

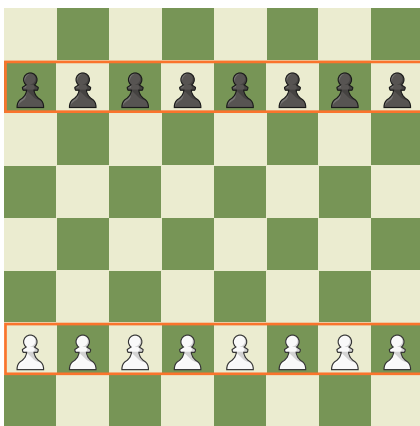
## 1 Setting Up the Board

### BOARD ORIENTATION

Before placing the pieces, it's important to start with the proper orientation of the board. No matter which side of the board you're on, the bottom right square should be white.

### PLACING THE PIECES

Learn more: [chess.com/article/view/how-to-set-up-a-chessboard](https://chess.com/article/view/how-to-set-up-a-chessboard)



**1. Pawns** should fill the second ranks (rows) of each side of your board.



**2. Rooks** are placed in the corners, just like towers on a real castle.



**3.** Moving one file (column) inward, **knights** (the horses) go next to the rooks.



**4. Bishops** go between the knights and your royalty, the king and queen.



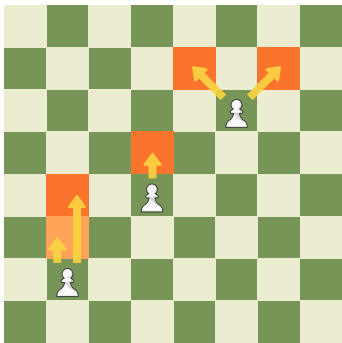
**5.** The **queen** goes on her own colored square.



**6.** The **king** goes on the last available square.

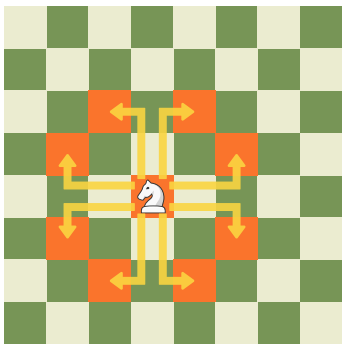
## 2 How the Pieces Move

Learn more: [chess.com/terms/chess-pieces](https://chess.com/terms/chess-pieces)



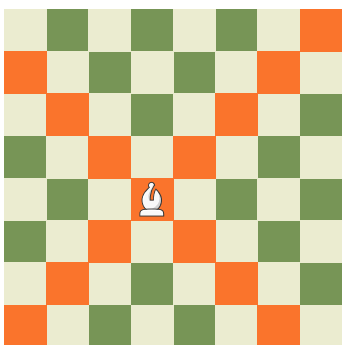
### THE PAWN

- If it is a pawn's first move, it can move forward one or two squares.
- After the first move, it can move forward just one square at a time.
- It attacks (or captures) each square diagonally to the left or right.



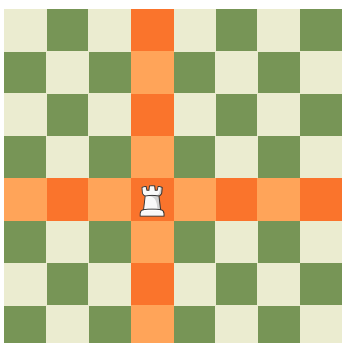
### THE KNIGHT

The knight is the only piece in chess that can jump over another piece! It moves in an "L-shape."



### THE BISHOP

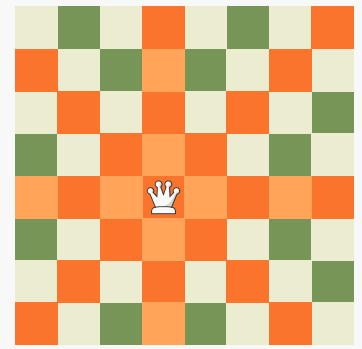
The bishop can move diagonally as many squares as it likes. Therefore, each bishop only moves on squares of the same color as the one it starts on.



### THE ROOK

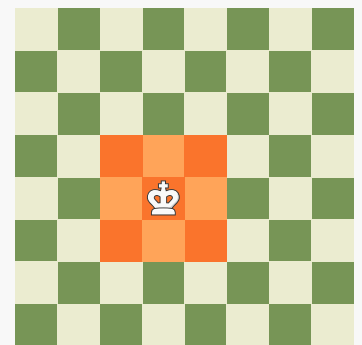
The rook can move as many squares as it likes horizontally or vertically as long as it is not blocked by an occupied square.

### THE QUEEN



The queen is the most powerful piece. The queen can move like a rook or like a bishop.

### THE KING



The king is the most important piece. However, it can only move one square at a time, in any direction it wants.

## 3 Playing the Game

### TIME CONTROLS Learn more: [chess.com/terms/chess-time-controls](https://chess.com/terms/chess-time-controls)

Before you begin to play, it is important to decide how much time each player receives to play the entire game and if any time will be added to the clock after each move (increment). If a player runs out of time before making their move, they automatically lose the game.



### MAKING MOVES

**The player with the white pieces always makes the first move.** After that, the players take turns making moves until the game ends. You may move your pieces to any square that is either unoccupied or occupied by an opponent's piece. When you move to an occupied square you capture that opposing piece and remove it from the board.

### CHECK Learn more: [chess.com/terms/check-chess](https://chess.com/terms/check-chess)

When a king is attacked, it is called check. Check is like saying, "Watch out! The king is attacked!" Since a king can never be captured, the term "check" is used when a king is threatened. **If a player is in check, they must get out of check!**



#### THERE ARE 3 WAYS TO GET OUT OF CHECK:



**1.** Move the king out of check.



**2.** Block the check with another piece.



**3.** Capture the piece putting the king in check.

## 4 Ending the Game

Every chess game ends in one of three results: a win for White, a win for Black, or a draw.

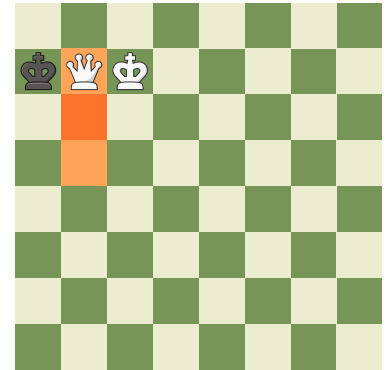
There are 3 common ways to win a game of chess.

1. **Checkmate.** Your opponent's king has nowhere to run.
2. **Resignation.** Your opponent gives up.
3. **Flagging.** Your opponent runs out of time.

### CHECKMATE

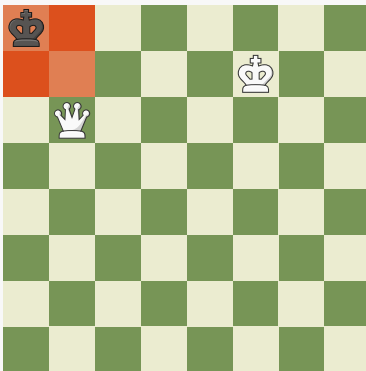
**Checkmating your opponent is the most crucial goal in chess.**

A checkmate occurs when a king is placed in check and has no legal moves to escape. When a checkmate happens, the game ends immediately, and the player who delivered the checkmate wins.

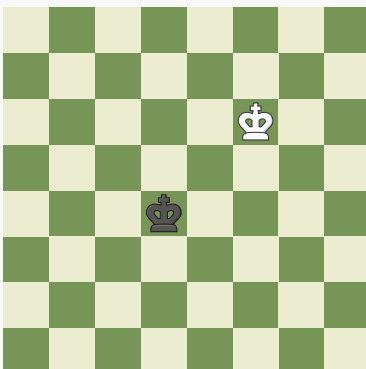


Learn more: [chess.com/terms/checkmate-chess](https://chess.com/terms/checkmate-chess)

There are several ways for the game to end in a draw:



Stalemate



Insufficient Material

### DRAW BY AGREEMENT

Both players agree to end the game in a draw.

### STALEMATE

When the player who has to move has no legal moves available, the game ends immediately in a tie by stalemate.

### THREEFOLD REPETITION

If the same exact position is repeated three times (though not necessarily three times in a row) the game is drawn. A position is repeated if all pieces of the same kind and color are on identical squares, and all possible moves are the same.

### INSUFFICIENT MATERIAL

If there are not enough pieces on the board to force a checkmate, i.e. only two kings left, or if one player runs out of time but the other does not have the pieces left to produce a checkmate, the game is drawn.

### FIFTY MOVE RULE

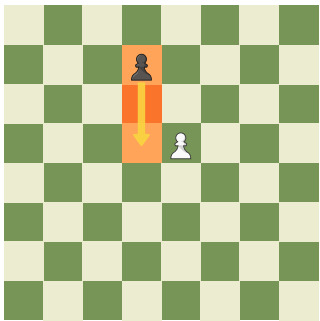
If fifty consecutive moves (one move being when both players have taken a turn) have been played where neither player has moved a pawn or captured a piece, the game ends in a draw.

Learn more: [chess.com/terms/draw-chess](https://chess.com/terms/draw-chess)

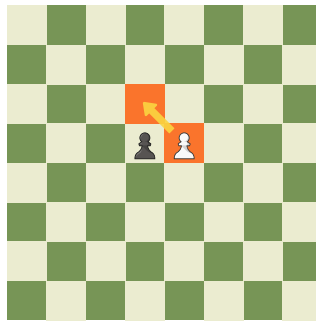
## 5 Unique Pawn Moves

### EN PASSANT Learn more: [chess.com/terms/en-passant](https://chess.com/terms/en-passant)

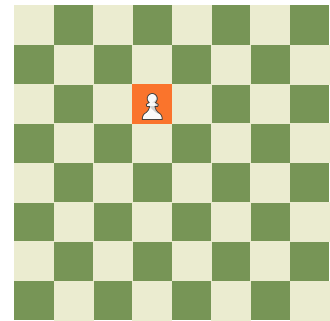
The en passant rule is a special pawn capturing move in chess. Normally, pawns can only capture pieces that are directly and diagonally in front of them on an adjacent file (column). With en passant, though, things are a little different. This type of capture is the only one in chess where the capturing piece doesn't land on the same square as its victim. Here is an example of an en passant capture for White, but know that colors may be reversed.



1. The black pawn **moves two squares** for its first move, landing right next to the white pawn.



2. **On the next move**, the white pawn captures the black pawn as if it had only advanced one square.

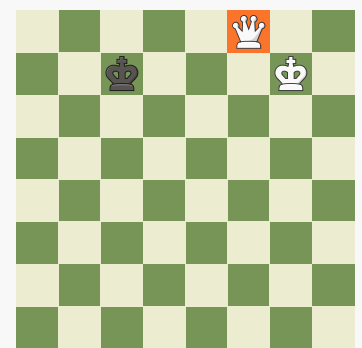
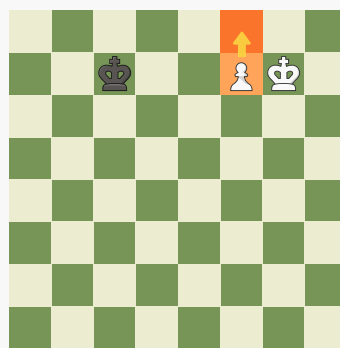


3. The white pawn lands on the square directly behind the black pawn and **the black pawn is captured**.

### PAWN PROMOTION

Promoting a pawn is one of the main goals of chess during an endgame. **Pawn promotion occurs when a pawn reaches the farthest rank from its original square.** When this happens, the player can replace the pawn for a queen, a rook, a bishop, or a knight. Most of the time, players promote a pawn to a queen, which is popularly known as "*queening the pawn*."

After one player promotes a pawn, the other player has to move (unless they are checkmated). **There's no limit regarding the number of active pieces of the same kind on the board.**

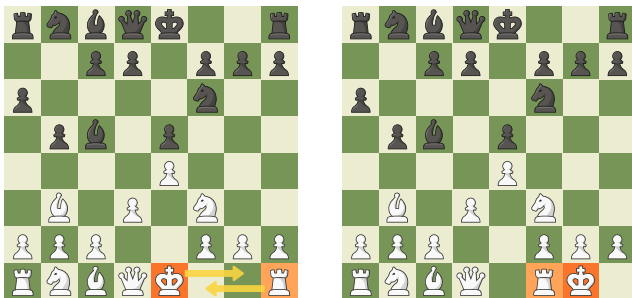


**UNDERPROMOTION** is when the player promoting a pawn turns it into any piece other than a queen. This is usually done to avoid stalemate or to checkmate the king with a knight.

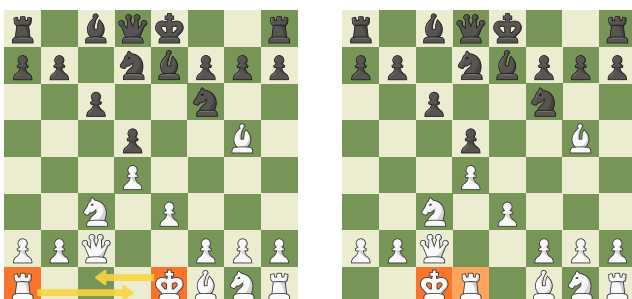
## 6 Castling *Learn more: [chess.com/terms/castling-chess](https://chess.com/terms/castling-chess)*

Castling is a special defensive move that protects your king and brings your rook into the game. Castling is the only move where you may move two pieces simultaneously. Castling is also the only time in chess when it is legal to move the king more than one square. Castling can be performed with either the kingside or queenside rook.

**KINGSIDE CASTLE:** The white king moves two squares to the right (the black king moves two squares to the left), and the white rook jumps over the king and lands on the square right next to it. On Chess.com, you can castle by dragging your king from its starting square and dropping it two squares to its right (or left if you're playing Black).



**QUEENSIDE CASTLE:** The white king moves two squares to the left (the black king moves two squares to the right), and the white rook jumps over the king and lands on the square right next to it. On Chess.com, you castle by dragging your king from its starting square and dropping it two squares to its left (or right if you're playing Black).

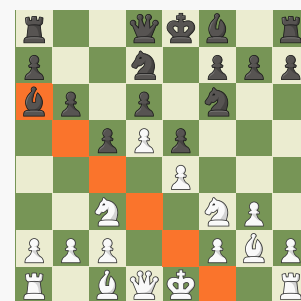


## THE RULES OF CASTLING

1. You may only castle if you haven't moved your king or your rook.
2. No piece can be between your king and the rook on the side where you want to castle.



3. If you are in check, you cannot castle. You must first get out of check before you can castle.



4. You cannot castle if any square the king is moving through is attacked by your opponent's pieces.

**Note:** you can still castle if the rook is moving through an attacked square or if it's being attacked.



5. You cannot castle into check. This makes sense since moving into check is illegal in the first place!

## 7 Basic Chess Concepts

Now that you know all the rules of the royal game, it's time to learn a few key concepts that will help you win more games. Here are some of the most important things you need to know:



### DEVELOP YOUR PIECES

Developing your pieces means moving them off of their starting squares to more active, strategic squares. The more pieces you develop, the more you can use the full power of your army. It's usually a good idea to develop your minor pieces (knights and bishops) first, castle, and only then develop your remaining major pieces (the other rook and the queen). It's also a good idea to avoid moving the same piece more than once in the opening unless you need to move it to avoid losing it. It's also important to avoid making too many pawn moves before you develop all your pieces.



### CONTROL THE CENTER

The central squares in the middle of the board are the most important on the chessboard. When playing chess, one of your priorities should be trying to control the center by having the most pawns and pieces attacking those squares. The player who controls the center has more options to attack, make threats, and move their pieces around the board.



### PROTECT YOUR KING

Protecting your king (and attacking your opponent's king) is the most critical aspect of chess. Protecting your king should be your top priority—if you get checkmated, you lose the game even if you have more pieces. That's why you should always try to castle as fast as possible at the start of the game. When you castle, your king moves to one of the sides of the board where less of your opponent's pieces will be able to reach it. Castling also brings one of your rooks closer to the center of the board, from where it will be able to help in your attacking and defensive efforts.

### KNOW THE VALUE OF EACH PIECE

In chess, different pieces have different values based on how powerful they are. Knowing the value of the pieces is important to know when you should trade one piece for another. If you trade a piece of lesser value for one of your opponent's better pieces, you'll have a material advantage and it will be easier for you to attack and defend.

Note that the value assigned to each piece is just a tool to remind you of how strong the piece is. In chess, you don't really win a game by simply having more material points—you have to be able to checkmate your opponent.

-  1
-  3
-  3
-  5
-  9

## 8 Win with Tactics

Now that you're familiar with the most important strategic concepts of chess, it's time for you to learn how to use tactics to win games. A tactic is a maneuver that a player can make to seize an immediate opportunity, such as material gain or checkmate. Here are the most common tactics in chess:



### DISCOVERED ATTACK

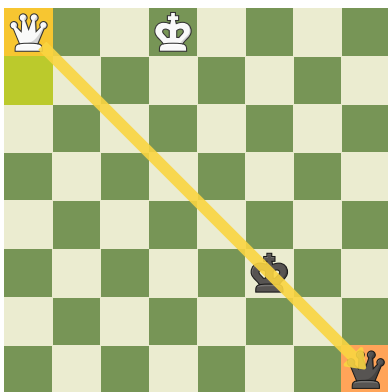
A discovered attack happens when a player moves one piece which reveals an attack from a different piece. If the uncovered piece attacks the enemy king, it's called a discovered check.

**Learn more:**  
[chess.com/terms/chess-tactics](https://chess.com/terms/chess-tactics)



### PINS

Pins happen when a piece attacks an opponent's piece aligned with another more valuable piece or critical square. The attacked piece is then "pinned" to the board since moving it would cause the attacked player to suffer a significant loss.



### SKEWERS

Skewers are like backward pins. They happen when a piece attacks a more valuable piece that is aligned with a weaker piece. The more valuable piece has to move and allow the attacker to capture the piece behind it.



### FORKS

Forks happen when a single piece attacks two or more pieces simultaneously with no way for at least one of them to escape. Knights are especially useful for forking because of their unique movement.

## 9 Go Play!