

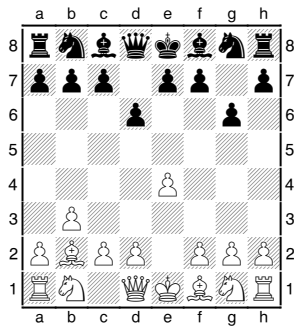
# Gungahlin Junior Chess Club

## Defending

While everyone loves to checkmate their opponent, or chase pieces around the board, you can't always do this. Sometimes you have to defend your position, rather than attack your opponents. And as you get better at chess you will soon learn that stopping your opponents' threats can win you as many games as making threats of your own.

### The Defenders Tricks

Before you can properly defend you have to be able to do one thing. You need to see what your opponent is threatening. The way to do this is simple. Look at every enemy piece and see what squares it can move to. Take special notice of the piece that your opponent moved last.



In this position White has just moved the Bishop from c1 to b2. If you look at all the squares the Bishop can move to you will see that it is planning to capture the Rook on h8. Unless Black wants to play the game with one rook less than White, then Black needs to defend against the threat.

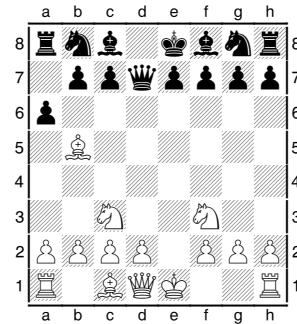
The things to watch out for include

- A piece being attacked by a weaker piece
- An undefended piece being attacked
- A piece that is being attacked more times than it is being defended
- Two or more enemy pieces aiming at the same square next to your King

### How to Defend

Having spotted that your opponent is threatening you, you need to find a way of defending. Fortunately this is pretty easy, if you concentrate.

Dealing with opponents' threats is often like getting out of check. You can **Capture**, **Block**, or **Run Away**. Unlike getting out of check you can also **Support** (add extra defender) or even **Ignore** (if you think it is wise)



In this position White thought it would be a good idea to attack the Black Queen with **Bb5**. Black can defend against the threat by blocking, with **c6** or **Nc6**. But Black has an even better defensive move, capturing the Bishop with **axb5**. Now not only is the Queen safe, but White has one less Bishop.

### Learning from Mistakes

Learning how to defend often comes from experience. Once you have worked out a good idea, you can use it over and over again. The following game shows some basic ideas.

**1.e4 e5 2.Qh5** Already White is threatening to capture the undefended pawn on e5. Also the experienced player will recognise that White is trying to set up "Scholars Mate". **2. ... Nc6** Black sees the threat to the e pawn and defends it. **3. Bc4** Now White is threatening checkmate on f7. Note that White is attacking f7 with 2 pieces and Black is defending with just 1. **3. ... g6** Black blocks the attack on f7 by the Queen, leaving one attacker and one defender on f7. **4. Qf3** White tries again, this time attacking f7 with the Queen on f3. **4. ... Nf6** Black once again blocks the attack on f7. **5.d3 Bg7 6.Bg5** Although the Bishop attacks the Knight, Black still has two defenders to match the two attackers, meaning the Knight is safe. **6. ... O-O** Now that Black has castled, White will find it hard to checkmate with just the Queen and Bishop.