

IMPASSE

by Mark Steere

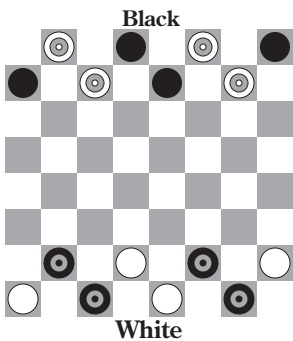


Fig. 1 - Initial Setup

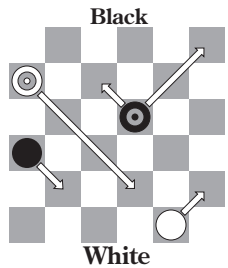


Fig. 2 - Slides

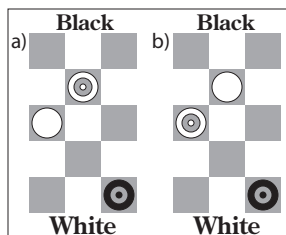


Fig. 3 - Transpose

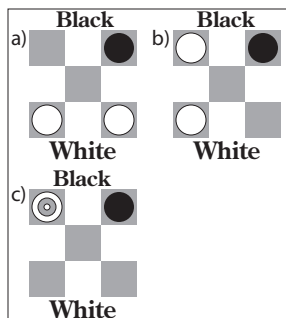


Fig. 4 - Crown

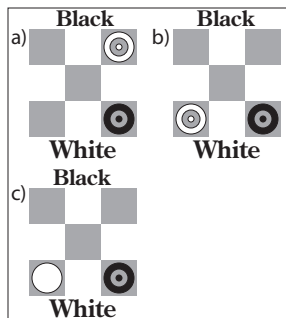


Fig. 5 - Bear Off

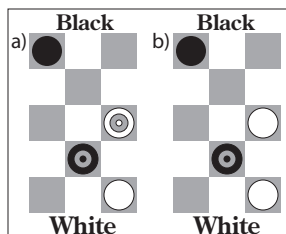


Fig. 6 - Impasse

INTRODUCTION Impasse 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,” Impasse is a unique, robust alternative to Checkers. Draws and ties cannot occur in Impasse. Mark Steere invented Impasse in May 2003.

OBJECT OF THE GAME The first player to remove all of his checkers from the board wins.

BASIC MOVES Players take turns moving their own checkers. There are three types of basic moves in Impasse: the single slide, the double slide, and the transpose. If you have any basic moves available at the outset of your turn, you must make one (and only one). You cannot pass on your turn. You will never have occasion to handle your opponent’s checkers.

Figure 2 shows examples of single slides and double slides. A single checker can be slid diagonally forward (away from the owner), in a straight line along any number of consecutive, unoccupied squares. A double is a stack of two like-colored checkers. Doubles (depicted by bulls’ eyes in the diagrams) can be slid diagonally backward in a straight line along any number of consecutive, unoccupied squares.

Figure 3 shows a transpose. If you have a single adjacent to one of your doubles, and in a nearer row than the double, you can take the top checker of that double and transfer it onto the single. A transpose can only be made backward (toward the owner), not forward.

CROWN When you come to have a single in your furthest row, by way of a slide, a transpose, or the impasse rule (see below), you must immediately “crown” that single with another one of your on-board singles while it is still your turn. Figure 4 shows an example of a crown. If you don’t have another on-board single, simply leave your lone single in your furthest row for the time being. If you come to have another on-board single during a later turn (via the bear off rule or impasse rule [see below]), and if you still have a single in your furthest row, you must immediately stack your new single onto your furthest row single while it is still your turn.

BEAR OFF When you come to have a double in your nearest row, by way of a slide or a transpose, you must immediately “bear off” or remove the top checker of that double from the board while it is still your turn. Once removed from the board (via bear off or impasse), a checker is not reintroduced into play. Figure 5 shows an example of a bear off.

IMPASSE If you have no basic moves available at the outset of your turn you are at an “impasse,” and you must remove exactly one of your checkers from the board - either a single or the top checker of a double. You cannot make any of the three basic move types during your turn, following removal of said checker - although you may be required to perform a crown while it is still your turn. It’s White’s turn in Figure 6 and he has no basic moves available, so he must remove one of his checkers. In this case he has selected the top checker of his double for removal. This concludes White’s turn. If you come to have two singles in your furthest row (the second single via the impasse rule), you must immediately choose one of the two singles and stack it onto the other while it is still your turn. The winner’s last checker is removed via the impasse rule.

AUTHOR’S NOTE Feel free to publish this rule sheet, and to program the game of Impasse 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.