

BYTE by Mark Steere

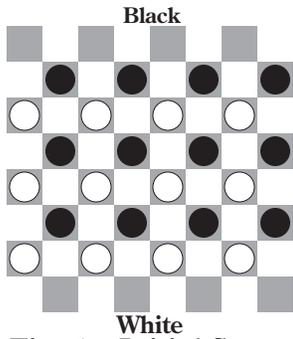


Fig. 1 - Initial Setup

INTRODUCTION Byte is a board game which is played with a Checkers set. The initial setup is shown in Figure 1. More than just “new rules for an old game” Byte is a unique, robust alternative to Checkers. Draws and ties cannot occur in Byte. While standard Byte is played on an 8 x 8 checkerboard, the international version uses a 10 x 10 board. Byte was invented by Mark Steere on July 13, 2005.



Fig. 2 - 3 Stacks of 8

STACKS A stack can be any height from one to eight checkers and can be made up of any combination of colors in any order. When a stack of eight is formed it is immediately removed from the board and the **top checker** of that stack is placed next to the board, **indicating the winner of the stack**. During the game three stacks of eight will form. The **player who wins the majority of the three stacks wins the game**. In Figure 2 Black would be the winner. In the larger international Byte five stacks of eight are formed.

BASIC MOVES Only the dark squares are used in Byte. If a stack is not adjacent to any other stack, and if you own the bottom checker in that stack, you may slide the entire stack to an adjacent square (one square in any diagonal direction). See Figure 3. You must move the entire stack. The only time you can break a stack is when you’re merging two stacks together (see Merging Stacks below).

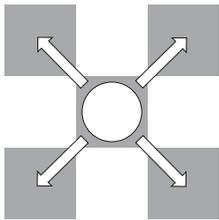


Fig. 3 - Basic Move

MOVE CLOSER The distance between two stacks is measured by the number of moves it would take to get from one stack to the other. When making a basic move, as described in the preceding section, you must **move the stack closer to its closest stack**.

Figure 4 shows the **bottom checker** of each of four stacks. Either of the two moves shown would move the stack closer to its closest stack. In this case the closest stack is the one with the black checker on the bottom (five moves away). If two or more stacks are equally close (and nearest) to a stack you wish to move, pick one and move closer to it.

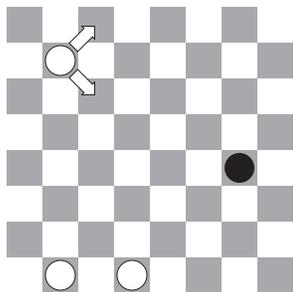


Fig. 4 - Move Closer

In summary: If there is a stack which is not adjacent to any other stack on the board, and you own the bottom checker in that stack, then you can move that stack. But you must move it one square closer to its closest stack.

MERGING STACKS Assume there are two adjacent stacks on the board. Call them stack A and stack B. If you have a checker in stack A, at any level, **you may pick up your checker, carrying all of the checkers on top of it, and place it on stack B**. Two conditions: 1) Your **checker which you pick up must be moved to a higher altitude** - not to the same level or a lower level. 2) You **cannot form a stack of nine or more**.

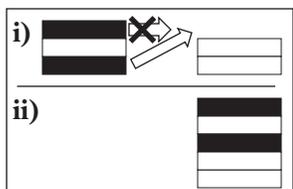


Figure 5 - Move Up

In Figure 5 Black cannot merge his level three checker horizontally to the same level. But he can merge his level one checker up to level three. In Figure 6 Black cannot merge his level one checker because this would form a stack of nine. If Black has no other moves available on the board he is forced to make the move shown, **winning the stack for White**.

If two stacks on the board are adjacent, you cannot move either stack to an unoccupied square.

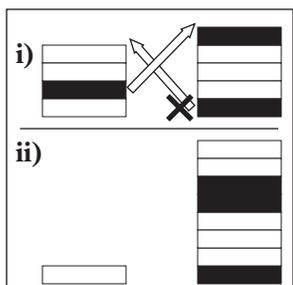


Fig. 6 Don't Make 9

MOVE If you have any moves available you must make one, even if you benefit your opponent by doing so. If you have no moves available you must forfeit your turn and continue to forfeit your turn until you can move again. White moves first in the game.

AUTHOR'S NOTE Feel free to publish this rule sheet, and to program the game of Byte for online or offline play. No licensing fee or royalties are expected. However please don't change the name or the rules, and please attribute the game to me, Mark Steere. My other games can be found at marksteeregames.com.