

The Three Special Rules of Chess

This article is written for new players, those that have learned the rules of chess from a friend or a relative, not in a formal club environment. It can also serve as a refresher for those that have yet to play in a chess tournament or those that have not recorded one of their own games.

The special rules are:

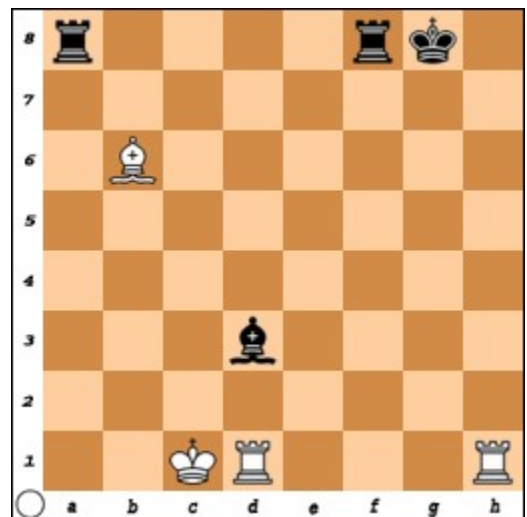
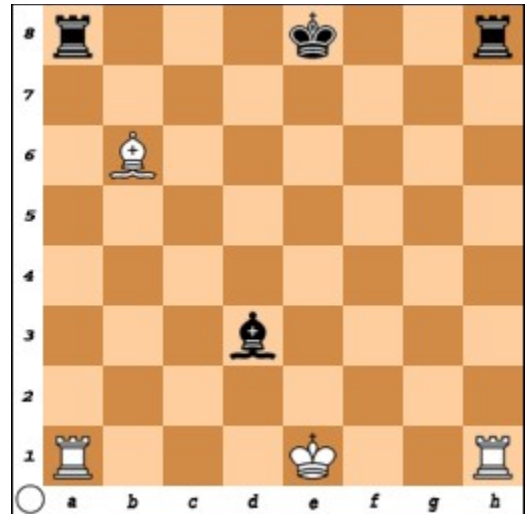
1. Castling
2. Promotion
3. The en passant capture

Castling

In chess, a basic rule is that you may move only one of your men on each turn. The exception to this rule is the "castling" maneuver. When castling, the king and a rook sort of "trade places" in a single move. The rules for castling are:

- the king may not have previously moved
- the rook you are castling with may not have previously moved
- the squares between the king and the rook must be empty
- the king may not be in check
- the square the king passes over may not be in check
- the square the king lands on may not be in check

If all of these conditions are met, then the king is moved two squares toward the rook, then the rook is moved to the other side of the king. Note that, if you move the rook first, your opponent may declare that "that is your move", and not allow the completion of the castling maneuver. Best practice is to move the king and the rook with the same hand. Also note that the *rook* may be under attack, or pass over an attacked b1 or b8 square in queen-side castling. You are not allowed to castle with a promoted rook, even if it hasn't moved since promotion. Castling is considered to be a move of the king. Here, black castling with the king's rook is called "king side castling" or "castles short" and is written "O-O" in chess notation. White, castling



with queen's rook is called "queen side castling" or "castles long" and is written "O-O-O" in chess notation.

Promotion

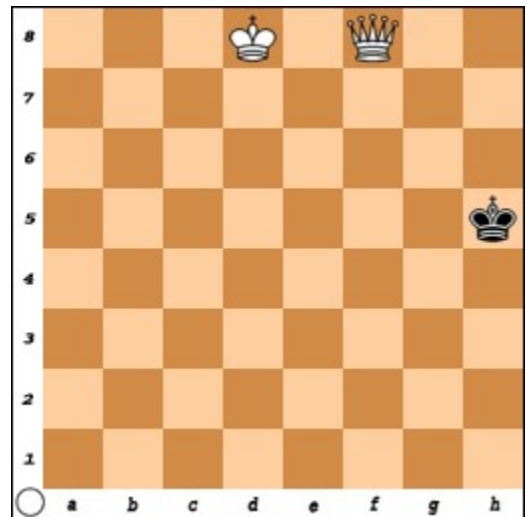
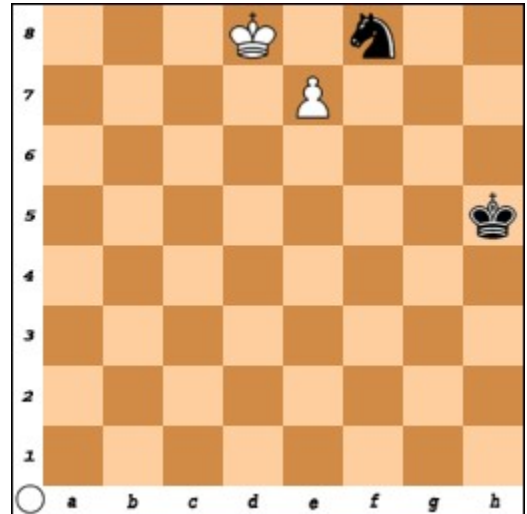
When a pawn reaches the far end of the board (called the 8th rank) it must be promoted to either a queen, a rook, a knight or a bishop of the same color to complete your turn.

This is sometimes accomplished by placing the piece on the 8th rank square that the pawn could move to, and removing the pawn from the board.

A queen is the choice 99% of the time. In rare instances a knight is chosen instead. In very, very rare instances a rook or bishop may be necessary to avoid giving stalemate.

You do not have to lose your queen in order to promote to another queen. There is a famous master game with five queens on the board at once.

In chess notation use an "=" to show the promotion, for example: "40 exf8=Q" to show on move 40 the e-pawn captured on f8 and promoted to a queen.



The en passant capture

All pawns move forward one square at a time, except for each pawn's initial move, which may be one or two squares. This was not always the case. Over 500 years ago, pawns only moved one square at a time. This rule was changed to speed the game up, but it brought with it a problem: a pawn could move two squares on its initial move, passing right by an enemy pawn (which could have captured it, if it had moved one square).

This brought about the "en passant" rule (French for "in passing") which says: If a pawn moves two squares, passing over a square attacked by an enemy pawn, then on the next turn **ONLY**, the enemy pawn can capture the pawn that moved two squares as if it had moved one square. This special rule only applies to pawns, not to the pieces or the king. In the diagrams below, white plays e4 and black captures fxe3.

