

Superior Game for 2 Players  
**CHESS**

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## Introduction

There are tens of thousands of books written about chess, most of them full of detailed strategies, tactics, and principles designed to hone the skills of a dedicated player. This is not our purpose here. The following is written for those who have never played chess or who played a little in their distant past and have forgotten some of the basics. Other than the bare facts one needs to begin play, I offer but one bit of advice: Chess need be no more serious than you want it to be. Remember to have fun!

## Historical Notes

Chess is the most respected, challenging, and widely played two-person game in the Western hemisphere (and much of the Eastern as well). The game seems to have its origins in India some fifteen centuries ago and gained its current form around the time Columbus sailed the ocean blue.

## The Playing Area

Chess is played on a flat board popularly known as a chess board or checker board. This board is generally about 12 to 16 inches square, but it can be any size from tiny “pocket” boards, to large fields on which real people represent the game pieces. Every chess board is divided into 64 squares forming a grid of eight by eight squares that are colored alternately light and dark so that each square is a different color than its neighbors in that row (known as a rank) and column (known as a file). For ease of reference, the ranks are numbered from 1 to 8, and the files are labeled from a to h. Given squares can thus be denoted by a combination of letter and number, such as d2 or h7.

At the beginning of the game, the board is between the players aligned so that the corners with light squares are to each player’s right side.

## The Game Pieces

Each player controls 16 playing pieces which come in six different types. As named in the Western world, these are: one King, one Queen, two Bishops, two Knights, two Rooks and eight Pawns. Traditionally, the pieces belonging to one player are referred to as “white” and those belonging to the other player are referred to as “black,” although sets of chess pieces (chessmen) can be – and often are – made of various materials and can be in any colors, so long as there is a clearly discernable contrast between the two sides. In such cases, the lighter color is referred to as “white.”

Generally, the King is the tallest piece, then the Queen, Bishop, Knight and Rook with the Pawns being the shortest.

There are symbols, letters (used to record moves and captures), and point values commonly associated with each type of chess piece.



Piece: King  
Symbol: crown with a cross (or x)  
Letter: K Value: infinite



Piece: Queen  
Symbol: multi-pointed crown  
Letter: Q Value: 9



Piece: Bishop  
Symbol: Miter hat  
Letter: B Value: 3



Piece: Knight  
Symbol: Horse’s head  
Letter: N Value: 3

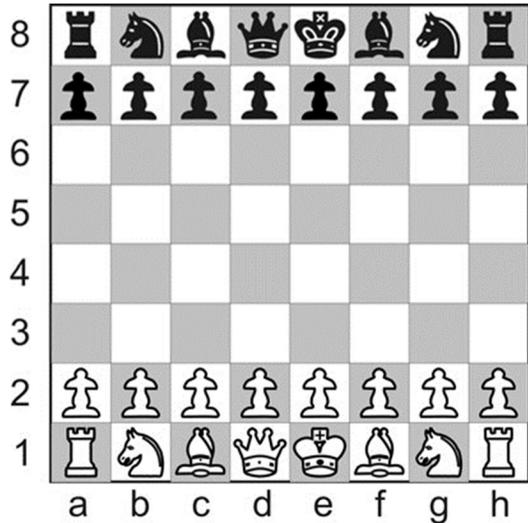


Piece: Rook  
Symbol: Castle turret  
Letter: R Value: 5



Piece: Pawn  
 Symbol: Stylized foot soldier  
 Letter: n/a Value: 1

The white and black pieces are arranged on opposite ends of the board so that each color is closest to the person playing it.



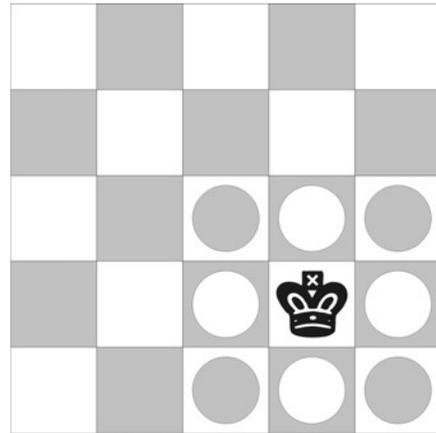
Note that the Queen always starts on her own color, that is, white on a light square and black on a dark square. This means that the Kings face each other in the same file (column), as do the Queens. Players take turns moving their playing pieces around the board; one move per turn. Often chess clocks are used to ensure that each player has an equal amount of playing time available in a game.

### The Moves

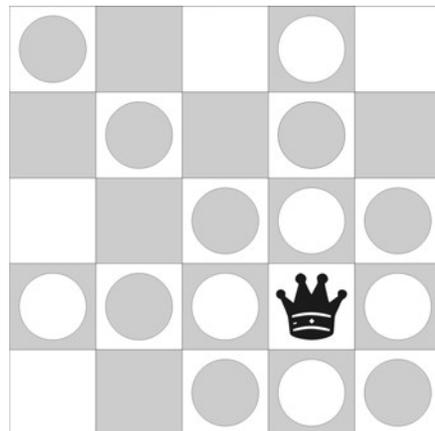
Each type of chessmen has its own distinct abilities to move around the board and to capture opposing pieces. With the exception of his knights, a player can move his pieces only in straight lines that are unoccupied by another of his pieces. When an opponent's piece is encountered along the piece's path, it may be captured. Capturing an opponent's piece involves removing it from the board and

taking its place with the capturing piece. No piece may be moved beyond the boundary of the board unless it has been captured.

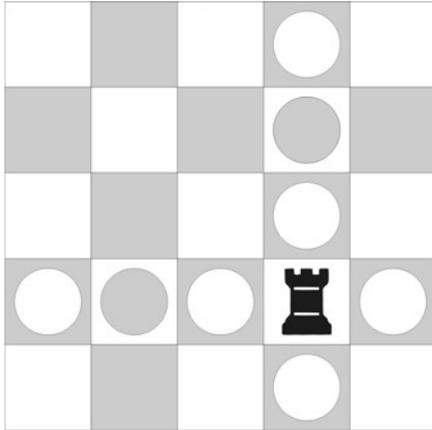
**The King** can move (and capture) one space (square) in any direction from its current position; horizontally, vertically, and diagonally as marked with circles in the illustration below. The King is unique in that it cannot move into a square in which it is threatened.



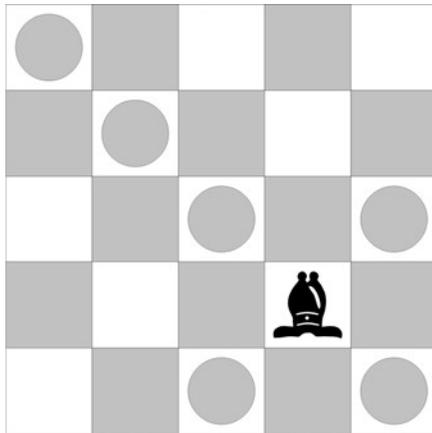
**The Queen** can move (and capture) any number of spaces in any direction — in a straight line.



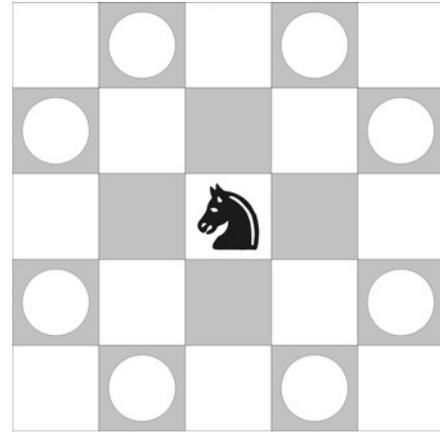
**The Rook** can move (and capture) any number of spaces along horizontal (side to side) or vertical (forward and back) lines.



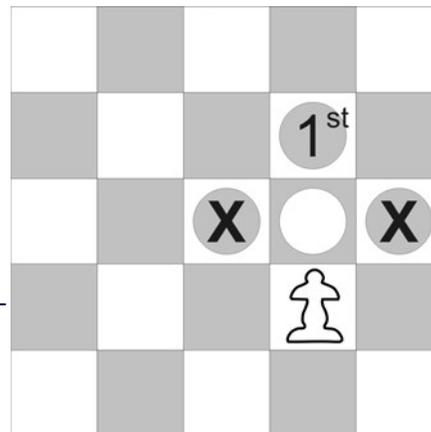
**The Bishop** can move (and capture) any number of spaces along diagonal lines.



**The Knight's** mobility is special and it is the only piece that is not restricted by the presence of other pieces on adjoining squares. The knight can "jump over" or "slide between" other pieces in a pattern that can be thought of as two-over-and-one-up (or one-up-and-two-over) or as straight-slant (or slant-straight).



On its first move, **the Pawn** can move either one or two spaces forward (toward the opponent). On subsequent moves, the pawn can only move one space forward. Unlike any other piece, pawns capture differently than they move. A pawn may capture an opposing piece only if that piece is occupying a square that is one space diagonally forward.



*The "X" indicates a piece that may be captured by the pawn.*

## Winning

The object of chess is to trap your opponent's king so that its capture is imminent and cannot be avoided. When a player threatens his opponent's king – that is, moves a piece into a position from which it could capture the king – the king is considered to be "in check," and the player must announce this condition by saying "Check." (Some tournament players no longer follow this rule.) If the opponent

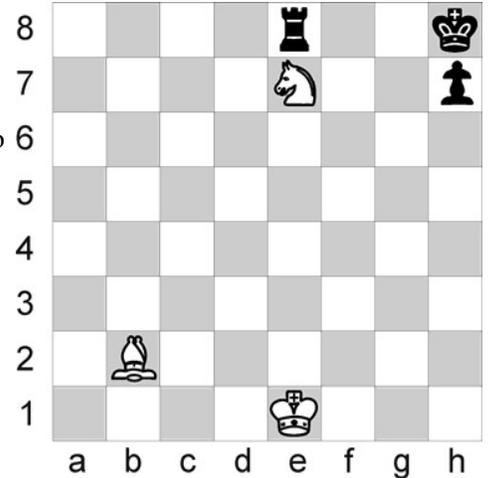
can make no move without the king remaining in check, the player says “Checkmate” and the game is over.

Two examples of check:

Black’s King on g7 in check by White’s Bishop on e5.  
[Bc5+]



Black’s King on h8 is in check by White’s Bishop on b2 (which also controls g7) cannot move to g8 due to Knight or to h7 due to its own Pawn.  
[Bb2++]



Black’s King on e8 in check by White’s Knight f6.  
[Nf6+]



White’s King on e1 in check by Black’s Queen on f2. The King cannot capture the Queen because she is protected by the Bishop on c5.  
[Qf2++]

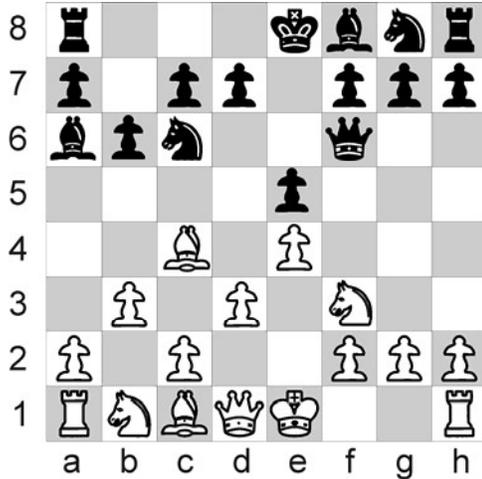
Two examples of checkmate:

### Special Moves

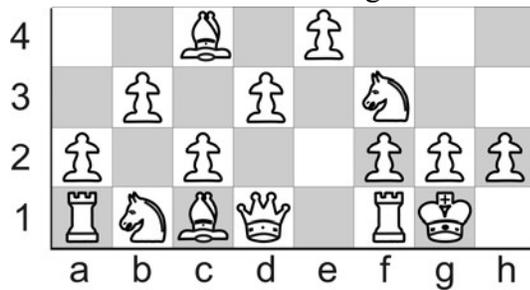
**Castling:** During a single turn, a player may move his King two spaces to the right or left and place the corresponding Rook on the square to the inside of that King, providing that three conditions are met: One, neither the King nor the Rook have been moved so far in the game. Two, the spaces between the King and the Rook are unoccupied. And three, the King is not in check and does not cross or enter a square where it would be in check. This very common move is known as “to castle” or “castling.” The symbols used to record the move are 0-0 (if the castle is to the King’s

side of the board) and 0-0-0 (if to the Queen's side).

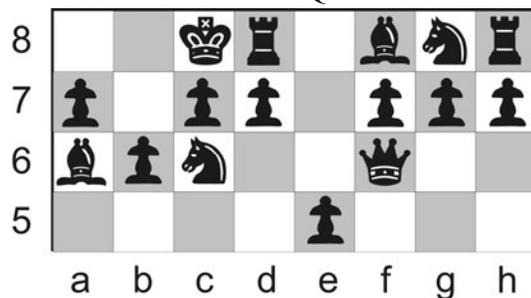
Here, both sides may castle:



After White has castled King-side:



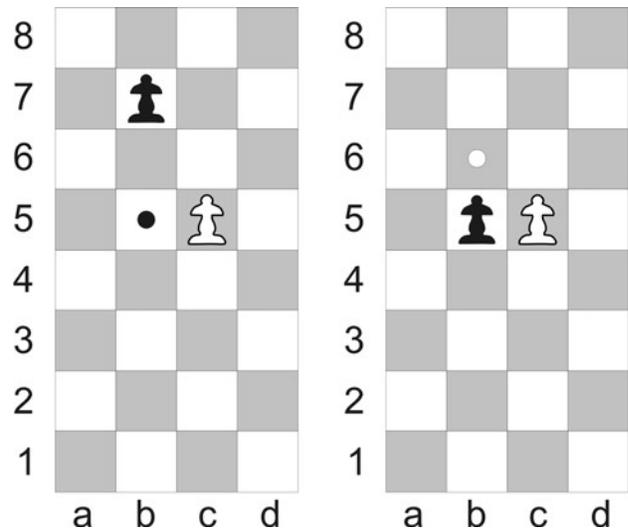
After Black has castled Queen-side:—



**En Passant:** If a player (for illustration purposes let's say White) has advanced his Pawn three spaces forward from its original position and Black moves a Pawn two spaces forward so as to occupy a space beside

White's Pawn, thus avoiding landing where it could be captured by the White Pawn, then (on his ensuing move only) White has the option of capturing Black's Pawn as if it were sitting on the square behind it. That is, as if Black had only moved one space forward instead of two.

If Black advances his Pawn on b7 to b5 (black dot) he does not avoid capture because White may move her Pawn from c5 to b6 (white dot) thereby taking Black's Pawn *en passant*.



**Pawn Promotion:** Upon reaching an opponent's king row, a Pawn may be promoted by replacing it with any other playing piece except for a King. Typically, this would be a Queen, but sometimes a Knight could better check the King. Also, other pieces might be chosen to prevent a stalemate (see below). Turning a Pawn into some piece other than a Queen is called "under promotion." If the player's Queen is still on the board, and the set being used does not provide a second Queen, a captured Rook may be inverted to become the second Queen.

## Stalemate and Draws

Chess games are considered tied or drawn in the following situations:

- When neither player has sufficient pieces on the board to checkmate the other.
- When the only way a player can avoid checkmate is to repeatedly put the opposing King in check, and the King repeatedly moves out of the way. This is called “perpetual check.”
- When one player’s King is not in check, but that player’s only possible moves would result in check. This is called a “stalemate.”
- Whenever the exact same positioning of the pieces is reached three times in sequence. This is called a “draw by repetition.”
- By mutual agreement between the players.
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