



## CHYÄHTZ

A Chess Variant By Simon Edward Jepps  
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### Introduction

**Chyähztz** (pronounced "ch-ar-tz") is an 8x8 variant combining both Classical Chess and a kind of *Yahzee* with dice. Aside from the standard array of pieces & board, the game uses SIX 6-sided dice, 3 of one colour and 3 of another colour.

I have had this idea a few times and eventually I decided it actually is a good one and this is because whilst the game brings chance into play, there is still a dominating pinnacle element of skill and strategy in balancing how you employ your dice.

Indeed anyone who has played traditional Chess with any added element of luck will probably tell you that losing a regular game is bad enough, let alone to someone you were actually about to win against, all because of a turn of chances.

Yet, what if there were a way to make such a concept viable whilst maintaining a focussed achievable objective through individual skill? Furthermore, what if it might even be playable to a competition level?

I realised, if the game was focussed more on scoring points than delivering "Check Mate" what you actually have is a reverse concept, whereby instead of bringing *Yahzee* into Chess one has actually brought Chess into *Yahzee*.

In this way the "focussed achievable objective" becomes not "Check Mate" but the "Top Score" and as such a new way of playing Chess is born.

This isn't to say **Chyähztz** is less like Chess, oh no in fact for it retains the same rules and tempo of moves per turn... only it brings a new dimension of life into the game and in fact somewhat resurrecting an ancient cultural theme, of which of course I am comparing with Chaturanga.

So yes, it is like Chess + *Yahzee* = Chaturangahtzee!



### Objective, Play & Strategy

#### Objective

Aside from a few special moves, the main difference in play from regular Chess is that the **King MUST** be captured to conclude and win the game. There is **NO** "Check" or "Check Mate"!

- The objective of the game is to obtain the highest score and to have retained that lead when any of the two **Kings** is first captured. The player with the highest score when the first **King** is captured wins the game.
  - Capturing the **King** awards 50 points!
    - ... the **Queen** 64 points.
    - ... a **Rook** 40 points.
    - ... a **Bishop** 30 points.
    - ... a **Knight** 20 points.
    - ... a **Pawn** 10 points.

The game is played similar to *Yahzee*, but with SIX 6-SIDED DICE (or D6s), 3 of one colour and 3 of another colour. Whilst they can be any two colours you desire, for this article we will use **RED** and **GREEN** dice.

The SIX 6-sided dice are employed not only to skillfully chance your score, but also to strategically chance your ability to move pieces about the board.

Thus whilst all SIX dice accumulate your score, the **THREE RED** dice determine what pieces you may move in your turn. Each number of each face of the die represents a particular piece as will be explained shortly.

#### Play

Players take it in turns to roll ALL their SIX dice, re-rolling some or all of the dice **ONCE** again if desired, in order to influence the total outcome of all dice.

Whilst much like *Yahzee*, there are **FIVE** special hands:

- Triple Red "2"** = The **Knight** may leap/capture to the 2nd square away in ANY direction OR receive a **Bonus 25 points**, thus voiding the special move.
- Triple Red "3"** = The **Bishop** may slide/capture a max of TWO squares orthogonally OR receive a **Bonus 25 points**, thus voiding the special move.
- Red "2, 3, 5"** = The **King** may leap/capture like a Knight OR receive a **Bonus 25 points**, thus voiding the special move.
- Six-Of-A-Kind** = Scores **double** AND grants the respective **Triple Red Move** (or) Bonus.
- Straight Run (1-6)** = Receive a **Bonus 25 points** OR may move the **Queen** like a **Camel** if a **Red "1" & Red "6"** are given, thus voiding the bonus.
  - The ancient **Camel** piece moves & captures like an elongated **Knight**, thus in a 3x1 "L" shape.

The **THREE RED** dice determine which pieces you may move on the Chess board. The values of the dice represent the following **Chyähztz** pieces:

- = Pawn
- = Knight
- = Bishop
- = Rook
- = King
- = Queen

The **THREE RED** dice offer you the **CHOICE** of moving ONE of the **THREE** pieces offered - you **MAY NOT** move MORE than ONE piece in a turn, **UNLESS** whence **Castling**.

All pieces move as like they do in Classical Chess, however in order to **Castle your King**, BOTH a **Red 4** and **Red 5** are required. **Castling** is the only exception to the rule of only moving one piece per turn.

**NOTE!** Since there is **NO** "Check" or "Check Mate" a player **CAN** Castle THROUGH "Check"?

#### Rounds

Whilst just one game is enough to wine away the evening, a tournament of 5 games over a period of days is often a much better way to play **Chyähztz**. In this way one would have a running total, combining all **FIVE** scores into the final match.

#### Strategy

Herewith the strategy resides in balancing your score with your choice of abilities on the board. For example, you may wish to re-roll some or all dice to better your score but as consequence this may likely hamper your tactical abilities on the board.

In retrospect you may wish to re-roll some or all dice to better your options of movement about the board but as consequence this may likely decrease your score for that hand.

The **bonus 50 points** awarded for capturing the **King** and respective points for other pieces is a pinnacle controller of the game's momentum, for on average any "otherwise equal" player lagging behind is nevertheless still likely to be just within the margin necessary that, whence the **King** is captured, they may thus be able to reverse the polarity of the match.

Here then a second qualification of balancing must be achieved, in that you must learn to balance your ability to maintain a good score with the ability to juggle the piece-options of the dice, in order to prevent your enemy getting the better of the game and claiming those **50 points** first!

The bonus points for all other captures is not just for fun though, for without these points there would be little incentive to actually play Chess. For example, one could merely roll each and every hand for a maximum score instead, completely ignoring the progress of the game, so that whilst the opponent is attempting to move particular pieces he is scoring weaker as a consequence - thus it would not matter which **King** was captured if you yourself maintained the highest score over gameplay.

Yet making captures point-worthy turns this "sit back & wait" strategy completely on its head - whereof both players are herewith obliged to actively defend their army in order to prevent their opponent increasing his/her score during the game proper.

Incidentally, the **Red "2, 3, 5"** special **King** move is not a "Triple 5" instead, like the **Bishop (3)** or **Knight (2)**, because it is designed to inject an element of sacrifice into the strategy of scoring. Any dice game that offers regular bonus points or abilities for hands that score higher anyway will not be doing itself any justice. For this reason only the **Six-Of-A-Kind** high-hand scores a bonus double in **Chyähztz**.

### Summary

*Chaturanga*, the ancient Indian game of four armies, has always been a dear and close inspiration to my heart when inventing Chess variants. I am very much an earthy, spiritual person with a deep connection to the fantastical fruits of universal cultural embrace.

Herewith, when creating **Chyähztz** I wanted to preserve and resurrect a little of that wholesome, ancient magic - thus of course through the special **King-Knight** move and the **Queen-Camel** move.

Yet one thing has always "nagged" at me in the world of Chess variants or indeed board games in general and that is my desire for quick, hand-to-hand dice combat, which to simplify a more complex description, is very difficult to make compatible with something like Chess. The two styles of game-play are very far removed from each other.

Yet eureka, of course not impossible and finally I believe the careful balancing and blending of scores with abilities in my game makes **Chyähztz** the grandiose summit of the meeting of two seemingly very different worlds. This game truly breathes fire just as if, like dragons themselves were competing for a world title of Dragon Quidditch!

Indeed the suspense and bamboozlement conglomerated into the tactics, skills and logics in **Chyähztz** provides for an actually tremendously entertaining game and one that I believe will become a firm favourite of many Chess Variant enthusiasts!

Thank you for reading.

