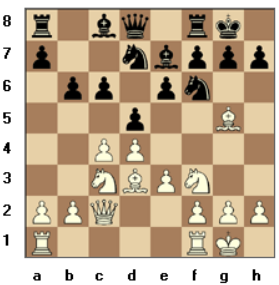
101 Essential Chess Tips

Bill Wall



1. Rapidly develop all pieces

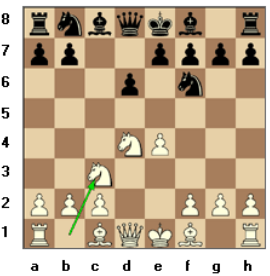


The main goal at opening is to **develop pieces** and reach castling as quick as possible.

Opening is complete when one or both players have their Rooks connected.

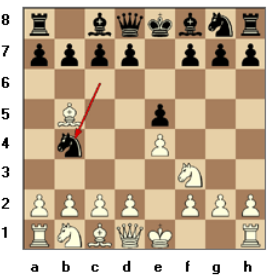
The player, who finishes the development first, **gains the initiative**.

2. Develop Knights before Bishops



While **Bishops can control several squares** from their original position, if there are no pawns obstructing their way, **Knights** dominate **only their neighbour squares** and take longer to reach the opponent's field, because they are less mobile pieces.

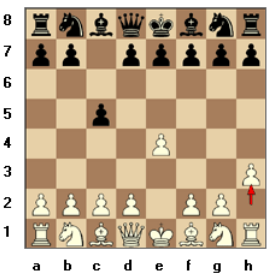
3. Don't move the same piece twice during opening



Try to place your pieces at the **best possible position** at the first move.

It is a waste of time to move the same piece more than once during opening and it may cost you the **initiative** in the game.

4. Don't make unnecessary pawns moves during opening



Pawn moves should be **restricted** during opening, because the time involved in these moves could be applied to **develop another piece**.

Generally, moving pawns is suitable when the player aims to **open diagonals** for the Queen or Bishops or **occupy the center**.

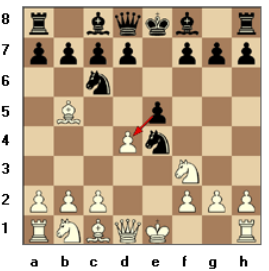
5. Don't check if not necessary



A check that can **easily be defended** by the opponent is unnecessary.

Most of the checks during opening can easily be defended by moves that **favor development**.

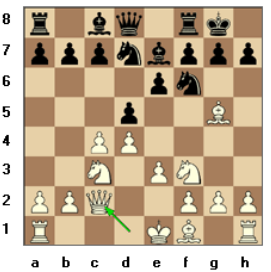
6. Don't open a position if you are late in development



An open position **favors the color with more pieces** in the game.

Therefore, only the player who has an **advantage in development** should produce an open position.

7. Place the Queen behind the line of friendly pawns during opening



Since the Queen is a **very powerful** piece, it is also **very vulnerable** to the opponent's constant attacks.

Therefore, it's convenient to place it **behind a pawn**, preferably on the second rank so that the first one is free for **Rook development**.

8. Avoid trading a developed piece for a not developed one



Generally, it's a bad deal to trade a **well-positioned piece** for a bad-positioned one.

When you trade one of your developed pieces for one of your opponent's not developed ones, you **waste time**.

The same is true if you trade a piece that has moved a lot for one that your opponent moved only once.

9. Castle as quickly as possible



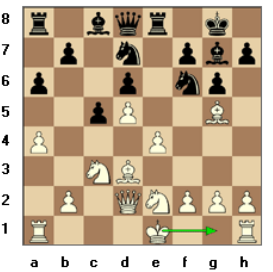
The **King's safety** é is one of the most important things to care about during opening and middlegame.

The King in the center will always be very vulnerable to the opponent's attacks, especially in open positions.

Castling means placing your King comfortably **behind a pawn blockade** and allowing development of one of your Rooks.

Then, the Rook may rapidly occupy an open or half-open file.

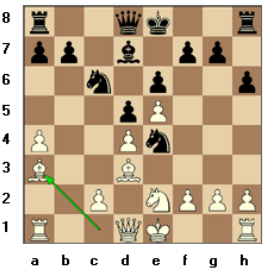
10. Kingside castling is safer than Queenside castling



Kingside castling places the King **away from the center** and safer behind a rank of protected pawns; furthermore it's a quicker move than Queenside castling since only 2 pieces have to be moved before.

On the other hand, castling on the opponent's opposite side may be very interesting to **create more attacking opportunities**.

11. Try to prevent the opponent from castling

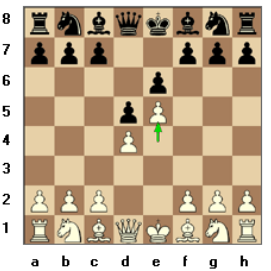


If your opponent is waiting too long to castle, try to keep the enemy King even longer in the **center**.

One of the most common ways to do so is to **control one of the squares serving as passage for the King** (usually f1 or f8, when Kingside castling).

Most of the times it's worthwhile to sacrifice a pawn in order to keep the King in the center.

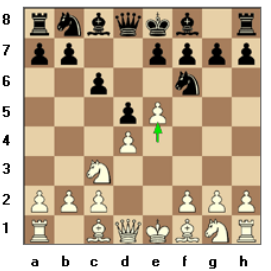
12. Dominate as much territory as possible



The player, who has an advantage in space, enables **greater mobility** to friendly pieces and can, therefore, transfer pieces from one side to the other with more **flexibility**.

On the other hand, the player in a more restricted position finds it difficult to **maneuver pieces**, which might be fatal if they are requested to defend the King.

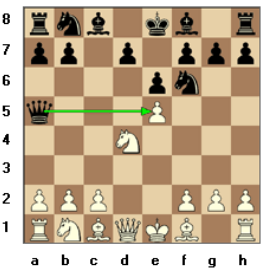
13. Advance pawns in order to conquer space



Although advancing pawns is the main resource to restrict the opponent's position, this rule should be considered carefully because the farer the pawns are from base position the **harder it is to defend them**.

Furthermore, each position advanced by a pawn creates **weakness at its adjacent squares**, which may be occupied by enemy pieces.

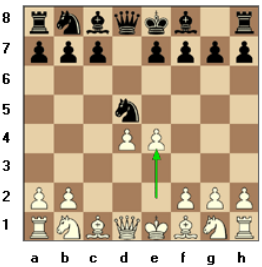
14. As pawns advance they get more difficult to protect



A weak pawn is one that is not **defended by another pawn**, which means, that it must be defended by pieces, when it is under attack.

Those pieces lose much of their effectiveness because they have to assume a defensive role, while enemy pieces get an active role.

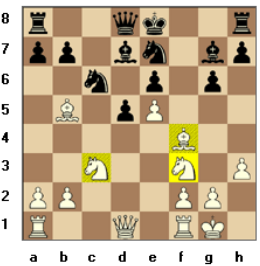
15. Place your pawns in the center



The center of the chessboard consists of **e4, e5, d4 and d5**. The expanded center also includes the squares that form the **c3, c6, f3 and f6** rectangle.

Pawns are the best units to create the center because, differently from pieces, they are not vulnerable to the attack of enemy pawns.

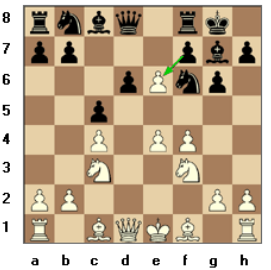
16. Keep your pieces as close as possible to the center



In the center, a piece **controls more squares** than anywhere else on the board. The Knight, for instance, may move to 8 different squares from the center while it has only 2 options when placed in corners.

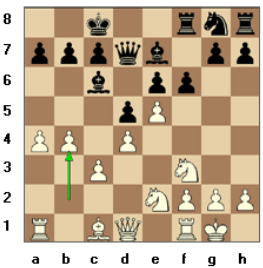
The control of the center is also important because it enables pieces to move rapidly from one side of the board to the other, and if your pieces move faster than the ones of your opponent, you have greater chances to create a successful attack.

17. When trading pawns, try to get yours as close as possible to the center



If two of your pawns can retake the opponent's piece that previously captured one of your pieces, it is recommended to move the pawn that, at the end, will be closest to the center, since central pawns are **more important** than lateral ones.

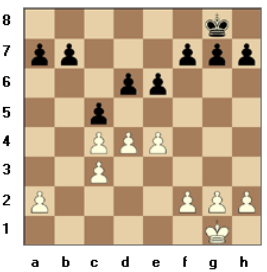
18. Control the center before attacking



Successful attacks on the wings depend mostly on center control.

Therefore, concern yourself with a **strong and stable** center before starting any lateral attack.

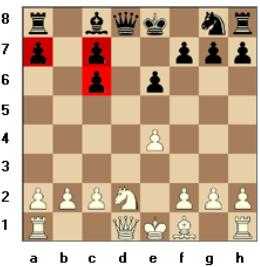
19. Pawns are the foundation of strategy



The pawn structure is **fundamental** to any position, because it improves or reduces the effectiveness of pieces.

In order to achieve good pawn conformation, all different kinds of weak pawns should be avoided: **isolated, doubled, backward and hanging pawns**.

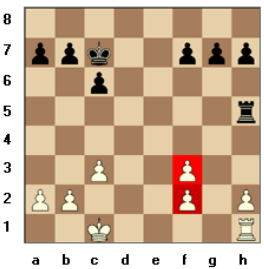
20. Pawn weakness is eternal



While pieces can move to become more active, any deficiency in pawn structure is a **long-term** weakness.

Therefore, if your opponent has weak pawns, you **don't need to hurry** to explore them.

21. Avoid doubled pawns



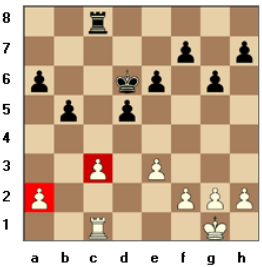
Doubled pawns are two pawns of the same color lined up on the same file.

They have **less mobility** than normal ones and are **more vulnerable** to attacks, especially when isolated.

However, they do not always represent a disadvantage.

Dominance of an open or a half-open adjacent file, or even additional control of the center, may often be a sufficient compensation.

22. Avoid isolated pawns

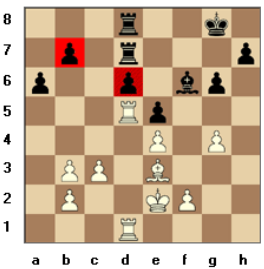


Isolated pawns are those with no friendly pawn on either adjacent file. Therefore, they **cannot be defended by a pawn of the same color**, when they are under attack and have to be protected by a piece.

The main weakness of an isolated pawn is that **the square directly in front of it is debilitated** (a hole), because it cannot be controlled by another pawn and is easily occupied by an enemy piece.

Isolated pawns are even more vulnerable when placed in half-open files, because they become **easy targets for enemy Rooks**.

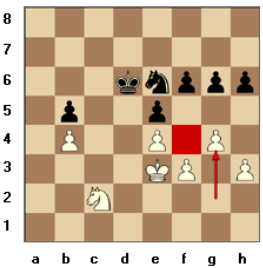
23. Avoid backward pawns



A backward pawn is closer to its base considering its adjacent comrades and is prevented from advancing, because the square directly in front of it is under an enemy pawn's control.

A backward pawn usually **impairs communication between defensive pieces** and the weak square (hole) in front of it may easily be occupied by an enemy piece.

24. Avoid creating holes (weak squares)

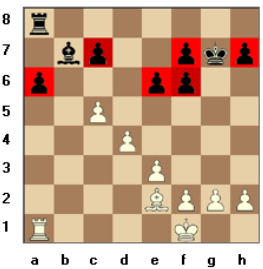


Every time you advance a pawn, the squares beside him become holes.

A hole is a square that **cannot be protected by pawns**.

Its main disadvantage is that it is easily occupied by **enemy pieces**, improving their effectiveness, because they are not easily chased away from their positions, since they are free from opponent pawn attacks.

25. Avoid pawn islands



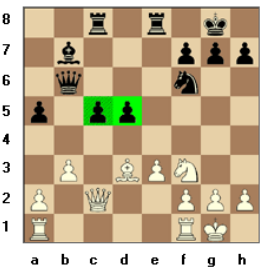
A pawn group separated from the others by one or more files is called an island.

Each island contains a basic position that has to be protected by other pieces.

Therefore, the more islands a player possesses the **harder it gets to defend them**. It is useful to consider influences on the pawn structure every time you trade pieces.

At the endgame, the smallest number of islands may be considered a significant advantage.

26. Think carefully before advancing hanging pawns



Hanging pawns are two friendly neighbour pawns that have **no comrades on adjacent squares**.

If they are placed in the same rank, they can control many squares in front of them, which is an advantage. But, on the other hand, they cannot be defended by other pawns.

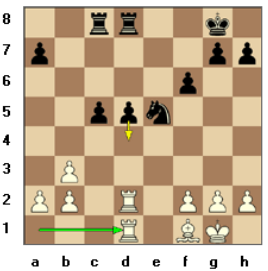
Advancing one of them results in creating a backward pawn and a **hole**, both to be explored by the opponent.

27. Put pressure on the opponent's backward pawn



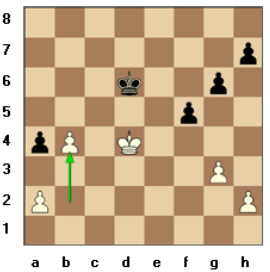
Usually, the best way to explore a backward pawn is to put pressure on it, so that the enemy uses resources in its defense, and afterwards, attack at **another point** of the board.

28. Force your opponent to advance hanging pawns



In order to fight hanging pawns, you have to put them under pressure until a pawn advances, which results in a **hole** that you can occupy.

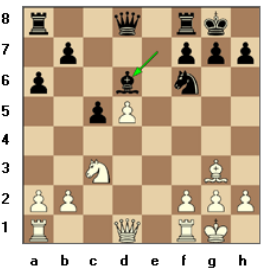
29. Whenever possible, create a passed pawn



Passed pawn is the one that doesn't have enemy pawns in its way in its file or in adjacent files.

A passed pawn is considered a very dangerous weapon, because it may reach the final rank and be promoted.

30. Always blockade your opponent's passed pawns

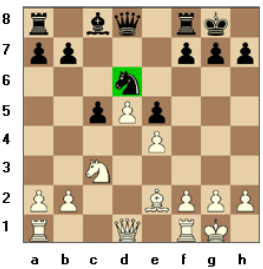


A passed pawn can become a very powerful weapon, especially when it is well protected by enemy pieces; therefore it has to be immobilized **as fast as possible**.

To block a pawn is to prevent it from advancing by placing a piece in its way.

Knights and **Bishops** are considered the best pieces for blockades.

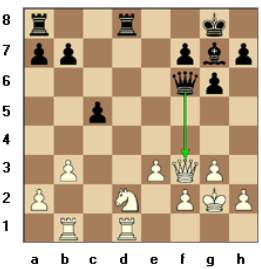
31. The Knight is the best piece to block a passed pawn



Thanks to its ability to jump over all units, the Knight is considered **the best piece to block a passed pawn**, because its range isn't impaired by the pawn itself.

The Bishop is the second best blockader, especially if the pawn's adjacent diagonals are open.

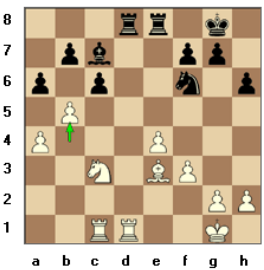
32. Pawn majority distant from the enemy King is an advantage



Majority is when a player possesses more pawns on one side than the opponent. For example, 2 against 1, 3 against 2, etc...

In many cases, majority results in a **spatial advantage**, but most important is that this majority always produces a **passed pawn**, when pawns are correctly advanced.

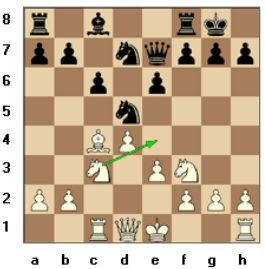
33. Minority attack



Whenever a color has majority of pawns on one side, the other color may perform a minority attack.

This attack consists of advancing pawns in order to **force trades**, leaving the opponent with only one isolated pawn or a backward one.

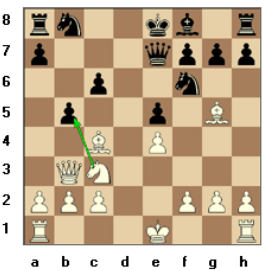
34. Avoid unnecessary trades



As a general rule, you should only trade pieces:

- When your opponent has the **initiative**
- When you are in a **restricted** position
- In order to **weaken** your opponent's pawn **structure**
- When you are in **material advantage**
- In order to trade off a passive piece for an **active** one of your opponent
- In order to **simplify** position and reach a more favorable endgame
- In order to eliminate an **important enemy defense**

35. The value of a piece varies according to its position

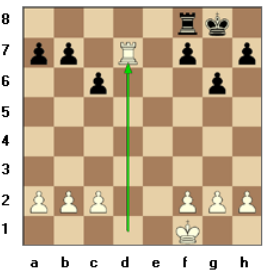


The value of a piece is, generally, consistent with the number of squares it **dominates**, because the more squares it controls, the more it threatens the opponent.

A well-positioned piece is of much higher value than the equivalent enemy piece that occupies a bad position.

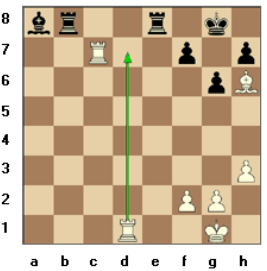
In general, a well-positioned piece has the following qualities: it is **protected**, has great **mobility**, isn't easily attacked, **cooperates** with the other pieces and **attacks** enemy pieces or pawns.

36. Whenever possible, place your Rooks on the 7th or 8th rank



A Rook on the 7th rank is an advantage, not only because it represents danger to enemy pawns, but also because it **restricts the opponent's King** and creates various mate possibilities.

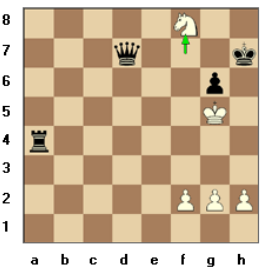
37. Double Rooks on the 7th rank



Two Rooks occupying the 7th rank is an extremely dangerous weapon, because the enemy is condemned to the most complete passivity.

The enormous amount of pressure on the pawn base and the possibility of innumerous **tactic themes**, almost always turn this advantage into a win.

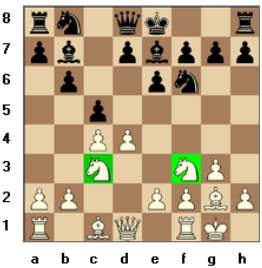
38. Not always a pawn should be promoted into a Queen



In amateur games, automatically queening a pawn has been the reason for many stalemate draws.

Carefully consider which piece is **most appropriate** for that specific circumstance.

39. Keep your Knights close to the center

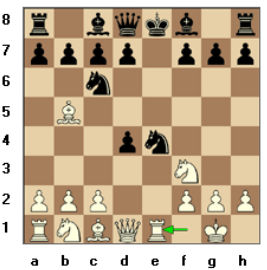


Knights, more than any other piece, need to be close to the center of the chessboard.

First, because a Knight **can control 8 squares** from the center, while from the borders it controls only 4.

Second, because a Knight needs 4 moves to cross the chessboard and reach the other side, while from the center it takes **only 2** to get to one of the borders.

40. Rooks should rapidly occupy open or half-open files

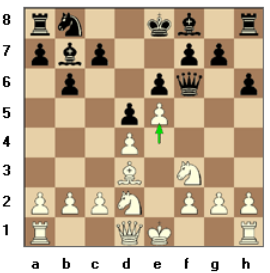


During opening, Rooks are the last pieces to be developed, because they are effective when they settle on open or half-open files.

Usually, the ideal squares to place Rooks are e1, d1 and c1 (e8, d8 and c8 for Black), because from these positions they can put pressure on the center and **defend the backrank** at the same time.

A Rook may, however, be an effective defense when placed on the 2nd file, while it still operates aggressively in the file.

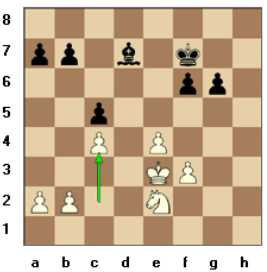
41. Keep your Bishops active



The activity of a Bishop depends mostly of his friendly **pawns' placement**.

A Bishop that is not **blocked** by its own pawns is a good Bishop and the one that is limited by its pawns is a bad Bishop.

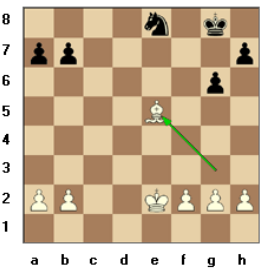
42. Keep your pawns on squares of the same color of your opponent's Bishop



When your opponent has only one Bishop, you should place your pawns on squares of the **corresponding color** of the square occupied by the enemy Bishop.

However, if you have only one Bishop, then the color of your pawns' squares should **not correspond** to your Bishops placement, whether your opponent has only one Bishop or not.

43. A Bishop is worth more than a Knight on open positions

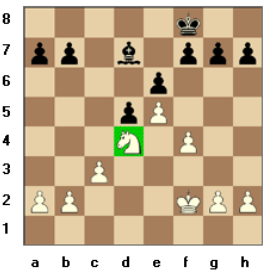


Bishops must have diagonals to operate in order to be more effective, therefore the less there are pawns on the chessboard, the more effective they get.

In open positions - when diagonals **aren't obstructed by pawns** - a Bishop can attack the kingside and protect its own flank from the Queen, at the same time.

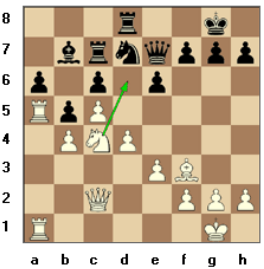
On the other hand, a Knight can maneuver only on one side due to its **restricted mobility.**

44. A Knight is worth more than a Bishop in closed positions



Due to their ability to jump over other units, Knights perform better than Bishops in **rigid pawn chain** positions.

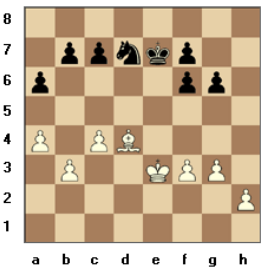
45. Knights need outposts



An outpost is a square, usually in the 5th and 6th ranks, that is under the protection of a pawn and isn't subject to enemy pawn attacks.

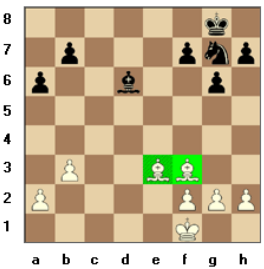
When a Knight occupies an outpost, it puts a **great deal of pressure** on the opponent's camp and it also supports the development of flank attacks.

46. Usually, in mobile pawn endgames, the Bishop is worth more than a Knight



In the Bishop's fight against the Knight, the Bishop's color should try to keep its **pawns mobile**, while the other camp should paralyze these enemy pawns, preferably on squares of the same color as the square occupied by their Bishop.

47. Two Bishops are, usually, stronger than Bishop and Knight and than two Knights



The Bishop is a long-range piece and its main disadvantage is the ability to control only squares of the same color.

Therefore, two Bishops complement each other perfectly. When well coordinated, they are superior to a Bishop and a Knight, because these enemies **take too long** to reach the active field due to the limited mobility of the Knight.

Another advantage of a pair of Bishops is that, at any moment, you may trade one of them for the enemy Knight, while it is very difficult for the opponent to trade the Knight for one of the enemy Bishops.

48. How to fight against a Bishop and a Knight



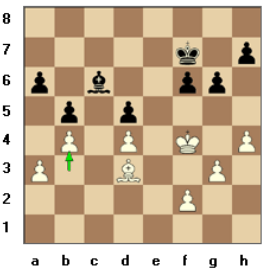
If you own a pair of Bishops and your opponent a Bishop and a Knight, restrict the enemy Bishop's range by placing pawns on squares of the **same** color as the Bishop's square, and reduce the power of the enemy Knight by **preventing it from occupying outposts** and central squares.

49. How to fight a pair of Bishops



If your opponent owns a pair of Bishops, restrict their activity with blocking pawn chains and conquer outposts for your Knight(s).

50. Keep your pawns on squares that are different from the ones of your Bishop



If you own only one Bishop, try to place your pawns on squares of the **opposite** color of the Bishop's square.

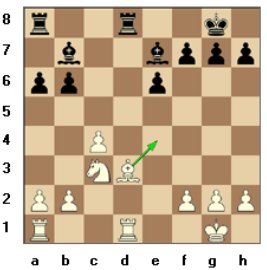
Besides keeping the diagonal clear for the Bishop's operation, this enables your pawns to work in perfect **harmony** with the piece, controlling one color of squares, while the Bishop controls the other.

51. Bishops should be placed in front of a pawn chain



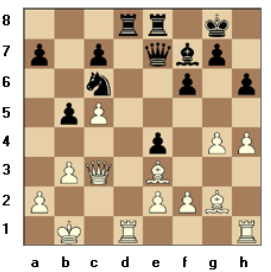
A Bishop will be very weakened if it is restricted by pawns, therefore always try to place it **out** of the pawn chain, when they are on squares of the same color as the Bishop is.

52. If your opponent owns two Bishops, try to trade one of them off



When you are fighting a pair of Bishops, try to trade one of them off, because this will withdraw the **dominance** your opponent had over the squares the Bishop used to control.

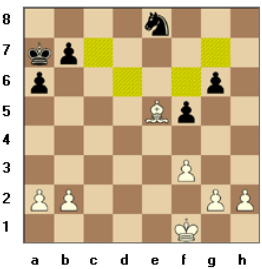
53. Keep your eyes on the squares controlled by your opponent's Bishop



If your opponent owns two Bishops and you only one (the white-squared Bishop, for instance), the enemy has **control** over the color of the spare Bishop's squares (the black squares, in this example).

That means, that you have to watch carefully over these squares, because the other Bishop (of the black squares) can attack pawns and squares your Bishop cannot defend.

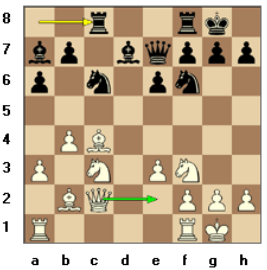
54. A Bishop can dominate a Knight



Due to its wider range, the Bishop can totally control a Knight that is placed at a border of the chessboard.

In endgames, this may be fatal, because the color that owns a Bishop is, in effect, playing with an **extra piece**.

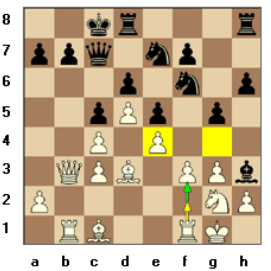
55. Think about defense first



The most important principle in chess is **safety**. At each move your opponent makes stop and ask yourself the following questions:

- Where is this move threatening me?
- What are my opponent's intentions?
- What would I do in my opponent's place?

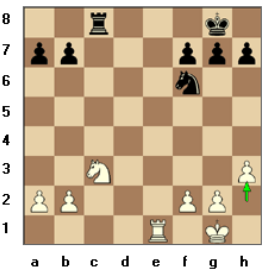
56. Assess the changes resulting from your opponent's move



Each move may considerably change the situation on the chessboard. Therefore, it's recommended to ask yourself the following questions after each of your opponent's move:

- What does the new move **attack** and **defend**?
- Where has defense and attack been withdrawn?
- Which diagonals, ranks and files have been **obstructed**?
- Which diagonals, ranks and files have been **liberated**?
- Which enemy piece can occupy the square left by the piece that made the move?
- Where can the piece head to now?

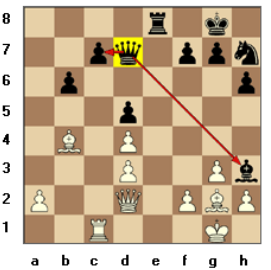
57. Keep the backrank protected



Make sure your King is able to escape any backrank checks, before moving your Rooks from the 8th rank.

It's always wise to open a small escape path for the King, before withdrawing Rooks from the 8th rank.

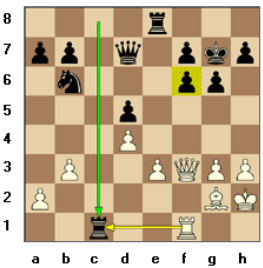
58. Don't let your pieces get overloaded



An overloaded piece is a piece performing more than one function at the **same time**. Usually, it's the one that is busy defending two or more pieces.

Overloaded pieces are reason for tactic strikes leading to **loss of material**, because they leave something unprotected when they are forced to move.

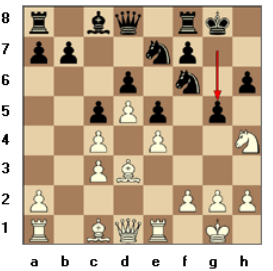
59. Don't recapture pieces automatically



It's recommended to consider the possibility of **intermediate moves** before retaking any piece.

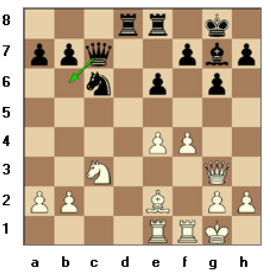
Intermediate moves are powerful weapons because they **surprise** the opponent, besides being an important tactic component.

60. Avoid advancing pawns that protect your King



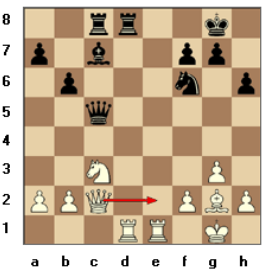
Every pawn move creates a weakness that may seem irrelevant at first site, but that can be explored **later** on by your opponent.

61. Never allow your King to stay in danger of a check



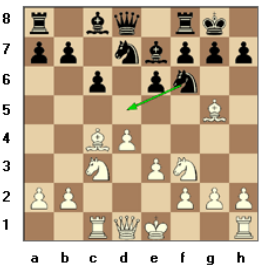
Unexpected checks are, many times, the key to tactic strikes.

62. Avoid placing heavy pieces in the range of lower pieces



A piece of greater value should never be placed in the way of a less aggressive one, because the latter will be **nullified**.

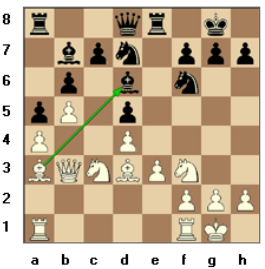
63. If you've got little space, try to trade off one or two pieces



Try to trade one or two pieces in order to liberate some space, when you are in a restricted position.

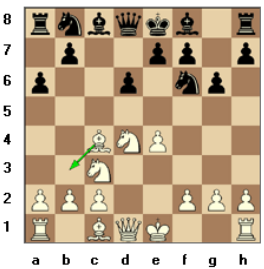
The other way round, when you have space advantage, avoid trading and use this advantage to **quickly shift the attack** from one side to the other.

64. Eliminate your opponent's best piece



If one of your opponent's pieces is very well positioned, try to trade it off.

65. Keep your pieces protected



Every unprotected piece may be the target of an enemy combination.

The ideal is to keep all pieces protected by pawns or, if there aren't any available, by other pieces.

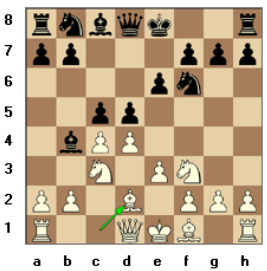
The main disadvantage of defending pieces by pieces is that, once the defender itself is attacked, it must abandon the piece it was protecting.

66. Keep your pieces on a square of a different color than the enemy Bishop is on



If your opponent has only one Bishop, try to place all your pieces on a square of a **different** color than the enemy Bishop can control.

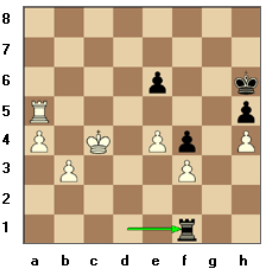
67. Try to get rid of all pinned pieces



A pinned piece is **immobilized** and always vulnerable to new attacks.

It is impossible to avoid losing material, when the opponent gets to attack this piece with a pawn.

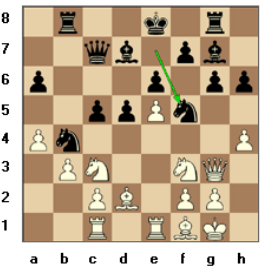
68. Never make the job easy for your opponent



Don't despair when you are under attack; even in a clearly inferior position, there is always a **chance** for survival.

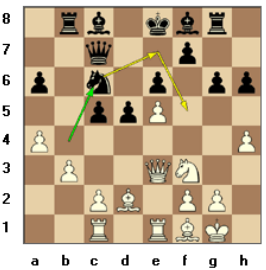
The main principle consists in making things difficult for your opponent's attack, placing many **obstacles** in the enemy's way, lingering as much as possible your defense and inducing your opponent to a mistake.

69. If your opponent attacks on one side, counter-attack in the center



Many times, the best answer to a flank attack is a counter-attack in the center, even if it costs you a pawn.

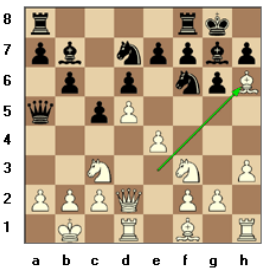
70. Try to anticipate your opponent's threats



Usually, a direct threat can be easily defended, but a remote threat, on the other hand, is only defended if you are able to **anticipate it some moves** before.

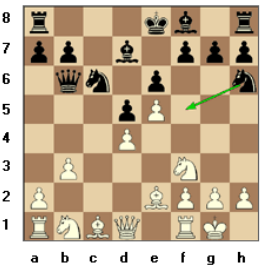
Otherwise, when the remote threat becomes imminent, it will come with another direct threat that will also need to get your immediate attention.

71. Trade off the opponent's Fianchettoed Bishop



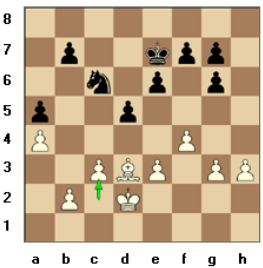
This means to weaken a **group of squares** close to the King, which may open lines for an attack.

72. Improve your pieces' position



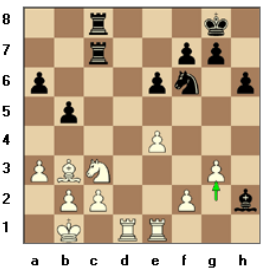
Try, gradually, to improve your pieces' position so that they can **control more important squares**, cooperate with friendly pieces and put more pressure on the enemy territory.

73. Restrict the movement of enemy pieces



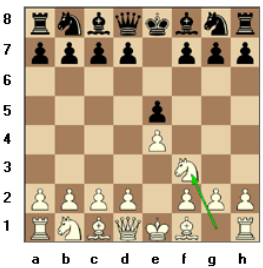
Try, whenever possible, to keep enemy pieces **as far as you can** from the field of action.

74. Confine an enemy piece



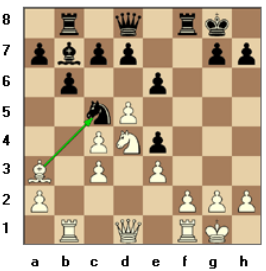
Keeping an enemy piece out of the game for a while may be sufficient to gain **decisive** advantage.

75. Do always create a threat



Your opponent is forced to allocate **resources in order to contain** the threat you created, which draws attention away from the enemy's own plans.

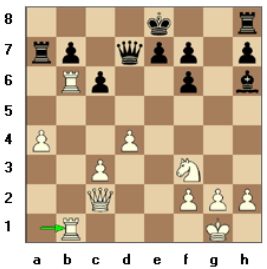
76.Create new weaknesses in the enemy field



Never be satisfied in attacking an existing weakness on your opponent's position, but try to create **new ones**.

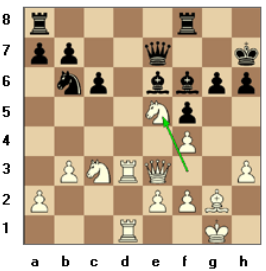
Many times, the first step to a kingside attack is to force the weakness of a pawn.

77. Concentrate your forces on your opponent's weak points



As you put pressure on certain point, your opponent is forced to bring in pieces in order to protect this point, which leaves other areas on the chessboard unprotected and subject to new attacks.

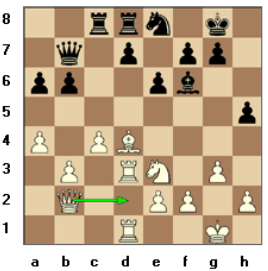
78. Cumulate advantages before attacking



Before starting an attack, you should create **weaknesses** in the opponent's position and place as many pieces you can in aggressive position.

A premature attack offers the opponent a chance to **organize** defenses.

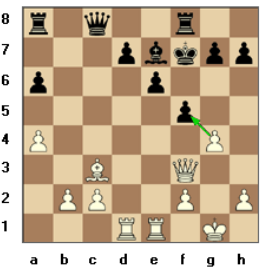
79. Concentrate as much as possible your forces when you attack



In order to ensure a successful attack, it's essential to concentrate your forces on your **target**, preventing your opponent from an effective defense.

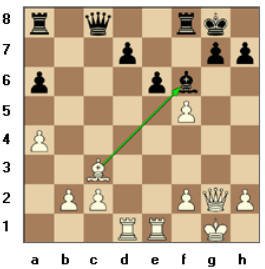
If the attack fails in this case, the opponent's weaknesses are very likely to **increase**.

80. Open ranks, files and diagonals



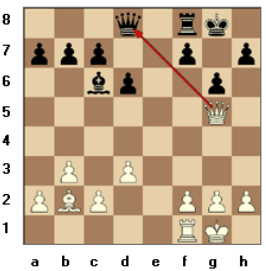
It's important to open ranks with pawn moves or piece sacrifices, because it's through these ranks that attacking pieces can **enter the enemy position**.

81. Eliminate key pieces of your opponent's defense



Identify the most important piece of your opponent's defense, when you are attacking, and try to eliminate it.

82. Avoid trading while attacking



Unless there is a very good reason, it's recommended not to trade pieces while attacking, because this may make the opponent's **defense easier**.

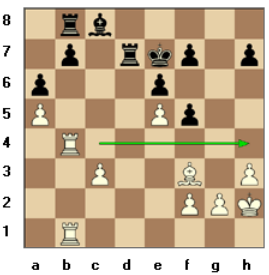
Especially Queen trades, usually, debilitate the attack.

83. Plan hypothetical trades



Mentally withdrawing pieces from the chessboard, assessing the new position and verifying if the new situation is worse or better than the previous one is a very useful technique to evaluate if an exchange is to be made or not.

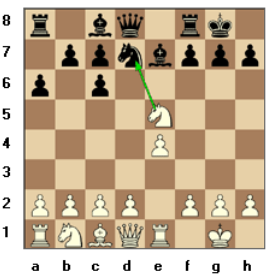
84. Quickly move your attack from one side to the other



Many times it's necessary to create at least **two weaknesses** in enemy positions to win a game.

Then, an alternated attack on these weak points is a very powerful weapon, especially, when your opponent has a lack in space, since enemy pieces will get **overloaded** by defending both positions at the same time.

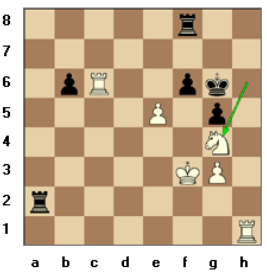
85. Whenever you have material advantage, simplify



Material advantage gets more and more intense as the number of pieces on the chessboard **falls**.

The difference of 1 unit in a battle of 4 against 3 is much more significant than in a battle of 10 against 9.

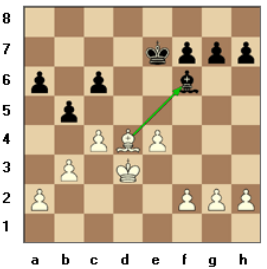
86. After an attack, reorganize your pieces



Usually, after an attack pieces lose their harmony.

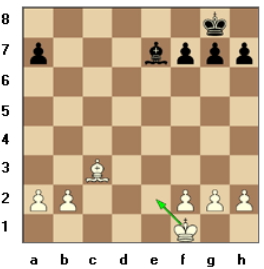
Therefore, before starting a new incursion against your opponent, reorganize your forces and **protect your weak points** as quick as possible.

87. When a player has an extra pawn it's recommended to trade pieces instead of pawns



The principle is very simple: the fewer pieces in a game, the less complicated is the position and much easier it gets to explore material advantage.

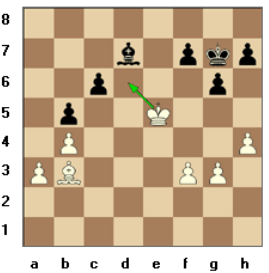
88. Centralize your King as quick as possible in endgames



After most of the pieces, especially Queens, have been traded off, the King takes a predominant role in the battle and becomes an **aggressive** piece.

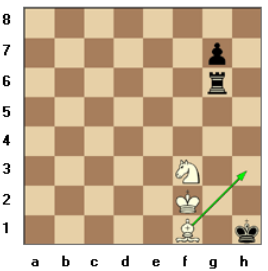
Since the King is a piece of little mobility, it's recommended to centralize it as quick as possible so that it may **move fast** to the position on the chessboard where it is most needed.

89. The King must be active in the endgame



During most endgames, the King must worry less about mates and should assume a more active position, especially, **pursuing** and **blocking** enemy pawns.

90. Drag your opponent into *Zugzwang*

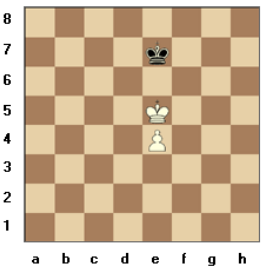


Zugzwang is a situation in which any movement the player makes results in an **even worse** situation than if no move at all was performed (diagram).

This resource is particularly important in Bishop versus Knight endgames.

Since the Bishop has control on practically the same squares when it moves on a diagonal, it has a great **time advantage** on the Knight that loses control on squares when it moves.

91. Many wins are based on winning opposition

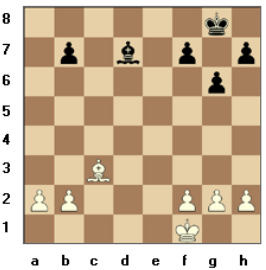


Kings are in opposition when they are placed on the same file, rank or diagonal with only one free square between them.

Opposition is a kind of *Zugzwang*, in which the move of one King **opens the way** to the passage of the other one.

Winning the opposition means that a player moves the King in order to put the enemy King in *Zugzwang*, forcing the latter to make the next move.

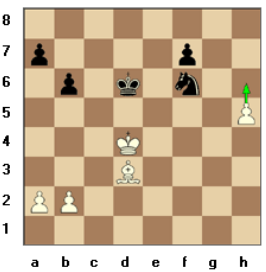
92. Endgames with Bishops of opposite colors usually result in a draw



Bishops of opposite colors may represent an advantage for the active color in the middle game, since the Bishop of the defensive part **won't be able to neutralize the pressure** on a certain diagonal.

Nevertheless, in endgames one Bishop cannot attack the points the other can defend.

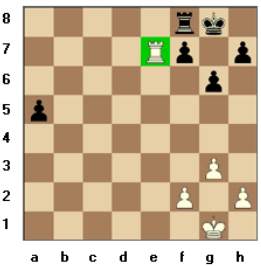
93. Flank pawns are very strong against Knights



Usually, a Knight has a **hard time** to fight passed pawns, due to its little mobility.

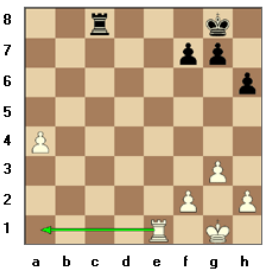
When these pawns are **Rook pawns**, it gets even harder, because Knights have more restricted movements close to the borders.

94. Keep your Rooks active in endgames



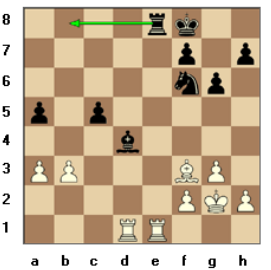
An active Rook is much stronger than a passive one. In endgames, this may, sometimes, be enough to win a game.

95. Always place a Rook behind a passed pawn



Rooks become more active behind passed pawns, both to **support** friendly pawns and to **attack** enemy ones.

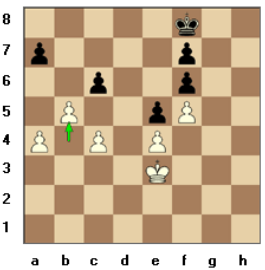
96. The color that has an exchange down should avoid trading the second Rook



Many times, when a player has an exchange down, the simplest way to win an endgame is to **trade off the opponent's second Rook**.

Usually, a lonely minor piece has little chance against a Rook.

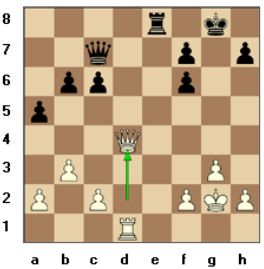
97. Create a passed pawn if you have majority



In order to create a passed pawn from a majority of pawns, advance the pawn first that has **no opponent** in its file.

When the opponent succeeds in placing a pawn directly in front of your most advanced pawn, the advantage of your majority tends to **disappear**, because lateral pawns have no support to advance.

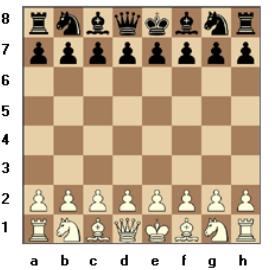
98. Centralize the Queen in endgames



Although the Queen should not be too exposed during the first part of the game, after some piece trading, it **should be centralized** whenever possible.

On a central square the Queen reaches its highest mobility (almost **half of the chessboard**) and it prevents the enemy Queen from occupying the most important positions.

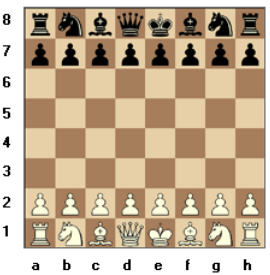
99. Always expect your opponent to make the best move



Never make a move believing that your opponent won't find the best answer to it.

Always try to make moves that **gradually improve your position**, even if your opponent finds the best answers.

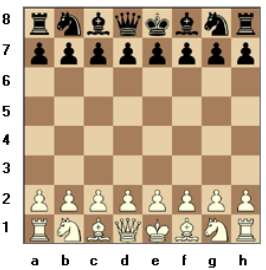
100. Not every weakness is bad



Weaknesses only are relevant if the opponent can explore them.

A pawn is only weak if it can be **captured**; a square is only weak if the opponent can **occupy it**.

101. Every rule was made to be broken



Chess is not an exact science and all tips and concepts presented hereby **cannot** be applied in a 100% of the situations, neither should they be followed **blindly**.

One of the great differences between a Grandmaster and an amateur is knowing when basic strategy principles are **to be violated or not**.

In general, we recommend that you: avoid advancing pawns that protect your King, **unless you have a good reason to do so**.

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