

Check and Checkmate Lesson

Learn about the important concepts of check and checkmate - and how to win a game of chess.

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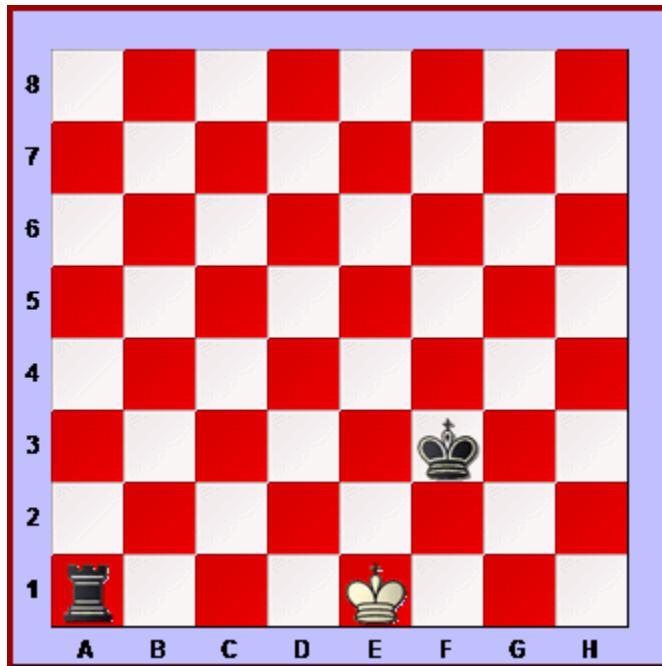


There's still a lot more you need to know about the KING. This lesson teaches you about CHECK and CHECKMATE.

This is a VERY IMPORTANT lesson because you'll learn you can win or lose a real game of chess.

So pay attention, go slowly and make sure you really understand it.

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In this position Black has just moved his rook to a1, ATTACKING the white KING.

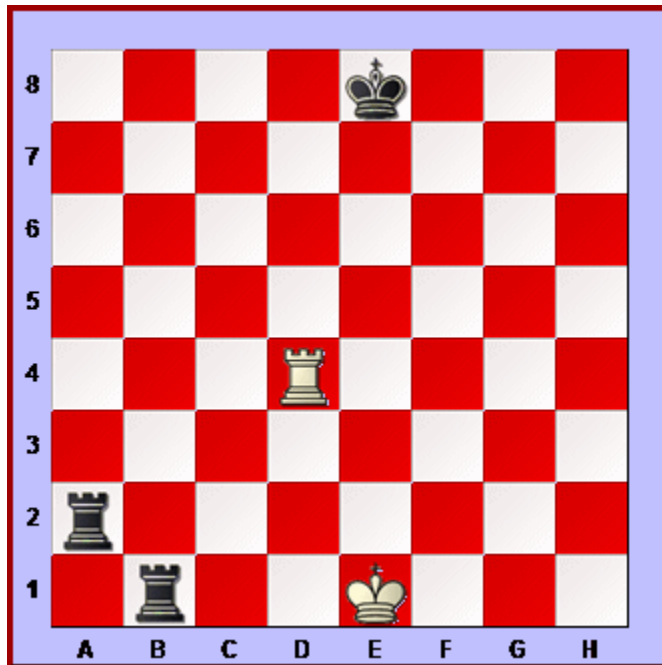
When you play a move that ATTACKS the enemy KING you CHECK him. If you like you can say the word CHECK to warn your opponent.

Here, White is IN CHECK. If you are IN CHECK you HAVE to do something about it.

Here, White has only one way to GET OUT OF CHECK. He HAS to move his king to d2. You will see that this is the ONLY safe square.

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In this position White CANNOT get out of CHECK by moving his KING.



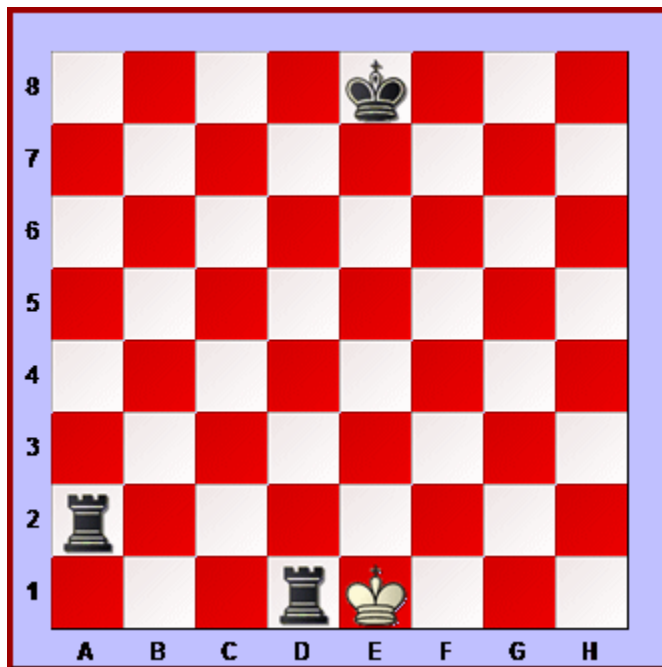
But if you're in CHECK from a QUEEN, a ROOK or a BISHOP you might be able to GET OUT OF CHECK by BLOCKING: putting a piece in the way.

Here, White can BLOCK the CHECK by moving his rook from d4 to d1.

Black could then capture the rook on d1 with his rook on a1, giving the next position.

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In this position we see the THIRD way of GETTING OUT OF CHECK.

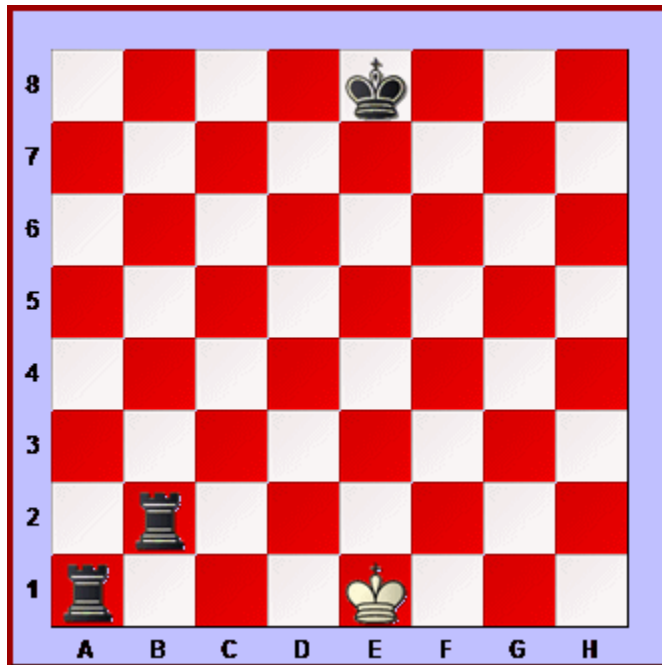


White can - and has to - GET OUT OF CHECK by CAPTURING the rook on d1 with his king.

So we have THREE ways of GETTING OUT OF CHECK.

1. MOVE the KING to a square where he is not under attack.
2. BLOCK the CHECK by putting a piece in the way (you can only do this if you're in CHECK from a QUEEN, ROOK or BISHOP).
3. CAPTURE the piece that's CHECKING you, either with your KING or with another piece.

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In this position the white king is IN CHECK from the rook on a1. This rook also stops him moving to d1 or f1.

He cannot move to d2, e2 or f2 because he would be in CHECK from the rook on b2.

He cannot CAPTURE the rook on a1.

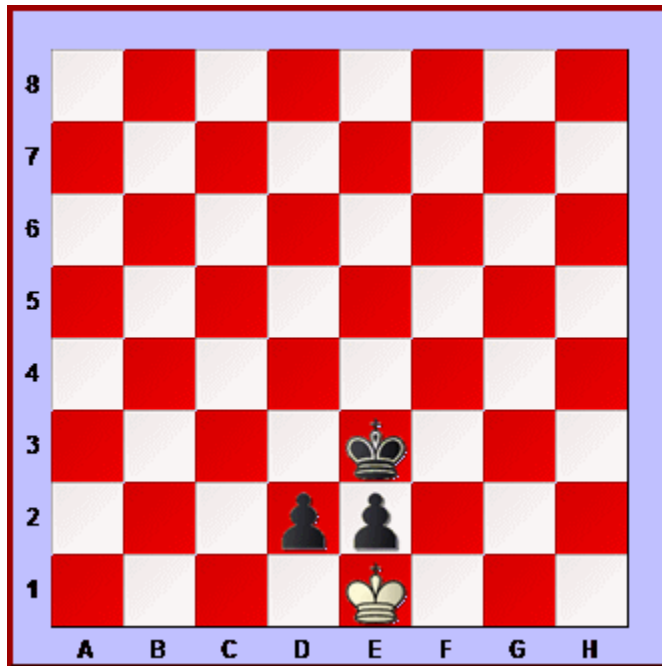
He cannot BLOCK the CHECK by putting a piece in the way.

He is IN CHECK and can do nothing about it.

This is CHECKMATE: Black has won the game.

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Here's another example of CHECKMATE.



The white king is IN CHECK from the pawn on d2.

The pawn on e2 stops him moving to d1 or f1.

The black king stops him capturing the either pawn or moving to f2.

Again it is CHECKMATE: Black has won the game.

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In this position the black knight is CHECKING the white king.

Remember the knight can jump over the pieces in the way so this really is a CHECK.

The white king cannot move because he is surrounded by his own men.

And none of them can CAPTURE the knight.

So again it's CHECKMATE.

We also use the word MATE which means exactly the same thing: it's just a shortened form of CHECKMATE.

This sort of CHECKMATE with a KNIGHT is known as a SMOTHERED MATE.

