

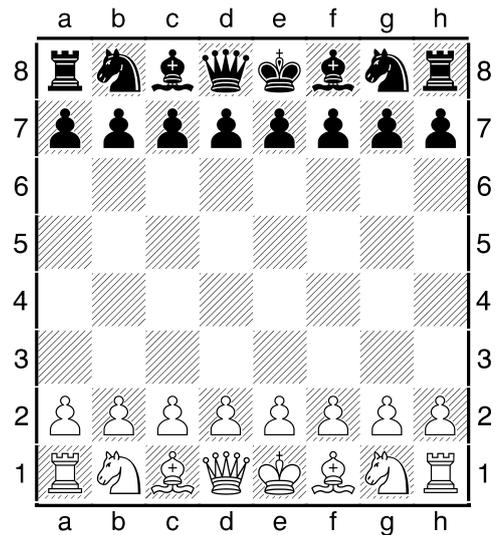
This is a chess board.

It has eight rows (ranks) and eight columns (files) with eight squares in each. That makes 64 squares in total, alternating light ('white') and dark ('black').

When you set up a chess board make sure you have a white square on your right.

Each square has a name made up of the letter of its file followed by the number of its rank: for instance a1, h8, e4. If you have letters and numbers on your chess board set up the white pieces on rows 1 and 2 and the black pieces on rows 7 and 8.

The a-d files are, collectively, the queen side, and the e-h files, collectively, the king side.



This is how you set up the pieces to start the game.

Each player has:

One king: ♔ ♚

One queen: ♑ ♒

Two rooks: ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙

Two bishops: ♜ ♝ ♞ ♟

Two knights: ♠ ♡ ♢ ♣

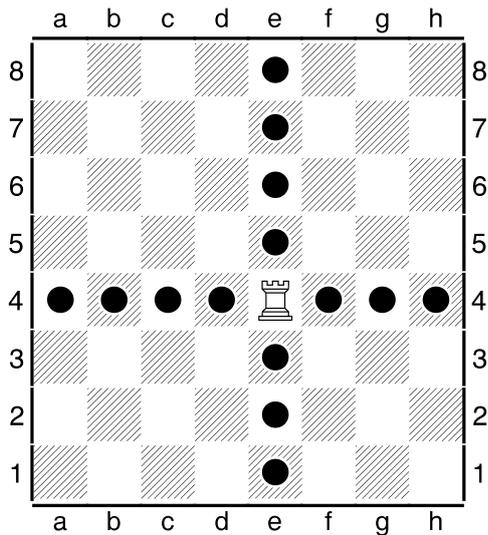
Eight pawns:



The rooks start in the corners, the knights go next to the rooks and the bishops next to the knights.

The queens start on the d-file: the white queen starts on a white square and the black queen on a black square. Likewise, the kings start on the e-file.

In a game of chess the players take it in turns to play a move. White always makes the first move.



This is how the rook moves:

Forwards and backwards, left and right.

North, South, East and West.

In this diagram the white rook can move to any square marked with a black circle.

Rooks can't jump over other pieces: if there was, for example, a white pawn on e2, the rook would be unable to move to e1.

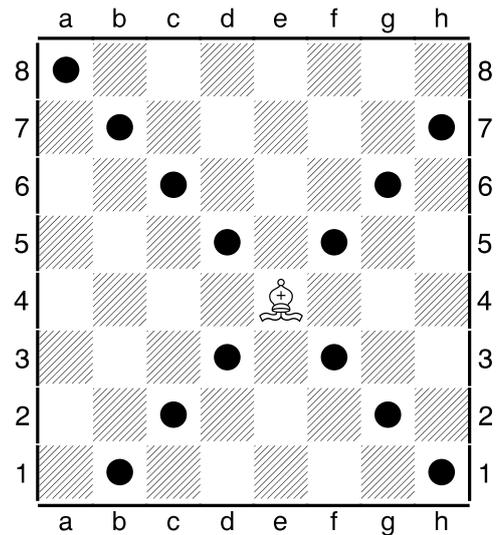
A rook captures, as do all pieces in chess, by moving to a square occupied by an enemy piece and taking it off the board.

If Black had a pawn on c4 White would be able to capture it with the rook but wouldn't be able to jump over it to reach b4 or a4.

The rook is one of the most powerful pieces on the board.

(Rooks are often informally referred to as castles, but 'rook' is the correct word: pupils should get used to this.)

A rook is worth 5 POINTS.



This is how the bishop moves.

Along the diagonals, always on the same colour square.

North East, North West, South East and South West.

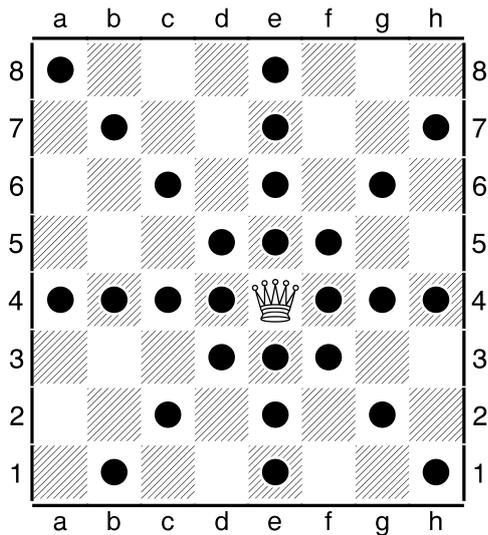
A bishop that starts on a white square will stay on white squares throughout the game.

Like the rook, the bishop cannot jump over another piece.

Like the rook, the bishop captures by moving to a square occupied by an enemy piece and taking it off the board.

The bishop is not as powerful as the rook because it can only stay on one colour square.

A bishop is worth 3 POINTS



This is how the queen moves.

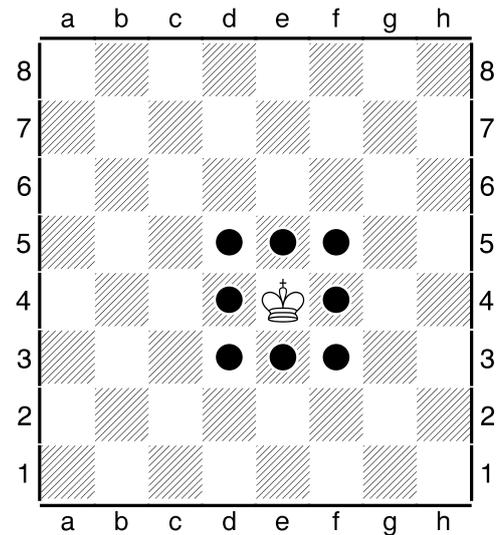
Like a rook or like a bishop, backwards, forwards, sideways or diagonally as far as it likes.

Like rooks and bishops, the queen cannot jump over other pieces.

Like the rook and the bishop, the queen captures by moving to a square occupied by an enemy piece and taking it off the board.

The queen is the most powerful piece in your army.

The queen is worth 9 POINTS.



This is how the king moves.

Just one square at a time in any direction.

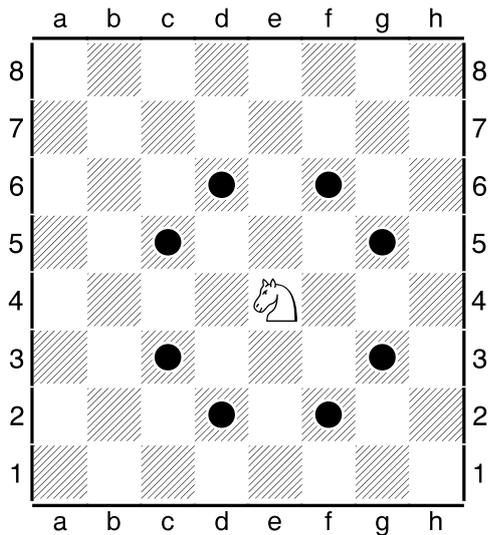
The king captures by moving to a square occupied by an enemy piece and taking it off the board.

The kings are never captured: both kings are always on the board all through the game.

YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PLAY A MOVE THAT LEAVES YOUR KING OPEN TO CAPTURE.

If black had a rook on d8 white would not be allowed to move the king to d3, d4 or d5.

As kings can never be captured we do not give the king a value.



This is how the knight moves.

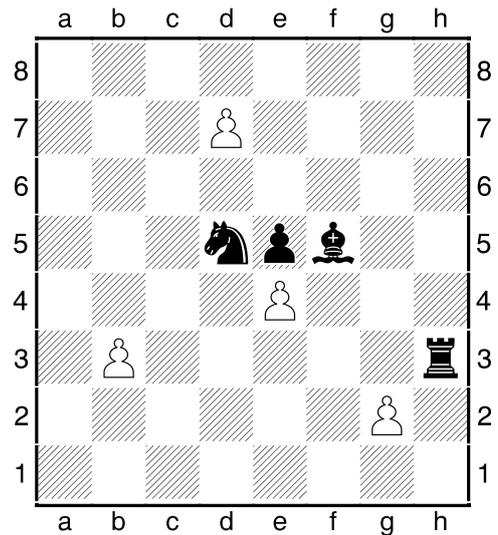
It moves in a shape like the letter L: two squares backwards, forwards or sideways, then one square round the corner.

The knight always moves to a different colour square every move. Here the knight is on a white square. All the squares it can move to are black squares.

The knight is the only piece that can jump. It can jump over pieces of either colour. If you put a white pawn on e3 and a black pawn on f3 the knight can still move to f2. It captures the same way as it moves, just like the other pieces you've seen so far.

A knight is about as powerful as a bishop.

A knight is worth 3 points



This is how the pawn moves:

On its first move a pawn can move forward either one or two squares. The pawn on g2 can move to either g3 or g4.

A pawn that has already moved can only move one square forwards. The pawn on b3 can only move to b4.

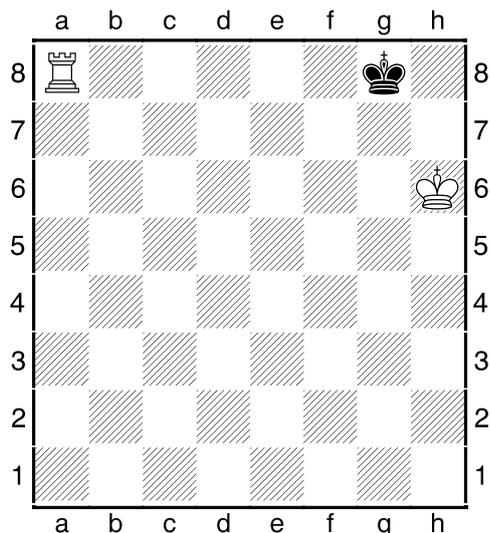
A pawn captures only by moving diagonally forwards. The pawn on g2 can capture the rook on h3. The pawn on e4 can capture the knight on d5 or the bishop on f5 but not the pawn on e5.

When a pawn reaches the end of the board you can exchange it for a queen, a rook, a bishop or a knight. White can move the pawn from d7 to d8, take it off the board and put a queen (rook, bishop or knight) there instead. As the queen is the most powerful piece you'll usually choose a queen.

Note that you are allowed more than one queen on the board at the same time.

The pawn is your least powerful piece.

A pawn is worth 1 point.



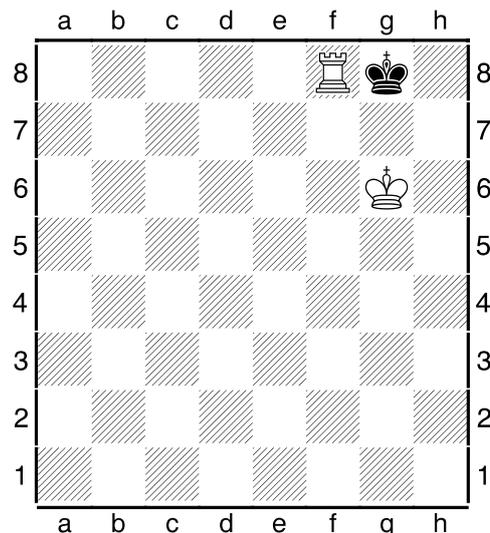
If you make a move which attacks (threatens to take) your opponent's king this is called 'check'. You should warn your opponent by saying the word "check".

If you are in check you must do something about it.

You are never allowed to play any move that leaves your king open to a potential capture.

Black therefore cannot move the king to h8 or f8, where the white rook would be able to take it, or move it to h7 or g7 where the white king would be able to take it.

But black can - and must - move the king to f7 where it is not attacked by either the rook or the king.

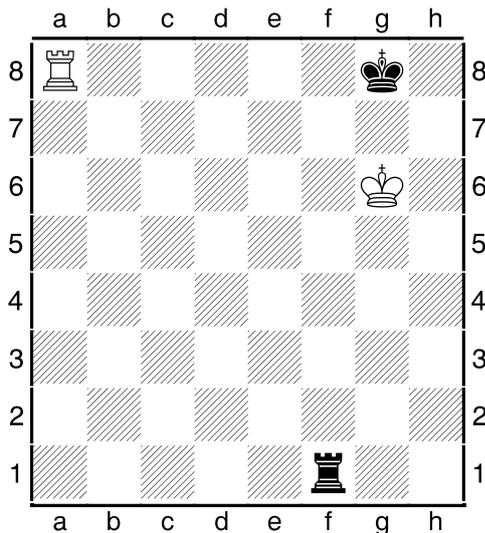


In this position white has just moved the rook to f8 and announced "check".

Black cannot move the king to h8 where the white rook would still be able to capture it, or to g7 or h7 where the white king would be able to capture it.

Black cannot move the king to f7 where the white rook and the white king would both be able to capture it.

Black can - and must - capture the rook on f8, leaving only two kings on the board - which is a draw.



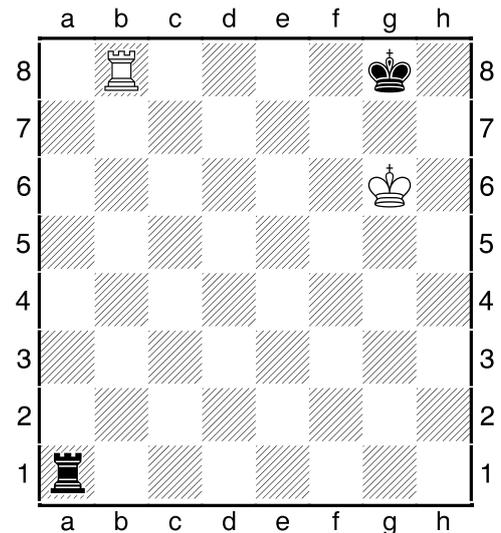
In this position White has moved the rook to a8 and announced "check".

Black cannot move the king to f8 or h8: the white rook would be able to capture. Nor can the king move to f7, g7 or h7: the white king would be able to capture.

Black cannot capture the white rook.

But Black can - and must - block the check by moving his rook from f1 to f8.

There are three ways of getting out of check: 1. Avoid by moving the king Away, 2. Block and 3. Capture: ABC.



Here, White has just moved the rook to b8 and announced "check".

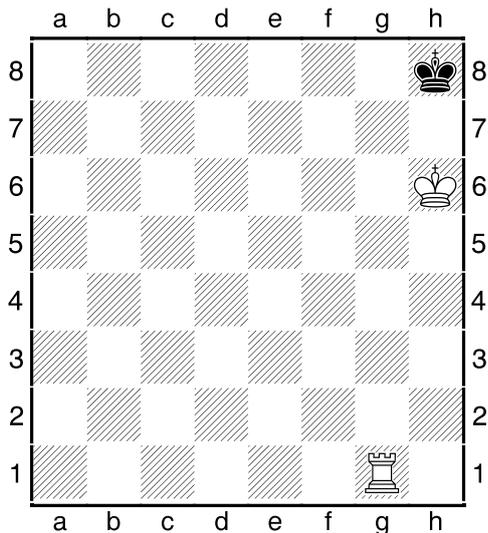
Black cannot move the king to a safe square, cannot capture the white rook and cannot block the check.

Note that two kings can never stand next to each other.

The ultimate aim of chess is to reach a position like this where you're attacking your opponent's king, and your opponent has no way of parrying the attack. This is called checkmate.

Observe that you're trapping the king: you never capture the king in chess so the game stops here.

You can't really play a game of chess unless you understand how to win.



In this position it's Black's move.

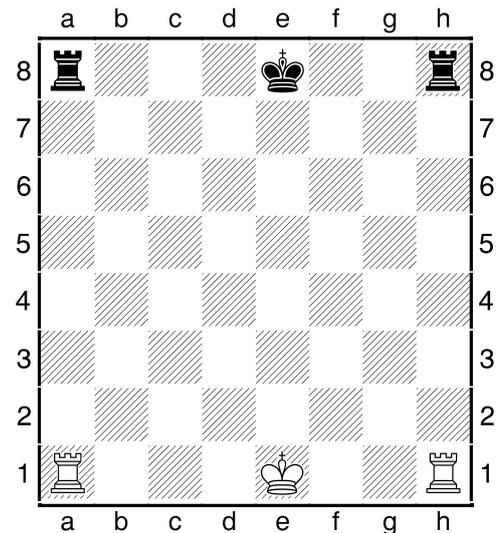
The king cannot move to h7: it would be next to the white king. It cannot move to g8: it would be attacked by the rook. It cannot move to g7 - for two reasons.

Black is not in check but cannot move anywhere. This is called 'stalemate'. The result of the game is a draw.

If you reach a position where the player whose turn it is to move cannot make any legal moves that's the end of the game.

If the king is under attack it's checkmate and the other player wins.

If the king isn't under attack it's stalemate and the game is a draw.



There is an important special rule called 'castling'.

This is a double move of king and rook.

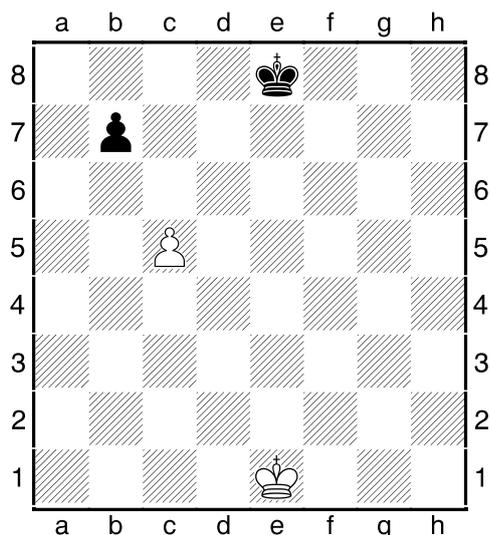
If your king and rook haven't moved and there is no piece standing between them you can castle.

You can castle on the king side by moving your king two squares towards the rook (to g1 or g8) and jumping your rook over the king (to f1 or f8). You can castle on the queen side by moving your king two squares towards the rook (to c1 or c8) and jumping your rook over the king (to d1 or d8).

You cannot castle if you are in check. (It doesn't matter if you've been check as long as you didn't move your king.)

You cannot castle if your move will leave you in check.

You cannot castle if the square your king crosses (f1 or f8, d1 or d8) is attacked (controlled) by an enemy piece.



There is another special rule called *en passant* (French for 'in passing'). This is a special sort of pawn capture. It's rather hard to understand so you'll need to read it a few times to make sure you remember it.

Suppose you have a pawn on your fifth rank: like white's pawn on c5. Now suppose your opponent has a pawn on the second (your seventh) rank on the next file to your pawn.

If your opponent moves the pawn two squares you can capture it as if it had moved only one square.

If black moves the pawn from b7 to b5 white can capture it - only on the next move - by moving the pawn to b6 and taking the black pawn off the board.

You might reach a position in which both players only have a king left. It's not possible for either player to get checkmate so the result is a DRAW.

It's also a draw if you end up with king and knight against king or king and bishop against king where again it's not possible to get checkmate.

You might also want to agree a draw if you and your opponent both think it's not possible to win.

When you start to play in tournaments and matches you'll have to play a rule called, informally, 'touch and move'. It's a good idea to play to the 'touch and move' rule once you're confident about how the pieces move.

This rule states that if you touch a piece deliberately you have to move it if you can. And if you touch an opponent's piece deliberately, either with your hand or with your piece, you have to take it if you can.

Remember the values of the pieces. Always look to see if you can make a move which wins points. Try not to play moves which lose points. The player with more points will usually win.