

Getting Better

“Let’s Play Chess” includes all the basic rules and pointers you will need to get started on a lifetime of chess fun. You will be ready to find chess partners among the millions of chess enthusiasts around the world.

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Special Moves

CASTLING

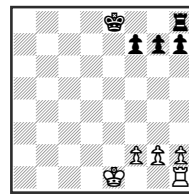
Each player may castle only once during a game and when certain conditions are met. Castling is a special move that lets a player move two pieces at once — the King and one Rook. In castling, the player moves his King *two* squares to its left or right toward one of his Rooks. At the same time, the Rook involved goes to the square beside the King and toward the center of the board (see illustrations at left).

In order to castle, neither the King nor the Rook involved may have moved before. Also, the King may not castle out of check, into check, or through check. Further, there may not be pieces of either color between the King and the Rook involved in castling.

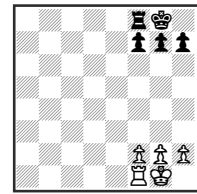
Castling is often a very important move because it allows you to place your King in a safe location and also allows the Rook to become more active.

When the move is legal, each player has the choice of castling kingside or queenside or not at all, no matter what the other player chooses to do.

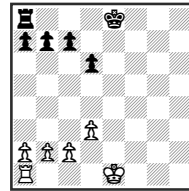
The diagrams below show what happens:



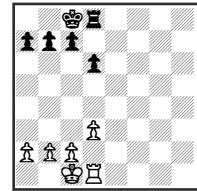
Before Kingside Castling



After Kingside Castling



Before Queenside Castling

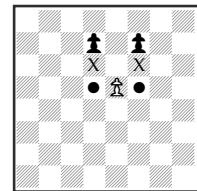


After Queenside Castling

EN PASSANT

This French phrase is used for a special pawn capture. It means “in passing,” and it occurs when one player moves a pawn two squares forward to try to avoid capture by the opponent’s pawn. The capture is made exactly as if the player had moved the pawn only one square forward.

In the diagram, one of the Black pawns moves up two squares to the square with the dot. On its turn, the White pawn may capture the Black pawn that just moved on the square marked with the X. If the White player does not exercise this option immediately — before playing some other move— the Black pawn is safe from *en passant* capture for the rest of the game. But new opportunities may arise for each pawn in similar circumstances.



About Check and Checkmate

The main goal of chess is to checkmate your opponent’s King. The King is not actually captured and removed from the board like other pieces. But if the King is attacked (“checked”) and threatened with capture, it must get out of check immediately. If there is no way to get out of check, the position is a “checkmate,” and the side that is checkmated loses.

You may not move into check. For example, moving into a direct line with your opponent’s Rook if there are no other pieces between the Rook and your King is an illegal move. Otherwise, the Rook could “capture” the King, which is not allowed.

If you are in check, there are three ways of getting out:

1. Capturing the attacking piece;
2. Placing one of your own pieces between the attacker and your King (unless the attacker is a Knight or a Pawn);
3. Moving the King away from the attack. If a checked player can do none of these, he is checkmated and loses the game.

If a King is not in check, but that player is on move and can make no legal move, the position is called a *stalemate* and the game is scored as a *draw*, or tie.



Let’s Play Chess

Summary of the Moves of Chess

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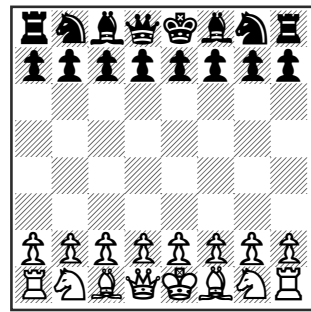
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Let's Play Chess

Chess is a game for two players, one with the "White" pieces and one with the "Black" pieces. At the beginning of the game, the pieces are set up as pictured at right. (See diagrams below to identify pieces.)

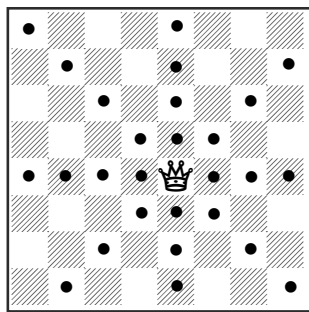
These hints will help you to remember the proper board setup:

1. Opposing Kings and Queens go directly opposite each other.
2. The square in the lower right hand corner is a light one ("light on right").
3. The White Queen goes on a light square, the Black Queen on a dark square ("Queen on her own color").



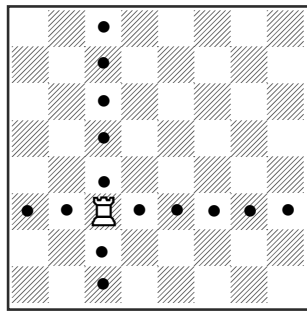
The Pieces and How They Move

White always moves first, and then the players take turns moving. Only one piece may be moved at each turn (except for castling, a special move that is explained later). The Knight is the only piece that can jump over other pieces. All other pieces move only along unblocked lines. You may not move a piece to a square already occupied by one of your own pieces. But you can capture an opponent's piece that stands on a square where one of your pieces can move. Simply remove the opponent's piece from the board and put your own piece in its place.



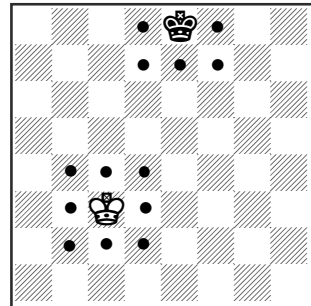
The Queen

The Queen is the most *powerful* piece. She can move any number of squares in any direction — horizontal, vertical, or diagonal — if her path is not blocked. She can reach any of the squares with dots in this diagram.



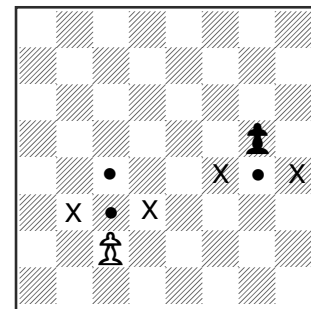
The Rook

The Rook is the next most *powerful* piece. The Rook can move any number of squares vertically or horizontally if its path is not blocked.



The King

The King is the most *important* piece. When he is trapped, his whole army loses. The King can move one square in any direction — for example, to any of the squares with dots in this diagram. (An exception is castling, which is explained later.) The King may never move into check — that is, onto a square that is attacked by an opponent's piece.

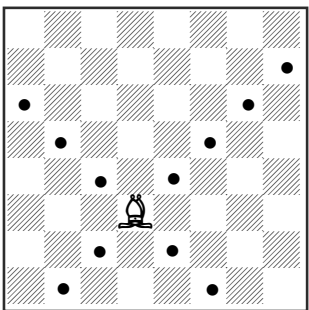


The Pawn

The pawn moves straight ahead (never backward), but it captures diagonally. It moves one square at a time, but on its first move it has the *option* of moving forward one or two squares.

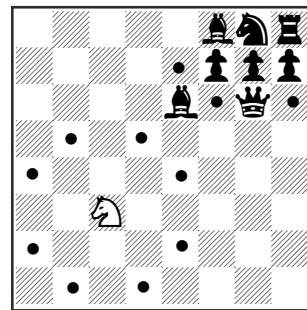
In the diagram, the squares with dots indicate possible destinations for the pawns. The White pawn is on its original square, so it may move ahead either one or two squares. The Black pawn has already moved, so it may move ahead only one square at a time. The squares on which these pawns may capture are indicated by an X.

If a pawn advances all the way to the opposite end of the board, it is immediately "promoted" to another piece, usually a Queen. It may not remain a pawn or become a King. Therefore, it is possible for each player to have more than one Queen or more than two Rooks, Bishops, or Knights on the board at the same time.



The Bishop

The Bishop can move any number of squares diagonally if its path is not blocked. Note that this Bishop starts on a light square and can reach only other light squares. At the beginning of the game, you have one "dark-square" Bishop and one "light-square" Bishop.



The Knight

The Knight's move is special. It hops directly from its old square to its new square. The Knight can jump over other pieces between its old and new squares. Think of the Knight's move as an "L." It moves two squares horizontally or vertically and then makes a right-angle turn for one more square. The Knight always lands on a square opposite in color from its former square.

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