

HNEFATAFL

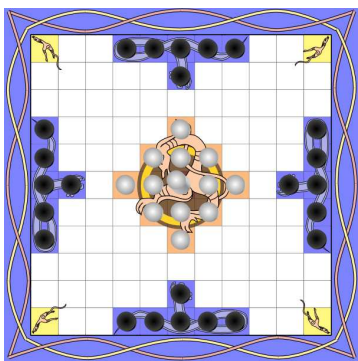
Hnefatafl is one of numerous games in the greater **Tafl** family of board games, harkening back to the time of the Vikings. Although strong evidence for the setup of the board and pieces can be found, there are numerous reconstructions of the rules. Nonetheless, there is a good degree of consistency in the interpretations and translations, so **nestorgames** proudly presents a Viking classic that will fit in your pocket.

MSCEBISL

- A Hnefatafl board
- 24 invaders (black)
- 12 defenders and one king (white)

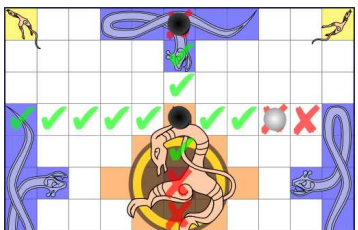
SECDP

Place the king in the very center of the board, on the reddish space. Place the defenders on the twelve orangish spaces around him. Place the invaders on the bluish spaces: six at each side of the board.



PLSYING

All movement and orientation in Hnefatafl is orthogonal — never diagonal. Accordingly, when you see the term *adjacent*, it means “orthogonally adjacent”.



There will never be more than one piece in the same space.

Invaders’ goal: Capture the king.

Defenders’ goal: Get the king to a corner space (haven), where he escapes.

Invaders start.

On your turn, **move one piece**, possibly causing a capture.

1. All pieces move the same way: Move the piece in a straight line, through **as many unobstructed spaces as you like**. This means that at the beginning of the game, the king, four other defenders, and four invaders are unable to

move. There are five special spaces on the board into which and through which only the king can move: The center space, where he starts, and the corner spaces. We shall call these the throne and havens, respectively.

2. In order to **capture** an enemy piece, your move must cause one of the following (captured pieces are removed from the board):

a. hammer and anvil — With an *anvil* (the throne, a haven, or one of your pieces) adjacent to one side of the enemy piece, strike it with a *hammer*. Move a piece to be adjacent to the opposite side of the enemy piece.

i. If the throne is the anvil, it doesn't matter whether the king is on the throne.

ii. Moving your piece in between two enemies does not cause your piece to be captured.

b. trap — The enemy piece is entirely surrounded by some combination of your pieces, throne, haven, and/or edge of the board.

3. If the king is on the throne or adjacent to the throne, then he is impervious to a simple *hammer and anvil* attack, and can only be captured in a *trap*.

CAPTURED SAFE

VARIANTS

Hnefatafl is a game of uneven sides. In every game of the greater Tafl family of board games, you have a king plus a 2:1 ratio of invaders to defenders. It has been said that in your first games of Hnefatafl, you can expect the king to escape easily, but as you and your opponent gain experience, the balance shifts the other way. It also has been posited that the main rule of Hnefatafl, back in the day, was “house rules”. In that spirit, if you and your opponent are not enjoying the game, there are numerous suggested variants, about which you can read on BoardGameGeek.com. You are also welcome to devise your own, and by so doing, you arguably would be playing by the “original rules”.