

HOW TO WIN

Each piece you capture is worth its pip count in points. (Pawn = 1, Drone = 2, Queen = 3.) High score wins.

DEADLOCKS & TIES

ENDING A DEADLOCK

During the final stages of the game, the action slows down and may become stagnated. If any player feels the game has reached a state of deadlock, during their turn they may “call the clock.” From that point on, if seven moves go by in which neither player captures a piece, the game ends and the final score is computed. If someone makes a capture, the counter is reset.

RESOLVING A TIE

If the final score is tied, and one Zone is empty, the player who ended the game is the winner. But if the game ends in a deadlock with a tie, the result is simply a tie. Play again!

STRATEGY TIPS

BEWARE THE DOUBLE WHAMMY

Whenever you capture a piece, make sure the piece you moved isn't in a position where it can immediately capture one of your own remaining pieces (unless you're happy enough making an exchange...).

EYES ON THE PRIZE

Keep in mind that the goal is points, not position. This is particularly vital in a four-player game, when two people can use the Double Whammy on each other to quickly trade pieces for points.

RUN FOR THE BORDER

If you're ahead on points and low on pieces, try to end the game quickly by pushing your last few pieces across a canal.

OTHER INFORMATION

FOUR-PLAYER VERSION

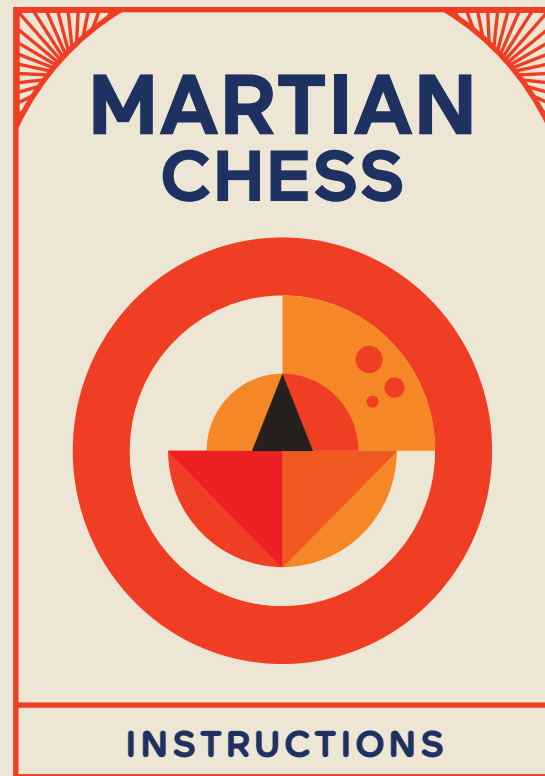
If you have a full-sized chessboard and enough additional pyramids, you can play this game with four players. Just place each player's set of nine pyramids in a corner of the board, and envision canals dividing the board into fourths. Also, ignore the No-Undos rule when playing with more than two. (It's not needed because of the increased volatility and diplomatic possibilities you get with more than two players.)

ODD-PLAYERS VERSION

If you have more pyramids and wish to play with three, five, or even six players, look online for Eeyore's Martian Chessboard Wedges which make such games possible.

HISTORICAL NOTES

Martian Chess was designed by Andrew Looney in 1997 and is the second game ever invented for Looney Pyramids.



OVERVIEW

In Martian Chess, color means nothing. Instead, location determines which pieces you may move. As in Chess, each type of piece has its own way of moving, and you capture by entering an opponent piece's square. However, you can move only the pieces sitting in your section of the board, and you can only attack pieces in another player's zone. Thus, a piece changes ownership after it attacks. The game ends when a player has no pieces left in their zone.

GOAL

Score the most points. ("Checkmate" is an Earthly concept; the term has no meaning here.)

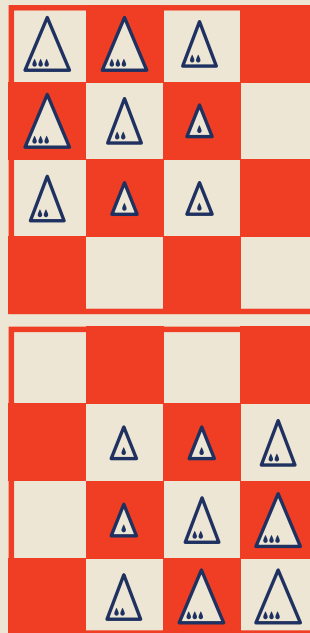
TERMINOLOGY

- Pawn: Small pyramid.
- Drone: Medium pyramid.
- Queen: Large pyramid.
- Canal: The dividing line separating the two players' zones.
- Zone: One player's half of the board.

SETUP

Each player starts by setting up their nine pyramids in opposing corners of the board, creating a 3x3 square in the right-hand corners of each end (not as exact mirrors, but rotationally symmetrical).

Start with a Queen in the corner and two more Queens on either orthogonal side. Next, add a diagonal row of Drones that share sides with the Queens. Finally, fill in the square with Pawns in a similar-but-opposite setup as the Queens.



HOW TO PLAY

On your turn, move one of the pieces in your zone in a straight line, passing through unobstructed spaces according to its movement ability. Jumping is not allowed.

- Pawn: One space at a time, in any of the diagonal directions.
- Drone: One or two spaces, on either the horizontal or vertical lines.
- Queen: Any distance, in any straight-line direction: horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

OWNERSHIP

You control ALL and ONLY the pieces currently in your sixteen-space zone of the board. After you move your piece into another player's area, it stops being your piece.

CAPTURING

When your piece moves into a space occupied by an opponent's piece, remove their piece from the board and keep it for scoring. Any piece can capture any piece. Capturing a piece always involves moving a piece across the Canal and losing control of it after completing the capture.

WHO STARTS?

Conceal a small pyramid in one of your palms, then offer two closed fists to your opponent. If they choose the hand containing the Pawn, they go first.

NO UNDOS

Your opponent may not "reject" your move; if a player moves a piece across the canal, the other can't move it back to the same square it was in.

FIELD PROMOTIONS

If you have no Queens, you can create one by moving a Drone into a Pawn's space (or vice versa) and merging them. Similarly, if you have no Drones, you can make one by merging two of your Pawns. (The pieces being merged should be removed from the board immediately and swapped for a piece of the combined size.)

ENDING THE GAME

The game ends as soon as one player's zone is totally empty. This means if you have only one piece left, you can force the end of the game by moving your last piece across a canal.