

Gungahlin Junior Chess Club

Queen of the Board

The Queen is the strongest piece in your army. This is because it can move like a Rook, and a Bishop. If you put the Queen in the centre of an empty board it can move to 27 squares, almost half the number of squares on the board.

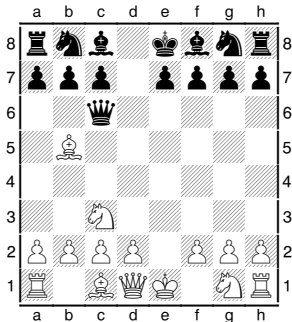
Due to its strength, the mighty Queen is worth 9 points, and between good players, getting your queen taken is as good as losing the game.

Keeping Safe

However the value of the Queen is often its undoing. At the start of the game your army is worth 39 points, and to lose a Queen is to lose almost a quarter of your points. Therefore it is important that you keep your Queen safe.

Bringing your Queen out early in the game makes it an easy target for enemy. Minor pieces like Bishops and Knights will chase the Queen around the board, trying to trap it unawares. In the following game the Queen gets caught out very quickly.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qc6 4.Bb5 and the Black Queen cannot move as otherwise it would be check.



It is often wiser to bring the Queen out after the smaller pieces have been developed first. This way you don't give your opponent such a big target in the opening.

Using your Queen

However, you can't hide your Queen away for ever. What is the point of having such a strong piece and not using it!

There are two common ways of using your Queen. Firstly you can either use it to attack two or 3 things at once. Because of the power of the

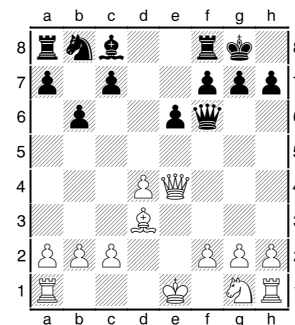
Queen it often is able to attack two undefended things at the same time. If one of them is the King, then even better.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 c6 3.e3 Qa5+ and White has both the King on e1 and the Bishop on g5 under attack. After White gets out of check then the Black Queen will capture the Bishop.

The other way of using the Queen is to attack a target with the support of other pieces. The 4 move checkmate is an example of this, with the Bishop and Queen both attack the f7 square. Normally you would develop the supporting pieces first, and then bring the Queen into the game later. This is because the Queen can usually get around the board much faster than the other pieces.

In this game the Queen manages to combine both ideas. Firstly the White Bishop targets the h7 square, and when the Queen moves to e4 checkmate is threatened. At the same time the Queen also attacks the Black Rook on a8. Black can only defend against 1 of the threats.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Bg5 Be7 6.Bxf6 Bxf6 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Qe2 b6 9.Nxf6+ Qxf6 10.Qe4



What to look for?

So how can you tell when it is safe to use your Queen? Here are a couple of sign posts.

If you have developed your other pieces and castled, then you can look for squares for your Queen.

If your opponent's King doesn't have many of its own pieces near it, then you can aim your Queen and minor pieces at it.

If your opponent's pieces aren't defended and are out in the open, then use your Queen to attack them.