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Solution Code

Python

```
def is_path_clear(board, start_r, start_c, end_r, end_c):
     """
     Checks if there are pieces between (start_r, start_c) and (end_r, end_c).
     Works for horizontal (rook) and vertical (rook) moves.
     Does not check diagonal moves.
     """

     # CASE 1: Vertical move (same column, different rows)
     if start_c == end_c:

          # start_path stores the smaller row index
          # Add 1 because we do not check the starting square
          start_path = min(start_r, end_r) + 1
          # end_path stores the larger row index. range() already excludes the
          # last number so we do not check the destination square
          end_path = max(start_r, end_r)

          # Scan the intermediate squares
          for r in range(start_path, end_path):
               if board[r][start_c] != ".":
                    # We found an obstacle!
                    print(f"Path blocked by a piece at {r},{start_c}")
                    return False  # Stops the function immediately

     # CASO 2: Horizontal move (same row, different columns)
     elif start_r == end_r:
          start_path = min(start_c, end_c) + 1
          end_path = max(start_c, end_c)

          for c in range(start_path, end_path):
               if board[start_r][c] != ".":
                    print(f"Path blocked by a piece at {start_r},{c}")
                    return False

     # If the loop ends without ever returning False, the path is clear
     return True
```

Code Analysis:

1. Identifies the direction of the move (horizontal or vertical).
2. Determines the range of squares to check (excluding the start and destination squares).
3. Iterates over these squares one by one.
4. If it finds a non-empty square (different from "."), the search stops because the path is blocked.

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