

Gungahlin Junior Chess Club

Checks and Checkmates

In Chess the aim of the game is to force your opponents King to surrender. Unlike all the other pieces in the game, the King cannot be captured. Every time the King is in danger of being captured it must find a way to avoid this. Putting the King under attack is called putting the King in **Check**. If the King cannot get to safety this is called **Checkmate**, and the game is over.

Getting out of Check

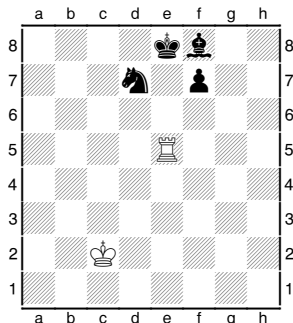
When your King is in check you have three ways of making your King safe.

The first way is to capture the piece attacking the King.

The second way is to put something between your king and the piece giving check.

The third way is to move your King to a square that isn't attacked.

The following diagram shows the 3 ways to get out of check.



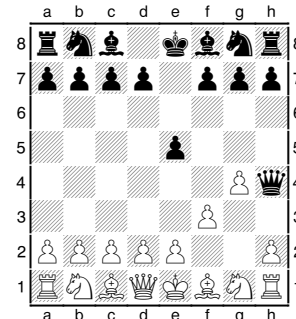
The Black King is in check from the White Rook on e5. The first way to get out of check is to take the Rook with the Knight (Nxe5). The second way is to block the check with the Bishop (Be7). And the third way is to move the King to a safe square, in this case d8.

Checkmate

If your King is under attack and there is no move that makes your King safe, then this is **Checkmate**. As Checkmate ends the game clearly this is something you want to do to your opponent, rather than have it done to you. Here are some very short games that end in

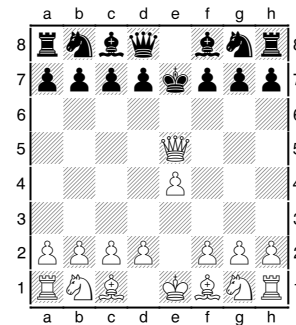
Checkmate.

1.f3 e5 2.g4 Qh4#



The White King is in check from the Queen on h4. No White piece can take the Queen by moving to h4, and no White piece can move to f2 or g3 to block the check. Finally, the only square the White King can move to is f2, but that is still attacked by the Queen. So it is Checkmate. This game is the shortest game of chess that can end in Checkmate, and is known as **Fools Mate**.

1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 Ke7 3.Qxe5#



Here it is Black that has been checkmated. The White Queen on e5 attacks the Black King on e7. No Black piece can capture the White Queen, and no Black piece can move to e6. And the Black King cannot move to a safe square as d6, e6, f6 and e8 are all attacked by the White Queen.

Here is one more game that ends in checkmate. See if you can play through it on a chess board at home.

1.e4 e5 2.f4 Bc5 3.fxe5 Qh4+ 4.Ke2 Qxe4#