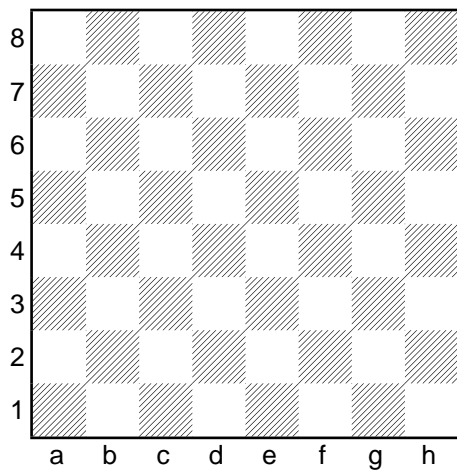


Chess Rules

The Chess Board

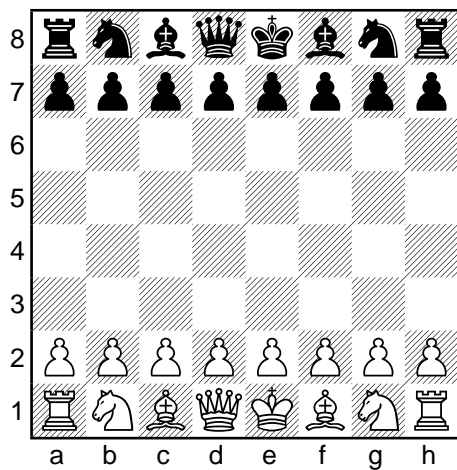
First things first... the chess board needs to be set up properly of course.

There's two possible ways to orient the board, but only one is correct: there should be a white square in the bottom right corner, from both players' perspectives.



The Chess Pieces

The pieces get placed on the board like so:



Just make sure that the kings get placed on their respective opposite coloured middle-square, while the queens go on their matching colour. (eg. White king goes on the black middle square, and the white queen goes on the white middle square).

In case you are wondering about the names of the pieces:

- Pawns — the little fellows at the front
- Rook — the castle looking pieces on the corners
- Knight — the horses
- Bishop — the guys with the pointy hats next to the knights
- Queen — she's on the d4 and d8 squares in the above diagram
- King — using your powers of deduction – he must be the one on e1 and e8

Movement

- Pawns — these little fellows only move forwards, in a straight line, and never backwards. They cannot jump over yours or enemy pieces.

If a particular pawn has never moved before during the game, it is given the opportunity, once-only, to move two squares forwards.

- Rooks — the castle is the simplest – they move in straight lines, forward/back left/right. They cannot jump over anything (they're made of stone?!).
- Bishops — they move on the diagonals only. (Basically the opposite of a rook).
- Knights — the horses are weird – they move in an L shape. Two squares forward or backwards, and one square to the left or right. Or one square forwards/backwards and two squares left/right.

They are the only piece that can jump over both your own and your enemy's pieces – but they must land on an empty square, or on an enemy piece (in which case they capture that piece).

- Queen — the most powerful and versatile piece she moves in a straight line in any direction (diagonal and straight).
- King — he's smart, so he can move in any direction but he's fat so he can only move one square at a time.

Capturing

Capturing enemy pieces is a simple operation for most of your troops.

- The rook, bishop, queen and king will capture any piece that occupies the square that they move to.

They cannot jump over the enemy, so if an enemy troop is between them and the edge of the board, they must first capture that enemy, and wait there (unless they go around it). In their next turn they can move off and continue their journey to the end of the board (if that's where they wanted to go ..).

- Knights, as mentioned earlier, can jump over pieces. If the square they land on, is occupied by an enemy troop, then they capture that piece.
- Pawns complicate life for the person writing a description of the chess rules (ie. Me!). They move forwards, but can only capture anything on the next square on the two forward diagonals. And when they do capture, they move to that diagonal square.

The interesting rule is that if an enemy pawn moves two squares forwards (described earlier), and ends up in a position directly to the left or right of your pawn, you can capture it, just as if it had only moved one square during that move. This rule is called "En Passant".

Winning

So now you have the gist of moving and capturing — you'll want to know what the point is to all this. You basically want to **kill the enemy king**. But in practice you need to reach a *Checkmate* position. What's this?

- Check — this is a position where your enemy's king would die in your next move if they don't make an attempt to avoid it. You say the king is "in check". It's often nice to let your enemy know this, because they *must* save him! It's against the rules not to. They must either move him, block the attack with another piece, or kill the enemy piece that was threatening him. Sometimes you may be forced to throw away a valuable piece just to save your silly king.
- Checkmate — this is when the enemy king is in check, and cannot do anything to save him.

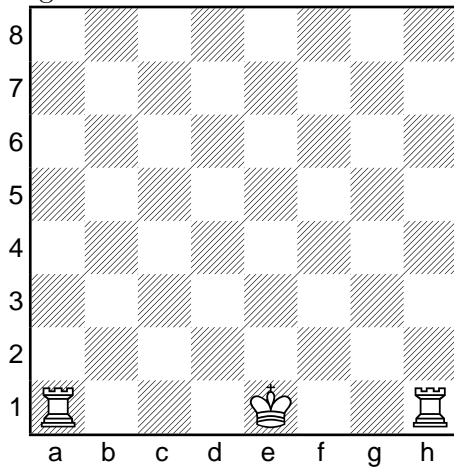
Other Rules

Castling

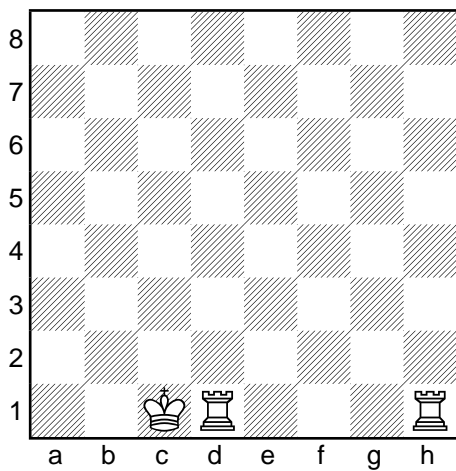
This is a weird move where if the king and respective rook has never moved, you can move your king two squares towards the rook, and place the rook on the opposite side. You cannot perform this weird move, however, if:

- your king is in check,
- if for some reason he stopped on the intermediate square, he would be in check, or
- if the destination square places him in check

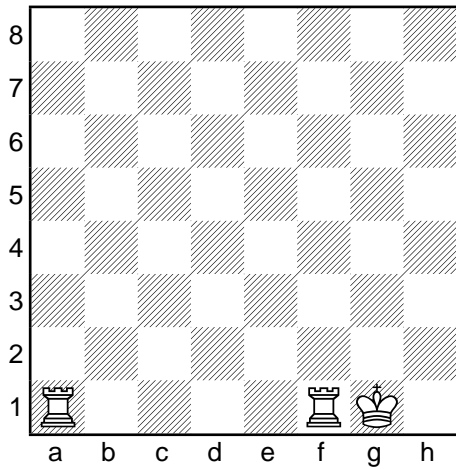
Eg:



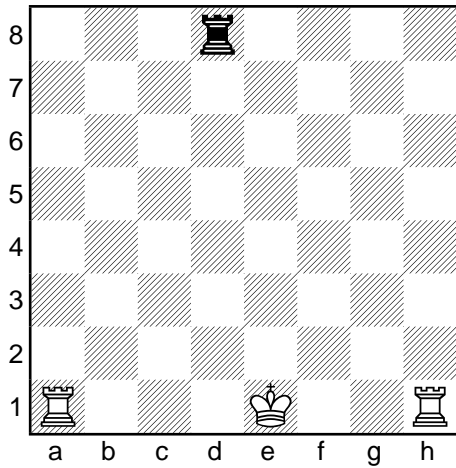
You can “castle” to the left...



Or to the right ...



In this position, the king *cannot* castle to the *left*:



Promotion

When a pawn reaches the end of the board, it's a big achievement! You would think it's a stupid thing to do – since pawns can only move forwards, and capture on the forward diagonals, so they would be useless reaching the last row of the board? Nope!

To celebrate their great journey, you can “promote” them to any piece you like! Just take the pawn off the board, and replace it with any other piece you like (even if you already have one currently on the board). Most people promote their pawns to queens – since they're the most powerful piece.

There are times when it's not a good idea to promote to a queen, eg. it may leave your enemy with no possible moves – forcing a draw out of the game. Sometimes the weird and wacky movement pattern of the knight is useful in a particular situation.

Tie-Game

There are 3 ways to tie a game:

- if a player is unable to move without violating the rules (and their king is *not* in check).
- if each player has made 50 moves with no captures occurring, and no pawn movements. On the players move, they may (but not required to) claim the draw.
- both players can agree to call it a draw

Being able to force a draw out of your opponent, when you are fighting a losing battle, is a skill in itself.

More Info ...

That's about all there is to the rules of chess (unless I accidentally left something out?!). Of course just reading the rules alone wont give you much idea of how to play a decent enjoyable game of chess - so come along to the La Trobe Uni Chess Club some time. If any part of the rules seem unclear, feel free to let me know at patrick@latrobe-chess.org.

Contact

As mentioned above, feel free to contact me at patrick@latrobe-chess.org with regard to anything at all chess.

Also, check out our club website: www.latrobe-chess.org