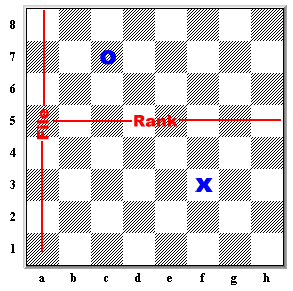
**Chess Notation**

The moves of a chess game can be recorded in a variety of ways. You will probably see algebraic notation used more often but older chess books often use descriptive notation. It is a good idea to be conversant with them both. Chess positions can be recorded using Forsyth notation.

**Full Algebraic Notation**

The rows of squares on the chessboard are called ranks and the columns of squares are called files. The ranks are labelled from 1 to 8 and the files are labelled from a - h. We use these numbers and letters to describe where pieces are on the chessboard. In the diagram the blue cross is on the squared named f3 and the circle is on c7. Notice how the letter always comes first and the number follows it.



There are some symbols you should know when reading or writing chess notation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Symbol** | **Meaning** | **Symbol** | **Meaning** |
| K | King | Q | Queen |
| R | Rook | B | Bishop |
| N | Knight | x | Captures |
| + | Check | ++ or # | Checkmate |
| O-O | Castles King's side | O-O-O | Castles Queen's side |

If you play in tournaments you will have to record the game so it is a good idea to practise as soon as you begin playing. You can also later go over your games to find out where you or your opponent made mistakes.

The moves are written in two numbered vertical columns like this:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1.f2-f4 | e7-e5 |
| 2.f4xe5 | d7-d6 |
| 3.e5xd6 | Bf8xd6 |
| 4.g2-g3 | Qd8-g5 |
| 5.Ng1-f3 | Qg5xg3+ |
| 6.h2xg3 | Bd6xg3# |

The first column is for the White moves and the second column is for the Black moves. First of all the symbol for the piece is written, then the square on which this piece was standing, then a hyphen (-), then the square to which this piece moves. If a pawn moves the symbol is omitted.  
  
For example, 1. f2-f4 means on the first move the pawn on the f2 square moved to the f4 square. 5. Ng1-f3 means the Knight on the g1 square moved to the f3 square.   
  
If you wish to refer to a Black move by itself you put three dots before the move. For example, 4. ... Qd8-g5 means on move 4 Black moved his Queen on d8 to g5.  
  
x indicates a capture took place so: 5. ... Qg5xg3+ means the Black Queen on g5 captured a piece on g3 and the + means with this move the opponent's King was checked.  
  
# means checkmate so: 6. ...Bd6xg3# means the Black Bishop on d6 moved to g3 and checkmated the White King.

This is what this game would look like on the chessboard:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Du Mont Game | Du Mont Game |
| 1. f2-f4 e7-e5 | 2. f4xe5 d7-d6 |
| Du Mont Game | Du Mont Game |
| 3. e5xd6 Bf8xd6 | 4. g2-g3 Qd8-g5 |
| Du Mont Game | Du Mont Game |
| 5. Ng1-f3 Qg5xg3+ | 6. h2xg3 Bd6xg3# |

**Abbreviated Algebraic Notation**

In this type of notation the starting square of the chess piece is left out and only the destination square is written. If a pawn makes a capture then the file on which the pawn was standing is indicated.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In the diagram on the right, both the White Rooks can move to d1. To make it clear which one moves, the file on which the piece stands before it moves is indicated. | Rook moves |
| The diagram shows the Rook on f1 has moved to d1. This is written Rfd1. | Rook moves |

Sometimes it may be possible that two pieces on the same file can move to the same square.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In the diagram on the right, both the Rooks can move to the d5 square. To show which Rook moves there we indicate the rank the Rook has moved from. | Rook moves |
| The diagram on the right shows the Rook on the seventh rank has moved to d5. We write this as R7d5. | Rook moves |

This is how the game above would be written in short algebraic notation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. f4 e5 | The White pawn moves to f4 and the Black pawn to e5. |
| 2. fxe5 d6 | The White pawn on the f file takes the pawn on e5. The Black pawn moves to d6. |
| 3. exd6 Bxd6 | The White pawn on the e file takes the pawn on d6. The Black Bishop takes the pawn on d6. |
| 4. g3 Qg5 | The White pawn moves to g3. The Black Queen moves to g5. |
| 5. Nf3 Qxg3+ | The White Knight moves to f3. The Black Queen takes the pawn on g3 and checks the White King. |
| 6. hxg3 Bxg3# | The White pawn on the h file takes the Queen on g3. The Black Bishop takes the pawn on g3 and delivers checkmate. |

**The Forsyth Notation**



The Forsyth Notation allows us to record where the chess pieces are on the board in a quick and easy way.

Look at this position:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://www.chesscorner.com/tutorial/basic/forsyth/forsyth1.gif |  |
| In Forsyth notation this position would be recorded as:  r1bq1rk1/pp3ppp/3n4/2p1N3/2B5/7P/PPP2PP1/R1BQR1K1. | |

The pieces are represented by their letter symbols (For example, Q = Queen, R = Rook etc.). The letter symbols for Black are written in lower case and for White they are written in capitals. Empty squares are represented by a number. For example, 1 means there is one empty square, 2 means there are two empty squares and so on.

The position is recorded rank by rank starting with the eight rank (a8) and the ranks are seperated by a "/".

Thus r1bq1rk1/ means on a8 there is a Black Rook, then an empty square (b8), a Black Bishop (c8), a Black Queen (d8), an empty square (e8), a Black Rook, (f8), a Black King (g8) and an empty square (h8). See diagram below.

Forsyth

3n4/ means on row 6 there are three empty squares, then a Black Knight, and 4 empty squares as shown in the diagram below.

http://www.chesscorner.com/tutorial/basic/forsyth/forsyth3.gif

If a whole row contains empty squares like this:

http://www.chesscorner.com/tutorial/basic/forsyth/forsyth4.gif

it is recorded as 8/

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The position on the right would be written:  4kb1r/p4ppp/4q3/8/8/1B6/PPP2PPP/2KR4. | http://www.chesscorner.com/tutorial/basic/forsyth/forsyth5.gif |