

Gungahlin Junior Chess Club

Your First Moves

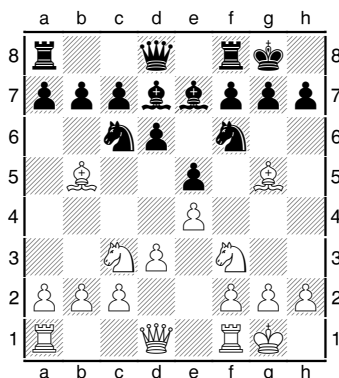
It is very important to start a game of chess correctly. It is no fun to sit down against your opponent, and lose in under 10 moves. To avoid this there are some simple rules you can remember.

Your Opening Goals

In the opening there are 3 things that you aim to do. Firstly you should develop your pieces. As your pieces start at the back of the board, and hidden behind your own pawns, they cannot do much. You need to move them forward, so they can threaten your opponents pieces, and defend your half of the board.

Secondly you should try and control the centre of the board. Pieces can move much further from the centre, and can threaten different parts of the board through the centre. If you stop your opponents pieces from using the centre, then they will not be able to attack you easily.

Thirdly, you should castle. Castling makes your king safe, moving it from the middle of the board to the edge. Also castling is a developing move, bringing one of your rooks from the corner of the middle, where it can attack down the centre. Finally, if you can castle, it means you must have moved at least 2 pieces from the back of the board.



The above diagram shows the kind of position you should be aiming for. Both sides have developed their minor pieces (bishops and knights) and have castled. Both sides also have a strong pawn in the centre, on e4 and e5. This position would be considered even, with both sides safe from any immediate attacks.

10 Opening Rules

The following rules will help you start a game of chess sensibly. Of course they can't be followed all the time, especially if your opponent is forcing you to break them, but as you get better at chess you will know when to use them, and when not to.

1. Begin by moving a centre pawn two squares, usually the e pawn or the d pawn.
2. Do not move the same piece twice in the opening.
3. Put your pieces on squares where they have the maximum mobility and freedom of movement.
4. Keep your King safe by castling. Also do not weaken your king by moving pawns away from it.
5. Avoid unnecessary pawn moves. Pawns should only be moved to allow your pieces to develop, or to control the centre.
6. Develop Knights before Bishops. Knights usually end up on f3 (f6) and c3 (c6), while the best square for a Bishop isn't always obvious.
7. Connect your rooks as soon as possible. Then put them on open files.
8. Don't check because you can. Useless checks slow down your development and allow your opponent to chase your pieces.
9. Don't bring your queen out too early. Wait until your minor pieces are developed before moving your Queen.
10. Watch for your opponents threats, and assume that they will see yours.

If you follow these rules you should be in a position to take advantage of any of your opponents mistakes. Of course you still have to play good chess but it is easier when you have a good positions to start with.

An Example Opening

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bb5 Bb4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6 7.Bg5

If you play through the above moves you will see that both players have followed the rules. White has a slight advantage due to the aggressive bishops, but Black is well placed to defend.