

## History of Chess

The origins of chess are not exactly clear, though most believe it evolved from earlier chess-like games played in India almost two thousand years ago. The game of chess we know today has been around for more than 500 years!



King

Queen

Bishop

Knight

Rook

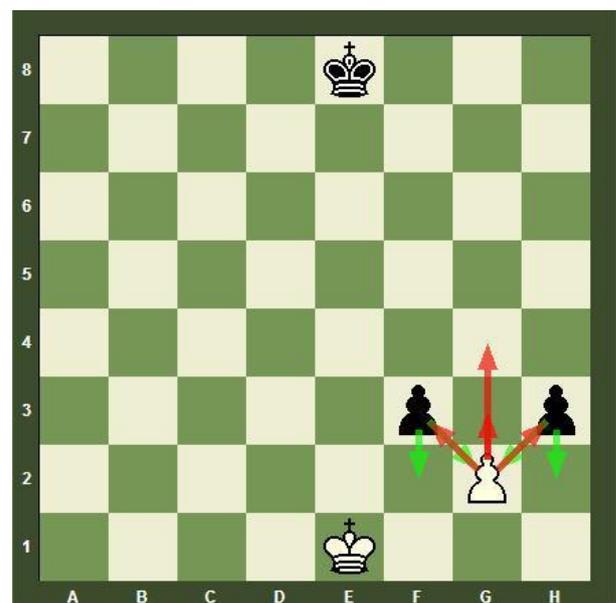
Pawn

## MOVEMENTS

### The Pawn

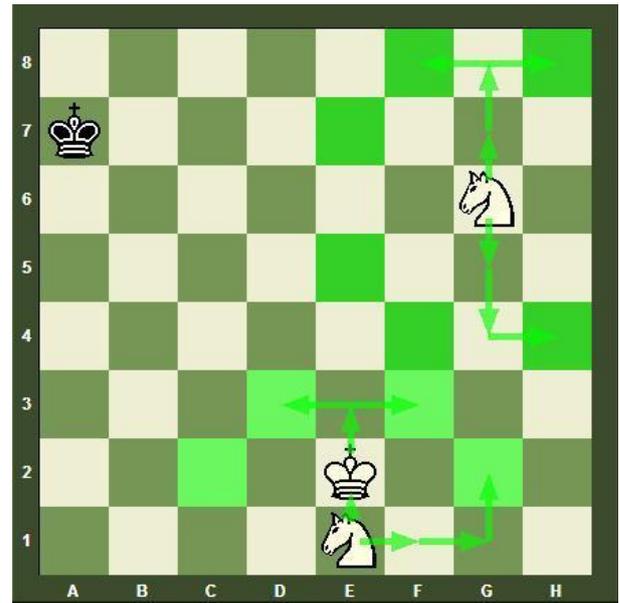
Half of your starting team is pawns, so it's very important to understand how to use these little guys, even though they are not very strong. Pawns are unusual because they move in one way, but capture in a different way. When they move, they just go forward, but when they capture they go diagonally. Pawns can only move forward one square at a time, except for their very first move where they can move forward two squares or one. Pawns can only capture one square diagonally in front of them. They can never move or capture backwards.

Because they move and capture differently, the pawn is the only piece that can get blocked by enemy pieces: if there is another piece directly in front of a pawn he cannot move past or capture that piece.



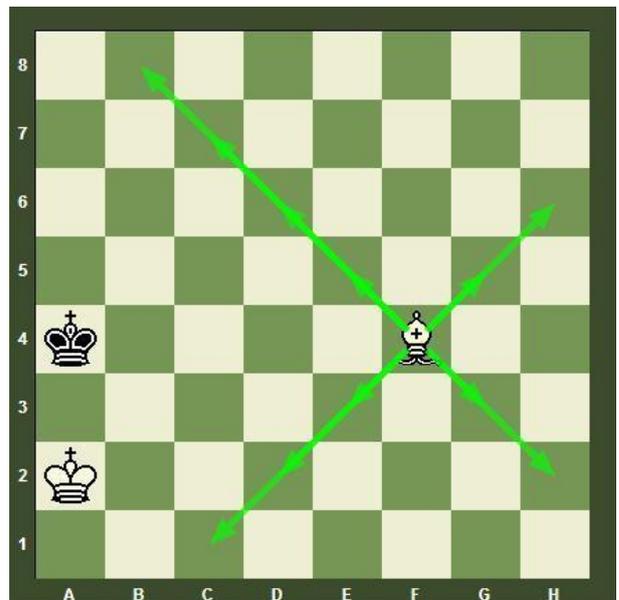
## The Knight

Knights move in a very different way from the other pieces - going two squares in one direction, and then one more move at a 90 degree angle, just like the shape of an "L". Knights are also the only pieces that can move over other pieces. People often say knights "hop" because of that special ability. Check out these knight hops:



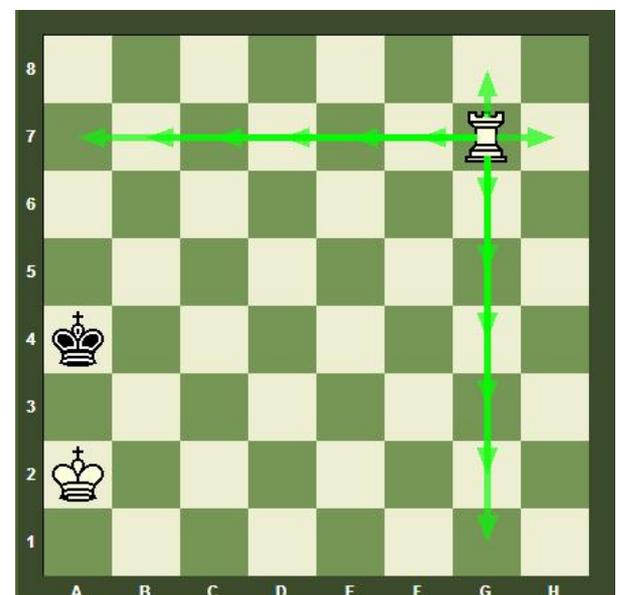
## The Bishop

The bishop is the "other half" of the queen. It moves as far as it wants, but only diagonally. You start with one bishop on a light square and one bishop on a dark square, and you will notice, only moving on diagonals, each one is stuck on the color it starts on. Bishops work well together because each covers the squares the other one can't.



## The Rook

The rook moves much like the queen: as far as it wants along straight lines, but only forward, backward, and to the sides (not diagonally).





## SPECIAL MOVES

### **Check and Checkmate**

When another piece threatens to capture the king, it is called 'check.' When there is no way for the king to escape check, it is called 'checkmate.' As stated before, that is how you win. There are only three ways a king can get out of check: move out of the way, block the check with another piece, or capture the piece threatening the king. If a king cannot escape checkmate then the game is over. Customarily the king is not captured or removed from the board, the game is simply declared over.

### **Promotion**

Now pawns may be small and weak, moving slowly and having trouble fighting against the faster guys on the board. But pawns still have big dreams! They want to be the hero who rules the chessboard and brings you victory. And pawns have one more special ability that can help make their dreams come true.

If a pawn reaches the other side of the board it can become any other chess piece (called promotion), except a pawn or king. [NOTE: A common misconception is that pawns may only be exchanged for a piece that has been captured. That is NOT true.] A pawn is usually promoted to a queen, because she is the most powerful piece. Only pawns may be promoted; no other piece can do this!

### **Castling**

One other special rule is called castling, the only time you can move two pieces in one move. This combination move allows you to do two important things all in one turn: get your king to safety (hopefully), and get your rook out of the corner and into the game. On a player's turn he may move his king two squares over to one side and then move the rook to the other side of his king. (See the example below.) In order to castle, however, the following conditions must be met:

- it must be that king's very first move
- it must be that rook's very first move
- there cannot be any pieces between the king and rook to move
- the king may not be in check or pass through check

Notice that when you castle one direction the king is closer to the side of the board. That is called *kingside*. Castling to the other side, through where the queen sat, is called castling *queenside*. Regardless of which side, the king always moves exactly two squares when castling.

## **BASIC STRATEGY**

There are four simple things that every chess player should know:

### **#1 Protect your king**

Get your king to the corner of the board where he is usually safer. Don't put off castling. You should usually castle as quickly as possible. Remember, it doesn't matter how close you are to checkmating your opponent if your own king is checkmated first!

### **#2 Don't give pieces away**

Don't carelessly lose your pieces! Each piece is valuable and you can't win a game without pieces to checkmate. There is an easy system that most players use to keep track of the relative value of each chess piece:

- A pawn is worth 1
- A knight is worth 3
- A bishop is worth 3
- A rook is worth 5
- A queen is worth 9
- The king is infinitely valuable

At the end of the game these points don't mean anything – it is simply a system you can use to make decisions while playing, helping you know when to capture, exchange, or make other moves.

### **#3 Control the center**

You should try and control the center of the board with your pieces and pawns. If you control the center, you will have more room to move your pieces and will make it harder for your opponent to find good squares for his pieces. In the example below white makes good moves to control the center while black plays bad moves.

### **#4 Use all of your pieces**

In the example above white got all of his pieces in the game! Your pieces don't do any good when they are sitting back on the first row. Try and develop all of your pieces so that you have more to use when you attack the king. Using one or two pieces to attack will not work against any decent opponent.