

35 MOST IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF CHESS



THECHESSWORLD.COM

What's in the Ebook?

This guide will teach you about **35 most important chess principles**. Some of these materials were previously published on TheChessWorld.com and more than 50,000 chess players have learned from these materials. Now you have a unique chance to learn from these ideas for yourself.

Here is what you will learn from this ebook:

- **Most Important Positional Principles**
- **Most Important Opening Principles**
- **Most Important Middlegame Principles**
- **Most Important Attacking Principles**
- **Most Important Endgame Principles**

Want to learn more?

"There Are 3 Main Problems That 95% of All Chess Players Are Facing..."



You will instantly discover **how** you can **significantly improve your game**, adding hundreds of elo points **without** hiring an expensive chess coach or spending 5 hours a day on chess!

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MOST IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF POSITIONAL CHESS

1. IMPROVE ALL OF YOUR PIECES

Improving positioning of your own pieces is one of the most important principles of chess. That is something common to both “**tactical**” and “**maneuvering**” type of positions.

Every tempi invested in improvement of your pieces will greatly benefit you in the long run. In order to attack or defend effectively your pieces need to be properly positioned, on the squares where they can perform at their best.

Take a look at the position below. White has plenty of ways to improve their pieces. For example:

- **Bb2** – occupying the long diagonal, where bishop is the strongest
- **Re1** – occupying an open file, where rook is the strongest
- **Ne4** positioning the knight at the center



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

2. CREATE FAVORABLE PAWN STRUCTURE

This is something that many chess players understand, but not many players manage to achieve in their games. The reason being, most likely, because they get disrupted by other “**more important chess matters**” and never have time to worry about simple things like [pawn structure](#).

The truth is, by creating a favorable pawn structure (the one which suits your pieces best) you not only improve your own pieces, but also make your opponent's play far less comfortable.

In the example below, white is about to play ...c5. That simple move has a deep meaning behind it. If you take a look at the white's pawn chain, you may notice that all of the pawns are located on dark squares.

Since black has a **dark squared bishop**, closing the position on dark squares would make a lot of sense, because white's knight can easily exploit the closed center. At the same time, black's bishop doesn't have many useful moves.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

3. RESTRICT YOUR OPPONENT'S PIECES

Restricting your opponent's pieces is a very powerful technique.

In the previous example we saw how we can create a favorable pawn structure to improve our own pieces' activity as well as to **reduce mobility of the opponent's pieces**. The same can also be done when one of our pieces restricts the movement of the opponent's piece or pieces.

In the example below white's bishop completely dominates black's knight. The knight has no moves, because all of the squares **d7,e6,g6,h7** are controlled by the bishop. [Here is an example when the opposite is true: [the knight dominates the bishop](#).]

Despite the fact that the material is equal, **black already has a losing position**, and key reason is the restricted knight. White continued with **1.c5!** restricting the king to **a7**, followed by **2.h4** running the pawn towards the promotion square. Soon black will have to give up his knight for that pawn. This examples contradicts to common rule that if your opponent has a dark squared bishop you need to position all of your pawns on light squares.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

4. NEUTRALIZE YOUR OPPONENT'S PLAN

Understanding what your opponent is [planning](#) to do and interfering with his plan is a very important ability. By [constantly staying alert](#) and questioning all of the opponent's moves you will be able to stay one move ahead in the game, which is typically enough to win.

In the example below black is planning to relocate his knight on **e4-square** via **d7-f6-e4** maneuver. Since white saw that coming, he took necessary precautions to prevent that from happening. White played **1.Nd3** followed by **2. Nf2** covering the important e4-square first.

Black's plan failed. Notice that the exchange of rook does not help black to position the knight on **e4**.



Black to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

5. ACCUMULATE SMALL ADVANTAGES

Positional chess is all about **accumulating many small and very small advantages** and using them when the time is right. In the position below white already has some of such advantages.

They control an open e-file, black's a-pawns are weak, the **a7-bishop** is a bad piece and the **d5-knight** is very well placed.

That is more than enough to [launch a winning attack](#) via **1.Re7**.



White to move

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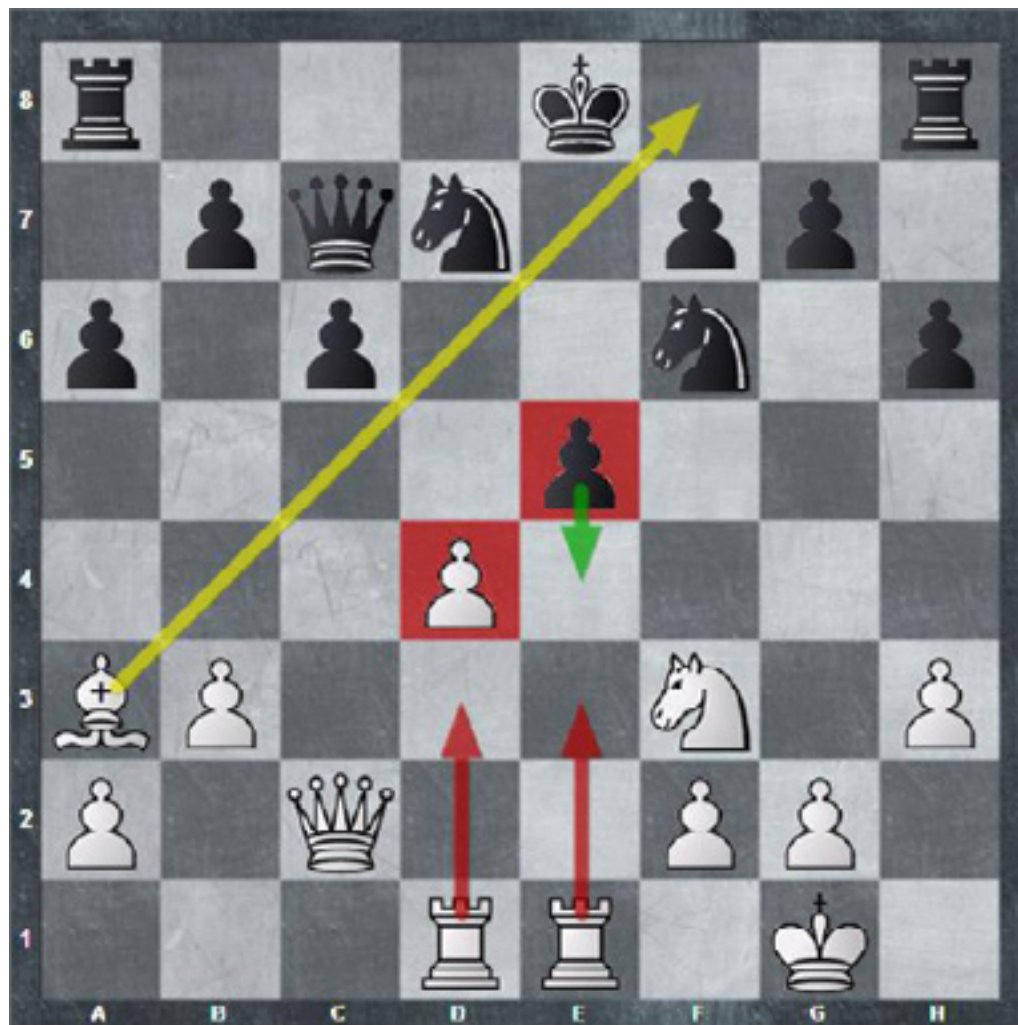
6. CONVERT TEMPORARY ADVANTAGES

It is indeed important to **possess advantages in the game of chess**. However, what's good about these temporary advantages, if they are well... temporary. In order to fully benefit from temporary advantages, we need to use them wisely and convert into permanent ones.

That typically means we need to act fast, before our opponent gets rid of them, or patches them.

In the example below we have that kind of situation. Black's king temporarily got stuck in the center. If white does not act fast, black will castle and the position will equalize. White has something in mind.

1... e4 2. Rxe4+! [Sacrificing the rook](#) to open up the position. Nxe4 3. Qxe4+ Kd8 4. Ne5 +- and white is winning. Notice how white skillfully converted a temporary advantage (inability to castle) into a permanent one.



White to move

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7. DO NOT RUSH

That is one of the very **important chess principles** applicable to all stages of the game from opening to the endgame. This principle does not mean that you need to waste tempis, but it says that you need to prepare carefully before attempting any serious positional changes.

In the position below white has an advantage of two central pawns. Indeed he can push them right away, but that wouldn't be wise.

Instead, he prepares the push first, by playing moves like **f4**, **Kh1**, **Rd1** and **Re1**. After the preparatory moves everything will be ready for a [strong attack in the center](#), which will most likely win the game.



White to move

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CHESS IS
THE ART
OF ANALYSIS.

MIKHAIL BOTVINNIK.

MOST IMPORTANT OPENING PRINCIPLES

8. DEVELOP PIECES RAPIDLY

It is not a secret that the main objective of [opening](#) is development. Even though it sounds like common sense it is not the case for many amateur players. Some players use this phase of the game for quick queen checks, pawn hunt and launch of unprepared attack.

Needless to say, that after their cheap shots fail (and that happens in **99%** of the games) they end up in deep trouble. Imaging being way behind in development, with an exposed king stuck at the center, under attack of opponent's rooks and the queen.

Not a very pleasant position to be in. Focus on **rapid development** and you won't be one of these “**unlucky**” players that lose in **15 moves**.

In the position below **Black is 2 pawns up** but he is so much behind in development that the game is already lost.



Black to move

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9. DON'T MOVE THE SAME PIECE TWICE

This is a general rule to remember. Typically you want to move **each piece just once during the opening phase**. Unless there is a very good reason (serious material gain, checkmate, etc.) to move the piece twice, it should be avoided.

Give a chance to other pieces to get developed before you start repositioning already developed pieces.

It seems like white found a nice [attacking move](#) Nb5, threatening a vulnerable c7 square. But this move was an inaccuracy because it violates one of the basic opening principles of not moving the same piece twice.

Black can easily defend with Qf7, simultaneously opening the diagonal for the light squared bishop. White just lost a tempo. It would've been better for white just to play O-O.



Black to move

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10. DON'T MAKE UNNEEDED PAWN MOVES

Don't spend valuable time in the opening making unnecessary pawn moves.

Generally speaking, you should only make pawn moves when they are needed to [develop the pieces](#) (central pawns, fianchetto, etc.) Especially avoid prophylactic pawn pushes; they don't do any good in the opening.

White just played an unforced pawn move h3. This is not very good move because it loses time. Better is just **Qe2+ or Nxd5**.



Black to move

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11. DEVELOP KNIGHTS BEFORE BISHOPS

There are many reasons to develop **knights before bishops**. First of all, the knight is a short range piece, meaning that it only can control the nearby squares. If a knight is not developed its [effectiveness is close to zero](#).

At the same time, a **bishop** is a long range piece and can control many squares even from the back rank.

Also, by developing the bishop before the knight you are leaving a knight's pawn unprotected.



Black to move

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12. DON'T EXCHANGE DEVELOPED PIECES

In order to develop a piece you invest a valuable chess resource: **time**. If you exchanged a well-positioned piece for an undeveloped counterpart you are losing tempos, and that's something you definitely want to avoid in the opening.

Use these tempos to develop more pieces instead!

In the position below it is not a good idea for white to play **Bxb8** because it will lose a tempo.



White to move

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13. CASTLE EARLY

Putting the King to safety is **one of the priorities of the opening**. Keep in mind that contrary to a popular belief it is much harder to attack the castled king.

At the same time, castling connects the rooks, allowing them to work more efficiently. Always castle early in the game!

Following this simple rules will save you handful of games.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

14. CONTROL MORE SPACE

The spatial advantage is a very important aspect of chess. Generally speaking a player that possesses a spatial advantage has control of the game.

Space allows you to much more efficiently coordinate the pieces for both attack and defense, at the same time preventing your opponent from doing the same.

In our [training course we have excellent examples](#) and a much **deeper explanation** of how spatial advantage can be effectively used and converted into the win.

Notice how white advanced his pawns to occupy more space.



White to move

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AN OUNCE OF
COMMON SENSE CAN
OUTWEIGHT A TON
OF “VARIATIONS”.

SAVIELLY TARTAKOWER.

MOST IMPORTANT ATTACKING PRINCIPLES

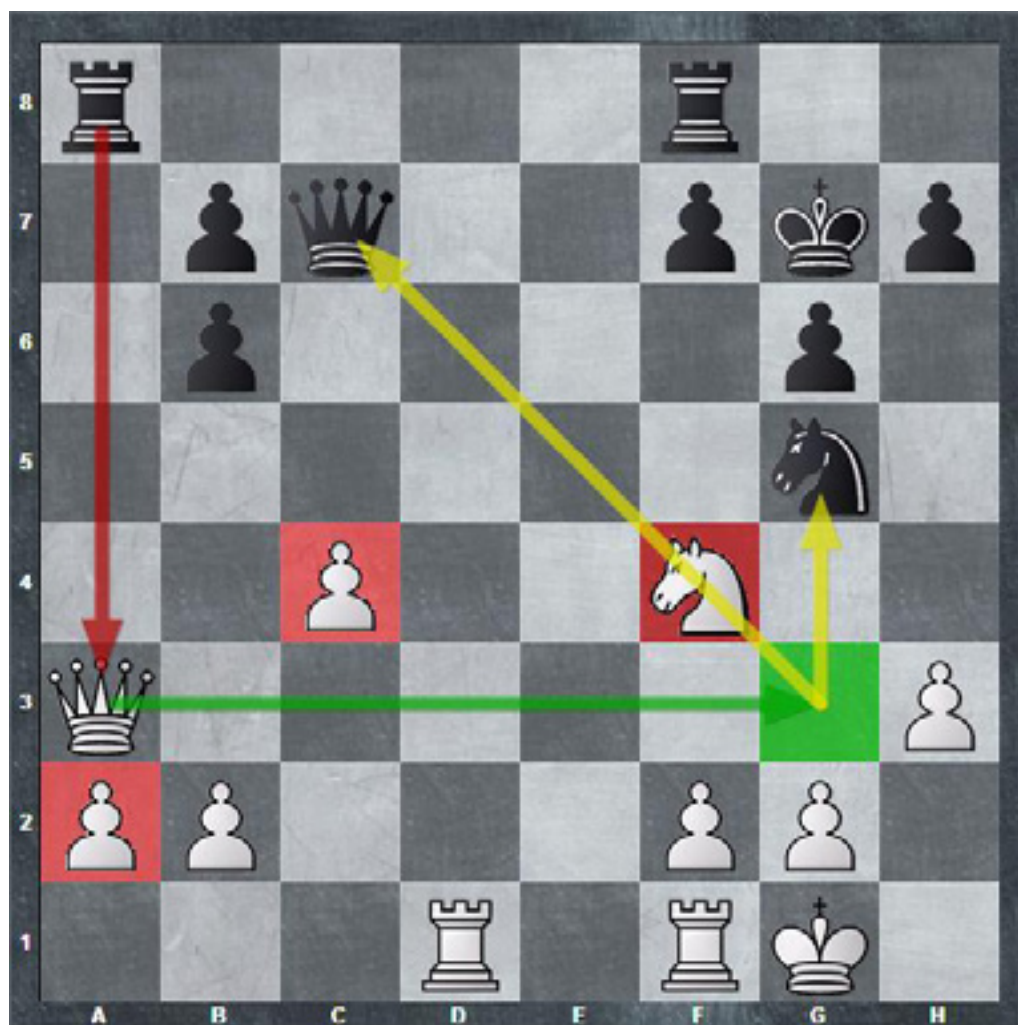
15. ALWAYS CREATE A THREAT WITH YOUR MOVE

Creating a threat with every move is one of the most important principles of attacking chess. If your move **possesses a threat**, your opponent will have a much harder time [realizing his own plans](#) since he would have to utilize his resources to deal with the threats first.

Always try to find a move that threatens your opponent's safety.

Take a look at the position below. It seems white is losing material because his queen, 2 pawns and the knight are in danger. If white plays passively he will lose a pawn and his advantage. White however, finds a strong counter-attacking move: **1. Qg3!**

Not only this move protects his own knight, but also it threatens black's knight as well as prepares a **discovered attack** on the queen (after **Nh5+**). Now black will be the one losing a piece.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

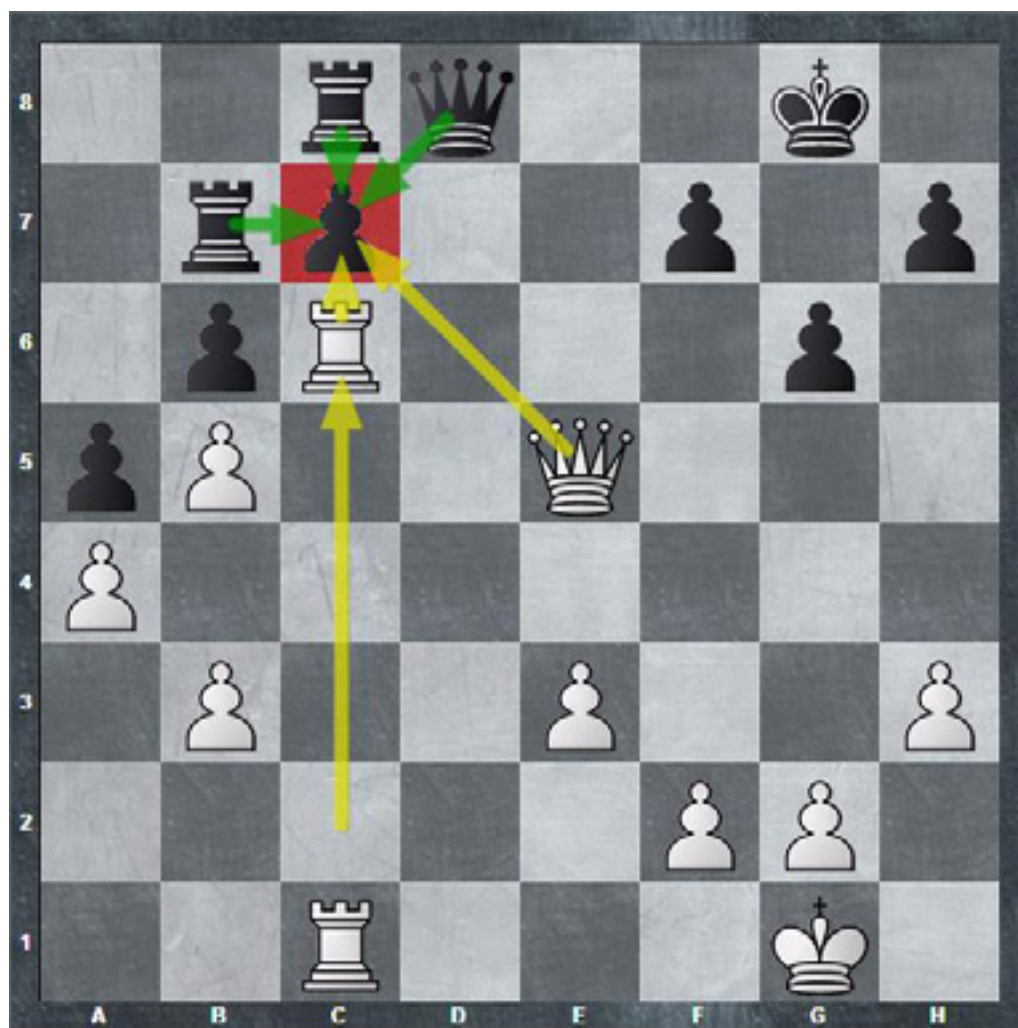
16. EXPLOIT YOUR OPPONENT'S WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses come in different shapes and forms. Often, they need to be created before you can fully exploit them. If your opponent already has a **weakness** you need to regroup your forces and attack it.

In the example below the **material is equal**. However, black has a very weak, [backward](#) c7-pawn. White regroups his forces and puts maximum pressure on the pawn.

The important idea that many amateur players don't understand is that even though white cannot win the **c7-pawn right away**, he gets an enormous advantage in pieces activity.

Compare how white pieces are positioned compared to their black's counterparts. The position is technically won for white.



White to move

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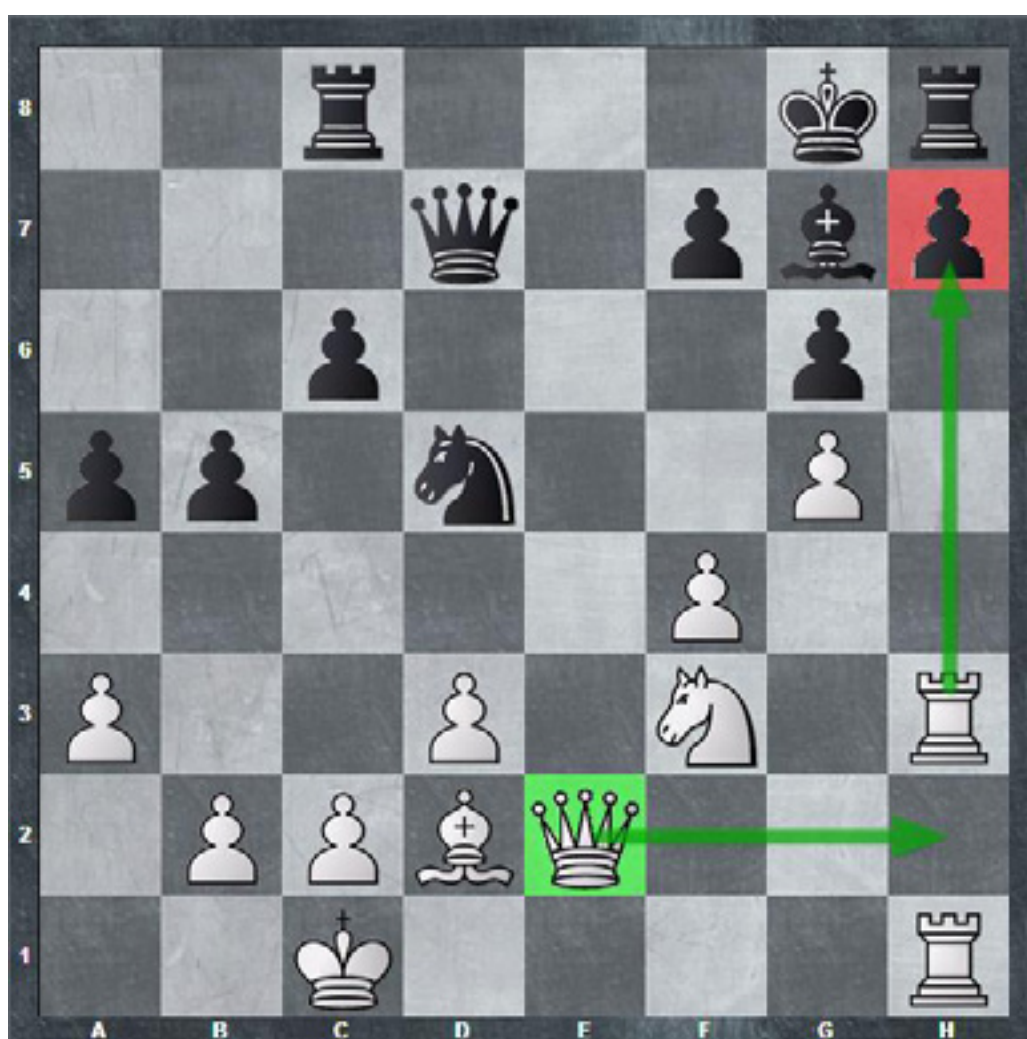
17. CONCENTRATE YOUR PIECES BEFORE ATTACK

Before you launch a **massive attack**, you need to make all necessary preparations. Not preparing the attack is a huge mistake that can turn out to be very costly.

By concentrating pieces in the region of the board where you plan to attack, you will have all available resources, increasing the possibility of success.

In the position below white is attacking on the [king's side](#). He plays **1.Qh2**, bringing the queen on the **h-file** and threatening black king's safety. Next, white will play something like **2.Ne5** instead of taking the pawn, focusing on king's side in general and not thinking about the small material gain.

“Not rushing” is a very important concept in many chess positions. It is much better to prepare an attack and to mate an opponent, than simply to win a pawn.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

18. WHEN YOU ATTACKING OPEN THE POSITION

This is a common sense rule, and still many players ignore that simple idea. If you have an attack in progress, it makes sense to open the position even further to allow your bishops and rooks to take use of that **open space**.

In the position **below black was greedy** in the opening and grabbed some pawns in expense of development. Now his queen is misplaced and the king is under attack. White just played **1.d4!** taking advantage of black king's vulnerable position.

The idea is to open the e-file and to include the rooks and queen in the attack. Black is already in trouble.



Black to move

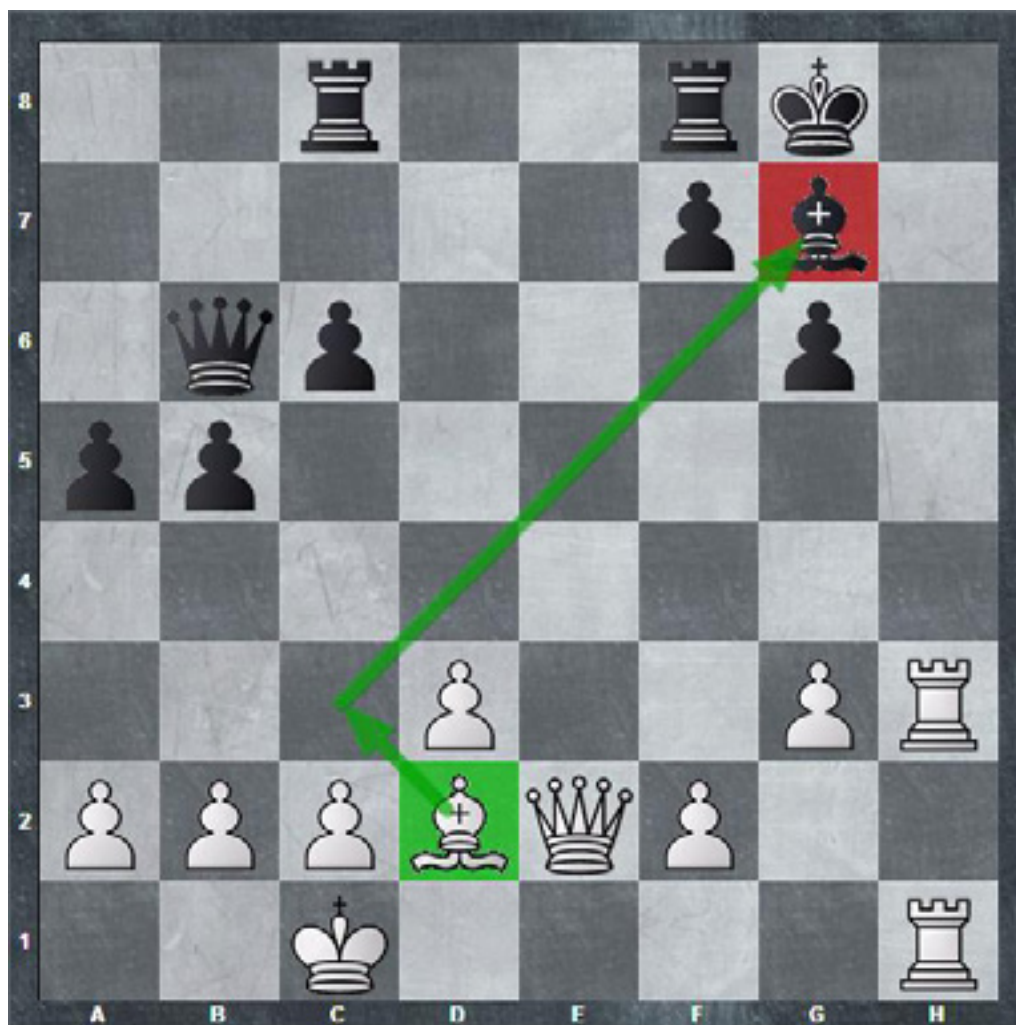
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19. EXCHANGE OFF KEY DEFENDERS

By exchanging off the key defender in the opponent's position you will make the attack much stronger. Keep in mind that the key defender is not always the strongest piece.

Let's take a look at the position below. White prepared an attack on the **king's side**, by opening **h-file** and doubling the rooks. However, white cannot advance onto h8 because the black's dark squared bishop defends that important square.

The **g7-bishop** is the key defender in this position. White's plan is to exchange it off. Therefore, the move is obvious **1.Bc3!**



White to move

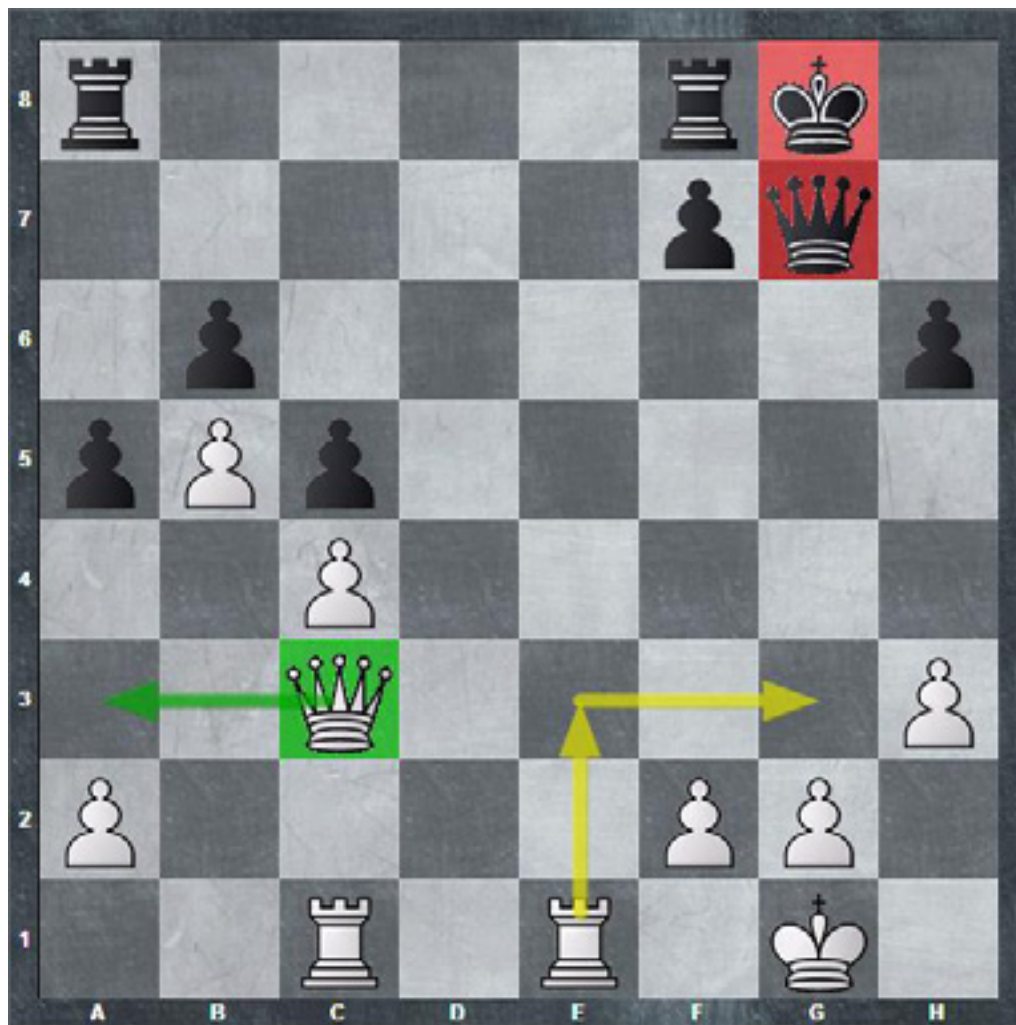
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20. IF YOU HAVE INITIATIVE AVOID EXCHANGES

This rule may seem to contradict with the previous one. Let me **clarify** what it means. Even though you should [exchange off the key defenders](#) in the opponent's position, you should avoid unnecessary **exchanges since** it will only benefit your opponent.

Fewer pieces mean fewer attacking possibilities and fewer things to worry about. That's not what we should go after.

In the position below white has significant advantage. He is a pawn up and the black king's side is weak. White needs to avoid trading queens and followed by lifting the rook to g3.



White to move

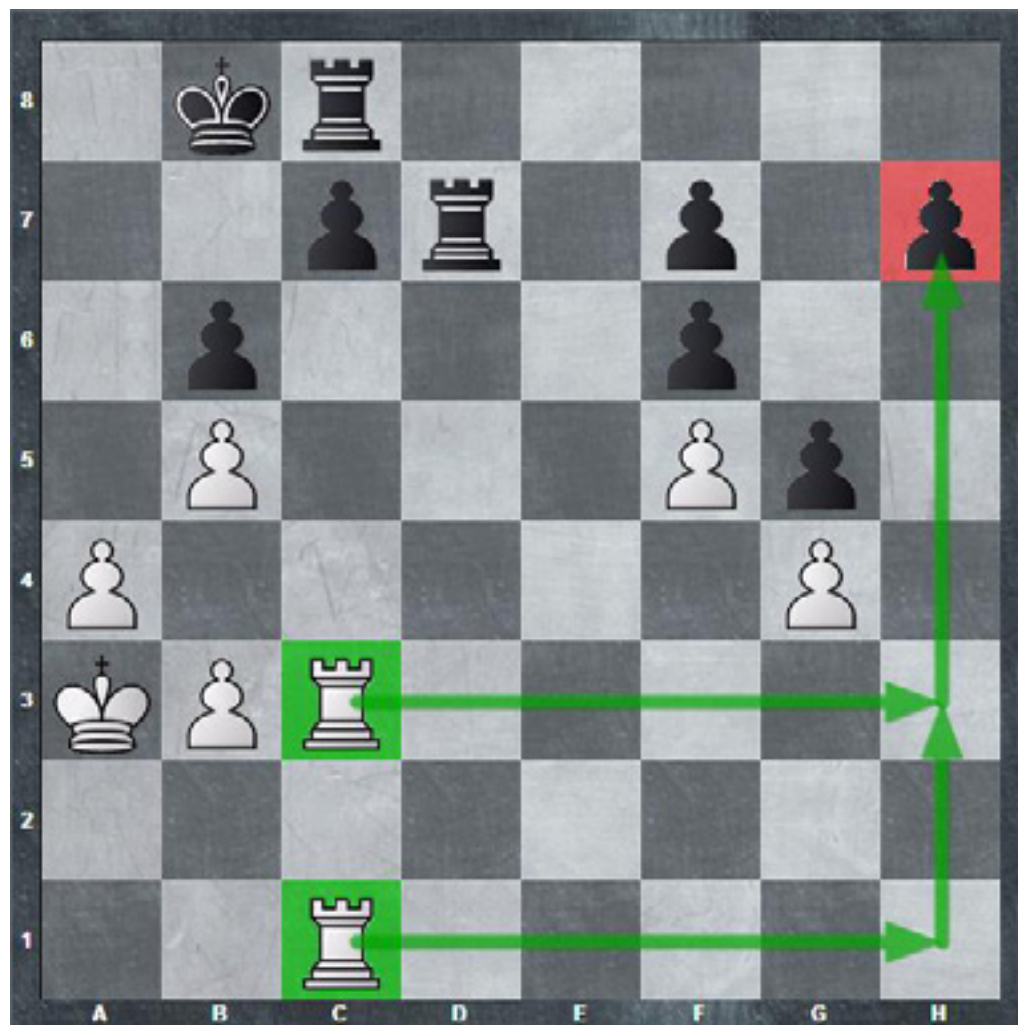
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21. ATTACKING ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BOARD

This is a very powerful technique that you should use in your own games. When your opponent was able to defend on one side of the board, you should relocate your pieces on the other side and **continue the attack**.

In the example below black defends queen's side with both [rooks](#) and the king pretty well.

Therefore, white changes direction of the attack and relocates his pieces on **h-file** winning material.



White to move

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NO PRICE IS TOO
GREAT FOR THE
SCALP OF
THE ENEMY KING

KOBLENTZ.

MOST IMPORTANT MIDDLEGAME PRINCIPLES

22. CENTRALIZE YOUR PIECES

It is a well-known fact that in the center pieces control a lot more squares than elsewhere. This is especially important rule to remember when dealing with the knights. The knights can control as many as **8 squares when centralized**, while only **2 square** if cornered.

It is true that **bishops** can be very effective from the flank. However, in the center they are more mobile and control both parts of the board. The same goes for the queen. If it is **safe**, bishops and queen should be **centralized** as well as knights.

Notice how white has centralized four of his pieces.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

23. TRADE YOUR FLANK PAWNS

The central pawns are generally considered to be more valuable than the flank pawns. This is because central pawns allow controlling important central squares (**d4-d5-e4-e5**) which can be used to support pieces and develop a strong attack not only in the center but also on the king's or **queen's side**. At the same time central pawns provide space and increase pieces mobility.

Therefore, it is **recommended not to trade your central pawns for the opponent's flank pawns**. In fact you should do the opposite and exchange your flank pawns for the opponent's central pawns.

White should play **fxe3** to create a strong pawn center with **e-d-c** pawns.



White to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

24. AVOID PAWN WEAKNESSES

A pawn weakness is something that can give your opponent an instant edge and allow him an easy game by exploiting them.

That is something that can turn an otherwise equal endgame into a loss. To avoid endgame trouble you need to take care of the pawn structure right from the opening and middle-game.

Avoid doubled, backward, and isolated pawns.

In the position below both white and black have serious [pawn weaknesses](#). White has doubled and backward pawns, while black have isolated pawns.



White to move

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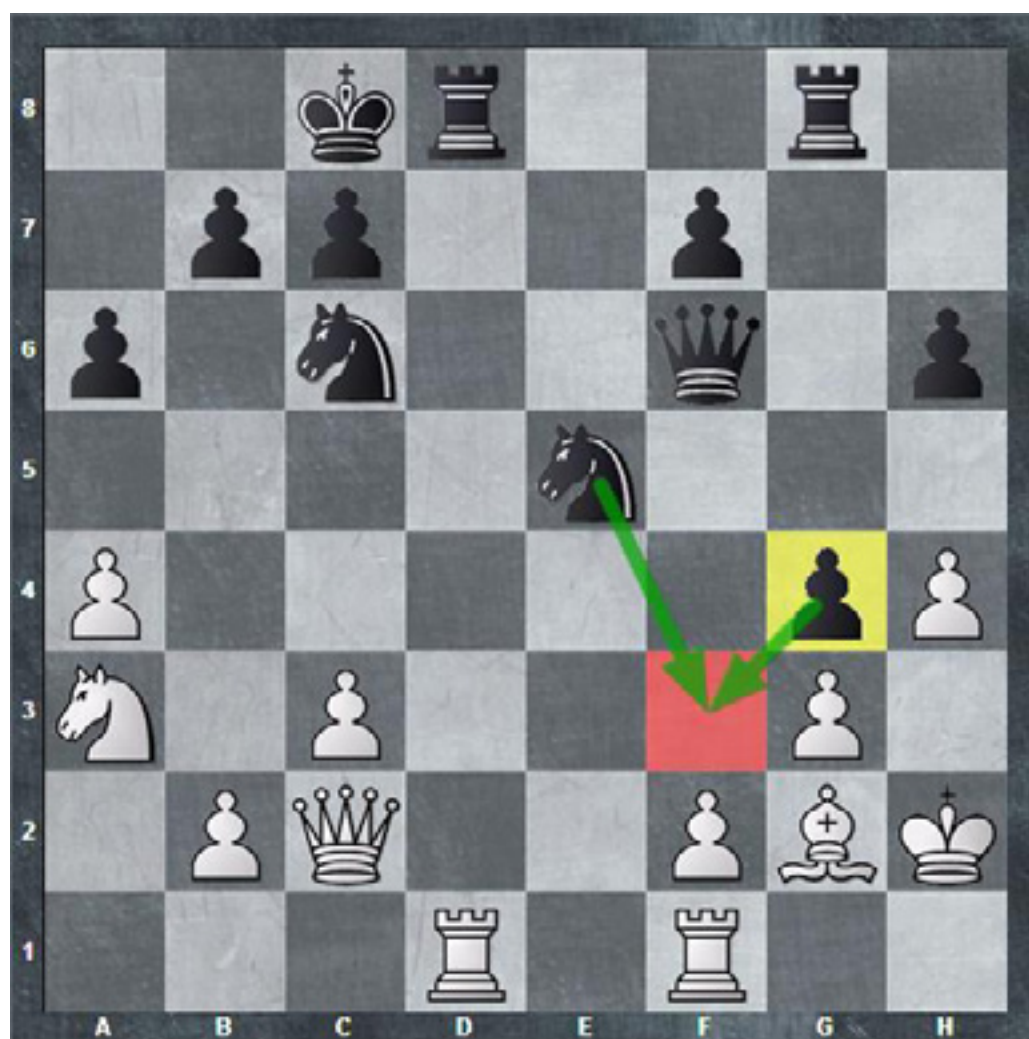
25. AVOID CREATING WEAK SQUARES

A weak square is a square that cannot be protected by a pawn. Weak squares in your position are perfect candidates for becoming strong outposts for your opponent's pieces.

The closer the weak square is to your king's position or to the center, the bigger trouble it usually creates. Always be careful with pawn advances, since that is what creates the **weak squares**.

Pawns can't go back.

On the diagram below white has a weak **f3 square** right next to his king's position. It can be soon used by the black's knight and queen to create mating threats.



Black to move

START CHESS TRAINING!

26. ALWAYS BLOCKADE OPPONENT'S ISOLATED PAWN

An [isolated pawn](#) is a powerful weapon and can be used by your opponent to launch a strong attack, because it supports pieces and provides extra space.

Another danger of isolated pawn is that it can be pushed forward at the right time causing many problems. That's why it is very important to always blockade opponent's isolated pawn to avoid complications.

The best piece for this purpose is indeed the **knight**.



Black to move

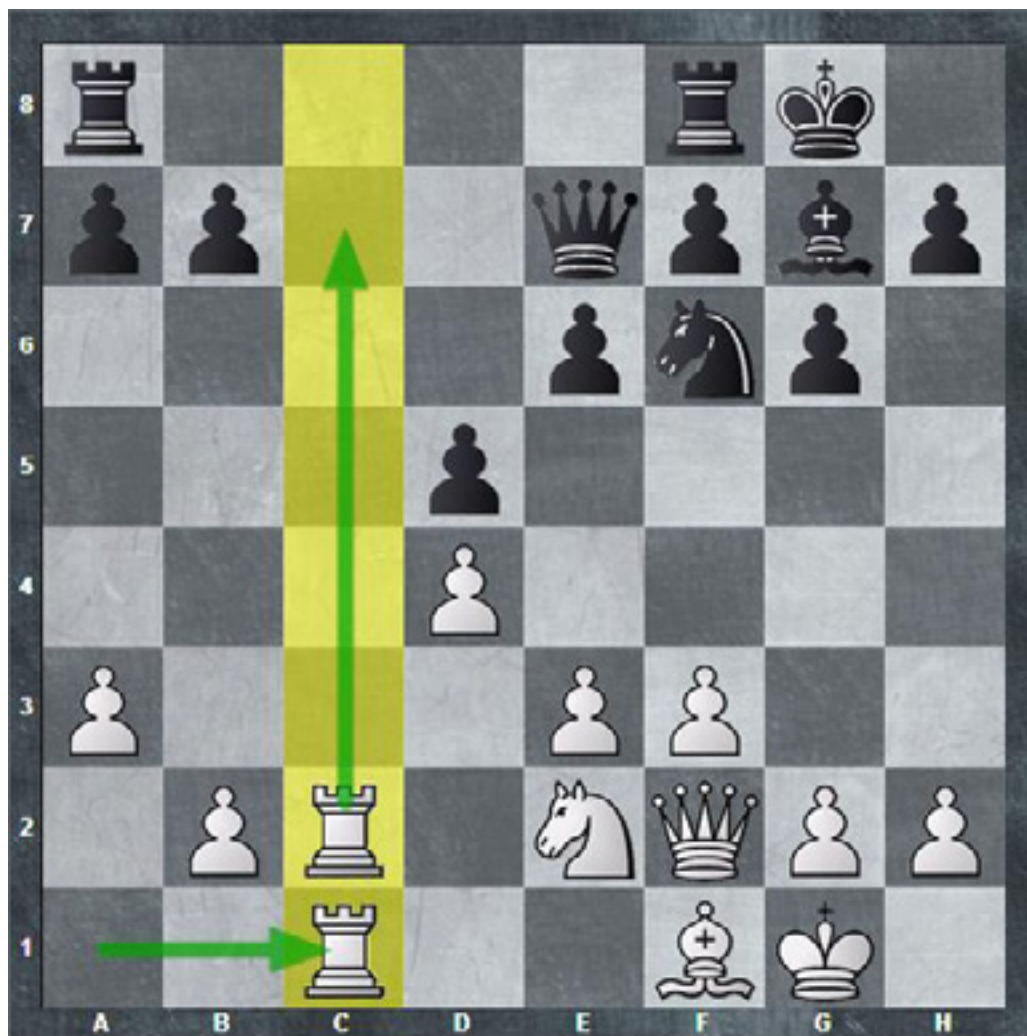
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27. OCCUPY OPEN FILES WITH YOUR ROOKS

It is no [secret that rooks work best](#) on open files. If there is an open file available your instinctual move should be to occupy the file with your rook.

Next step should be to double your rooks on the open file. If there are no open files available, you can occupy a **semi-open file** that you can force open later.

In the position below white has serious **positional advantage** because he is controlling the open file - main element of the position.



White to move

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28. KEEP THE BISHOP PAIR

The bishop pair is very powerful in most positions. Only if position is totally locked up the two knights may be stronger than a bishop pair.

Avoid giving up one of your bishops in the opening or early **middle-game** just to create doubled pawns in your opponent's pawn structure. In most cases the [attacking potential](#) of the bishop pair overweight the pawn structure defects.

In the position below white has a serious positional advantage due to the possession of the bishop pair.



White to move

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BEFORE
THE ENDGAME
GODS HAVE PLACED
THE MIDDLEGAME

SIEGBERT TARRASCH.

MOST IMPORTANT ENDGAME PRINCIPLES

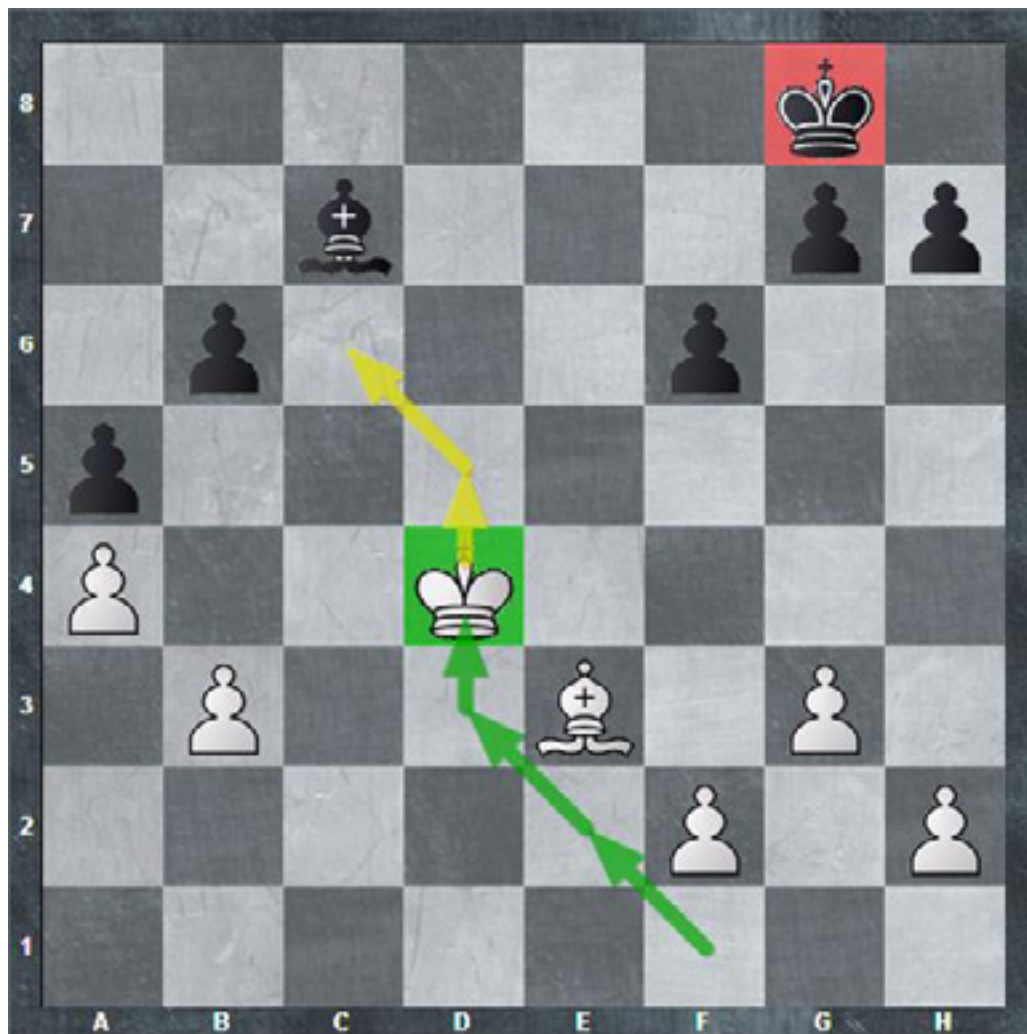
29. CENTRALIZE YOUR KING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

This is by far the most fundamental endgame rule. Surprisingly many amateurs neglect this important principle often missing a big opportunity to win or draw the game.

The idea of **centralizing the king** is rather simple. In the endgame, when majority of the pieces are gone, the king becomes a powerful weapon and should actively **participate** in the game to support his own pawns and piece as well as to attack the opponent's ones.

The first step of your thinking in any endgame position should be how to **centralize your king quickly and efficiently**.

In the position below white has [serious advantage](#) because they centralized the king three moves earlier than black.



Black to move

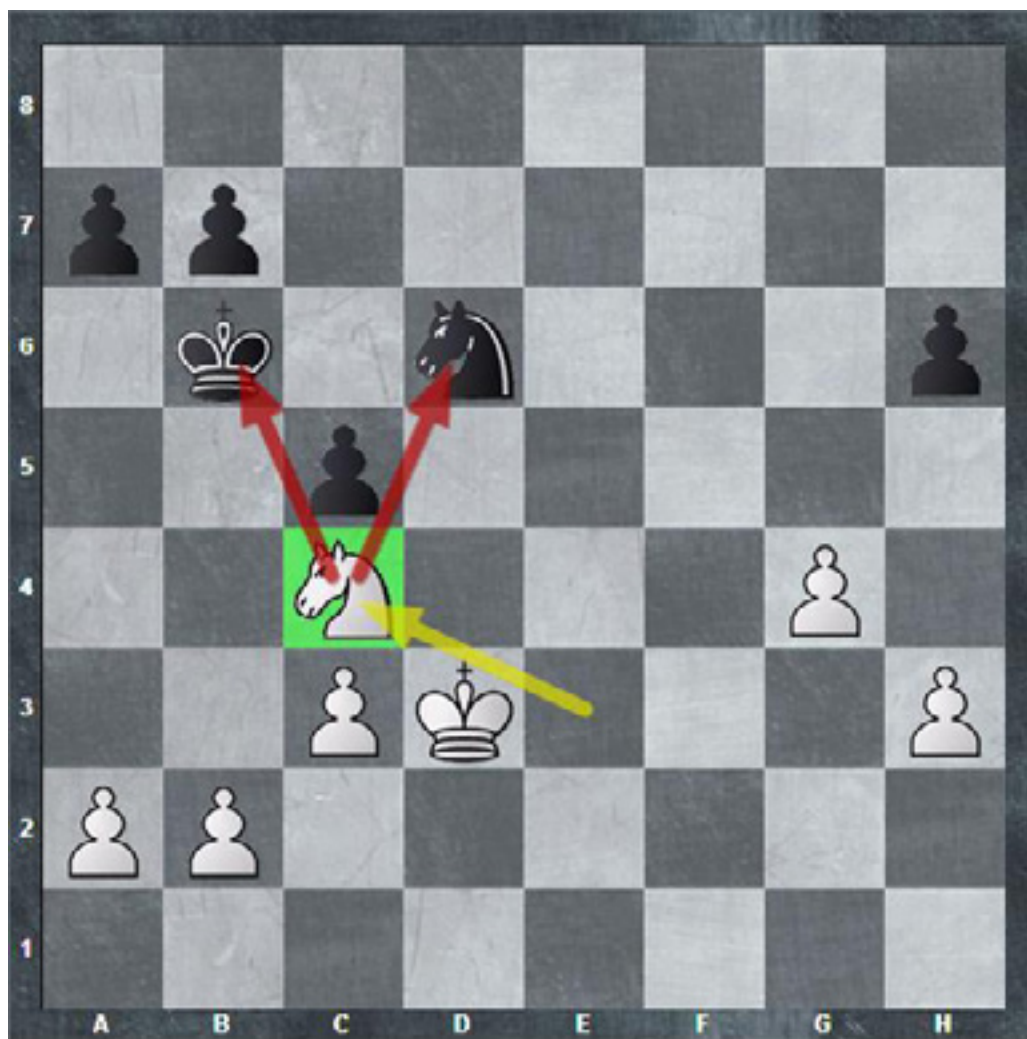
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30. WHEN YOU UP IN PAWNS EXCHANGE PIECES

This is a pretty straightforward rule to understand. If you up a pawn, with pieces on the board the position may still be ambiguous.

However, if you simplify the position further by taking pieces off the board, the extra pawn will immediately play a greater role and can even decide an outcome of the game.

In the position below white is up a pawn. That's why it is a good idea for them to trade the minor pieces. By **forcing that exchange** white will be able to easily take advantage of the extra pawn, winning the game.



Black to move

You should be very careful about exchanging pawns in positions like shown above. In the extreme situation, after exchanging all of the pawns you will end up in a **Knight + Pawn vs. Knight endgame** which may easily end in a draw, because black will simply give up his knight for a pawn.

To avoid this scenario, if you are up some pawns, exchange pieces, not the pawns.

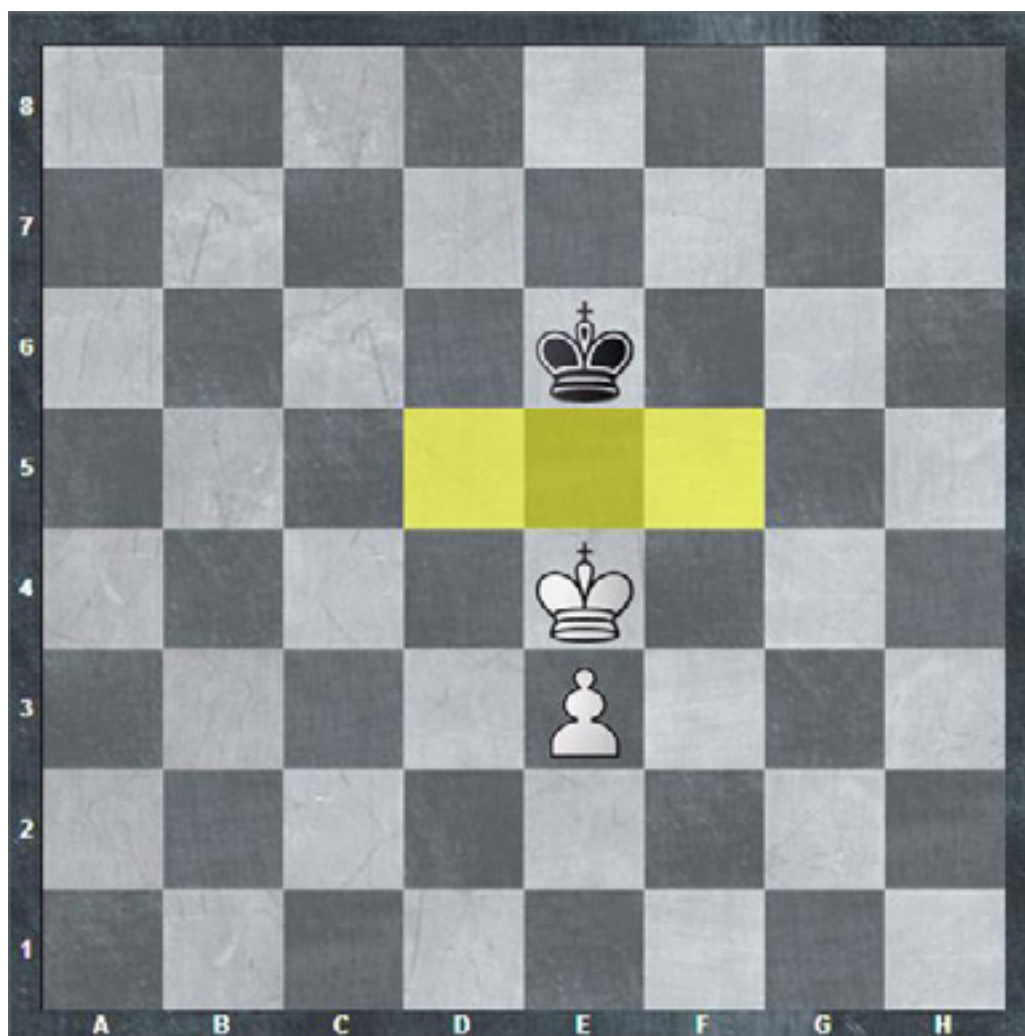
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31. OBTAIN AN OPPOSITION

Opposition is a powerful endgame technique. It is commonly used to force the opponent's king away from the pawns, giving up control of the key squares. Generally, a side that holds an opposition has a positional advantage, often winning or drawing the game.

Position below is the most classical example of the opposition. If it is white's turn to move the game is drawn, because white cannot penetrate **black's position** without advancing the pawn.

If it is black's turn to move, black needs to give up space and loses. In other words, the side that holds an opposition has some sort of advantage which is enough to win or save the game.

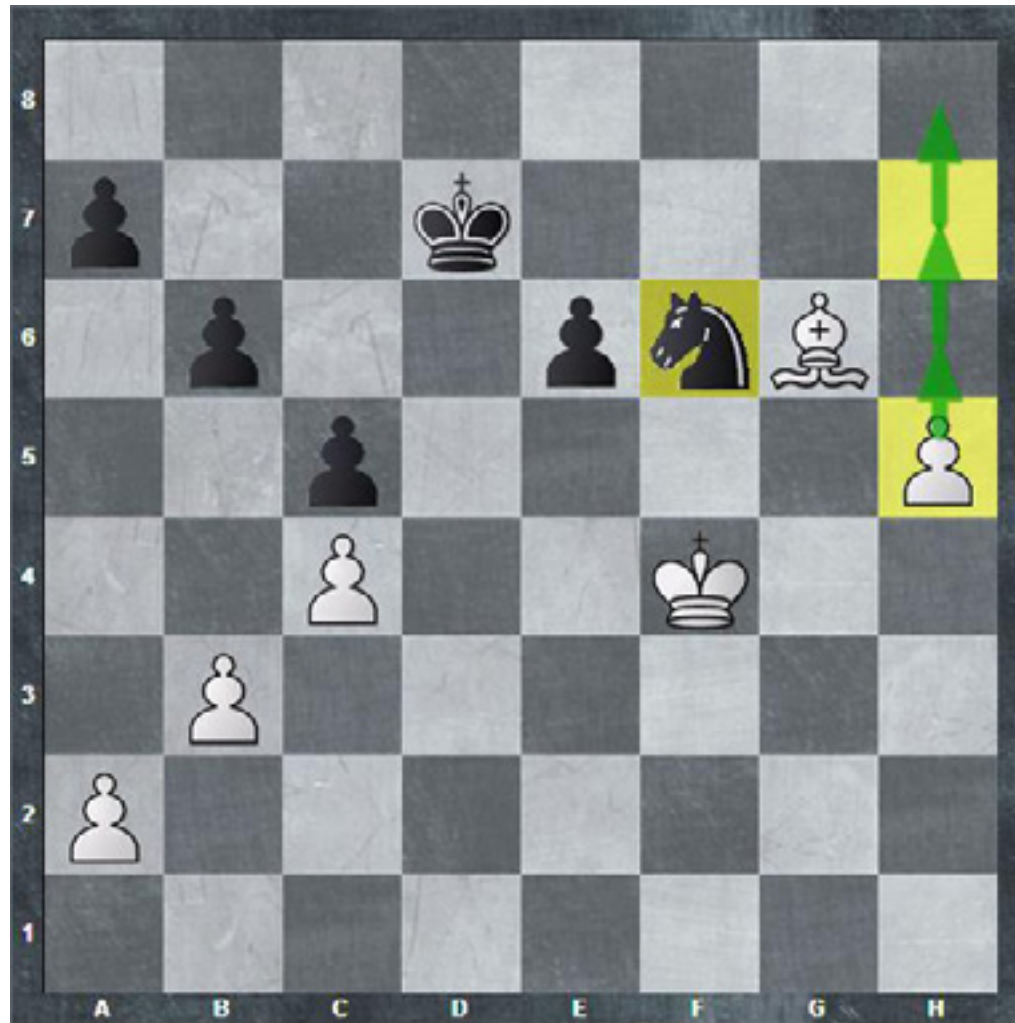


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32. FLANK PAWNS ARE STRONG AGAINST THE KNIGHTS

Knight is a short range piece and it has especially hard times in the endgame positions involving passed flank pawns.

For example, in the position below black's knight cannot stop the passed rook pawn due to knight's low mobility and inability to reposition itself into a better defending position on time.



White to move

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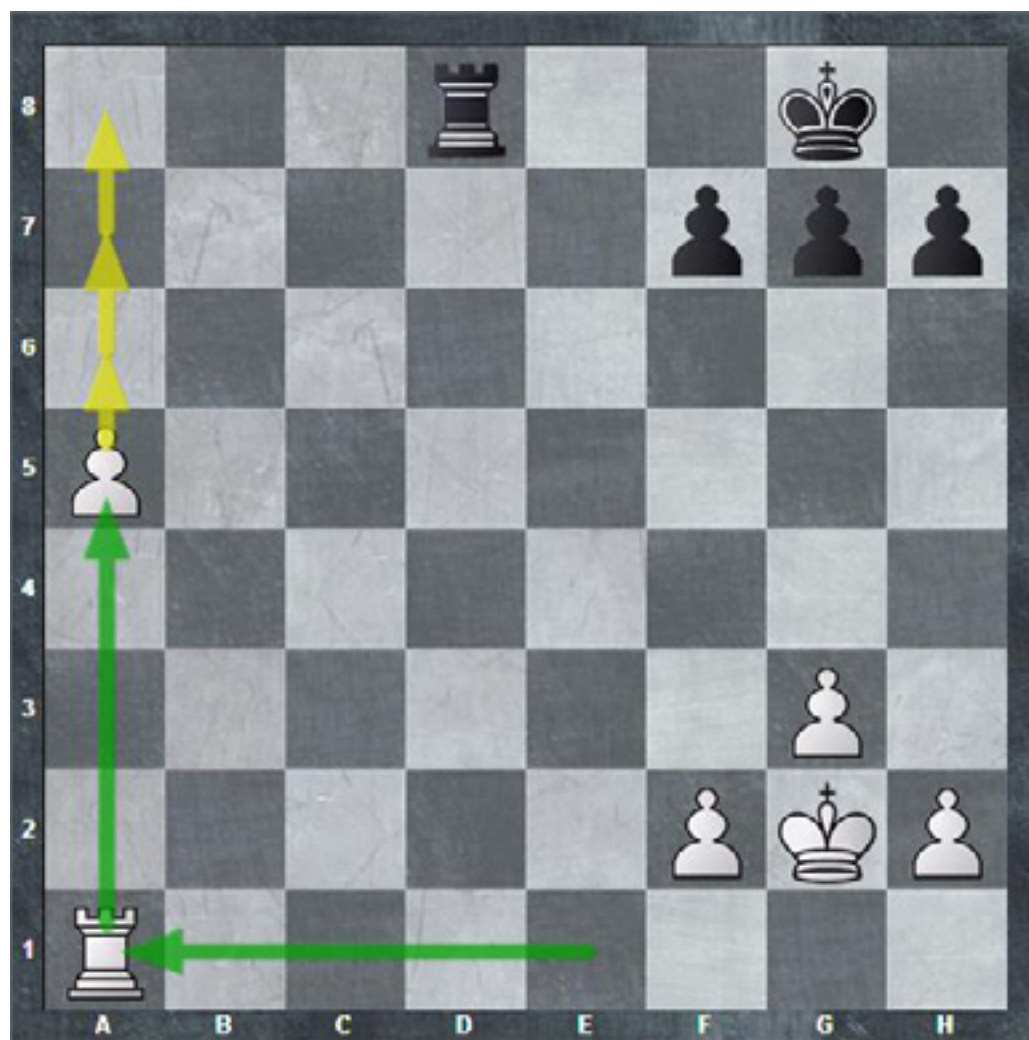
33. PLACE THE ROOKS BEHIND PASSED PAWNS

This is another very important rule to remember. Many amateur players disregard this simple rule placing the rook in front of the passed pawn and then have trouble converting the advantage.

Don't make that mistake and always remember to place the rook **behind** the passed pawn. This placement of the rook supports the pawn all the way through the promotion square and also makes it possible to threaten the opponent's king or pawns from the safe distance.

You should also keep this rule in mind when you're [attacking opponent's passed pawns](#). By placing your rook behind the opponent's passer, you control the pawn all the way through the promotion square making it much harder to defend.

In the position below white has placed his rook behind the **passed pawn and supports it all the way to the promotion square**.



Black to move

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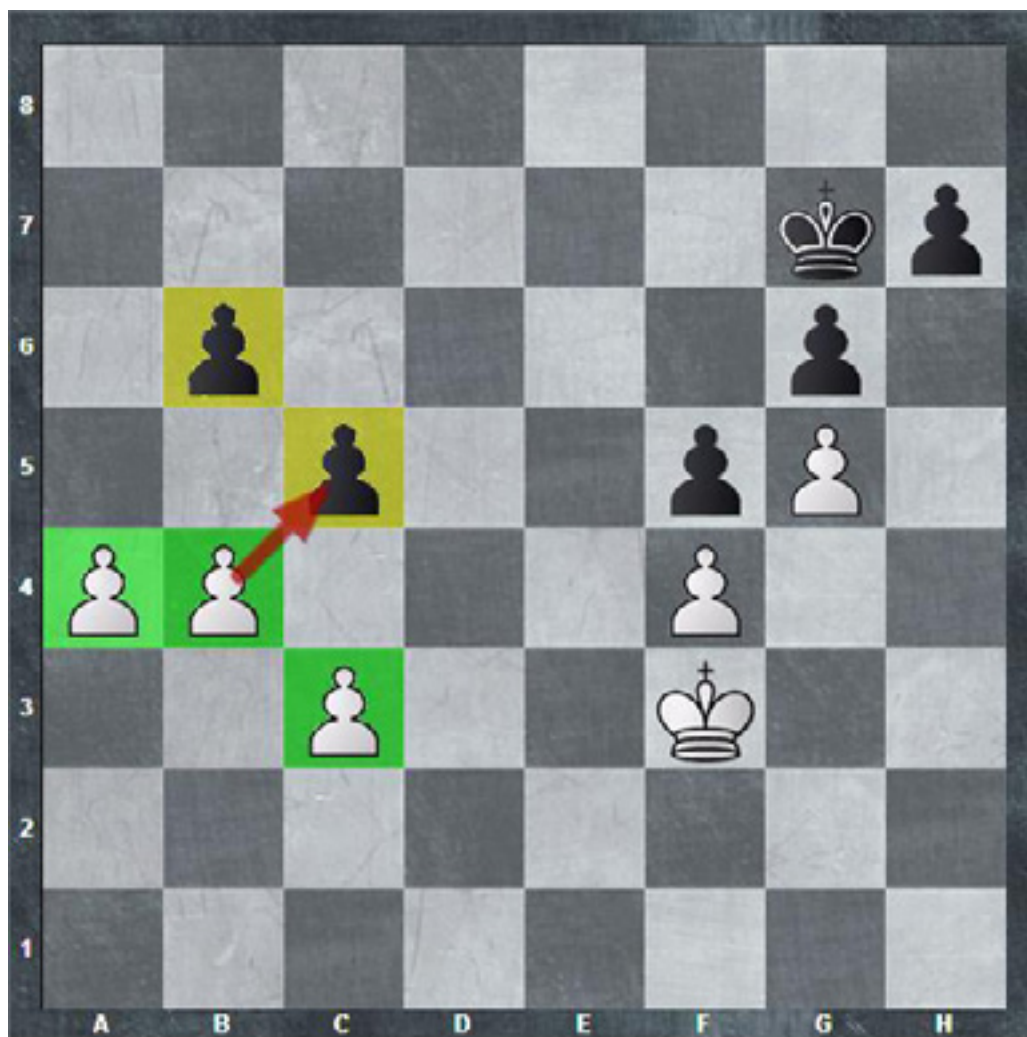
34. CREATE A PASSED PAWN

Creating a passed pawn should be one of the priorities in the endgame. Passed pawn possesses a large value due to the possibility of promotion.

In fact, a passed pawn is so valuable that if it reaches the **7th rank** it is worth a rook.

It is especially easy to create a passed pawn if you have a [pawn majority](#) on one side of the board.

In the example below, white can easily create a passed pawn by first exchanging the **b-pawn** on the opponent's c-pawn and then **exchanging off** the opponent's b-pawn.



Black to move

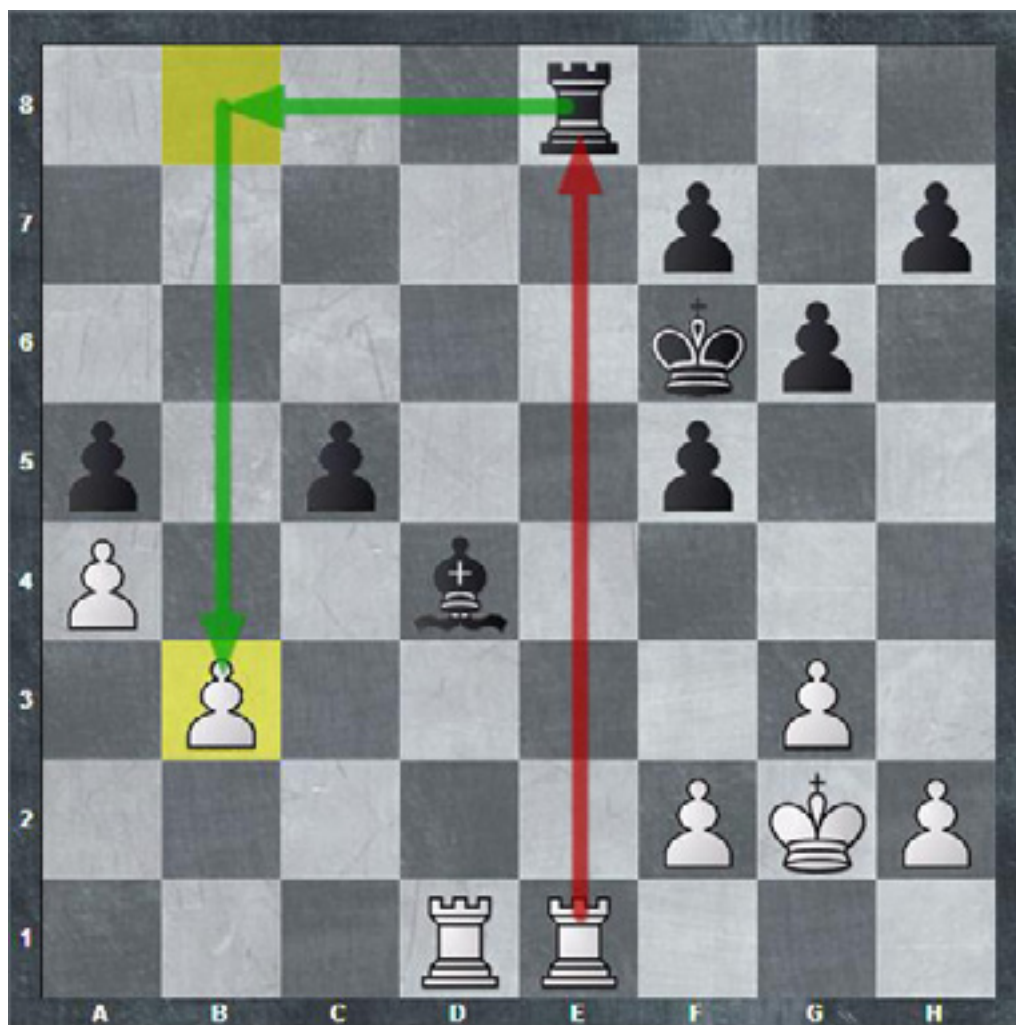
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35. IF YOU'RE EXCHANGE DOWN AVOID ROOK TRADE

If you have a minor piece for a rook (**aka exchange down**) you should save the remaining rook, since this is the only piece that can guard open files and ranks. Without this piece your position will collapse and the pawns will fall.

In the position below black is exchange down. White offers a rook trade, but black wisely rejects it attacking white's weakness the backward **b-pawn**.

With a correct play black has a good chance to draw this position.



White to move

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Give Me 21 Days and I'll Show You How to Become a Dramatically Better Chess Player ... Guaranteed

There are 3 main problems that 95% of all chess players are facing:

- 1** Most players do not know what to study and how to study it. They spend 99% of their valuable time studying unnecessary things and they do it in a wrong way, which leads to a tiny improvement or no improvement at all.
- 2** Most players gain passive knowledge from reading chess books. During the actual game, they simply cannot apply it, making that knowledge useless for an outcome of the game.
- 3** Most players do not have a crucial skill-set and the precise thinking process that is necessary to win chess games. They do not know what to pay attention to and what to take into account during the game.

That's where our program **21 DAYS TO SUPERCHARGE YOUR CHESS** comes into play. It is aimed to solve these and many more problems that ordinary chess players face during their improvement journey.



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Our Awesome Chess Training Materials:



“Attacking chess is something that truly separates the greatest minds of all time from the rest: Mikhail Tal, Bobby Fischer, Garry Kasparov, and now Magnus Carlsen...”

START CHESS TRAINING!



“What is the main difference between a Grandmaster and an amateur? It is the understanding of positions on a very fundamental level, or what’s called the positional understanding.”

START CHESS TRAINING!



“Rook endgames are the most common and probably one of the most complex of all endings. No wonder 90% of chess players have trouble with them. This course will make rook endgames one of your strongest sides!”

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