

CURRICULUM FOR BEGINNERS AND INTERMEDIATES

Highland Park Scholastic Chess

January, 2010

NOTE: This curriculum dates to 1995, when I began teaching chess. It began as a list of topics to be taught in a sequence that I thought made sense. Over the years I fleshed it out and added new sections. This year Phillip Yontez, one of our coaches, gave it a careful edit, added some additional sections and improved the diagrams. We have tried to keep it as short as possible while still covering the basics. Combined with game reviews, it contains enough material for approximately fifty 45-minute lessons aimed at grades K-8, sufficient to fill a school year for a club meeting twice a week. We have used uppercase and bold to emphasize prompts and reminders for coaches as well as points of special importance.

Jerry Neugarten

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THE RULES OF THE GAME AND A FEW BASICS

Introduction

SET UP BOARD OR DEMO BOARD, BE SURE EVERYONE HAS NAME TAGS

Want to get you playing quickly but will start from very beginning

How game is basically played (show): armies approach each other, capture, and surround King
(historical parallel: forces surrender)

Most played game in the world, both casual & competitive

Complicated! 16 billion board positions after 10 moves

Exciting! Can be battles in several parts of board, with lots of strategy!

The Board

Board has 64 squares, called White & Black

A White square is always in the lower right-hand corner

In diagrams & our demo board, White pieces always on bottom; red=White

Squares have names. **HAVE THEM NAME SQUARES**

Teach notation bit by bit, having them identify their moves by proper chess notation

Ranks, Files, Diagonals. **HAVE THEM FIND SOME**

The Pieces

Go through each piece, name them including Knight (not horse); Rook (not castle)

How each piece moves

DO IN THIS ORDER (easiest): R, B, Q (like R & B combined), N, K and P

Only Knight can jump

HAVE THEM TRY MOVES e.g. Rook to g5

Initial placement on the board

Queen's color (Kings & Queens across the board from each other)

Bishops have ear of K & Q

Kingside vs. Queenside

Purpose of Game: Checkmate -- we'll return to this, but briefly:

Explain Check: attack on King

Checkmate is Check PLUS can't move, block, or capture attacking piece. i.e. **ATTACKING & TRAPPING KING.**

GIVE EXAMPLES OF CHECKMATE eg back Rank with Rook (**CORRIDOR MATE**), Q next to K in protected spot (**SUPPORT MATE**)

Value of the Pieces -- based on **ATTACKING POWER** on empty board

Piece	Coverage (squares)	Value (points)
Queen	21-27	9
Rook	14	5
Bishop	7-13	3
Knight	2-8	3
Pawn	1-4	1

Explain – Queen can cover from 21-27 squares depending on where she is, Rooks always 14, Knights 2 to 8, Bishops 7-13, Pawns maximum of 4 but most often 1

Why are Bishops and Knights equal in value? Bishop covers more space; Knight can jump over other pieces and switch colors.

Moves generally

- White moves first, then each side alternates
- Can only move one piece at a time (exception—castling, covered later)
- To move, pick up piece & put it where you want
- Start with piece you are moving (not piece to be captured)
- Only one piece on a square

Attacking & Capturing

If aiming at piece, can take it

DO EXAMPLES WITH ALL PIECES; HAVE THEM FIND ATTACKS

include some 2 move attacks

and Bishops trying to capture on opposite color (impossible)

Once gone, gone forever (except for promotion, covered later)

Only the Pawn takes in a different direction than it moves

Special Moves

Castling -- the only move where 2 pieces move at same time which protects the King while bringing Rooks into play. Kingside castling vs. Queenside castling

Cannot castle: if any pieces are in the way

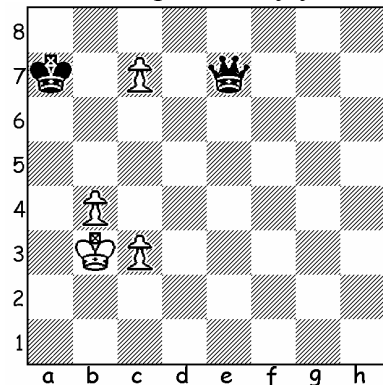
if the King or Rook have moved

from, through, or into Check

Beginners often afraid to castle (worried their moves will be wrong, King will be trapped)

Pawns promoting (normally to Queens) then disappearing

Good example of why you'd (under) promote to a Knight:



c8=N+ is a Knight Fork of the King and Queen

Defending an Attacked Piece -- 5 choices

1. Take the attacking piece
2. Block with another piece
3. Move
4. Protect with another piece to set up a trade. But exchange must be favorable. **GIVE GOOD AND BAD EXAMPLES -- "SHOULD WE DEFEND BY...?"**
5. Counter-attacking (capture a piece of equal or greater value)

Check

Main idea -- King under attack. Must escape IMMEDIATELY
HAVE THEM CREATE CHECKS WITH SEVERAL PIECES

Football analogy: quarterback attacked by a rusher

Take: rusher is knocked over

Block: rusher is blocked by a fullback

Move: quarterback runs around corner

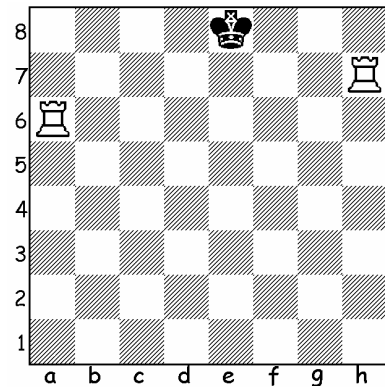
Unlike an attacked piece, can't just protect the King (must block or move immediately). King cannot move into Check; for example, there must always be an empty square between the two Kings.

GIVE EXAMPLES

Checkmate

This is the whole point of the game (not just capturing opponent's pieces). Can win even if you are behind in pieces. If can't capture, block, or move, you lose. King doesn't actually leave board

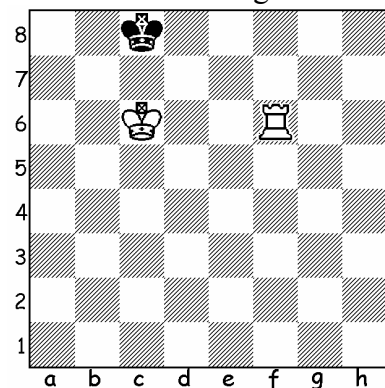
GIVE EXAMPLES & HAVE THEM SOLVE THEM:



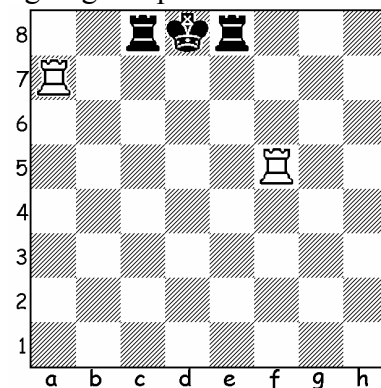
Ra8++

Give similar example but with King Pinned to left or right side (switch 90 degrees)

Then let one Rook get too close to King & get captured!



Rf8++



Rd5++ Again, do sideways

PRACTICE TWO ROOKS PUSHING THE KING BACK (Ladder Mate)

Another common example: Queen next to King on protected square (Supported Mate)

Give examples with several pieces, incl. Pawn

General lesson: Pin King to edge of board -- many Checkmates are there

SHOW SMOTHERED MATE (King in the corner surrounded by his pieces; mated by Knight)

Can Checkmate even if no pieces taken: **FOOL'S MATE** (fastest)

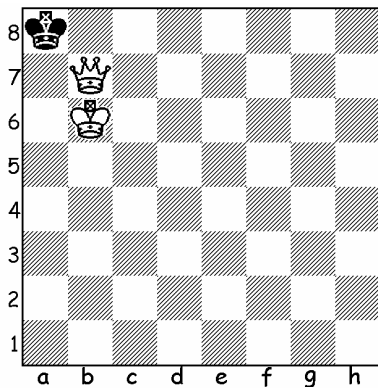
1. f3 e5
2. g4 Qh4++

One I guarantee you will fall victim to: **SCHOLAR'S MATE**

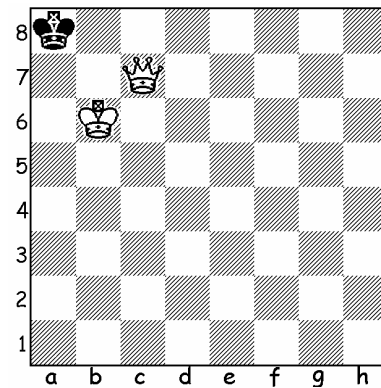
1. e4 e5
2. Bc4 Nc6
3. Qh5 Nf6
4. Qf7++

Stalemate (Public Enemy #1)

Frustrating, happens to everyone. Who wins this game? (if no other pieces on board)



Black is Checkmated.

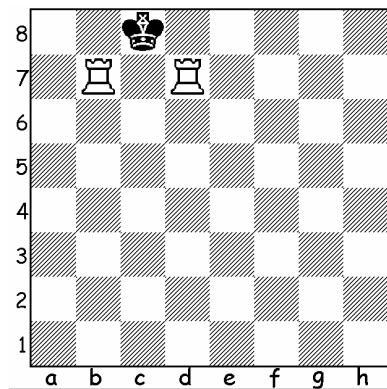


But what if Queen is on c7?

Black is Stalemated.

Stalemate means your opponent is not in Check, but has no possible moves by any piece. It is a Draw (if scoring, 1/2-1/2).

Another example (assume no other pieces on board):



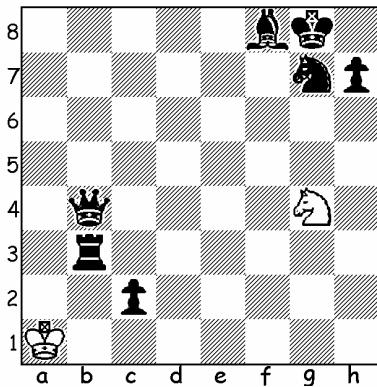
Black is Stalemated.

Common when get way ahead (excited?) but leave no escape room. Have to leave legal move available -- by any piece (add pieces to diagram and explain). If only King vs. King, always a Draw (though not Stalemate)

Other Draws in addition to Stalemate

- By agreement
- 3 position Draw (does not have to occur consecutively)
- 50 moves (broken by any Pawn move or capture of any piece)
- Insufficient material

Perpetual Check (one example of the 3 position Draw):



If Black to move, Qa4 OR Ra3 and it's Checkmate. But if it's White to move, Nh6+ and Nf7+ go on forever.

Another Special Move: en passant (Taking in passing)

Show move, then give historical explanation: When game developed 1000 years ago, Pawns could only move one space, so could always be assured of a capture of neighboring Pawn. Rules changed 500 years ago to permit Pawn to move 2 spaces to speed up game. Then it was thought to be unfair to pass an opponent's Pawn which could have captured. Only works with advanced Pawns (5th Rank). Taking must occur on next move (can't do it later)

Etiquette:

Be polite, shake hands before game ("Good luck!") and after game ("Good game!"), remain quiet, thank opponent afterwards even if you lose.

Touch move:

If you touch a piece, unless by accident, you have to move it. If you take one of your pieces and touch a piece of your opponent's, and that piece can legally be captured, you must capture it.

BASIC STRATEGY

The Opening

1. **Control the center!** If you can keep your opponent from attacking you from the center, it will be much harder for him. Attacking from the sides (flanks) is harder and takes more time. Also, your pieces normally attack more squares when they are located in the center, and are positioned to attack either side.
2. Put one or two **Pawns in the center** within your first few moves. The most common and safe openings are to move your King's or Queen's Pawn two squares. If you can move them both, and they are both safe, you will have a big advantage!
3. **"Develop" your pieces quickly** and well. This means to bring out your back Rank pieces early in the game into good attacking positions. The player whose pieces are ready for action sooner will be able to control the course of the game.
4. **Develop pieces by attacking** whenever possible. This often makes your opponent waste a move by moving or defending an attacked piece.
5. **Don't bring out the other Pawns early**, except for good reason. They control space but don't have much power. Be especially careful with your "f" Pawn. If you move it before you castle, you can end up in early Checkmate. For example:
 1. f4 e6
 2. g4 Qh4++
6. **"Knights before Bishops"**: Bring out your Knights first, toward the center (to c3, f3, c6, or f6) whenever possible. They are more effective in the center, controlling space and able to support center Pawns. Keep your Knights away from the edges and corners of the board ("Knights on the rim are grim!").
7. Then **bring out Bishops**, commonly to the 5th or 6th Rank. They can move across the board more quickly than Knights.
8. **Castle early**. This not only protects your King, but also helps to develop one of your Rooks. It is the only chance you have to move two pieces at once. King-side castling is easier (only two pieces need to be moved first) and is considered slightly better because the King is further from the center of the board and is less exposed.
9. Try to **prevent your opponent from castling**. You can do this sometimes by putting the King in Check if your opponent has no blocking moves. Try to create a "Check line" (which your opponent cannot cross in castling). You can also do this by trading Queens early, forcing your opponent to use his King to re-capture (for example):
 1. e4 e5
 2. d4 d5
 3. dxe dxe
 4. Qxd8 Kxd8
10. After castling, wait as **long as possible before moving the Pawns shielding your King**. They are his bodyguards and protect him. But if pressure begins to build, you may have to

move a Pawn to create an escape route for your King. Try not to move your Bishop's Pawn, as this opens the King to attacks from the center.

11. **Do not move your Queen out too early!** It is too easy to attack with less valuable pieces. You will generally waste time, and sometimes lose your Queen. No Queen adventures! For example:

1. e4 e5
2. Qg4 Nf6
3. Qf5 d5
4. Qf3 Bg4
5. Qb3

12. **Don't block your own pieces during the opening.** For example, don't move your King's or Queen's Pawns out one square if this will block the opposite Bishop from developing. (Bishops trapped by your own pieces are called "Bad Bishops.") Strong attacks are generally impossible from cramped positions.

13. During development, **try to move each piece only once.** It is normally better to get another piece out than to move a piece to a slightly better spot. Wait to move a piece a second time until other back Rank pieces have been developed. Exceptions: Freebies (easy captures of opponent's pieces) or Survival (to avoid being captured)

14. The opening is finished when you have one or two center Pawns out, two or three minor pieces out, and you have castled.

The Middle Game: The Attack Begins

The Profitable Exchange

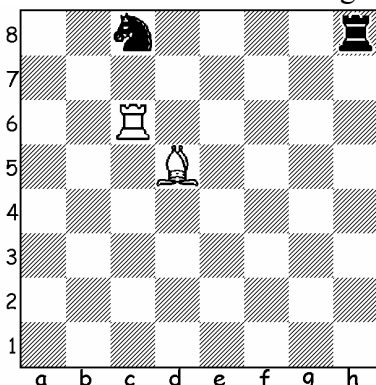
Normally you get to Checkmate by winning more material than your opponent -- but not always.

Do we always want to capture? e.g.

- Queen taking Knight, being captured (No)
- Rook capturing Queen, being taken (Yes)
- Trading Queens (Maybe)

Counting Attackers and Defenders (and remembering values)

Should White take the Knight?

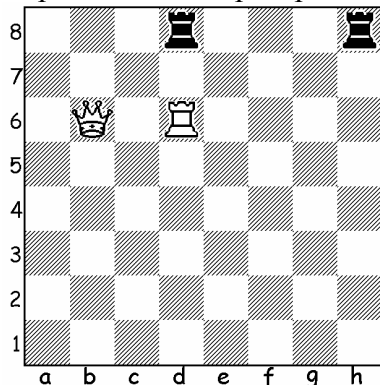


Answer: Not unless move Bishop to e6 first. Shows power of double attack.

General rule: If pieces are of equal value, don't attack unless there are more attackers than defenders. Don't start something you can't finish.

If pieces are of unequal value, COUNT. **GIVE SIMPLE EXAMPLES.** Best players are good counters. Sometimes have much larger numbers of attackers and defenders, e.g. 4 pieces vs. 3 pieces

Capture with cheapest piece first! e.g.



If Queen attacks first, White gains 1 point. If Rook attacks first, White gains 5 points

Trades

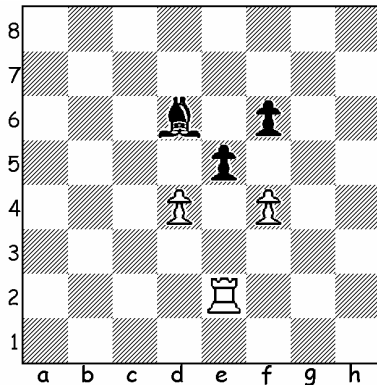
OK if you win a better piece. If pieces traded are of even value: TRADE WHEN AHEAD. Soccer or Tug of War example (11 vs 10 is close; 2 vs 1 is not). **Put numbers on board.**

Even trades can also be good if you & your opponent are even in material if there are good reasons which we'll take up later (for example, to open up a cramped position, or for other positional or strategic advantages).

Other Middle Game Basics

1. **Make the best possible move!** Look carefully at the square to which you want to move to be sure the square is safe. This is the mistake most commonly made by beginners. Be especially careful to watch out for your opponent's Knights!
2. **Learn to count.** First, remember what the pieces are worth. Memorize this if you haven't yet. Otherwise you won't know when to trade pieces. Queen=9, Rook=5, Bishop=3, Knight=3, Pawn=1.
3. **Learn to count, continued:** If the piece you are moving can be captured after your move, can you capture the attacking piece afterwards? And if you do, will still another capture follow? Often pressure builds on a square and captures are followed by several re-captures.

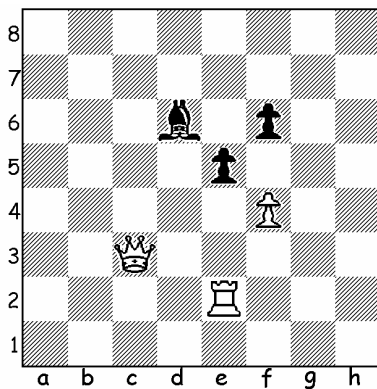
Figure out who will be ahead when the capturing is over. Your chess "vision" will improve with time. For example:



White should attack, because it wins the exchange:

1. fxe fxe
2. dxe Bxe
3. RxB

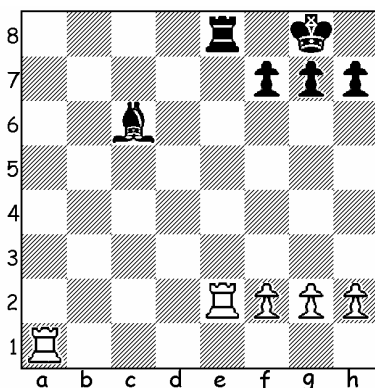
But in the following position, although it is similar, White should NOT continue the attack



1. fxe fxe
2. Both Rxe and Qxe lose

4. When two of your pieces are able to capture an opponent's piece, **take with the piece of least value.**
5. **Move your Rooks out** after some middle-game play. There is a good chance you will have an open File, where no Pawn or piece is blocking the way. With an open File, Rooks can develop much more quickly than by "going around the corner." But don't be in a hurry to bring them out.

6. Try to **develop a good position**. Put your pieces on "active squares," where they have maximum attacking power. Are your pieces moving forward, in a position to help each other, but still protected? Try to accumulate small advantages. Try to increase the pressure against your opponent's pieces and King
7. **Avoid moving too quickly.** When you see a good move, wait. Look for a better one.
 Questions you should ask before EVERY MOVE:
 - a. Do I have a piece in trouble (that my opponent can capture)?
 - b. Does my opponent have a piece in trouble (that I can capture)?
 - c. Why did my opponent move there? What is he/she trying to do?
 - d. Am I moving to a better square? (safe and better for offense or defense)
 - e. (As you improve): Are there any weaknesses in my opponent's position I can take advantage of? (especially two pieces on the same line—File, Rank or Diagonal)
8. **Do not put your opponent's King in Check unless you have a good reason.** Good reasons include achieving a better position for the attacking piece, or creating a double attack (eg attacking another piece while also putting your opponent's King in Check).
9. Similarly, **avoid useless attacks on other pieces.** Don't do it unless there is a reason. If they can simply move out of the way (or, worse yet, move to a better square), what have you gained?
10. **Fight for your Pawns.** They can often make the difference in a close game. In the end-game, a one-Pawn advantage can be decisive.
11. **Look to develop double attacks.** Any time you can attack two pieces at once (including the King), you have a good chance of capturing one of them.
12. **Build "batteries,"** in which two pieces are on the same line, with the rear piece supporting the attack of the forward piece.
13. Try to **"connect" your Rooks,** which means having them on the same Rank or File. This may permit them to attack the King or Queen without risk of being taken, and positions them for decisive end-game attacks and sacrifices. For example:

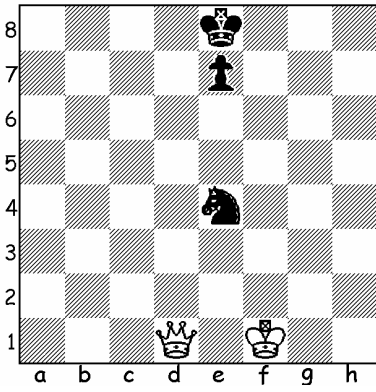


If White moves Rae1, it both defends the Rook on e2 and creates an additional attack on Black's Rook.

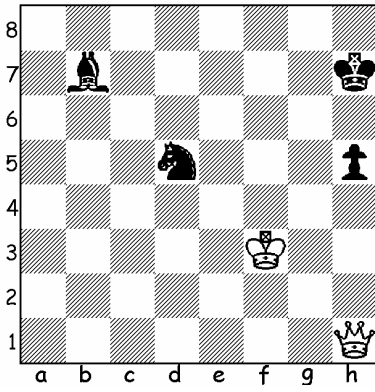
14. **Have a plan.** For example, when you have developed well enough that you are prepared to begin an attack, decide whether to attack on the King's side or the Queen's side. Then position your pieces so that they are attacking the same side. Or, if you are ready to attack your opponent's King, plan to attack with more than one piece. (Attacking with one piece rarely works.)
15. **Think about Pawn structure.** For example, "Pawn islands" (consecutive Pawns on a Diagonal) are stronger than Pawns in a horizontal line (on the same Rank), and much better than doubled or tripled Pawns (on the same File). "Isolated" Pawns (unable to be defended by other Pawns on either side) are easy for your opponent to pick off, so try to avoid getting them.
16. **Know when to trade pieces.** For example:
 - Trade pieces of even value when you are ahead, not when you are behind.
 - Trading a piece for a better piece generally makes sense.
 - If you are even in material, an even trade may make sense if you have a badly-positioned piece (e.g. a trapped piece, a "bad" Bishop, or doubled Pawns) and your opponent's piece is putting pressure on you.
17. **Concentrate and be alert!** Don't fiddle with your pieces or let yourself be distracted by other activity in the room. Bobby Fischer said the biggest difference between him and his opponents was that he gave 90% of his attention to the game. He thought most players give as little as 30%.
18. **Don't relax if you are ahead.** With one careless move, you can lose the lead quickly.
19. If you are behind, **don't give up!** Keep making strong moves, and hope your opponent will give you an opportunity to catch up. (This happens often in games between beginners!) Where there's life, there's hope.

BASIC TACTICS

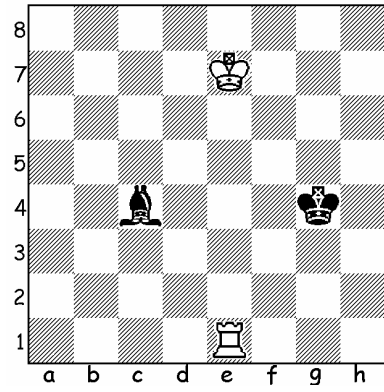
Forks Look for situations where your pieces can attack two of your opponent's pieces at the same time. One type of Fork occurs when two of your opponent's pieces are on the same Rank or File (where they can both be attacked by a Rook or Queen) or on the same Diagonal (where they can both be attacked by a Bishop). Keep on the lookout for these patterns.



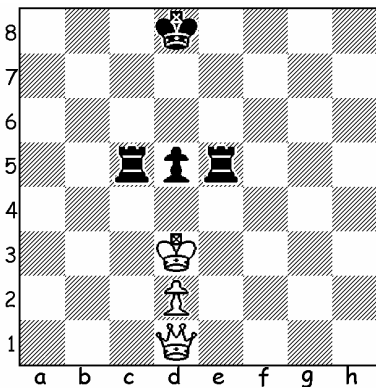
Qa4+



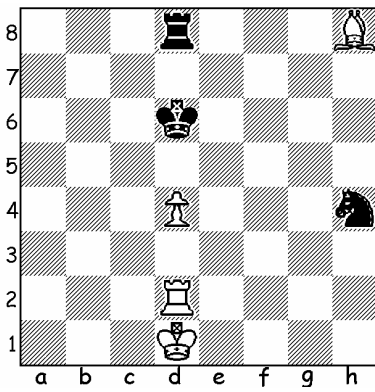
Qb1+



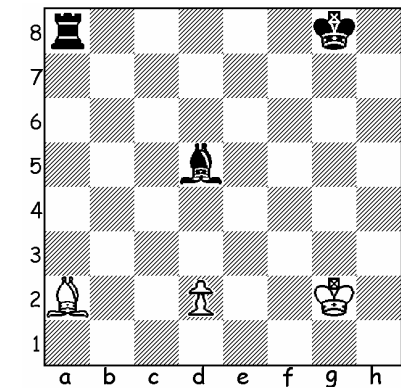
Re4+



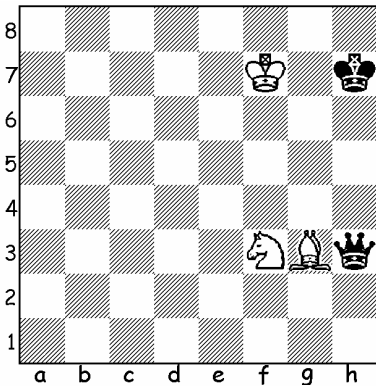
Kd4



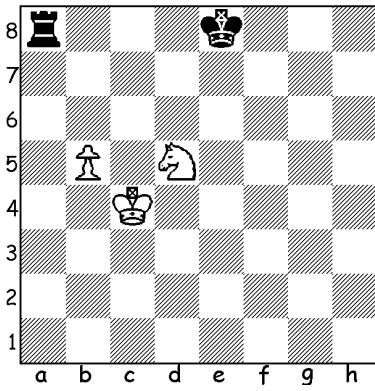
Bf6



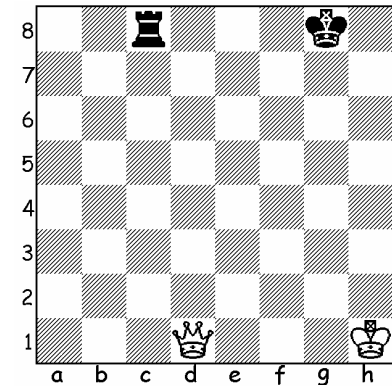
Bxd5+



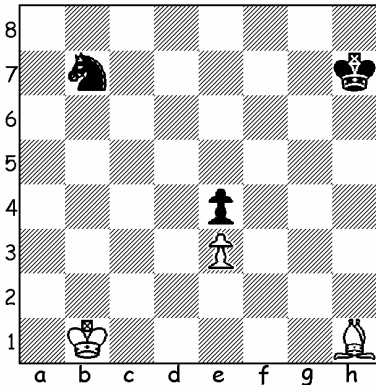
Ng5+



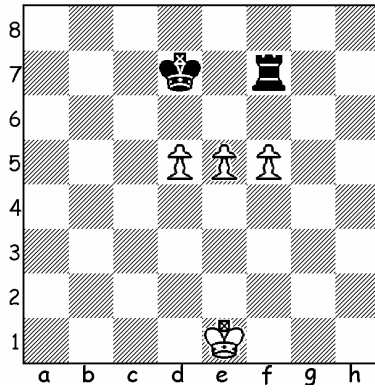
Nc7+



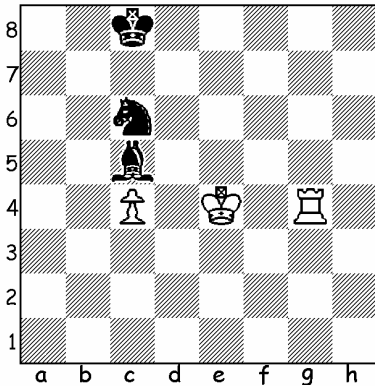
Qg4+



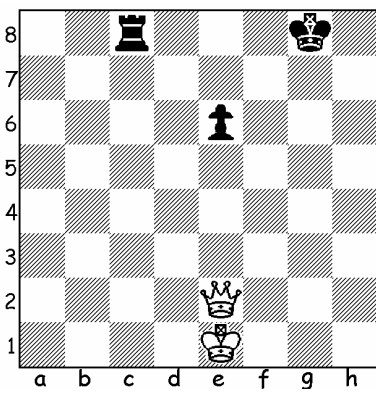
Bxe4+



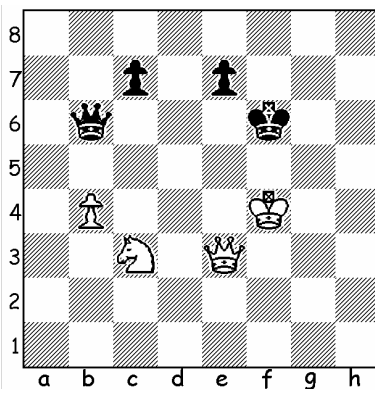
e6+



Kd5

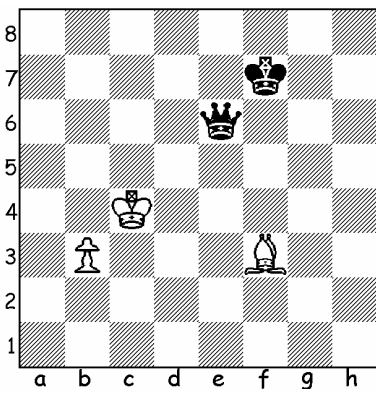


Qxe6+

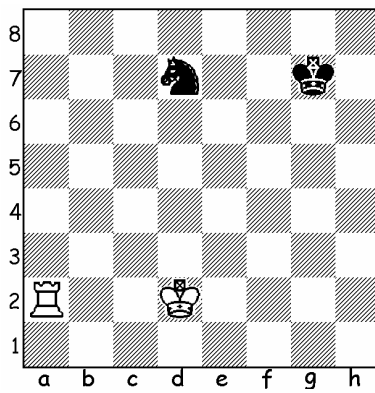


Nd5+

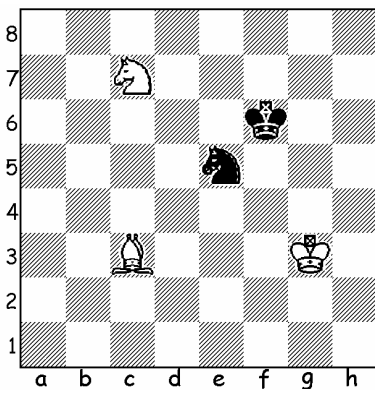
Pins Look for situations that occur where an opponent's piece cannot move because to do so would leave the King in Check (an “absolute” Pin) or leave another valuable piece open to attack (a “relative” Pin). The Pinned piece cannot be used by your opponent, and is also open to further attack.



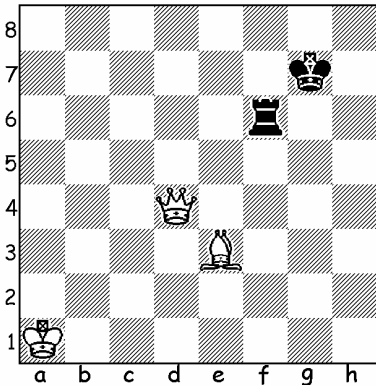
Bd5



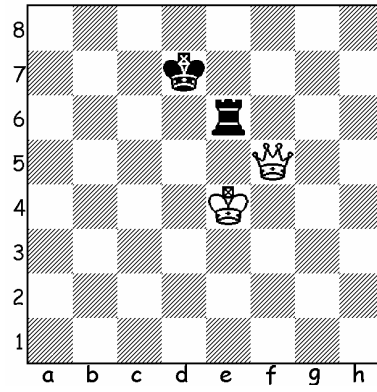
Ra7



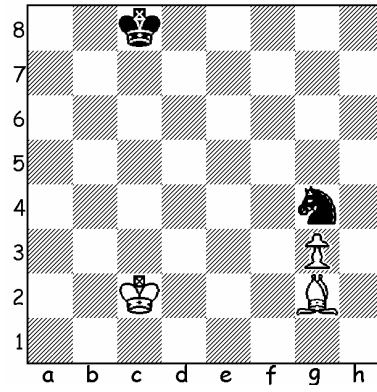
Kf4



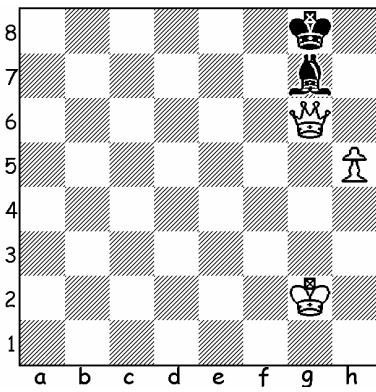
Bg5



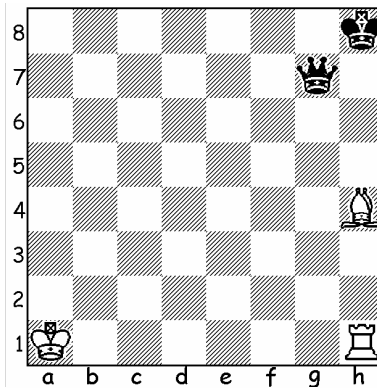
Kd5



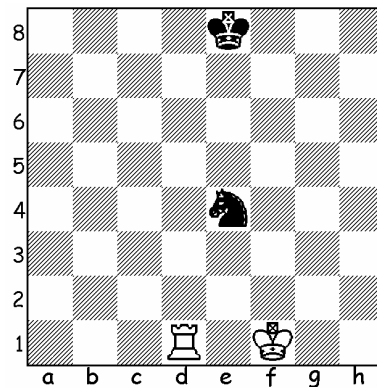
Bh3



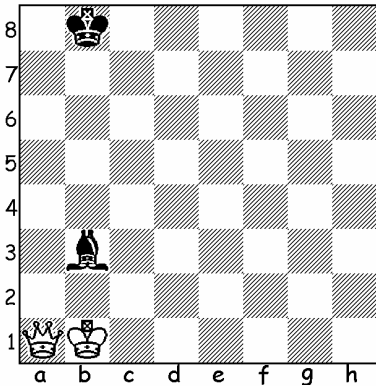
h6



Bf6+

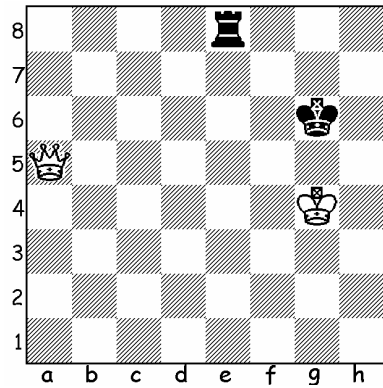


Re1

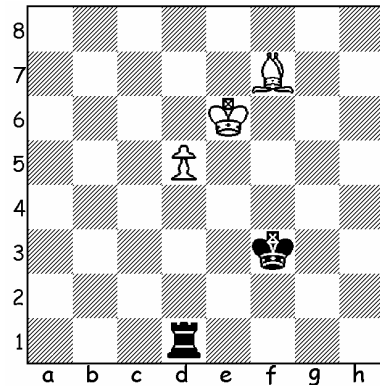


Qb2

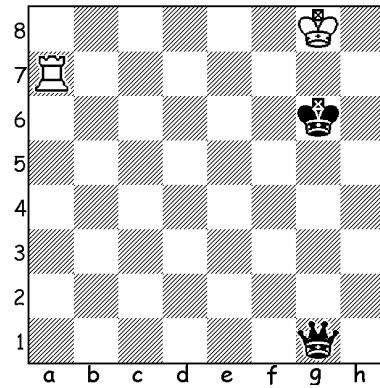
Skewers Look for situations where you attack a King or a valuable piece of your opponent's, forcing it to move, and you then attack another piece behind it!



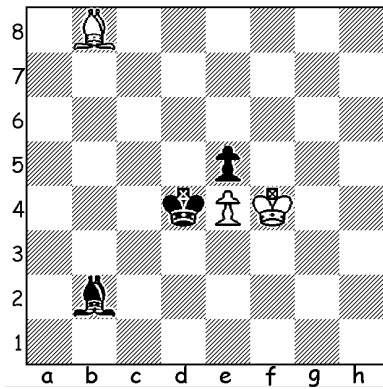
Qh5+



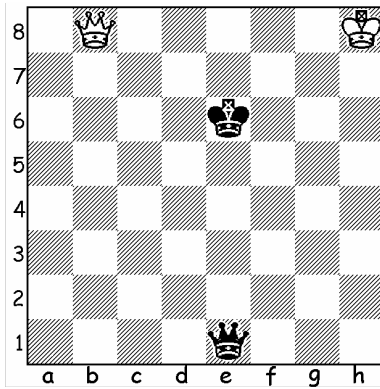
Bh5+



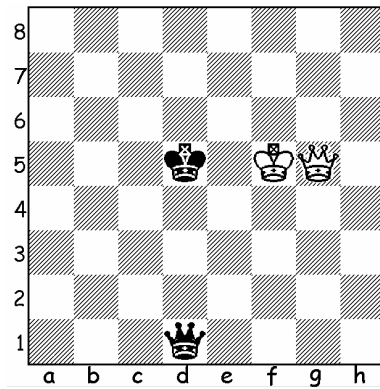
Rg7+



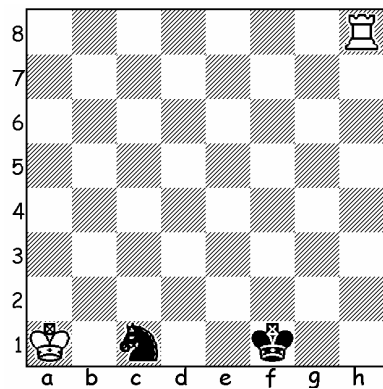
Bxe5+



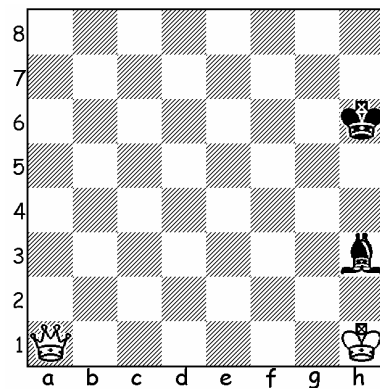
Qe8+



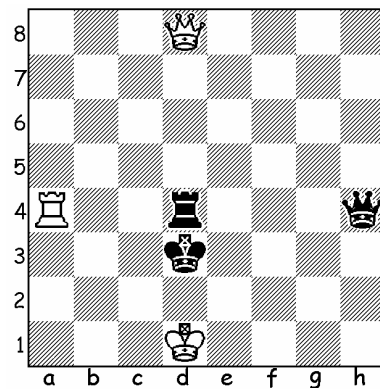
Qd8+



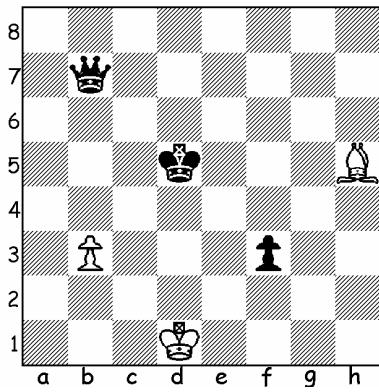
Rh1+



Qh8+

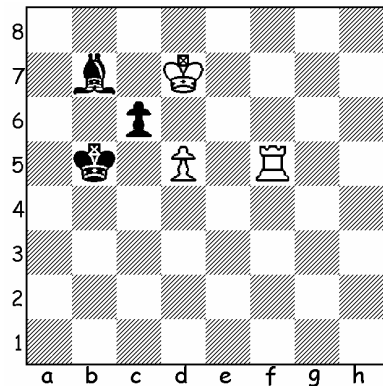


Qxh4

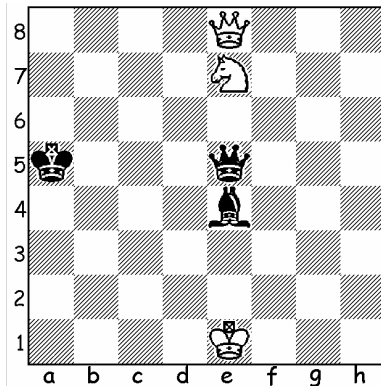


Bxf3+

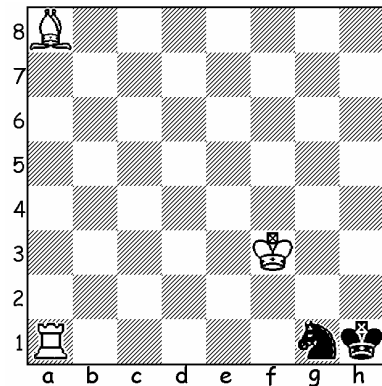
Discovery (Discovered attacks) Look for situations where by moving one piece, perhaps to attack, the piece behind it on the same Rank, File or Diagonal creates an additional attack on some other piece of the opponent.



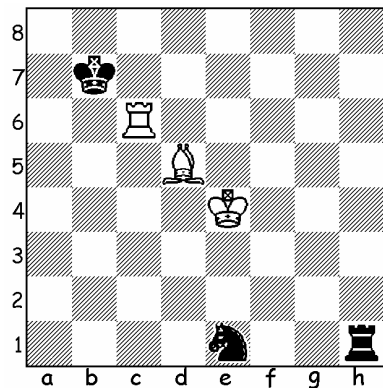
dxc+



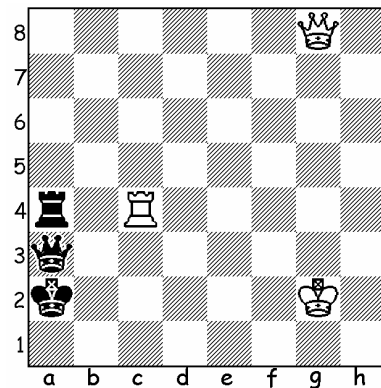
Nc6+



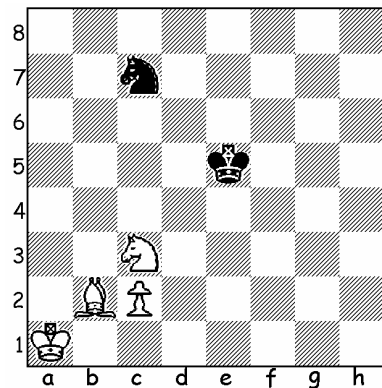
Kg3++



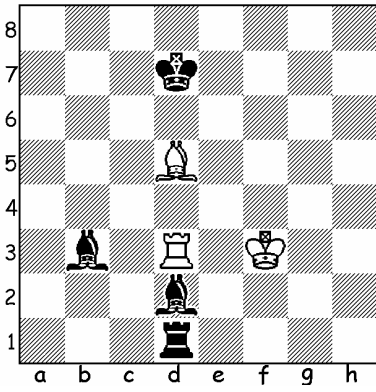
Rh6+



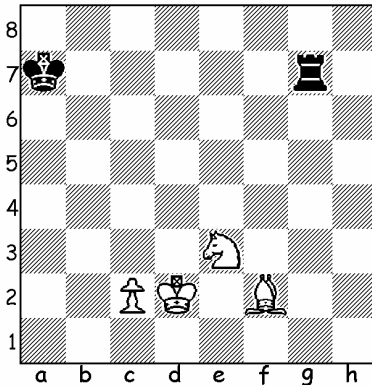
Rxa4+



Nb5+

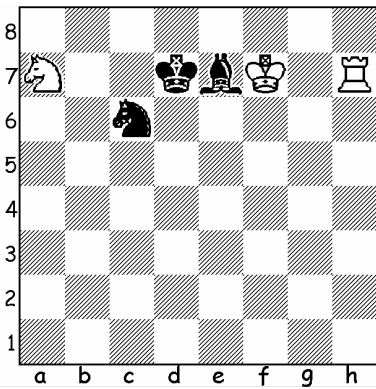


Bxb3+

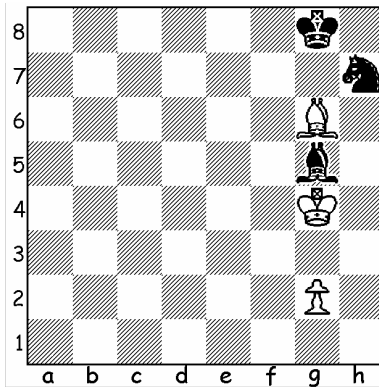


Nf5+

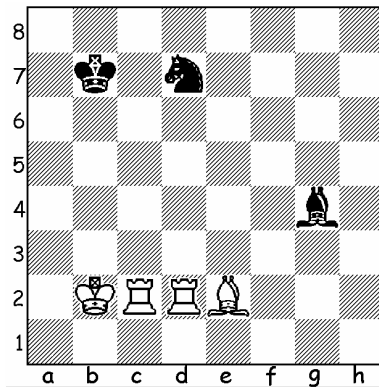
Overload/Attacking the Defender Look for your opponent's pieces that are defending other pieces that you can attack. If they are defending more than one, they are "Overloaded."



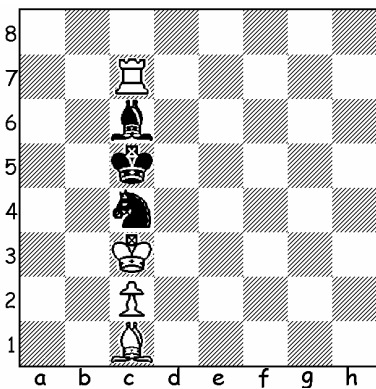
Nxc6



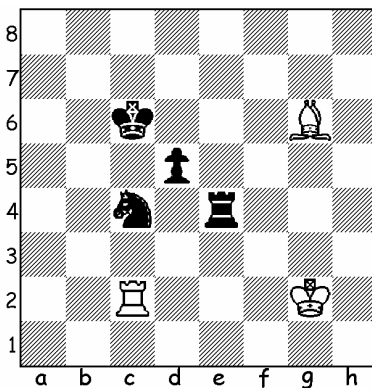
Bxh7+



Bxg4

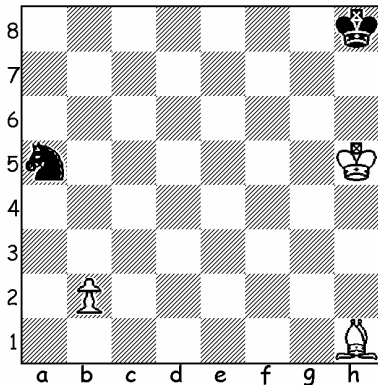


Rxc6+

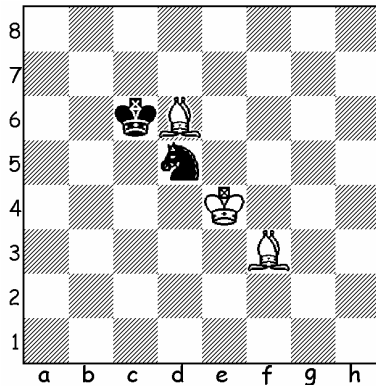


Bxe4

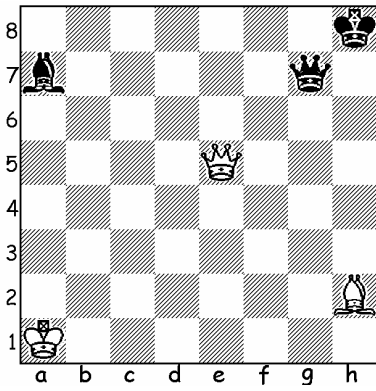
Mixed Tactics



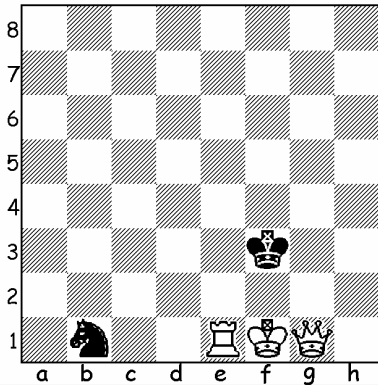
Bd5 Trapping N, then b4



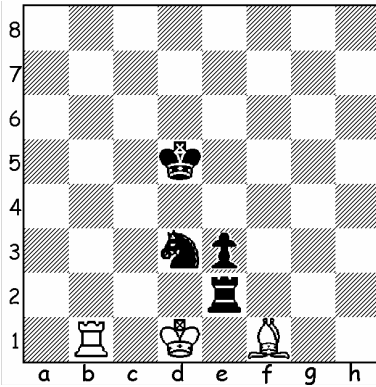
Ke5 Pinning N



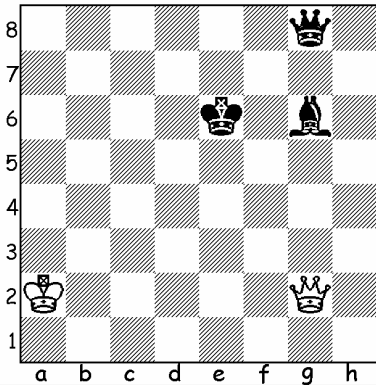
Black Bd4+ Forking Q



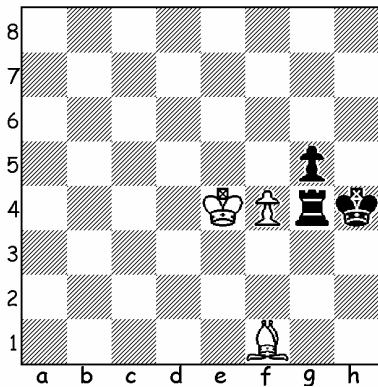
Black Nd2++



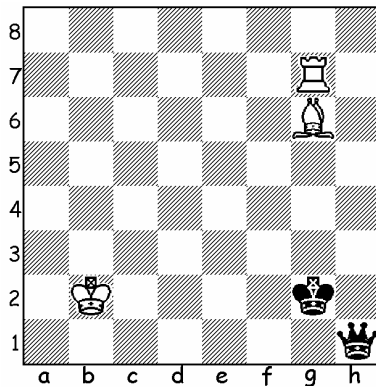
Black Rd2++



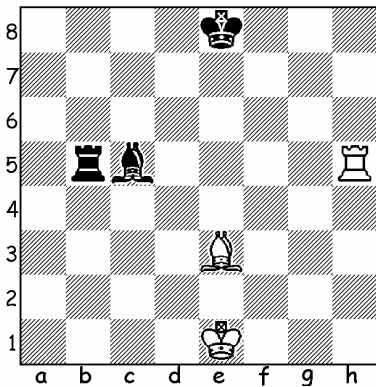
Black Bb1+ Discovery



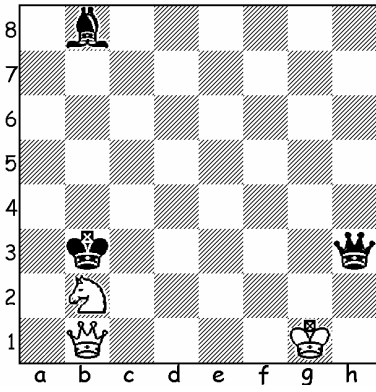
Black Rxf4+ Fork



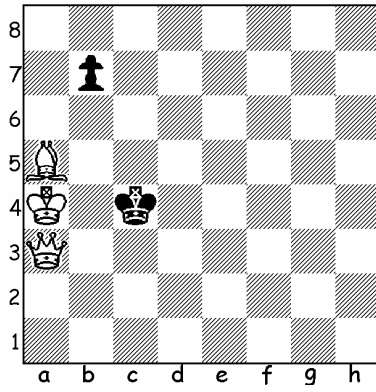
Black Qh8 Pinning the R



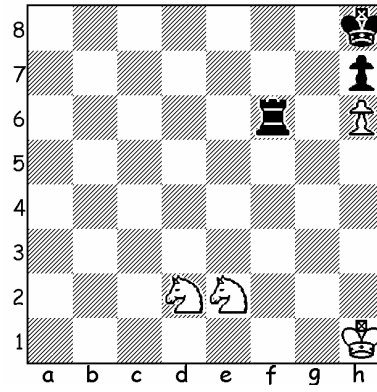
Black Bb4+ Discovery



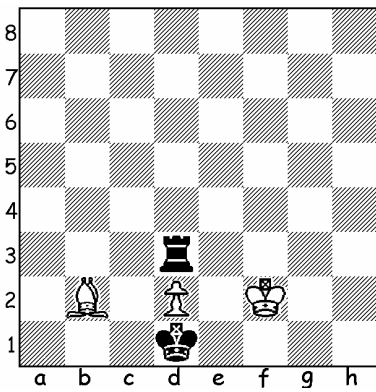
Black Ba7++



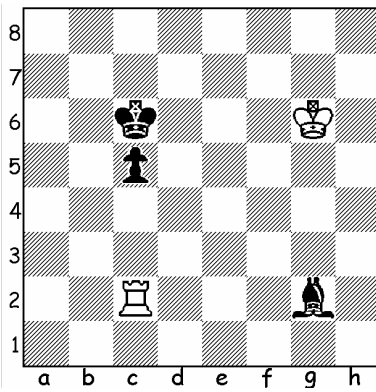
Black b5++



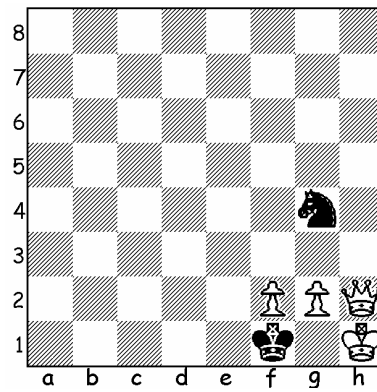
Black Rf2 Skewering a N



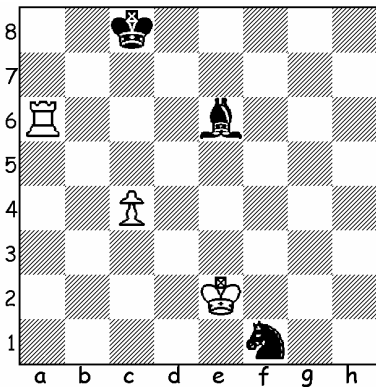
Black Rxd2+ Forking the B



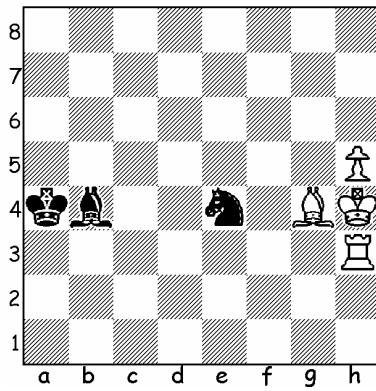
Black Be4+ Forking the R



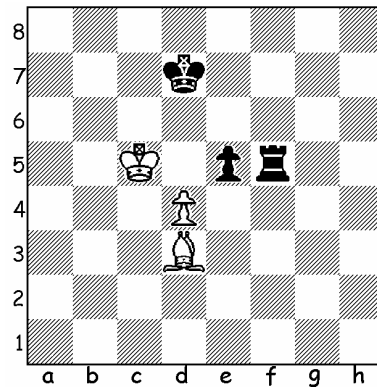
Black Nxf2++



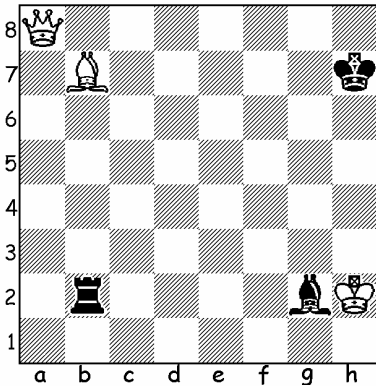
Black Bxc4+ Forking the R



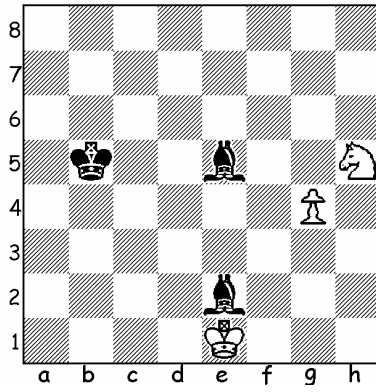
Black Be7++



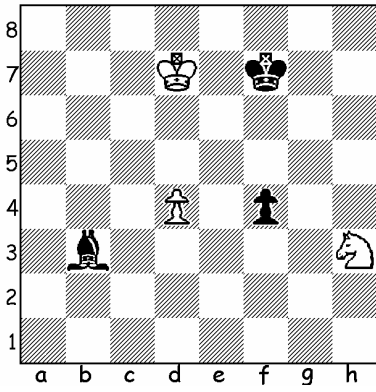
Black e4+ Discovery



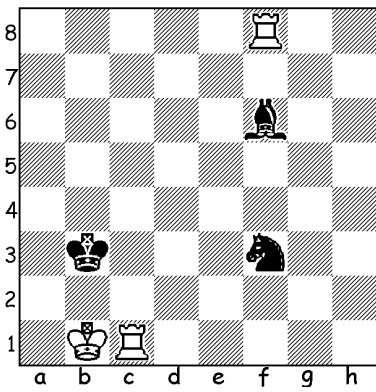
Black Bxb7+ Discovery



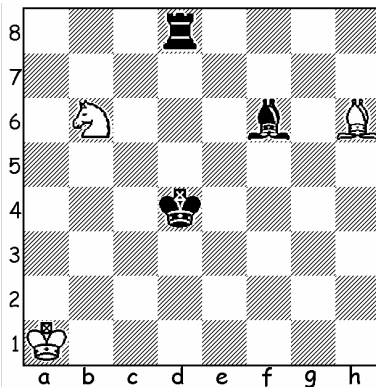
Black Bxg4 wins Trapped N



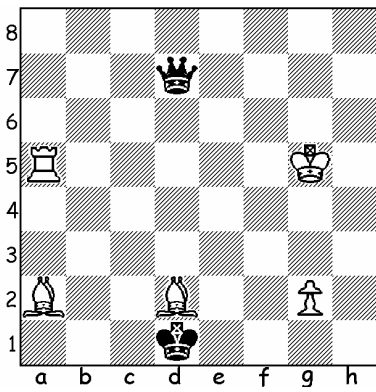
Black Be6+ Forking the K



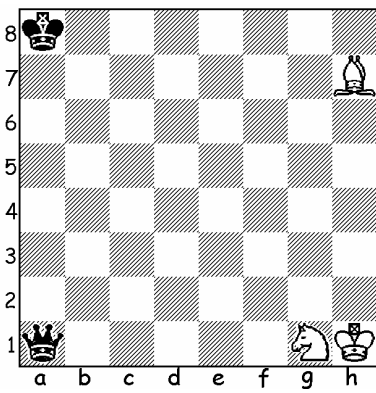
Black Nd2++



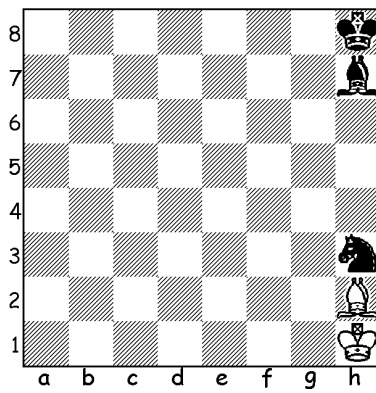
Black Kc5+ Discovery



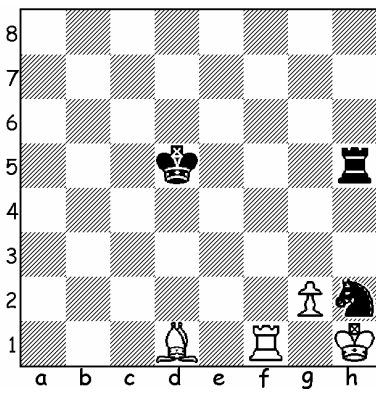
Black Qxd2+ Forking R and B



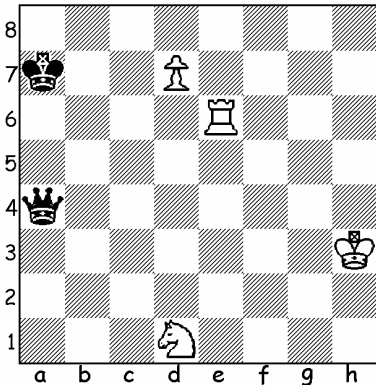
Black Qh8 Pinning the B



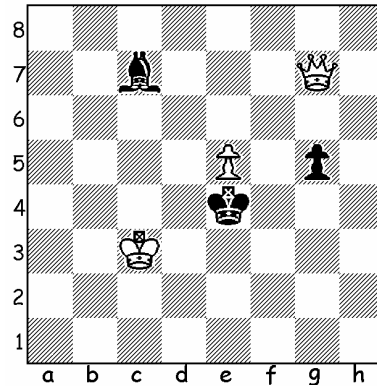
Black Be4++



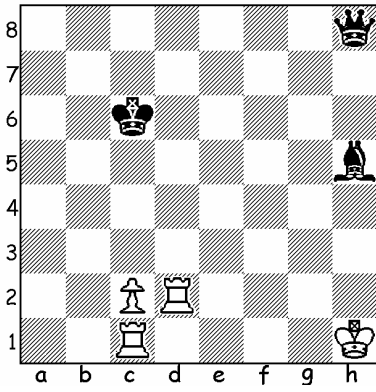
Black Nf3++



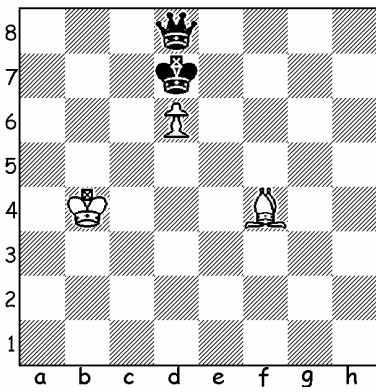
Black Qxd7 Pinning the R



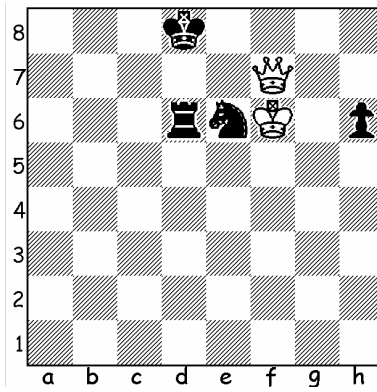
Black Bxe5+ Forking the Q



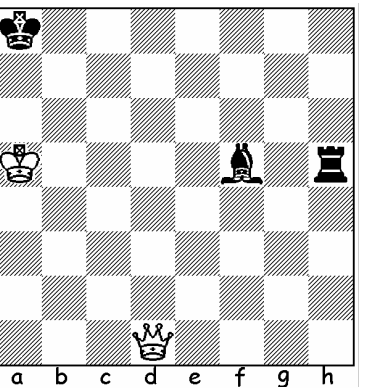
Black Qh6 Skewering a R



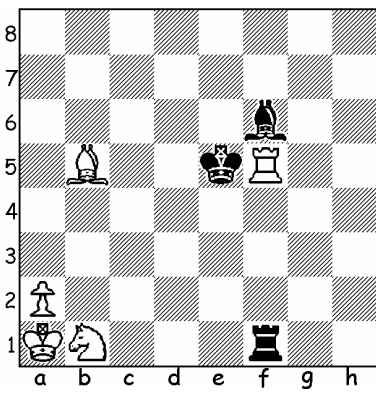
Black Qh4 Pinning the B



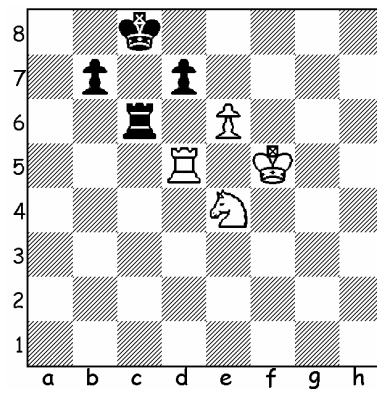
Black Ng5+ Discovery



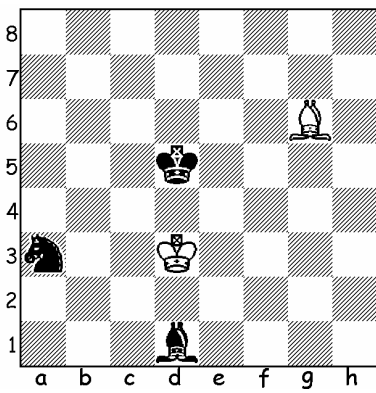
Black Bg4+ Discovery



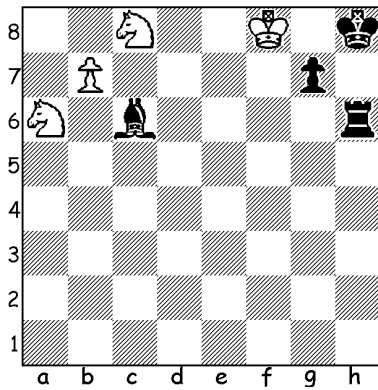
Black Kxf5++



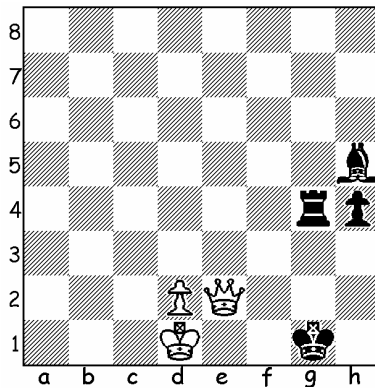
Black dxe+ Forking the R



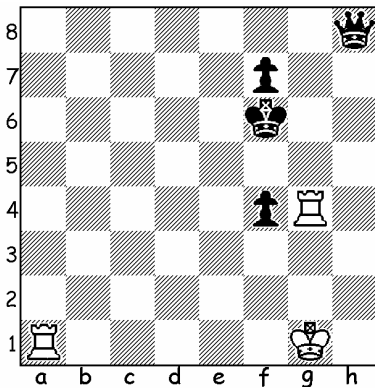
Black Bc2+ Skewering the B



Black Bxb7 Forking a N



Black Rg5 Pinning the Q



Black Kf5 Discovery

THE ENDGAME

Overview:

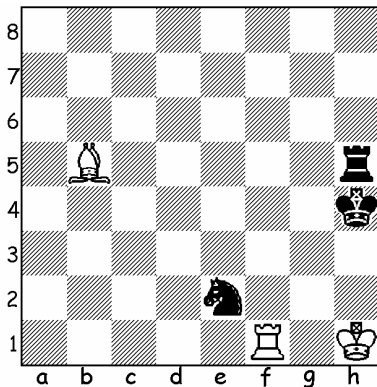
1. Try to **force your opponent's King to the edge** or to a corner if possible. It is generally more difficult to Checkmate the King if he is in the middle. Conversely, if you are losing, try to get your King to the center!
2. **Try to promote one of your Pawns** to another piece, generally a Queen. If you have a "passed" Pawn, which cannot be attacked by opposing Pawns on a File to his left or right, that is probably the one to try to promote.
3. **Create an outlet for your King** if he is at risk of being trapped, e.g. on the back Rank.
4. **Activate your King.** His role changes entirely in the end game. Although he moves only one square at a time, he is often crucial to winning during the end-game, protecting advancing Pawns and other pieces.
5. If you are **advancing a Pawn with your King next to it for protection**, try to keep your King ahead of or even with the Pawn (not behind it).
6. **Know how much strength is needed to get your opponent into Checkmate.** For example, if your opponent has only a King left, you can win easily with a King and a Queen or with a King and a Rook. You can also gain Checkmate with a King and two Bishops, or with a King, a Bishop, and a Knight, but these games are very difficult. A King and two Knights is not enough to win unless your opponent makes a big mistake.
7. Try to reduce the **number of squares your opponent's King can move to**, to make mating easier. For example, try to put your opponent's King in a box, and then make it smaller.

8. When Kings are facing each other with one square in between, this is called **"having the Opposition."** The Opposition is a good position to be in, as it creates a lot of blocking power against your opponent's King. So go for the Opposition if you have a chance.

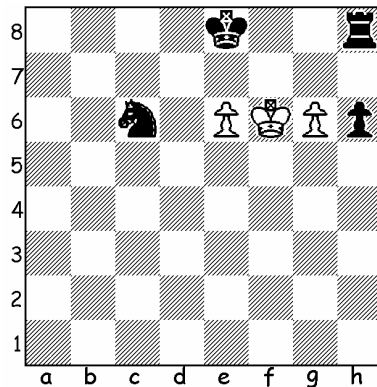
9. **Avoid a Stalemate** if you are ahead, and try for Stalemate if you are behind. Stalemate is very common among beginners where one side has overwhelming strength at the end of the game. It occurs frequently, too, where one side has only a King and the other side has a King and a Queen. Practice getting your opponent into Checkmate -- not Stalemate! -- with a King and a Queen.

10. **Learn and practice common mating combinations.** For example:
 - a. Queen next to the King in a protected spot (Supported Mate)
 - b. Trapping the King on the back Rank (Corridor Mate)
 - c. Two Rooks versus King (Ladder Mate rolling the King back)
 - d. King & Queen versus King
 - e. King & Rook versus King (careful to keep your pieces together)
 - f. King & Pawn versus King (tricky)

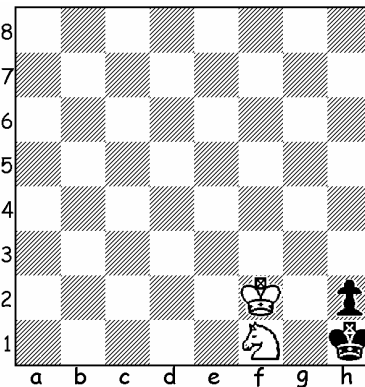
More Checkmates:



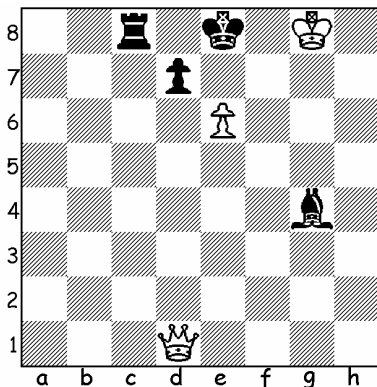
Black Kg3++



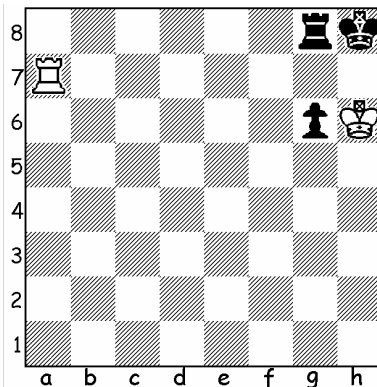
Black: O-O++



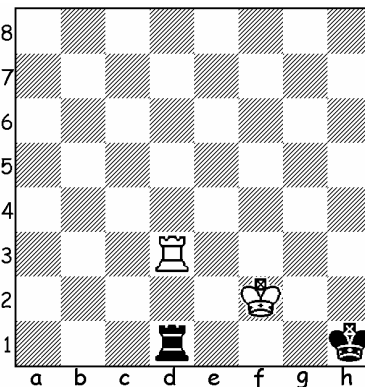
W: Ng3++



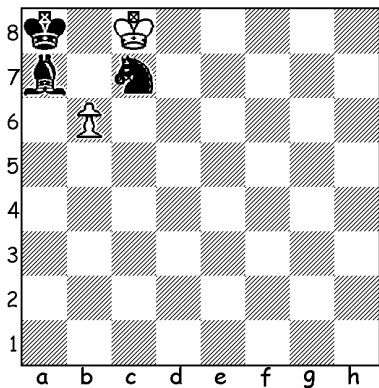
W: Qxd7++



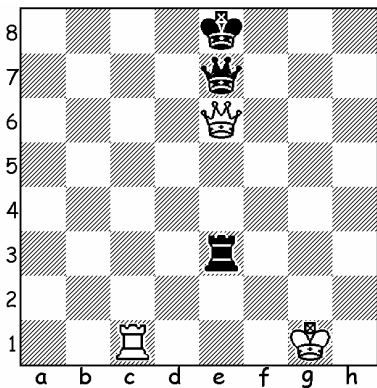
W: Rh7++



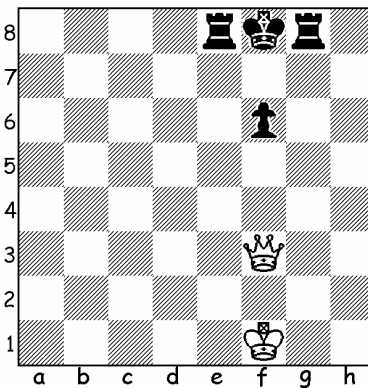
W: Rh3++



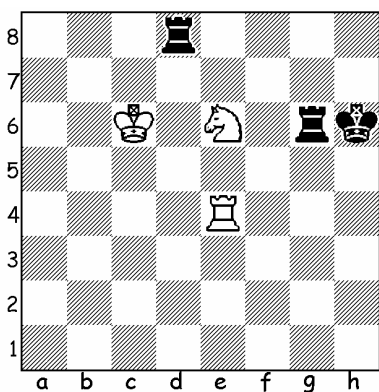
b7++



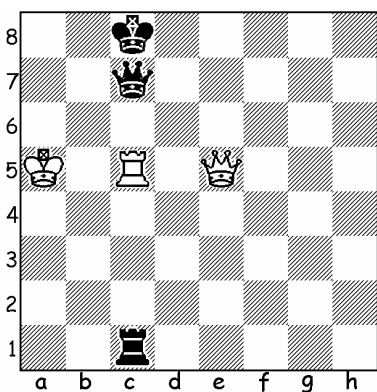
Rc8++



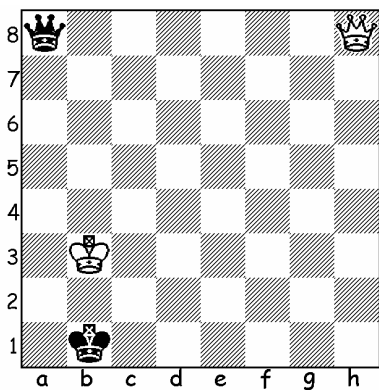
Qxf6++



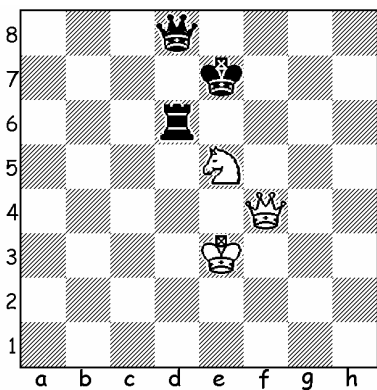
Rh4++



Qxc7++



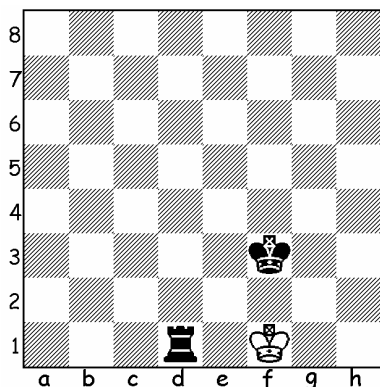
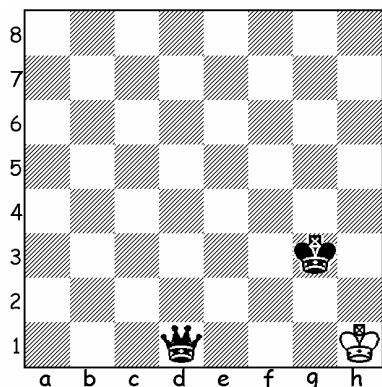
Qb2++



Qf7++

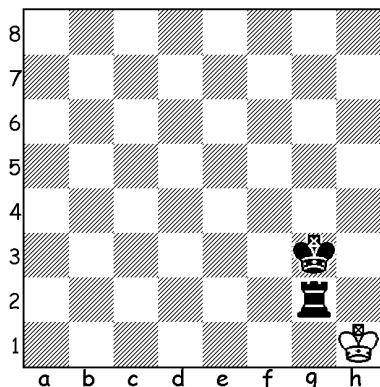
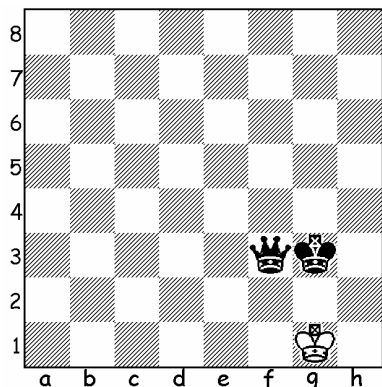
Endgame Concepts – Checkmate

What does Checkmate look like?



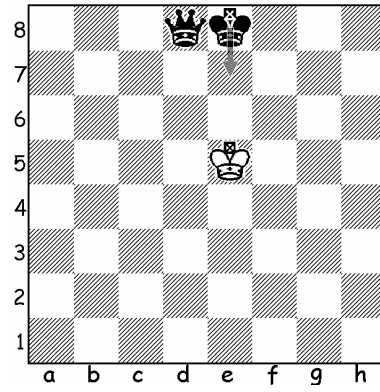
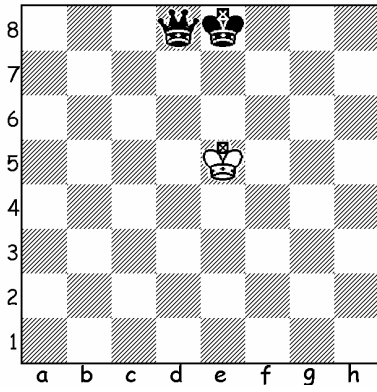
The King is at the edge of the board or in the corner and the Black Queen or Rook Checkmates the King on either the 2nd Rank being supported by the King (on the 3rd Rank) or with the Queen or Rook on the back Rank if the White King is in the corner.

What does Stalemate look like?

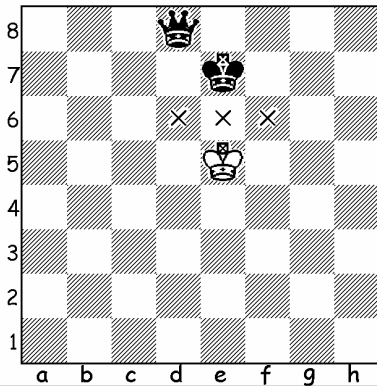


The King has been driven to the edge of the board or into a corner, but has no legal move. In the Endgame after you make a move that is NOT Check, make sure the other King has a legal square to move to or it will be Stalemate.

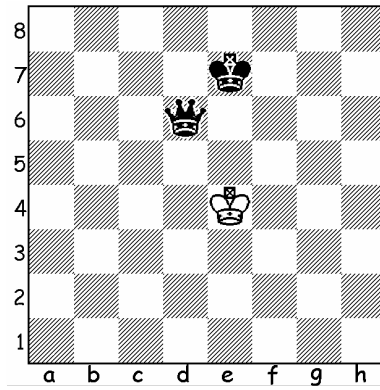
The King and Queen must work together to force the other King to the edge (or corner) of the board in order to Checkmate.



From the starting position on the left move the Black King to e7 to begin “pushing” the White King to the edge of the board. Imagine the White King is in a box defined by the 6th Rank and the e File. Either “push” the King back with your King or make the box smaller with your Queen until the White King is at one of the edges of the board.

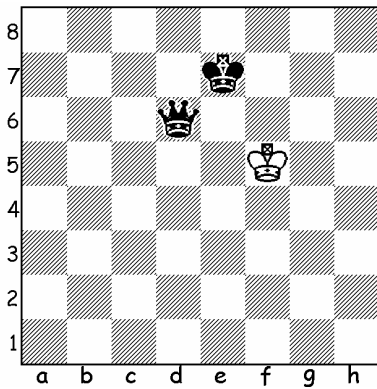


After 1...Ke7 (not Qe7)

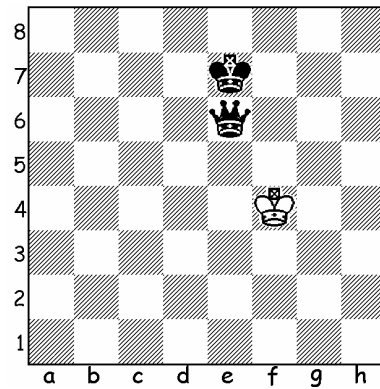


2. Ke4 Qd6 to make the box smaller.

You always need to keep one open square between the two Kings. This is one of the special powers of the King in the Endgame and is called the Opposition. When one King moves to face off against the other King, it forces the King to back up or go to the next File. In the Endgame, the King is almost as strong as a Rook in controlling the other King.

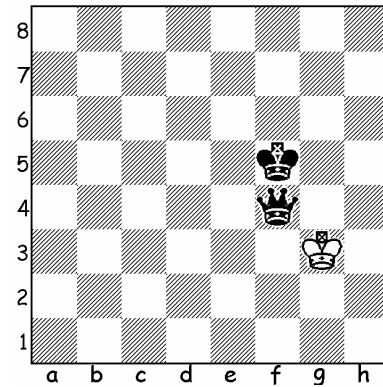
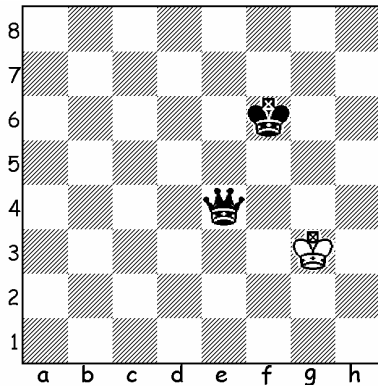


After 3. Kf5



3... Qe6+ 4. Kf4

The moves alternate between Black taking the Opposition to back up the White King and the Black Queen making the box smaller or sealing off White's available squares.

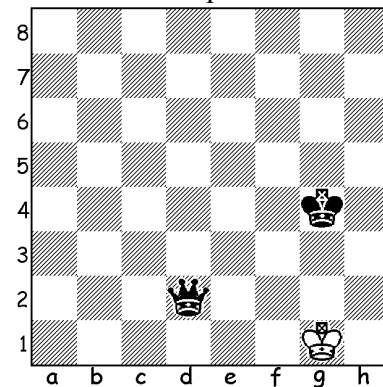
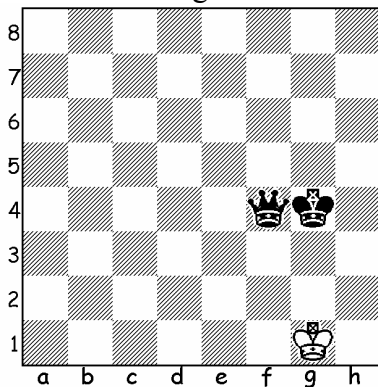


After 4... Kf6 5. Kg3 Qe4

6. Kf2 Kf5 7. Kg3 Qf4+

Now the White King has a limited number of available squares. Watch out that if Black is NOT giving Check, that the White King has a legal move available. (If one-on-one with the student playing Black, allow them to Stalemate White once or twice before reinforcing the concept).

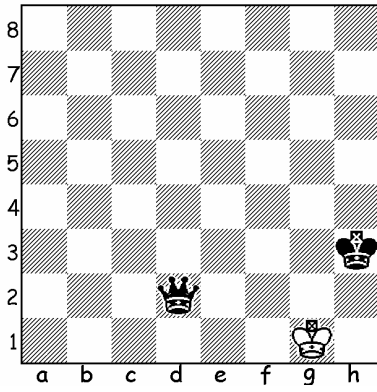
The White King is now at the edge of the board. Keep him there!



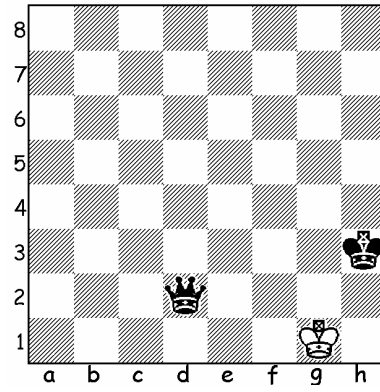
8. Kg2 Kf4 9. Kg1

9... Qd2

Now Black prepares to move to the 3rd Rank (and possibly, but not necessarily, take the Opposition on either f3 or h3 depending on where White moves next) in order to support the Queen giving Checkmate.



10. Kh1 Kh3 11. Kg1

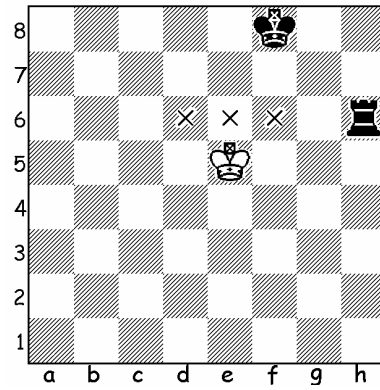
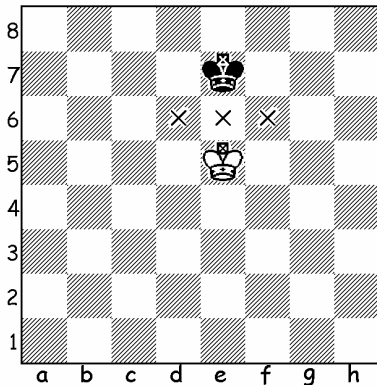


10. Kf1 Kf3 11. Kg1

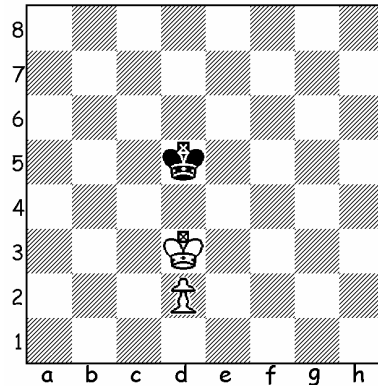
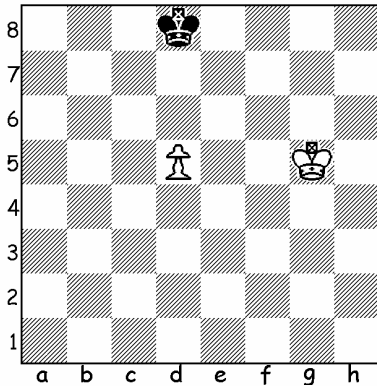
9...Qg2++ is the final move in either case. An alternate line of 8...Kg3 works no matter what White does and then the Black Queen would deliver Checkmate on f2 if the White King is on f1 or on the back Rank (c1, d1 or e1) if the White King is on h1. This is an alternate line only because many students think that ONLY the King in the corner will bring Checkmate.

Repeat with Black Rook in place of the Black Queen on d8.

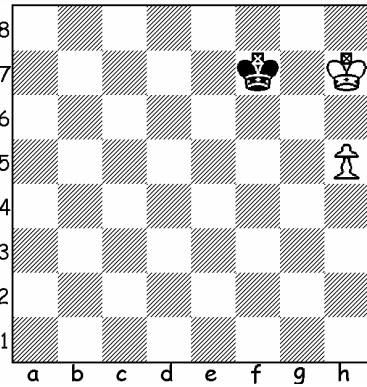
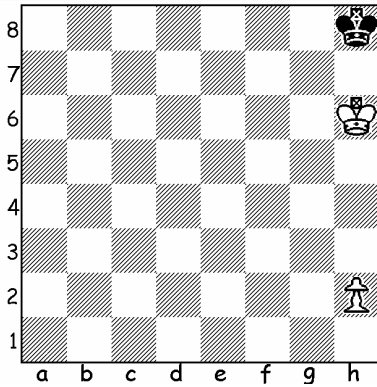
Endgame Concepts –Opposition



The Opposition is a very powerful force in the Endgame and needs to be utilized for Checkmate, Drawing possibilities and Pawn Promotion. In the diagram on the left above the White King is prevented from advancing to the 6th Rank by the Black King. The diagram on the right shows the same control exerted by the Black Rook which also prevents the White King from advancing.



The White King can take the Opposition with Kf6 and eventually push the Black King off the Queening square. The White King must control the Queening square by being on either e7 or c7 to protect the Pawn and allow it to advance. The outcome in the diagram on the right is decided by whose move it is which determines who has the Opposition. White to move Draws as he loses the Opposition, Black to move loses as he loses the Opposition. Have the student try playing each side of the board in these diagrams.



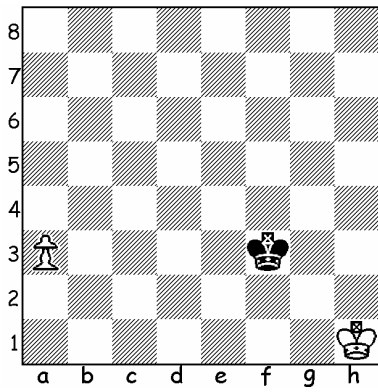
Rook Pawns are an exception to the general rules concerning Pawn Promotion if the opposing King can get near or in the corner of the Queening square. In both diagrams the White King is properly in FRONT of his Pawn, but both diagrams end in a Draw because the White King cannot get control of g7 and out of the way of his Pawn to advance. In the diagram on the left, the Black King cannot be pushed out of the corner by the White King to allow the Pawn to Promote. In the diagram on the right the Black King is preventing the White King from moving to g7 out of the way of his Pawn advancing to Promote.

Have the student play each side of the board in these diagrams.

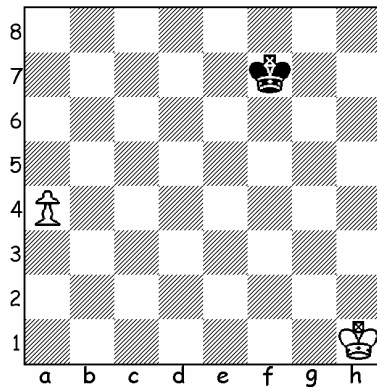
The Square of the Pawn

What is the definition of a Passed Pawn? A Passed Pawn is a Pawn that cannot be attacked by an opposing Pawn from the file on either side of it. How do you know whether a Passed Pawn can get Promoted before being captured by the opponent's King? Does anyone know the definition of the Square of the Pawn?

Can the Black King catch the White Pawn in the next two diagrams?

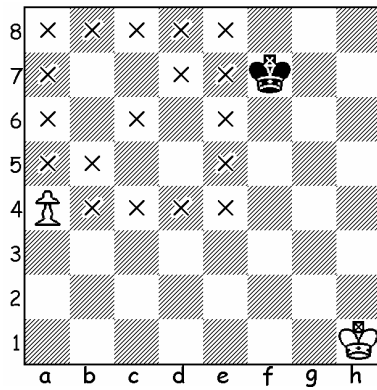
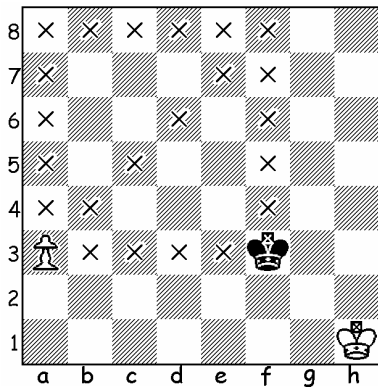


Yes, no matter who moves first.

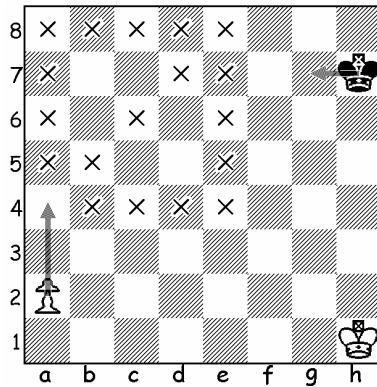
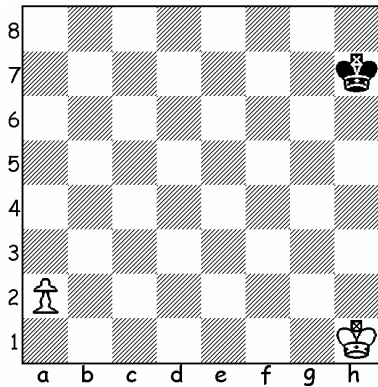


Yes, if it is Black to move.

The Square of the Pawn is made by imagining two lines: One line to the Queening square (vertically) and the other to the back Rank (diagonally) from the Pawn. Then complete the other half of the Square by drawing two more lines to connect the corners. If the opposing King is within the Square or on the border of it, then the Pawn can be caught before Promotion. Below are the diagrams showing the Square of the Pawn for the diagrams above. (NOTE: Switch the Pawn and Kings to the other sides of the board when you review or test the students later.)

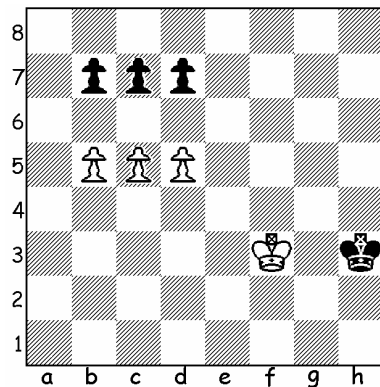


Can the Black King catch the White Pawn below?

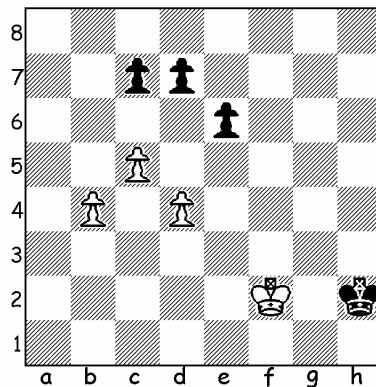


No, even if Black moves first because the Pawn can advance two squares which leads to the Square of the Pawn shown in the 2d diagram above. The King is not within the Square or on the border.

Now let's take a look at how to create a Passed Pawn. What is the best move for White in the diagram on the left below? (NOTE: use the diagram on the right below to review or test the students later).



1. c6



1. b5 and then continuing 2. b6 next

Two possibilities for Black here: 1... dxc 2. b6. OR 1... bxc 2. d6. In either case, whichever pawn Black captures, the other passes.

What if it is Black to move in the diagram on the left above? It is again 1...c6. White cannot create a Passed Pawn anymore and the Pawns will end up blocking each other. If 2. bxc then 2...bxc 3. dxc dxc. If 2. dxc then 2...dxc 3. bxc bxc.

PLAYING IN TOURNAMENTS

Overview

Before the tournament. Practice playing with a chess clock to get over the jitters most players get when they do so for the first time. You may wish or need to play with a clock at the tournament. (See below). Most of our clubs have clocks you can practice on. Consider buying one.

When you arrive at the site. Check in when you arrive at the tournament site, normally at tables set up for this purpose as you walk in. If pre-registrations are posted on wall charts, be sure the information, including your team designation, is correct.

When the pairings are posted. You will be told when the pairings are posted. There are two important things to note on the pairing sheet: what color you are playing and your board number, which corresponds to a numbered location on a table inside the playing room.

When you enter the playing room. Find your board and introduce yourself to your opponent. Wait until you are told you can start. Then shake hands with your opponent, wish him or her a good game, and begin.

If your opponent is late and you are not sure the floor directors know this, raise your hand and tell a director. If you have a clock, and if you are playing white, make your first move and hit your clock. (This will reduce the amount of time your opponent will have to finish his or her moves.) If you are playing

black, hit your clock after the round starts so your opponent's time starts to run down.

Problems during the game. Problems may arise such as a claim of an illegal move, a touch-move violation, your opponent making noise or otherwise bothering you, a problem with a clock, and so on.

Leave the board exactly as is, stop your clock if you are using one, and raise your hand for a director.

Explain the problem when the director arrives. If you wait until after the game to report a problem, it will be too late. In the rare event in which you disagree with the director's ruling, you are allowed to ask for (or yourself get) your coach, who might be better able to argue your case.

Clocks and time penalties. Any player who owns his or her own clock has a right to use it during the game. Even if you start your game without a clock, if your game runs long, a director may ask you to use a clock toward the end of the round, and will tell each of you how much time you have. If you run out of time, don't "call your own clock" – that's for your opponent to do. Similarly, keep a close eye on the clock when time begins to run short so you will see (and can tell your opponent) when his or her clock runs out. Some tournaments assess time penalties if there is an illegal move. Normally, rather than time being taken away from the offending player, two minutes are added to the remaining time of the non-offending player. Some tournaments penalize players who are not keeping notation by deducting time from their total allotment, but this is rare, especially for young players.

Advice from your opponent during a game. Some players will try to give their opponents "advice." Don't take it. Make up your own mind.

Draw offers. Some experienced tournament players will offer a Draw to an opponent who is beating them, hoping to sucker them in and end with a tie rather than a loss. Watch out for this. In this situation, resist the normal temptation to accept someone's handshake when it's offered.

At the end of the game, if you and your opponent agree on the result, extend your hand to your opponent whether you've won or lost and say "Good game." (If you don't agree on the result, get a director and leave your board untouched.) Then re-set the pieces on your board, remind yourself of your board number, and, **together with your opponent, report your score.** Normally there are tables set up near the exit door where people will ask for your board number and the result.

How to Play with a Clock

The player playing Black has the choice of which side the clock is placed on. If you are right-handed, put it on the right (and vice versa). You are required to hit your clock with the same hand you move your pieces with. At the start of the game, the player playing Black starts the clock and then the player playing White makes the first move. Each player then hits the clock after each move which starts to diminish the other player's time.

The most common time control for scholastic games is Game/30. This is a "sudden death" type of time control where each player has 30 minutes to play all of their moves in a game. Once a player's time has expired AND his opponent notices the expiration, the player has lost. The only exception is where the player with time still remaining has insufficient material to mate, in which event the game is a draw.

Chess Notation

K = King
Q = Queen
R = Rook

B = Bishop
N = Knight
P = Pawn (when needed)

Use upper case for pieces; lower case for letters of Ranks.

Examples of simple moves (no capture or Check):

Nf6 (Knight moves to f6)
Bb5 (Bishop moves to b5)

Special symbols:

0-0 = Kingside castle

0-0-0 = Queenside castle

x = capture. For example:

BxB (identifying pieces capturing and being captured)

Bxe3 (identifying square of captured piece)

cxd (for Pawn captures -- "P" is not necessary; identify the File instead)

+ = Check. Always goes at end of move. For example: RxR+

++ = Checkmate. For example: QxP++

Be more specific where more than one piece can move to a particular square, can capture, or can be captured. For example: Rae1 (the Rook on the "a" File moves to e1)

RxRe (Rook takes the Rook on the "e" File)

R1xR (Rook on the first Rank takes Rook)