pieces (excluding a knight, which can jump over pieces).
3. Pieces cannot move onto a square that contains one of their own pieces.
4. The king is the most important piece, but also the weakest. The king can only move one square in any direction—up, down, sideways, or diagonally.
5. The queen is the most powerful piece. The queen can move in any one direction— forward, backward, sideways, or diagonally– as far as possible as long as it does not move through any of its own pieces.
6. The rook can move as far as it wants, but only forward, backward, and sideways.
7. The bishop can move as far as it wants, but only diagonally. Each bishop starts on one color (black or white) and always stays on that color.
8. Knights move two squares in one direction, followed by one square at a 90-degree angle forming the shape of an "L." They are the only piece that can move over other pieces, similar to a knight on horseback.
9. Pawns move and capture in different ways: they move forward but capture diagonally. Pawns can only move forward one square at a time, except for their very first move when they can move forward two squares. Pawns capture one square diagonally in front of them. They never move or capture backwards. If there is another piece directly in front of a pawn, it cannot move past or capture that piece.

QUEEN

unknown Italian artist, Queen Elizabeth I doll

wood, cardboard, ermine, lace, beads, pearl, velvet, teracotta, circa 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7381

KING

unknown Bini maker, bust of Oba Ozolua

bronze, 1977

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.3025

BISHOP

unknown European artist, church official, one of pair

wood, carving, gilding, painting, 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 1999.0160

BISHOP

unknown European artist, church official, one of pair

wood, carving, gilding, painting, 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 1999.0161

KNIGHT

unknown artist, untitled (knight with sword) (detail)

ink, colored pencil, paint, 1914–1918

Spencer Museum of Art, 2014.2594

KNIGHT

unknown artist, untitled (knight with sword) (detail)

ink, colored pencil, paint, 1914–1918

Spencer Museum of Art, 2014.2594

ROOK

Utagawa Hiroshige III, Nagoya Kyūjō Owari no Kuni (detail)

woodcut, hand coloring, 1891

Spencer Museum of Art, 1928.7447

ROOK

Utagawa Hiroshige III, Nagoya Kyūjō Owari no Kuni (detail)

woodcut, hand coloring, 1891

Spencer Museum of Art, 1928.7447

PAWN

attributed to Giuseppe Gori and Giuseppe Sanmartino, presepio figure, wolf dog

wood, carving, paint, glass, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1852

PAWN

unknown European artist, presepio figure, goat

terracotta, paint, metal, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.2762.a,b

PAWN

unknown Italian artist, presepio figure, goose

paint, metal, glass, terracotta, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1855

PAWN

unknown Italian artist, presepio figure, greyhound

wood, carving, paint, metal, glass, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1853

PAWN

unknown Italian artist, presepio figure, donkey

wood, carving, paint, gesso, burlap, leather, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1862

PAWN

unknown Italian artist, presepio figure, greyhound

wood, carving, paint, metal, glass, late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1851

PAWN

unknown Italian artist, presepio figure, sheep

late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.1850

PAWN

unknown European artist, presepio figure, goat

late 1700s

Spencer Museum of Art, 0000.2638

Cut on **SOLID** lines

Fold on **DOTTED** lines

Assemble each piece into a triangular tent by interlocking the slotted tops.

QUEEN

Studio of Domenico and Valore Casini, Maria Maddalena, Grand Duchess of Tuscany

oil, canvas, 1610–1628

Spencer Museum of Art, 1995.0045

KING

Cyndy R. Wilson, Lewis King Enthroned

woodcut, 2002

Spencer Museum of Art, 2002.0013.17

BISHOP

school of Erasmus Grasser, Bishop with Kneeling Beggar

wood, late 1400s

Spencer Museum of Art, 1961.0003

BISHOP

school of Erasmus Grasser, Bishop with Kneeling Beggar

wood, late 1400s

Spencer Museum of Art, 1961.0003

KNIGHT

Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 行川三平宗則 *Yukukawa Sampei Munenori*

color woodcut, 1847

Spencer Museum of Art, 2011.0033

KNIGHT

Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 行川三平宗則 *Yukukawa Sampei Munenori*

color woodcut, 1847

Spencer Museum of Art, 2011.0033

ROOK

Frederick Henry Evans, lantern slide-Pierrefonds

glass lantern slide, 1902–1904

Spencer Museum of Art, 1971.0018.362

ROOK

Frederick Henry Evans, lantern slide-Pierrefonds

glass lantern slide, 1902–1904

Spencer Museum of Art, 1971.0018.362

PAWN

unknown artist, monkey finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7353

PAWN

unknown artist, clown finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7352

PAWN

unknown artist, donkey finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7354

PAWN

unknown artist, Santa Claus finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7351

PAWN

unknown artist, old man finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7355

PAWN

unknown artist, old woman finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7356

PAWN

unknown artist, young girl finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7357

PAWN

unknown artist, young boy finger puppet

vinyl, cloth, paint, molding, late 1800s–1979

Spencer Museum of Art, 2007.7358

Cut on **SOLID** lines

Fold on **DOTTED** lines

Assemble each piece into a triangular tent by interlocking the slotted tops.

Janggi is a Korean variant of chess meaning "Game of Generals."

Xiangqi is a Chinese variant of chess with ancient origins that translates to "Elephant Game."

SPENCER'S GAMBIT

The earliest games of chess used animal warrior pieces to trap or capture the opponent's king.

"There is no remorse like the remorse of chess." – H. G. Wells

Chaturanga is an ancient Indian variant of chess that emerged in the sixth century.

The longest chess game theoretically possible is 5,949 moves.

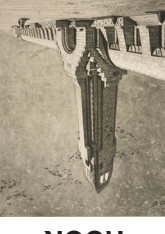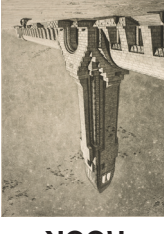The stylized designs of chess pieces reflect the game's passage through the Islamic world.

SPENCER MUSEUM of ART

Variants of chess are played around the world.

The game of chess is roughly 1,500 years old. It evolved from a convergence of games.

The terms "check" and "chess" come from the Persian word *shāh*, meaning "King."

In Spain and Italy, the Vizier (political advisor) was replaced by the Queen in the 13th century.

Indian and East Asian strategy games similar to chess were played along trade routes.

Over time and geography, chess evolved to reflect a system of labor and power.

Chess reached Medieval Europe through Persia in the ninth century.

Cut out board and black hatched spaces. Interlock with left side of chess board.

The term "rook" is based on the Persian word *rukh*, meaning "chariot."

The Harry Potter series features the fictional chess variant, wizard's chess.

Contemporary artists continue to design chess sets in their signature styles.

Benjamin Franklin penned an essay titled "The Morals of Chess" in 1779.

Chess matches feature in many films, including Casablanca, Blade Runner, and 2001: A Space Odyssey.

The oldest chess manual is in Arabic dating from 840 BCE, written by al-Adli ar-Rumi.

Some Medieval artists carved chess sets from walrus ivory, whales' teeth, and rock crystal.

Shogi is a Japanese variant of chess meaning "Game of Generals."

"While all artists are not chess players, all chess players are artists." – Marcel Duchamp

The term "checkmate" comes from the Persian phrase *shāh māt*, meaning "the King is helpless."

In the original Star Trek, Kirk and Spock played chess three times. Kirk won all three games.

GAMING
the
WINTER

How would you design your own chess set?

Chess was forbidden by the Catholic Church, so a priest invented a folding board in 1125, disguising it as a book.

Bob Dylan, Jay-Z, Wu-Tang Clan, and Taylor Swift have all referenced chess in their music.

The second book ever printed in the English language was about chess, the first being the Bible.

Cut out board and black hatched spaces. Interlock with right side of chess board.