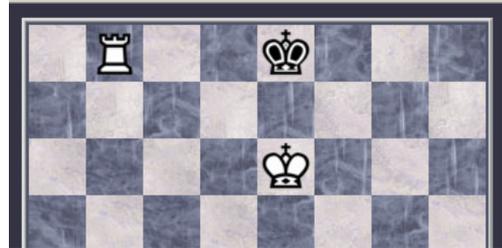


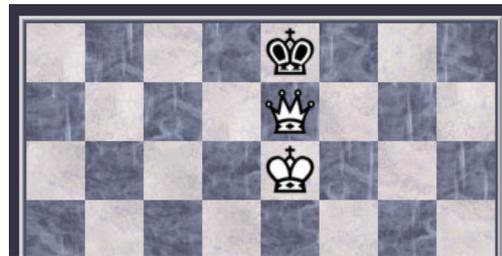
A beginner's guide to chess

Basic techniques

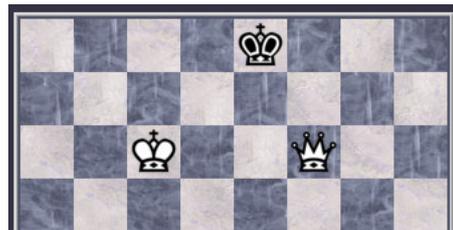
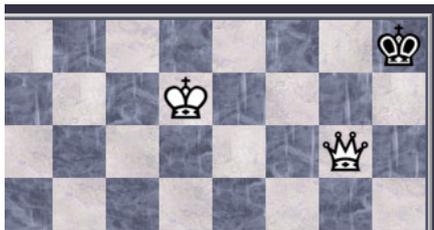
Try to remember these basic mating patterns



Remember that you cannot mate with King and Knight or King and Bishop alone. Promoting a pawn to a queen may help you if you have lost your Queen and rooks.



And also look out for these stalemates!



The four-move checkmate

This comes up time and time again – if you opponent is attacking your f-pawn – **beware!**



Planning your game, and limiting your mistakes!

The easiest way to improve your results is to cut out your mistakes. **The quickest and easiest way to cut out your mistakes is to stop before every single move and ask yourself two questions:**

1. Is my opponent threatening to take one of my pieces, and is that piece properly protected?
2. Am I able to take one of my opponent's pieces, and is it inadequately defended?

Even if you have a great plan and think you know what move you want to play, it is a good idea to **stop and ask yourself these two questions before you touch your pieces.**

If your position seems difficult, sit and have a longer think for a minute or two. Sometimes there is just one move which will turn the game around.

Follow the '3 Golden Rules'. Control the centre, Get your pieces quickly off the back row, and castle your King to safety early in the game.

- Try to attack. If you are making lots of threats, your opponent will have to defend very carefully. Make attacks against unprotected pieces, and try to attack the king.
- If you attack the king, remember that one piece on its own, even a Queen, cannot usually break down the defences on its own. Try to move 2 or 3 or 4 pieces into attacking positions, so that they can work together.
- If you can't think of a plan, look for your worst-placed piece (maybe a bishop or a rook still on its starting square) and move it to a better square.
- If you have lost material, try not to swap off pieces. Keep it complicated, attack some pieces and give your opponent as many chances as possible to make a mistake.
- Keep trying, even if your position isn't very good. You always have a chance.
- Don't forget to look for all checks and captures (for you and for your opponent) every single move!!
- Knowing the value of the pieces helps you choose which ones to take and which ones to sacrifice. Try to keep a bigger value of pieces and you'll have a better chance of winning!

Pawn = 1, Knight = 3, Bishop = 3, Rook = 5, Queen = 9, King = the whole game!

Time management

Clocks limit the maximum thinking time you can use. In all Rookies Shield events each player is limited to 15 minutes thinking time. After each move please press the closest button of the clock. This pauses your time and starts your opponent's time counting down. Your opponent then considers a move, makes the move and then presses their button. This starts your time counting down again.

You may use as little or as much time as you like on any one move. **BUT if your time counts down to 0:00 then you automatically LOSE the game.** This means you need to pace yourself. One strategy is to play slowly at the start and then sprint for the finish line once you have a winning position, or plenty more pieces. **The biggest mistake new players make when using clocks is to play TOO FAST.** You could spend 20-30 seconds on each move and not run out of time. Try to use up most of your time. The limit of 15 minutes per player is a total half-hour game.

If you only have 1 or 2 minutes left, start to move more quickly. If you run short of time, your clock tells you exactly how many seconds you have left. **So stay cool and don't panic!** For example, if you have to complete a checkmate with King and Queen against King, 30 seconds might be plenty of time if you know the right method.

If you can see that your time is definitely going to run out, and your opponent just has a King and a pawn or two, take his pawns at any cost! Then, when your time runs out and he only has a King left, you will draw on time instead of losing.

Remember to press your clock after each move!

A day of chess!

Seven games in one day can be quite tiring. As with any sport, the way that we eat and drink during the day is important if we want to still be performing our best in the afternoon.

- If we eat a big meal, our body feels a bit sleepy while we digest it. So it is best if you don't eat your lunch all in one go. Instead, eat small amounts throughout the day. Have a snack whenever you have time between rounds. For example, eat half a sandwich after one round, the other half after the next.
- Drink plenty of water through the day.
- Lollies and sugary foods provide short-term energy only. Grain-based foods such as sandwiches are a better choice because they give longer lasting energy. But a lolly just before the last round might be handy if you are getting tired.
- If you have a slightly longer lunchtime break between rounds, try to get outside and have a little run around. This helps to freshen you up again for the afternoon session.

Final reminders

Be a good sport. If you win, be nice about it. If you lose, shake hands with your opponent and say "well played".

- If you win see if you can teach your opponent some of your strategies after the game.
- If you lose make sure you learn something from your opponent.
- If you make a mistake and lose your game, it isn't the end of the world. Even chess Grandmasters sometimes make mistakes and lose their game. So stay cheerful and try again in your next game.
- Try to make a friend or two.