

How well do you know the Laws of Chess?

This month's teaser : **Castling (second part)**

1.



1. Look at Diagram 1.
1. White starts to castle and then realises the K will pass through check. What move should he play?

2.



2. Look at Diagram 2.
White starts to castle and then realises the K will pass through check. What move should he play?

Answers further down page

For Beginners!



- a. The above position has checkmate in just 2 moves - the shortest way to win (or lose!) a game of chess. What is this called?

Fool's mate.

1. f3 e4
2. g4 Qh4#

TIP: to avoid this embarrassment avoid moving pawns near your K at the beginning of the game. This



- a. This is a more common type of mate in games with beginners. What is this called and how can it be avoided?

Scholar's mate

The game will often start like this

1. e4 e5
2. Qh5 (this attacks f7 but also threatens the e5 pawn).

applies to both White and Black

Although this looks strong for White this early move with the Q gives Black a good game if they play properly.

2... Nc3 (protects the e5 pawn)

3. Bc4 (threatens Qxf7#)

in the position above Black played Nf6 - normally a good move but this just allows the checkmate on f7)

Instead Black should have played

3...g6 which attacks the white Q and blocks the attack on f7.

4. Qf3 (threatens mate on f7 again)

4...Nf6 (develops a piece and stops the mate)

Black will now look to play Bg7 and O-O with also Bg4 (harassing the white Q some more) giving a solid position for Black, while White has problems as the Q on f3 blocks the natural development of the N on g1. Game on!

TIP Early moves with the Q can look strong but if your opponent plays properly this usually leads to trouble.

Problems - Novice

Problem N3



N3a) Black promotes the pawn next move - what new piece should Black select?

N3b) If Black wants to eventually promote to a queen what move should he/she play first?

(answers next time!)

Problem N4



N4a) White to play – find the best move?

N4b) Black to play - suggest a good move

Problems - Intermediate

Problem I3

Problem I4



13a) White to play – what is the best move?

13b) Black to play, suggest a good move to prevent White's threat.

(answers next time!)



14a) You are white what is your move?

14b) Black to play – the best move is?

Answers to **Castling (second part)**

1. As White has started to castle he must have touched his King first. So White has to move the K if possible – it cannot go to squares e2 or f1 as they are attacked by the Black bishop but he can move to d1. So his move is Kd1.
2. Again White must have touched his King first (as part of the castling process) but now the only squares where the King could move are e2 and f8 both of which are under attack. So the King has no legal move. In which case White can now instead play a legal move with any other piece e.g. Ne2 or B x f6 or d5 etc.

Answers to last month's problems - Novice

Problem N1



N1a) Black to play and mate in 2 moves

White plays the R to any square on the b-file between b1 and b5.

Black has to play 2. Ka7 (a move to any other square would put the K in check)

White then moves the R one square over to the a-file with check and mate!

N1b) What is the result if it is White's move?

Stalemate!

Black K cannot move to any square (b8, a7 or K x b7) as these would mean the K would be in check. The K is not currently in check and there is no other B piece on

Problem N2



N2a) White to play – find the best move?

1...Nf6 ++ (checkmate)

This is a discovered check as it is the Q who attacks the K but that attack was blocked by the N (until it moved to also cover the g8 square so the K could not escape there)

N x f8 + (to remove the black Q is less good as it is not mate and the K can move to g8 attacking the N and also threatening checkmate for Black - see next answer)

N2b) Black to play - what is the best move?

1...Rb1+

White is forced to play 2.Rxb1

and Black then plays 2...Rxb1 ++

This is a back rank checkmate. This

the board that can move.

Stalemate counts as a draw 1/2 - 1/2 to each player

type of win often happens in games of beginners. Always make sure your K has an escape square!

Answers to last month's problems - Intermediate

Problem I1



I1a) White to play – who is winning?

White plays 1.Kc6 and wins. His plan is to take the c pawn and then use his K to win the other two white pawns (this involves giving up his own a pawn). Then White marches his K over to the kingside to help the two pawns march up the board.

Black cannot take the white pawn on h3 as the white pawn on g4 then marches up the board to become a Q and the K cannot catch that

Problem I2



I2a) You are white what is your move?

1. Qc3+ (and wins!)

It is important not to let the black K get next to the c pawn and threaten to Q

pawn.

11b) If you were black what would you play?

1...c5. Now black has a passed pawn and White K has to stay close by to stop the c pawn from promoting (usually, but not always, to a Q). So neither K can help their own pawns and so the game should be a draw.

Note that is white now plays 2.a3 (for example) Black plays 2...a6+ and if white replies with either 3.Kxa6 or 3.Kxb6 then the black c pawn will march onwards and cannot be stopped from promoting (to a Q or R). So then Black would win!

12b) Black to play - the best move is?

1... Kd2

Now the K supports the pawn that threatens to promote (to a Q, say). Game should be drawn if Black can manoeuvre his K to a1 as then if the white queen takes the c pawn it is stalemate!

Note that 1...c1(=Q) loses immediately to Qa6+ or Qg5+ and the skewer with check loses the new black Q.