

NEW SOUTH WALES JUNIOR CHESS LEAGUE

Incorporated

A GUIDE FOR PLAYERS

Dear Chess Players,

I have put together this guide to help you get as much as possible out of playing in the Schools Competition. It is intended to help you to understand some of the more complex rules of the game, to give you some pointers about good play, and to tell you about your rights (and obligations) regarding behaviour and how the matches should be run, plus a few warnings as to what can go wrong. The material is based largely on my own observation of players' needs, and on many of the problems that have been brought to my attention during several years of involvement with the Schools Competitions. I hope that by reading this, you will be able to avoid or cope with some of the problems that have caused some difficulty for others, and that it will give you a bit of a head start.

Before you enter the Competition you are expected to know how to play at least a basic game of chess. If you are not totally sure how to move each of the pieces, or you think you can win by taking the king, **YOU NEED SOME HELP** with the basic rules! Get hold of a basic rule book and ask your teacher to assist you! When you are ready, please read this Guide carefully - if every player (and supervisor) really knows what is going on, the Competition will run smoothly and pleasantly for everyone!

There are some comments and suggestions regarding cheating. This is a problem that I have heard **VERY LITTLE** about, thank goodness, and I am sure that more than 99% of players are fair and honest! However, without wishing to make anyone feel paranoid, I think it is important to let you all know some of the things to look out for, so that the few unfair players will find it difficult to carry out their tricks!

I am indebted to Kevin Harrison, Chess Coach, for providing illustrative positions and moves for most of the technical points covered in this Guide.

All the best chessing!

Margaret Cuckson
NSW Junior Chess League

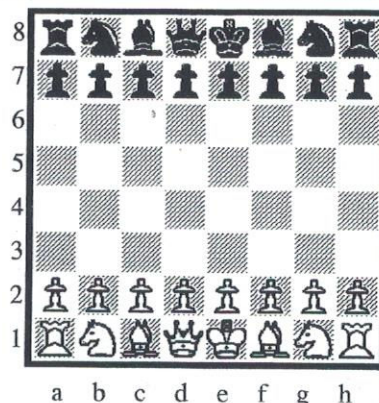
BEFORE YOU READ THIS GUIDE ...

To get the most out of this guide, you should first make sure that you are familiar with the BASIC moves of all the pieces, and you should have played quite a few games with friends, or with a chess computer. Then you will understand much better what all this is about, and it will make more sense and be more useful to you as well.

You should also study the following notes about chess notation (a method of writing down the moves in a game of chess), as you will need to understand it to be able to follow some of the descriptions of moves etc. included here.

HOW TO READ CHESS NOTATION

In order to talk about the moves played in a game of chess, we use a system called "Algebraic Notation". Firstly, this involves naming the squares on the chess board. If you look at the lettering and numbering at the bottom and side of the diagram, you can see that each square can be given a label consisting of a letter and a number. For example, the White queen starts on the square d1, and the Black king on e8. (Note: The letter always comes first.) The lettering "a-h" goes from White's left to right, and the numbering "1-8" from White's end to Black's end. In other words, the square a1 is always on White's near left corner.



Each piece is given a letter as its shorthand name:

King = K; Queen = Q; Rook = R; Bishop = B; Knight = N; Pawn = P

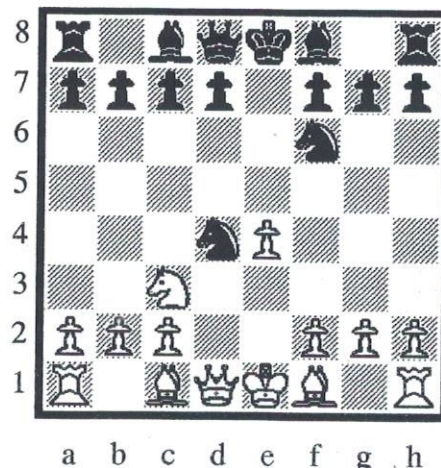
In full algebraic notation, the moves are recorded by first naming the piece, then the square on which the piece is placed, then the square to which the piece moves. However, when recording pawn moves, the letter "P" is usually omitted. Generally, abbreviated (or short) algebraic notation is used, which just names the piece and the square to which it moves (unless two pieces of the same type can move to that square, in which case more information is given). The moves are given in numbered pairs, with White's move recorded first. Here is an example of both forms of notation for a simple opening sequence:

Full Algebraic: 1.e2-e4 e7-e5 2.Ng1-f3 Nb8-c6 3.Nb1-c3 Ng8-f6 4.d2-d4 e5xd4 5.Nf3xd4 Nc6xd4 etc.

Short Algebraic: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Nxd4 etc.

"4...e5xd4 (or exd4)" means that the pawn on e5 takes the pawn on d4. ("x" means "takes".) Notice the "dots" before the move: this tells you that it is a Black move (i.e. named second in the pair, even though the White move is not mentioned here). The word "check" may be written, or the symbol "+" used to indicate that a move is giving check to the king. Castling is recorded as "0-0" on the kingside or "0-0-0" on the queenside. Sometimes comments are included on the game: a "?" after the move indicates that it is not a good move, and a "!" indicates a good move.

The diagram shows the position reached in the opening sequence described above. Look through the moves, and make sure you understand what each one means.



Try playing through the following very short (and rather odd) game. White made some bad mistakes, and was wiped out in just 7 moves:

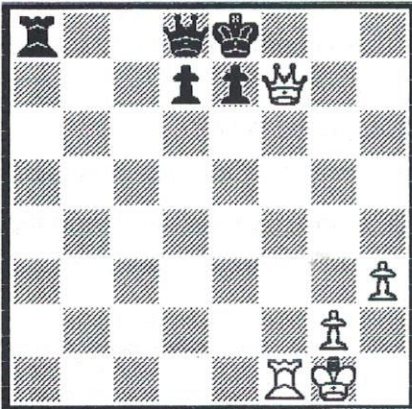
1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.d4 Qh4+ (It is not usually good to bring the queen out so early, but White has left the king very exposed, and Black cannot resist) 4.g3?? (a terrible move, allowing the black pawn in) 4...fxg3 5.Qd2 (it might have been more useful somewhere else) 5...g2+ 6.Kd1 gxf1Q+ (i.e. the pawn has promoted to a queen on reaching the last rank) 7.Qe1 (White has to make this move to block the check) 7...Qhx1 mate (Note the extra "h" in this last move indicates which of the Black queens captured on e1.)

HOW TO WIN!

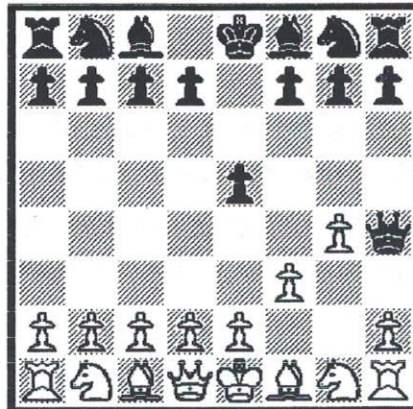
Once you know how the pieces move, the next thing you need to understand is how to win. The game of chess is won by checkmating the opponent's king. The king is in **CHECKMATE** when:

1. It is attacked by one or more of your pieces (that is, "in check").
2. It cannot get away
3. The attacking piece cannot be taken, and
4. The attack cannot be blocked by moving a piece in between.

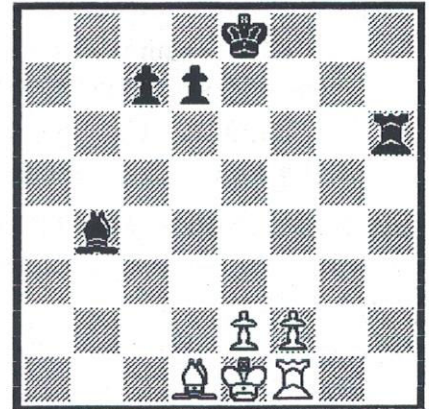
The diagrams show three examples of checkmate.



The Black king cannot take the White queen because the White rook is protecting it.



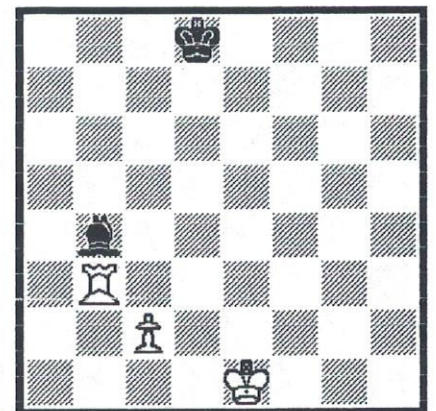
This is Fool's Mate! White would certainly have to be foolish to play these moves, allowing Black to mate in two!



The White king is blocked in by White's own pieces and cannot block the attack from Black's bishop.

WHAT IS CHECK?

A check occurs when one player's piece is attacking the square on which the other player's king is sitting. If a player's king is placed in check, then it must immediately, on the very next move, be taken out of check. This may be done by moving the king, blocking the attack or taking the piece that is giving check. (If it is not possible to escape the check, then it must be checkmate.) If a player does not notice that his/her king is in check, and makes another move, that move has to be taken back, and a correct move made to get the king out of check.



The check from the bishop may be avoided by blocking with the pawn, taking with the rook, or moving the king out of the bishop's diagonal.

HAVE YOU REALLY WON?

If you think you have **WON BY CHECKMATE** you must allow your opponent time to look at the position to decide if it is really checkmate. If your opponent can find a legal move to get out of check, then obviously you were mistaken! If your opponent thinks it is not checkmate, but cannot find a way out of your attack when you have given him/her a reasonable time to do so, and you cannot agree on the result, then you should call the supervisor. The supervisor is **NOT ALLOWED** to tell you whether it is checkmate or not whilst you are playing (unless you go on and make an illegal move!), but will doubtless be able to guide you or your opponent to a decision.

HAVE YOU LOST?

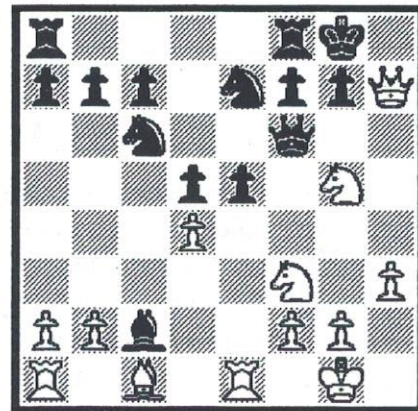
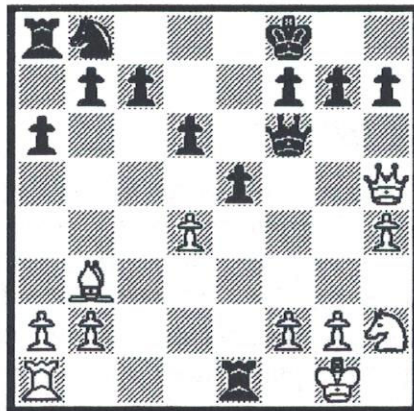
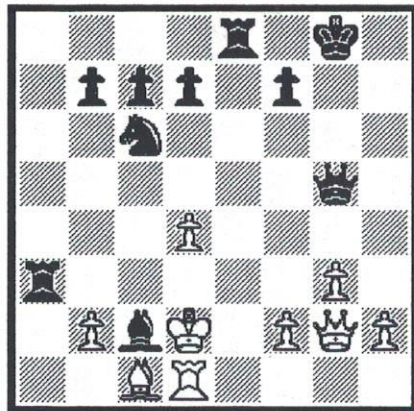
DON'T AGREE TO DEFEAT BY CHECKMATE until you have had a very good look at your position. Your opponent could be wrong! And if he or she has taken your king and claimed a win, they are *certainly* wrong - you must CHECKMATE the king to win, and if your opponent has taken your king, you must have left it in check, which is an illegal move. The pieces must be replaced and you must play another move to get your king out of check if you can. Always look and think carefully before you shake hands and report the result. Once you have agreed that it is checkmate, it is too late to change your mind. No one else is allowed to help you at this point: you have to decide for yourself whether it is really checkmate. First make sure that your king is really being attacked by one or two of your opponent's pieces. IF YOUR KING IS ATTACKED (that is, IN CHECK), see if you can do one or more of the following:

1. **RUN** - Can your king get away to a safe square? (Don't forget that running can involve taking one of your opponent's (unguarded) pieces.)
2. **BLOCK** - Can you block the attack (that is, put one of your pieces in the way)?
3. **TAKE** - Can you take the piece that is attacking the king (using the king or another piece)?

ALWAYS CHECK ALL THREE POSSIBILITIES and choose the BEST alternative - if your opponent is wrong and there is no checkmate, you might be able to turn the tables and take advantage of your opponent's mistake.

If you cannot RBT (Run, Block or Take), and your king is in fact attacked by your opponent's piece (or pieces) then your king has been checkmated and you have lost!

Look carefully at each of the positions below. In each case one of the kings is in check. Find the escape from the check as quickly as you can. Remember: Run, Block or Take (solutions at bottom of page).



WHEN SHOULD YOU RESIGN?

If you were playing a Chess Grandmaster and he had a pawn advantage (i.e. all pieces equal except that he has one more pawn than you have and you cannot win it back) then you should probably resign. However, if you are playing an inexperienced opponent, you should not give up so easily. Even fairly good players might make a mistake somewhere along the line, and although you may be a piece or two (or even three) down, you might still have a chance at least of a draw - and half a point is certainly better than none!

Even in an end-game where your opponent has many pieces against your lone king, you might be lucky enough to find that your opponent makes a blunder and stalemates you. However, if you know your opponent is very good and has an easily winning position, then it is good manners to resign.

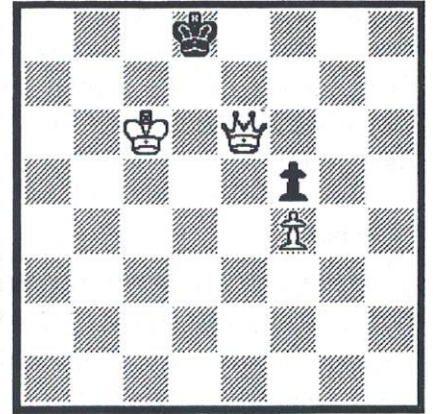
Solutions. Diagram Left: 1.Kxc2 or 1.f4 Diagram Centre: 1.Rxe1 (or 1.Nf1, but taking the rook is obviously better) Diagram Right: 1...Bxh7

WHEN IS IT A DRAW?

A *DRAW* is the result when one of the following occurs:

1. **STALEMATE** - that is, when one player's king is trapped (but not in check) and cannot legally move and that player has no other pieces that can legally move.

An example of *stalemate*. With Black to move, there is no legal move. The result is stalemate, because White is not attacking the Black king. White should have been more careful - with this material a checkmate would have been easy!



2. **AGREEMENT** - you are allowed to offer a **DRAW** to your opponent if you **REALLY BELIEVE** that neither player is going to be able to win the game. (You are **NOT ALLOWED** to offer or accept a draw before you have started playing!)

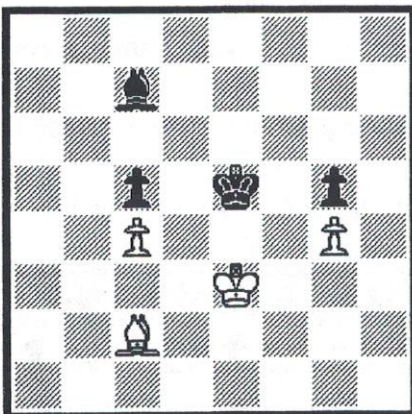
If you wish to offer a draw at some time during the game you should do so immediately after making your move (and before your opponent has time to make the next move). If your opponent accepts the draw before making his/her move, then that result may be given to the Supervisor. If he or she says no, or makes another move, then the draw is rejected.

You should always give the game a proper go before you consider offering or accepting a draw, and never offer a draw unless you really mean it. Once you have offered, your opponent is entitled to take it, until he/she says no, or makes a move.

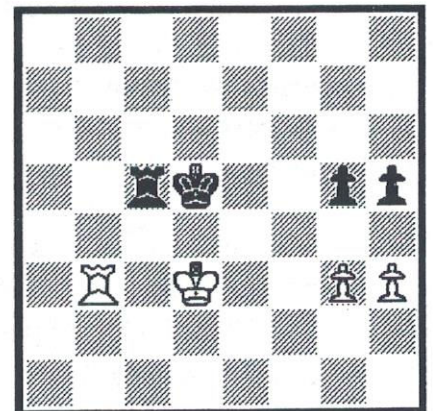
You should **NOT** offer a draw if you are clearly losing - that would just be bad manners - unless you think that your opponent is not going to be able to checkmate you. This might happen if you are in the endgame, and your opponent is chasing your king around the board with some strong pieces, but doesn't seem to know what to do with them to finish you off! In this case either player can offer the draw. The player with the pieces shouldn't be in too much of a hurry to accept the draw - you never know your luck: you might find the winning combination if you apply your mind to it!

You should **NEVER** offer a draw just for the fun of it - if you do this too often, you could be accused of trying to distract your opponent, which is against the rules.

During a match **YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED** to ask anyone whether it is a good idea to offer or accept a draw. You must judge this for yourself.



These are two examples of positions where an agreed draw would be appropriate. In both cases the material is even and the pieces are evenly matched. A win is possible only if someone makes a horrible blunder.

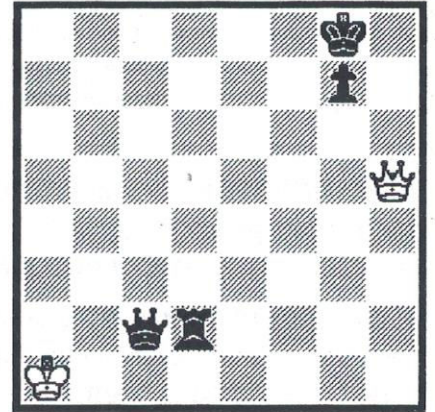


3. **INSUFFICIENT MATERIAL** - This means that neither player has the right sort of pieces left to get a **CHECKMATE**. It is not possible to checkmate with only two kings on the board, king and knight versus king, king and bishop versus king, or king and bishop versus king and bishop where the two bishops are on square of the same colour. The result with only these pieces has to be a draw - and this is the **ONLY TIME** that someone watching your game can stop you and tell you and your opponent the result!

4. 50-MOVE RULE - If 50 moves are played by both players (100 moves altogether) without a capture or a pawn move then it is reasonable to assume that not much progress is being made in the game, and the player to move may claim a draw. Unless you are writing down the moves as you play them (unusual in the Primary Schools Competition, you should ask the supervisor to count the moves for you if you think a 50-move claim is likely. Remember, once a capture occurs or a pawn is moved, then you have to restart the count! The most common occurrence of the 50-move rule is where a player is having difficulty checkmating his opponent - chasing the king around the board without getting anywhere.

5. THREEFOLD REPETITION - If the same position occurs three times in the one game (with the same player to move), then the player to move may claim a draw. As with the 50-move rule, you may need the supervisor (or other reliable witness) to watch the moves and verify that the repetition has occurred.

The most common occurrence of a draw by repetition is when a player's king is being checked backwards and forwards and cannot avoid "perpetual check". Forcing a perpetual check is a good way to get draw from an otherwise lost position, but not good if you are winning!



The diagram gives an example of a draw by *forced perpetual check*. Black has a big advantage in material - White's only real hope is for a draw, so: 1.Qe8+ Kh7 2.Qh5+ Kg8 3.Qe8+, and the same position will soon occur for the third time - draw. Obviously in this case, if White did not have this perpetual check, Black would win on the next move with Qc1 or Qa2 or Qb2 mate (not Rd1 which would be taken by the queen and delay (though not prevent) Black's win).

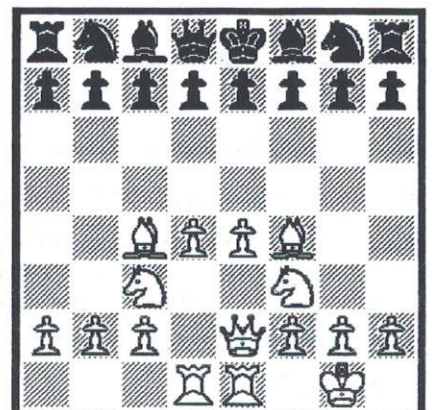
WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO START THE GAME?

How you play the first few moves, or "Opening" of the game is very important, because the player who manages to get more pieces on better squares is going to have an advantage as the game proceeds. The most important thing to aim for is to have as many pieces as you can firing through the centre of the board.

There are a number of good moves with which to open the game. Here are some "DOs" and "DON'Ts"

- * DO move out the pawns in front of your king and your queen, which lets out the bishops and later the queen.
- * DO move your knights out early, and towards the middle of the board. (Generally, if you move your knights out to the sides, you are not giving them much choice of future moves.)
- * DO castle early in the game, which puts the king into a safe "cubby" and brings a rook towards the centre.
- * DON'T move a piece twice unless you have to, until all your pieces are developed (pieces = knights, bishops, rooks, queens).
- * DON'T bring your queen out too early (or your opponent will have fun developing lots of pieces whilst chasing your queen around and preventing you from developing your other pieces).
- * DON'T make lots of pawn moves early in the game.
- * DO aim to make way for the rooks to fire down the board.
- * DO try to control the centre of the board.

The Diagram shows White's ideal development, applying all these rules. Unfortunately it is not so easy in a game - your opponent will want to play some moves too!



CASTLING

CASTLING is a useful move that can get your king into a safe spot. You may castle either on the kingside or the queenside. To castle, you move your king two squares towards the rook, and then the rook jumps over the king and sits next to it. You *must* touch the king first, or both pieces at the same time. The castled positions are as follows:



(It is more common to castle on the kingside.)

There are four important things to remember about when you **MAY NOT** castle:

1. You may not castle if there are pieces between the king and the rook
2. You may not castle if the king or rook have already moved
3. You may not castle if the king is in check
4. You may not castle if the king passes across (or lands on) a square that is under attack from an opponent's piece

If you do CASTLE, look out for something **VERY** important and dangerous:

BEWARE OF BACK RANK MATE!

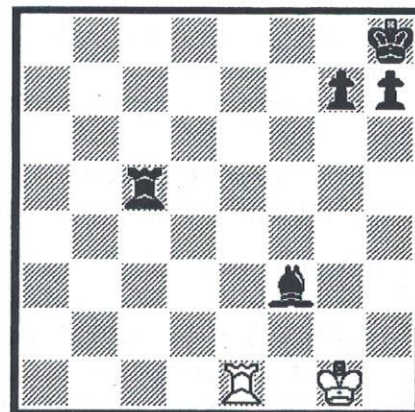
If you have castled, and your king is nicely tucked away behind a wall of pawns, you must be always on the watch for the danger of **BACK RANK MATE**. As you can see in the diagram, Black has lots more pieces than White, and it looks as if Black is winning. However, if it were White's turn to move, White would win on the very next move. Can you see how?

Yes: the White rook can checkmate by moving to e8. Black can do nothing - the Black king is trapped and the game is lost!

If Black had the next move instead of White, Black should do something to protect against the checkmate. There are several choices:

1. Protect the dangerous square or squares on the back rank - here you can play 1...Rc8 or Bh5 or Bc6 to protect e8.
2. Move a piece into a position from which it can "intervene" - play 1...Bd5 (If 2.Re8+, then 2...Bg8, and the rook threat has no effect because the bishop is now in the way.)
3. Move one of the black pawns to provide an escape square.

This is often the best choice, as you do not want your pieces tied up having to protect the back rank, when they want to be free to pursue the opponent's king! Here you can move 1...h6 or g6.



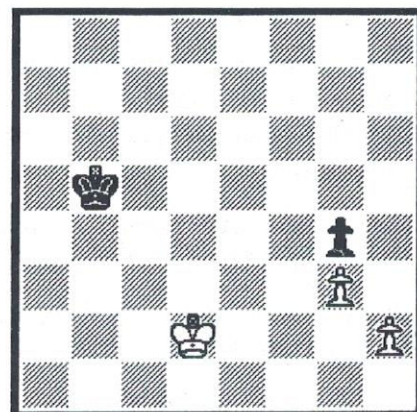
EN PASSANT

In primary schools chess not everyone knows about the *en passant* rule. They should, because it is one of the rules of chess, and it can come as a nasty shock if your opponent uses it on you and you don't know about it. The *en passant* rule is as follows:

"If a player moves one of his pawns two squares on its first move, and if his opponent has a pawn that could have captured it if it had moved forward only one square, then on his next turn, but **ONLY** his next turn, the second player may take the advanced pawn as if it had indeed advanced only one square."

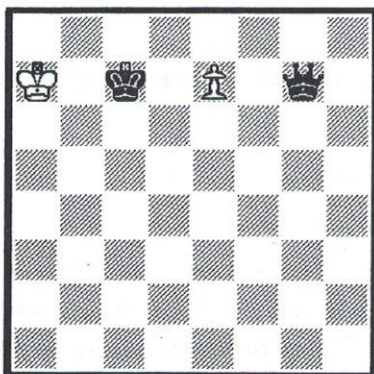
En passant (e.p.) is a French term meaning "in passing" - the pawn is captured as it tries to slip past.

In the diagram, if White tries to march his pawn forward (to get a queen) by 1.h4, then Black can capture it with 1...gxh3 e.p.

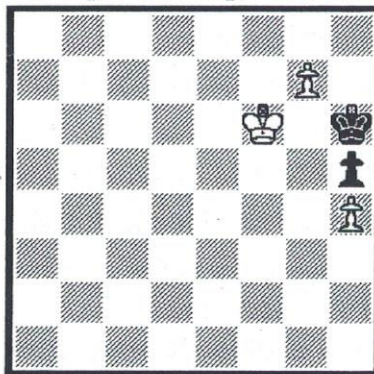


PAWN PROMOTION

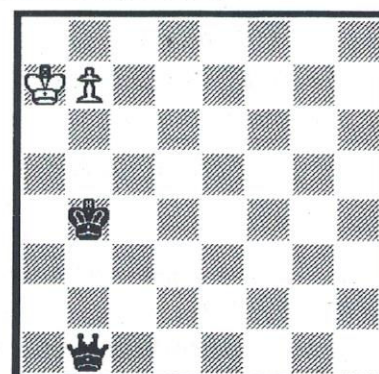
When you manage to get a pawn through to the opposite end of the board from which it started, you can promote that pawn to any piece (except a king). This "promotion" takes place immediately when the pawn moves to the last square, as part of that move. You must announce straight away which piece you are promoting to. You can borrow a piece from another set (don't forget to return it!), or use an upside-down rook for a queen if you wish. Most people promote their pawns to queens, because of course the queen is the most powerful piece. However, if promoting to a queen creates a stalemate, which can happen, you should obviously choose something else (unless a draw is the best you can hope for!) Sometimes it is even better to promote the pawn to a knight - in some circumstances, the knight can immediately fork two important pieces (and win one), or even achieve checkmate! Look at the following diagrams, and try to decide which pieces the pawn should become in each case.



If 1.e8Q, then Black plays 1...Qa1 mate! Correct is 1.e8N+, attacking both king and queen at once (a fork). Black must move out of check, losing the queen.



1.g8R, NOT queen, since this would be stalemate. This is then followed by 1...Kh7 2.Kf7 Kh6 3.Rh8 mate.



Here a queen is certainly a safe promotion. 1.b8Q check, king moves, 2.Qxb1, and then White has an easy win.

ILLEGAL MOVE

ALL PLAYERS MUST UNDERSTAND about *illegal moves*. You aren't **ALLOWED** to make illegal moves yourself, and you must not let your opponent make them either!

An illegal move means either that the player has made a mistake in the way a piece moves (and even quite experienced players can slip up and move a piece onto the wrong square by mistake) or a player has moved his/her king into check or left it in check, which is never allowed. If an illegal move is made, the pieces must be replaced and the correct moves played (and the **TOUCH MOVE** rule must be obeyed - see below).

Remember, **THE KING MUST NEVER BE LEFT OR PLACED IN CHECK!** If your opponent does this, you should point it out (politely!) - all you need to say is "You are in check". **IF THE SUPERVISOR SEES YOU MAKE AN ILLEGAL MOVE, HE OR SHE IS ALLOWED TO TELL YOU SO** - but this is about the only time even the supervisor can say anything about your moves!

TOUCH MOVE, TOUCH TAKE

There is a saying amongst chess players: *Sit on your hands* while you are deciding your move! This is because if you intentionally touch one of your pieces, you **MUST MOVE IT!** (unless moving it is illegal). So always **THINK FIRST** because once you have touched your piece it is too late to change your mind.

Once you have moved a piece and **TAKEN YOUR HAND OFF** the piece, then you **CANNOT CHANGE THAT MOVE** unless the move was illegal.

If you intentionally touch one of your opponent's pieces with your hand or with your piece, then you **MUST TAKE THAT PIECE**, unless you cannot legally take it.

If the pieces on the board get messed up a bit and are not straight on their squares, you are allowed to "tidy them up", but **ONLY WHEN IT IS YOUR TURN**, and you must say "**ADJUSTING**" (or in French, "J'adoube") **CLEARLY** and **BEFORE** you touch the pieces.

HOW MUCH ARE THE PIECES WORTH?

Quite often players get very excited when they capture a piece, and ask "How much is this worth?" Each of the pieces can be given a value - a certain number of points - which is based on the relative strength and usefulness of the piece:

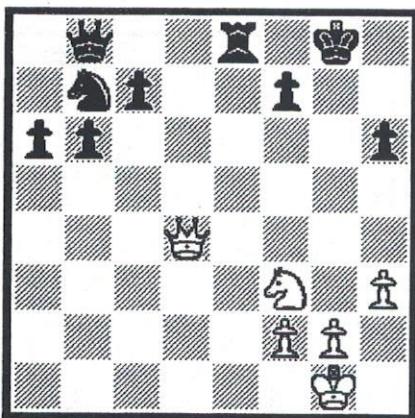
Queen - 9 points; Rooks - 5 points; Bishops & Knights - 3 points; Pawns - 1 point

The King is worth the whole game so it is not given a point value.

Often if a game is unfinished, the value of the pieces is added up to see who has won the game. There is really a lot more to consider. For example, a rook that is in the centre with a clear path ahead, and can move freely, is much more valuable than a rook that is blocked in by other pieces. Things like this are taken account when an adjudication (i.e. judgement of an unfinished game) is made.

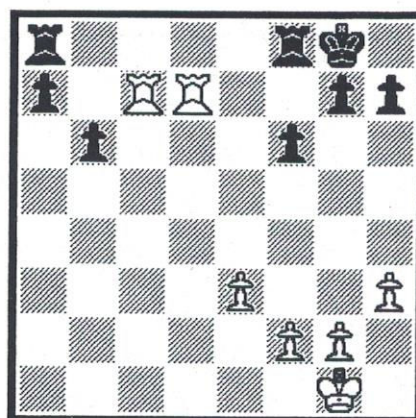
It is useful for you to know about the value of the pieces so that you know when it is safe to make a capture that means losing one of your own pieces. For example, if you can take your opponent's queen with a bishop, but then lose your bishop, it is quite O.K. - you are losing something that is less powerful in exchange for something that is of greater value to your opponent!

It is also quite O.K. to "swap" pieces - e.g. take a knight with your bishop and then lose your bishop - because these pieces are of the same value. Players will often swap pieces to try to improve their position - open up the board to give space for their other pieces, etc.



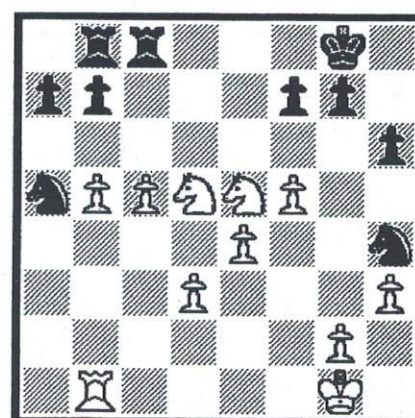
Queens are best located in the centre of the board, from where they can quickly switch to either the kingside or the queenside.

The White queen is well positioned, but the Black queen is hemmed in by its own pieces.



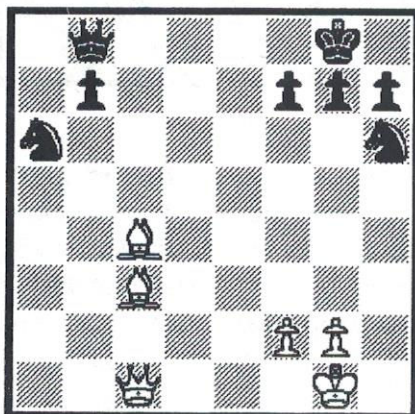
White's rooks are aggressively doubled on the 7th rank, and threaten to checkmate with 1.Rxg7+ Kh8 2.Rh8+ Kg8 3.Rcg7 mate.

The Black rooks are badly placed because they are hemmed in by Black's own pawns.



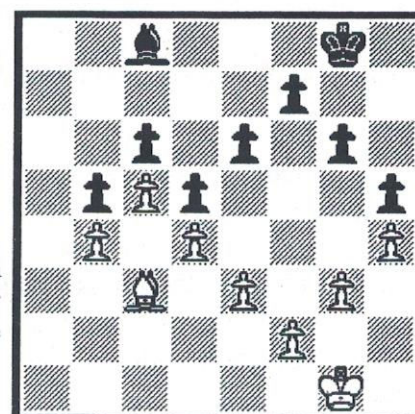
Knights are most powerful when they occupy central squares in the opposing half of the board. In this position White threatens to play Ne7+, catching the rook on c8 with a fork.

Knights are at their weakest on the edge of the board. In this position neither of the Black knights can move to a safe square.



Bishops are at their best when the board has been cleared of most of the pawns, since they are able to roam freely to all parts of the board (see left).

In the position on the right, both bishops are restricted by their own pawns and have little chance of making an impact.



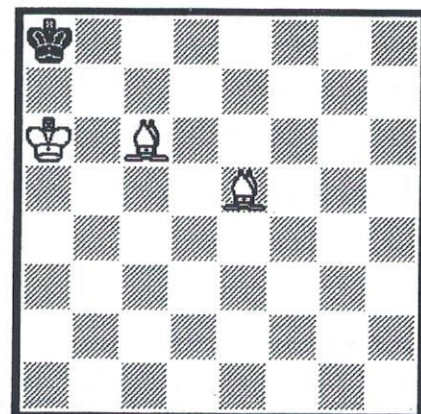
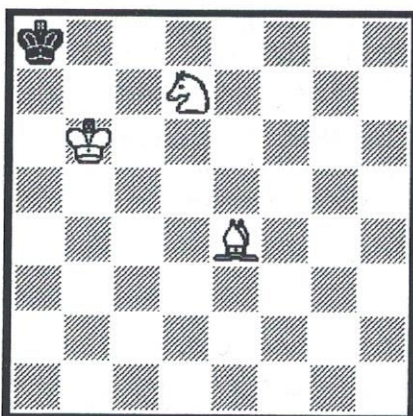
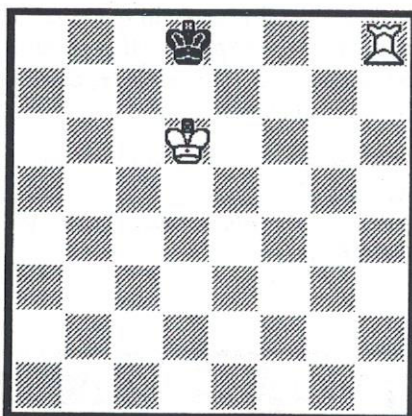
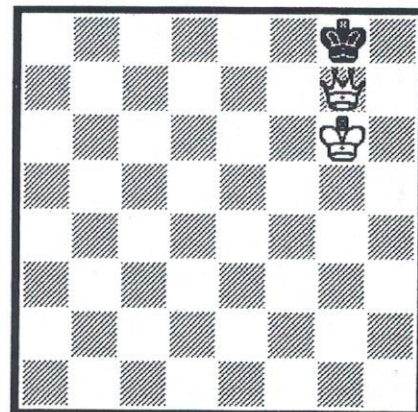
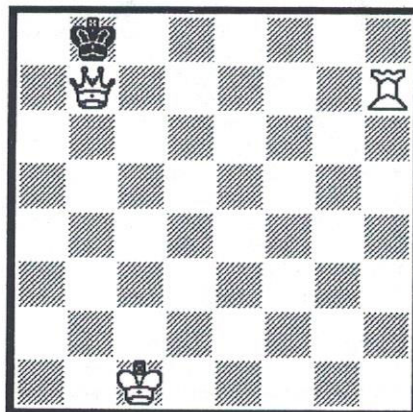
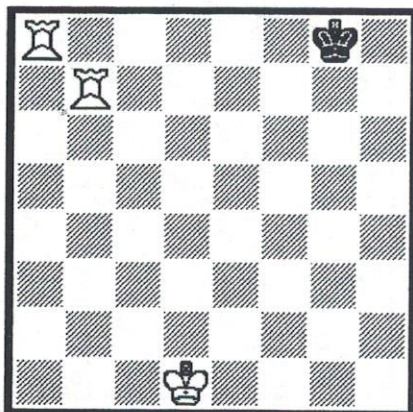
WINNING PLANS

Quite often players get to the "Endgame" and find that they have a big advantage in pieces, but don't know how to use them to get a checkmate. How frustrating! With certain pieces in the endgame, there are quite simple rules to follow which give you a guaranteed checkmate - as long as you can remember them! Occasionally players will hit on the right idea by accident, but more often they shift pieces back and forth with no successful plan, and end up with a draw after playing 50 moves and failing to win.

If you have king, queen and rook against king, king and two rooks against king, king and queen against king, or king and rook against king, then there are plans you can follow and achieve checkmate quite simply and quickly. There are also ways you can learn with bishops and knights as well, although these are a bit more complicated. Of course if you are left with just a king and a pawn or two against a king, you can probably "queen" your pawn and achieve a quick checkmate too!

I am not going to explain how to achieve these checkmates here, but you should be able to find an explanation in any good basic chess book that explains Endings. Try your school library, or a chess retailer, or ask an experienced player to show you.

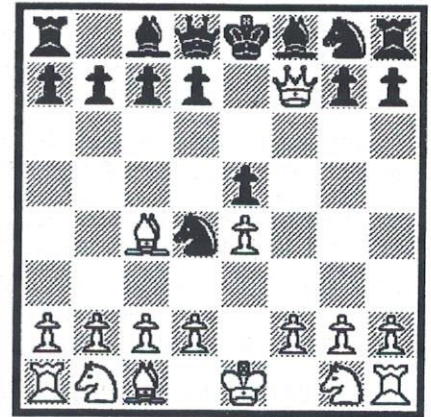
Here are some diagrams illustrating the final position in some of these checkmates. See if you can work out how to get there!



As you can see, these checkmates where there are only a few pieces left are all achieved by forcing the king to an edge of the board. You cannot do this using only one of your pieces (unless your opponent cooperates!) Use your pieces working together, and sometimes your king, to force your opponent's king to the side, and then make your checkmating move. In some cases you must be careful not to stalemate (and remember, you can NEVER GIVE CHECK WITH THE KING (you would have to put your own king into check to do so!) There are other checkmate positions, but these will at least give you a good start!

HAVE YOU EVER LOST IN THIS POSITION?!

If so, you would have held your head and groaned in disbelief, because it probably only took your opponent four moves, and about 2 minutes, to trap you in the dreaded *Four Move Checkmate!* Some people feel it is poor sportsmanship to play such a dirty trick and they think it should be banned! Perhaps they are right, but it is really impossible to ban it - there are slight variations that can be played that lead to the same result in five or six moves, so there wouldn't be much point in disallowing checkmate when it occurs in four. The best defence is for ALL OF YOU to learn to recognize it in time, how to defend against it and how to take advantage of your opponent if he/she tries it against you - then there will be no point in the smarties trying it out any more!



Let's replay the moves and see how Black ended up in this sorry state, then you need never fall for Four Move Checkmate again!

1.e4 (A good developing move that opens the way for the queen and the king's bishop) 1...e5 (Good for the same reason) 2.Bc4 (Aiming the bishop at the vulnerable f7 pawn) 2...Nc6 (A reasonable move, but more aggressive would be 2...Nf6, attacking the White e pawn) 3.Qf3 (A bad move, for unless there is a good reason, you shouldn't bring the queen out so soon) 3...Nd4? (The reason why it is dangerous to bring out the queen early in the game is that the queen can easily be attacked by less valuable pieces. However, this aggressive move is a mistake, since it fails to take account of why White played his queen to f3) 4.Qxf7 mate.

Chess would not be such a popular game if it was so easy to win in four moves with the White pieces. Here is how you can stop White carrying out the Four Move Checkmate.

1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 (Now White is ready to play the queen to either f3 or h5, lining up for the checkmate) 2...Nf6! (This move solves all Black's problems, since 3.Qf3 no longer threatens checkmate, whilst 3.Qh5 simply allows 3...Nxh5)

Some people get confused when White plays the queen out before the bishop. Here is how you should deal with this problem:

1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 (This not only gets ready to checkmate on f7 but threatens the pawn on e5) 2...Nc6 (Defends the pawn on e5) 3.Bc4 g6 (Prevents the queen from capturing the pawn on f7) 4.Qf3 (Saving the queen from capture and once again threatening 5.Qxf7 mate) 4...Nf6 (Blocking the checkmate threat. Now that White's checkmate has been prevented, Black is ready to go on the attack with ...Nd4, attacking the queen and threatening ...Nxc2+)

(A message to all those "Four Move Mates": Don't try it again - now all of NSW knows about it!)

SOME GOLDEN RULES!

1. **"Sit on your hands!"** Many juniors tend to play much too quickly: you see a move that looks good, and out comes the hand to move the piece, touches it, moves it - and then OH WOE!!, you realize to your horror that you have left your queen under attack so that it can be captured next move! ALWAYS SIT ON YOUR HANDS, plan your move, play it in your head, and then check in your mind whether the move is safe before you touch your piece!

2. **"Look for threats from your opponent!"** You should always assume that your opponent has a very good reason for making each move. Always look for threats of capture or checkmate EVERY TIME your opponent makes a move. Don't just get carried away with your own clever plans - you won't get to try them out if your opponent suddenly sneaks up with a checkmate or takes your queen when you are not paying attention!

3. **"Look for opportunities to attack!"** Any move that your opponent makes may be a mistake, even a tiny one, that you can take advantage of! Always look for opportunities to win pieces, or even checkmate your opponent.

BEHAVIOUR RULES

There are very strict rules for players in any properly-run chess competition. These are designed to make sure that things are fair to both players in each game. When you are playing a match game, it is your **RIGHT** to insist that the behaviour rules are followed, just as it is your **OBLIGATION** to obey them yourself.

Observers who break the rules should be asked to move right away from any games that are being played, and players who break the rules may be made to forfeit their game or may even have points deducted from their team!

YOU MUST REALISE THAT IF SOMEONE BREAKS THE RULES, YOU MUST STOP PLAYING AND COMPLAIN TO THE SUPERVISOR STRAIGHT AWAY. Your game will not normally be replayed once it has finished, so it is no good waiting until you have lost, and then saying "I lost because he/she put me off by making rude noises and saying nasty things..." or "I lost because someone came up 10 minutes ago and told him/her a good move!" or whatever. **ALWAYS REPORT A PROBLEM IMMEDIATELY IT OCCURS!**

1. PLAYERS ARE FORBIDDEN TO DISTRACT OR ANNOY THEIR OPPONENT IN ANY WAY. Sometimes players think they can put their opponent off whilst they are playing by making unpleasant noises, pulling faces, banging their pieces aggressively, etc. This sort of behaviour is not allowed, and if someone does it to you, you have the right to complain to the supervisor. Of course, you would **NEVER** do it to anyone else!!!

2. YOU MUST NEVER GIVE HELP TO ANY PLAYER OR ASK FOR HELP WITH YOUR MOVES! (and of course no one may help your opponent.) This would obviously be cheating. If players have a problem in their game and think there may have been an incorrect move made, for example, they must ask the Supervisor for advice. The Supervisor is only allowed to tell you the rules - you can **NEVER** be given advice as to what is your best move! (And you cannot ask someone to check whether you have checkmate or stalemate in your game: this is up to the two players. You only need to call the Supervisor if you cannot agree or play on.)

ALL TEAM MEMBERS MUST REALIZE that they **ABSOLUTELY MUST NOT** tell their fellow team members a "good move" - this is **CHEATING** and cannot be tolerated, even if the player has not asked for advice. You cannot even say something like: "You have a good move", or "You have checkmate in two!" etc. Obviously the player involved would then sit there and examine the game until he or she finds the good move - hardly fair to the opponent, when the player might otherwise have never even noticed that there was a good move. Comments like this are *very helpful* when you are playing practice games because they help to make you think but they have **NO PLACE AT ALL** during a competition game.

3. NEITHER PLAYERS NOR SPECTATORS SHOULD TALK OR MAKE A NOISE WHERE GAMES ARE BEING PLAYED.

Firstly, this can be distracting and put the players off.

Secondly, if it is quiet, it is much easier to tell if someone is misbehaving! It is very hard to tell if someone is telling a player good moves to make if there is a lot of talk going on.

4. SPECTATORS MUST STAND AWAY FROM A GAME THAT IS BEING PLAYED. Players have the right to ask the supervisor to remove spectators who are distracting them or standing too close. Nobody likes to have people crowding over them while watching the game - particularly a mob from the other team! You can feel quite uncomfortable and even threatened in this situation, particularly if you are in a close end-game. It can also be hard to tell if someone is cheating if there are people standing too close. Observers should be at least a metre and a half away from the body of a player and the chess board.

5. SPECTATORS MUST NOT TOUCH THE BOARD OR THE TABLE where a game is being played - obviously if they are, then they are standing too close (unless it is a very large table), and there is the danger of the board being knocked.

6. "FRIENDLY" GAMES MAY NOT BE PLAYED NEAR COMPETITION GAMES. I am sorry to say that I have actually had reported to me a case of some players sitting at a board close to one of their team mates and setting up the position that had been reached in his game. They then proceeded to give him hints by moving pieces on their board, making suggested moves! I am glad to say I have heard of very few cheats like this. I am not telling you this to make you paranoid about cheats, but just to help make sure that it never happens to you! If someone starts playing a "friendly" near you, just ask the supervisor (politely) to move them away. "Friendlies" tend to be a bit too noisy, as well.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT NO ONE, NOT EVEN THE SUPERVISOR, is allowed to comment on the game while you are still playing. The only time an observer may interrupt is if they see someone make an illegal move that the players have not noticed - and then the supervisor should be called and the position fixed.

The Supervisor may also tell you to stop playing and declare the game a draw where there is insufficient material for a checkmate or you may be stopped by the Supervisor if it is getting very late and everyone needs to go home. In this case, if you and your opponent agree between you to a result (you might both feel that a draw is a fair result, or one player might realise he or she is definitely going to lose) then the agreed result can be recorded. You do not have to accept a result if you do not believe it is fair. If you don't agree to a result, then your game should be recorded and sent to the Competition Director of Play to be adjudicated. This involves several people in a fair amount of work, so please be honest and fair about it, and try to reach agreement if you can.