

THE LAWS OF CHESS

OFFICIAL CODE

TRANSLATION BY THE
BRITISH CHESS FEDERATION

AUTHORISED BY THE
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DES ECHECS
1955

Published with the authority of the
BRITISH CHESS FEDERATION
By CHESS WORLD, 1 Bond Street, Sydney, Australia.

THE
LAWS OF CHESS

OFFICIAL CODE

TRANSLATION BY THE
BRITISH CHESS FEDERATION
AUTHORISED BY THE

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DES ECHECS

1955

Published with the authority of the
BRITISH CHESS FEDERATION
• By CHESS WORLD, 1 Bond Street, Sydney, Australia.

FOREWORD

The new official Code of the Laws of Chess was finally passed by the F.I.D.E. Congress at Schaffhausen in August, 1953. At the 1952 Congress the Units were requested to have the Code translated into the necessary languages in order to secure their universal adoption. The B.C.F. undertook the translation into English and finally submitted to the President of F.I.D.E. a British Edition, which was passed at their Congress in 1953 as conforming to the arrangement and expressing the true intent and meaning of the French Text—a literal translation having been found impracticable. Final amendments were accepted in 1955.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This is the only translation recognised by the Australian Chess Federation.

LAWS OF THE GAME OF CHESS

PART ONE GENERAL LAWS

Article 1

Introduction

The game of chess is played between two opponents by moving pieces on a square board called "a chessboard".

Article 2

The Chessboard and its arrangement

1. The chessboard is made up of 64 equal squares in colour alternately light (the "white" squares) and dark (the "black" squares).

2. The chessboard is placed between the players so that the square in the corner to the right of each player is white.

3. The eight rows of squares running from the edge of the chessboard nearest one of the players to that nearest the other player are called "files".

4. The eight rows of squares running from one edge of the chessboard to the other at right angles to the files are called "ranks".







5. The rows of squares of the same colour touching corner to corner are called "diagonals".

Article 3

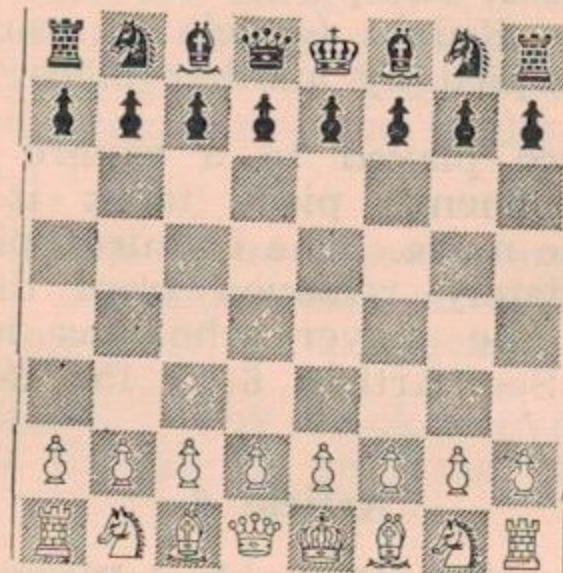
The Pieces and their positions

At the beginning of the game one player has 16 light coloured pieces (the "white" pieces), the other has 16 dark coloured pieces (the "black" pieces).

These pieces are as follows:—

A King	- - -	
A Queen	- - -	
Two Rooks	- -	
Two Bishops	-	
Two Knights	-	
Eight Pawns	-	

The initial position of the pieces on the chessboard is as follows:—



Article 4

The Method of Play

1. The two players must play alternately and make one move at a time. The player who has the white pieces commences the game.

2. A player is said "to have the move" when it is his turn to play.

Article 5

The Move in General

1. With the exception of Castling (Art. 6) a move is the transfer of one piece from

one square to another square which is either vacant or occupied by an opponent's piece.

2. No piece, except the Rook when Castling or the Knight (article 6), can cross a square occupied by another piece.

3. A piece played to a square occupied by an opponent's piece takes it as part of the same move. The captured piece must be immediately removed from the chess-board by the player who has made the capture. See Article 6(b) for taking "en passant".

Article 6

The Moves of the Individual Pieces

THE KING. Except when Castling, the King moves to an adjacent square that is not attacked by an opponent's piece. Castling is a move of the King and a Rook, reckoned as a single move (of the King), which must be carried out in the following manner:—The King is transferred from its original square to either one of the nearest squares of the same colour in the same rank; then that Rook towards which the King has been moved is transferred over the King to the square which the King has just crossed.

Castling is permanently impossible (a) if the King has already been moved, or (b) with a Rook that has already been moved.

Castling is prevented for the time being:—

(a) if the original square of the King or the square which the King must cross or that which it is to occupy is attacked by an opponent's piece, or (b) if there is any piece between the Rook involved in the move and the King.

THE QUEEN. The Queen moves to any square on the file, rank, or either of the diagonals on which it is placed.

THE ROOK. The Rook moves to any square on the file or rank on which it is placed.

THE BISHOP. The Bishop moves to any square on either of the diagonals on which it is placed.

THE KNIGHT. The Knight's move is made up of two different steps. It takes one step of one single square along the file or rank, and then, still moving away from the square it left, takes one step along the diagonal.

THE PAWN. The Pawn can only move forward.

(a) Except when making a capture it advances from its original square either one or two vacant squares along the file on which it is placed, and on subsequent moves it advances one vacant square along the file. When making a capture it advances one

square along either of the diagonals on which it is placed.

(b) A Pawn attacking a square crossed by an opponent's Pawn which has been advanced two squares on the previous move can capture the opponent's Pawn as though the latter had only been moved one square. This capture can only be made on the move immediately following such advance and is known as taking "en passant".

(c) On reaching the end of a file a Pawn must be immediately exchanged, as part of the same move, for a Queen, a Rook, a Bishop, or a Knight at the player's choice and without taking into account the other pieces still remaining on the chessboard. This exchanging of a Pawn is called "promotion". The promoted piece must be of the same colour as the Pawn and its action is immediate.

Article 7

The Completion of a Move

A move is completed:

(a) In the case of the transfer of a piece to a vacant square, when the player's hand has quitted the piece; or

(b) In the case of a capture, when the captured piece has been removed from the chessboard and when the player, having placed the piece on its new square, has quitted the piece with his hand; or

(c) In the case of Castling, when the player's hand has quitted the Rook on the square crossed by the King; when the player's hand has quitted the King the move is still not yet completed, but the player no longer has the right to make any other move except Castling; or

(d) In the case of the promotion of a Pawn, when the Pawn has been removed from the chessboard and the player's hand has quitted the new piece after placing it on the promotion square; if the player's hand has quitted the Pawn that has reached the promotion square the move is still not yet completed, but the player no longer has the right to move the Pawn to another square.

Article 8

Touched Piece

Provided that he first warns his opponent, the player whose turn it is to move can adjust one or more pieces on their squares.

Apart from the above case, if the player whose turn it is to move touches one or more pieces, he must make his move by moving or taking the first piece touched which can be moved or taken.

The touching of a piece or pieces entails no obligation if a breach of this rule is not pointed out by the opponent before he touches a piece, or if none of the moves indicated above can be carried out in accordance with the rules.

Article 9

Illegal Positions

1. If, during the game, it is ascertained that an illegal move has been made, then the position shall be set up again as it was immediately before the making of the illegal move. The game shall then continue in accordance with the rules given in article 8 as regards the move replacing the illegal move.

If it proves impossible to set up the position again then the game must be annulled and a fresh game played.

2. If, in the course of a game, one or more pieces have been accidentally displaced and are not correctly replaced, the position must be set up as it was immediately before the mistake and the game continued.

If it proves impossible to set up the position again then the game must be annulled and a fresh game played.

3. If, after an adjournment, the position is incorrectly put up, then the position as it was on adjournment must be set up again and the game continued.

4. If, during the game, it is ascertained that the initial position of the pieces was incorrect, then the game must be annulled and a fresh game played.

5. If, during the game it is ascertained that the position of the chessboard is incorrect,

then the position that has been reached must be transferred to a chessboard that has been correctly placed and the game continued.

Article 10

Check

1. The King is in check when its square is attacked by an opponent's piece; in this case the latter is said to be "checking the King".

2. The check must be met on the move immediately following. If the check cannot be met then it is called "mate" (see article 11, 1).

3. A piece that intercepts a check to the King of its own colour can itself give check to the opponent's King.

Article 11

Won Game

1. The game is won for the player who has mated the opponent's King.

2. The game is considered won for the player whose opponent declares he resigns.

Article 12

Drawn Game

The game is drawn:

1. When the King of the player whose turn it is to move is not in check, and such

player cannot make a move. This is called "stalemate".

2. By agreement between the two players.

3. At the request of one of the players when the same position appears three times, and each time the same player has had the move. The position is considered the same if pieces of the same kind and colour occupy the same squares.

This right of claiming the draw belongs to the player:

(a) who is in a position to play a move leading to such repetition of the position, if he declares his intention of making this move; or

(b) who is about to reply to a move by which such repeated position has been produced.

If a player makes a move without having claimed a draw in the manner prescribed in (a) or (b) he then loses this right to claim a draw; this right is, however, restored to him if the same position appears again with the same player having the move.

4. When the player whose turn it is to move proves that at least fifty moves have been played by each side without a capture of a piece and without a Pawn move having been made.

This number of fifty moves can be increased for certain positions providing that this increase in number and these positions have been clearly laid down before the commencement of the game.

PART II

of

LAWS OF CHESS

BEGINS PAGE 20

PART TWO
ADDITIONAL RULES FOR
COMPETITIONS

Article 13

Game Scores

In the course of the game each player should write down the score of his game in a clear and legible manner on the prescribed score sheet. (See Supplement No. 1).

Article 14

The Use of the Chess Clock

1. Each player has to make a certain number of moves in a given time, these two factors having been laid down in advance.

2. The time control for each player is effected by means of a clock provided with special apparatus.

3. The clock of the player who has White is set in motion at the time fixed for the commencement of the game. From then on, each player, having made his move, stops his own clock and starts his opponent's clock.

4. When considering whether the prescribed number of moves has been made in the given time the last move is not considered as made until after the player has stopped his clock.

5. All indications given by a clock or its apparatus are considered as conclusive in the absence of evident defects. The player who claims that there is such a defect should do this as soon as he himself has become aware of it.

6. If the game has to be interrupted for some reason for which neither player is responsible the clock must be stopped until the point concerned has been dealt with. This should be done, for example, in the case of an illegal position necessitating correction, or in that of a defective clock that must be changed, or if the piece which a player has declared he wishes to exchange for one of his Pawns that has reached the end of a file is not immediately to hand.

7. In cases arising out of article 9, clauses 1 and 2, when it proves impossible to determine the time taken by each player up to the moment when the illegality occurred, each player shall be allotted up to this moment a time proportional to that indicated on the clock at the moment when the illegality was ascertained.

For example: After Black's 30th move in a game, it is ascertained that an illegality occurred on the 20th move. Since the clock shows for these 30 moves 1 hour 30 minutes (90 minutes) for White and 1 hour (60 minutes) for Black, the times taken by the

two players for the first 20 moves are calculated as follows:

$$\text{WHITE} \quad \frac{90 \times 20}{30} = 60 \text{ minutes}$$

$$\text{BLACK} \quad \frac{60 \times 20}{30} = 40 \text{ minutes}$$

Article 15

Adjournment of the Game

1. If, after the lapse of the time laid down for play, the game is not finished, the player whose turn it is to move must write down his move in unambiguous notation on his score sheet, put this score sheet as well as that of his opponent in an envelope, close the envelope and then stop his clock. This move is called the "sealed move". Should the player make his move on the chessboard he must seal the same move on his score sheet.

2. On the envelope should be stated:

- (a) the names of the players.
- (b) the position immediately before the sealed move.
- (c) the time taken by each player.
- (d) the name of the player who has sealed the move and the number of this move.

3. The envelope must be put into safe keeping.

Article 16

The Resumption of the Game

1. When the game is resumed the position immediately before the sealed move should be set up and the time taken by each of the players when the game was adjourned should be indicated on the clocks.

2. The envelope must not be opened until that player is present whose turn it is to move (i.e. the one who should reply to the sealed move). The clock of this player should be started when the sealed move has been made on the chessboard.

3. If the player whose turn it is to move is absent, then his clock should be started, but the envelope will only be opened when he arrives.

4. If the player who has sealed the move is absent, then the player whose turn it is to move need not make his reply to the sealed move on the chessboard. He has the right to write down his move in reply on his score sheet, put this move in an envelope, stop his clock and start his opponent's clock. The envelope should then be put into safe keeping and opened on the opponent's arrival.

5. If the envelope containing the move sealed on adjournment has disappeared without it being possible to re-establish, with the agreement of the two players, the position and the times used for the adjourned game, or if for any other reason the said position and the said times cannot be re-established, the game is annulled and a fresh game must be played instead of the adjourned game.

If the envelope enclosing the move sealed according to sub-article 4 has disappeared then the game must be resumed as from the position at the time of adjournment and with the clock time used at the said time.

6. If, at a resumption of play, either clock has been incorrectly set, and if either player points this out before making his first move, then the error must be corrected. If the error is not so pointed out the game continues without correction.

Article 17

Loss of the Game

A game is lost by a player

1. Who has not played the prescribed number of moves in the given time;
2. who arrives at the chessboard more than one hour late;

3. who seals an illegal move or a move so imprecise that it is impossible to establish its true significance;

4. who during the game refuses to comply with the laws of chess.

If both players arrive at the chessboard more than one hour late, or if both refuse to comply with the laws of chess, the game shall be declared lost for both.

Article 18

Players' Behaviour

1. (a) Whilst play is in progress players are forbidden to use written or printed notes or to analyse the game on another chessboard, and are also forbidden to have recourse to the counsel or advice of a third party, whether asked for or not.

(b) No analysis is allowed in the rooms of play either whilst play is in progress or during the adjournment.

(c) It is forbidden to distract or worry the opponent in any way whatsoever.

2. Infractions of the law as indicated in sub-article 1 can entail penalties reaching as far as the loss of the game.

Article 19

The Competition Director

A person should be designated to direct the competition. The duties of this director are:

(a) to see that the rules of play are strictly observed;

(b) to supervise the competition, to establish that the prescribed time limit has not been exceeded by the players, to fix the order of resumption of adjourned games, to see that the arrangements contained in article 15 are observed, above all to see that the particulars put down on the envelope at the adjournment are correct, to keep the sealed envelope until the time when the game is resumed, etc.

(c) to put into force decisions which he may make on disputes that have arisen in the course of the competition;

(d) to impose penalties on the players for any fault or infraction of the rules.

Article 20

The Interpretation of the Laws of the Game

In case of doubt as to the application or interpretation of these laws the F.I.D.E. will examine the evidence and make an official decision.

Decisions published in the "F.I.D.E. Review" are binding on all affiliated Federations.

SUPPLEMENT No. 1

Chess Notation

1. The F.I.D.E. rules recognise at present only the two most generally known notations: the algebraic system and the descriptive system.

2. Each affiliated unit is at liberty to employ whichever of these two notations it prefers.

The Algebraic System

The pieces, with the exception of the Pawns, are represented by their initial letters. The Pawns are not specially indicated.

The eight files (from left to right for White) are represented by the letters from a to h.

The eight ranks are numbered from 1 to 8, counting from White's first rank. (In the initial positions, then, the White pieces are on the ranks 1 and 2 and the black pieces on ranks 7 and 8).

Thus each square is invariably defined by the combination of a letter with a number.

To the initial letter of the piece (except the Pawn) there is added the square of departure and the square of arrival. In the shortened form of notation the square of departure is omitted.

Thus: Bc1—f4 = the Bishop on the square c1 is played to the f4 square. In shortened notation Bf4.

Or: e7—e5 = the Pawn on the square e7 is played to e5. In shortened notation e5.

When two similar pieces can go to the same square, the shortened notation is completed in the following way:—if, for example, two Knights are on g1 and d2, the move Ktg1—f3 would be written in the shortened form Ktg—f3. If the Knights are on g1 and g5, the move Ktg1—f3 would in the shortened form be Kt1—f3.

Abbreviations

O—O = Castles with the Rook h1 or h8 (King side Castling).

O—O—O = Castles with the Rook a1 or a8 (Queen side Castling).

: or x = takes.

+ = check.

‡ = mate.

Common Abbreviations

! = well played.

? = bad move.

The Descriptive System

The pieces are represented by their initial letters (but the Knight may be represented by N instead of Kt if preferred).

Distinction is made between the King's Rook, Knight and Bishop and those of the Queen by addition of the letters K and Q.

The eight files (from left to right for White and inversely for Black) are represented as follows:—

The Queen's Rook	file	(QR)
„	„ Knight	„ (QKt)
„	„ Bishop	„ (QB)
„	„ File	(Q)
The King's File		(K)
„	„ Bishop file	(KB)
„	„ Knight	„ (KKt)
„	„ Rook	„ (KR)

The eight ranks are numbered from 1 to 8, counting from White's first rank in White's case and from Black's first rank in Black's case.

Current Expressions

1. **PARRY A CHECK.**—Placing a piece between the enemy piece which is giving the check and one's own King. A check given by a Knight cannot be so parried.

2. **PINNED PIECE.**—A piece that parries a check and in consequence loses its liberty of movement is called "pinned".

3. **DISCOVERED CHECK.**—Check given by a piece the action of which has been unmasked by the moving of another piece.

4. **DOUBLE CHECK.**—A simultaneous check obtained by the moving of a piece that gives check and, at the same time, discloses the action of another piece that also gives check.

5. **SMOTHERED MATE.**—Mate given by a Knight to a King the adjoining squares of which are occupied by pieces of its own colour or by enemy pieces that it cannot take.

6. **Q SIDE CASTLING** Castling with the Rook a1 or a8 (Queen's Rook).

7. **K SIDE CASTLING.**—Castling with the Rook h1 or h8 (King's Rook).

The initial letter of the piece played and the square to which it is played are indicated. e.g. Q—KB 4 = the Queen is played to the fourth square of the King's Bishop file.

When two similar pieces can go to the same square, the squares of departure and arrival are indicated. Thus R (KKt 4)—KKt 2 = that one of the two Rooks which is on the fourth square of the KKt file is moved to the second square of the same file.

Abbreviations

O—O or Castles K = Castles with the KR (K side Castling or Short Castling).

O—O—O or Castles Q = Castles with the QR (Q side Castling or Long Castling).

x = takes

ch or + = check

Common Abbreviations

! = well played.

? = bad move.

8. WINNING THE EXCHANGE.—Exchanging a Bishop or a Knight for a Rook.

9. LOSING THE EXCHANGE.—Exchanging a Rook for a Bishop or a Knight.

10. J'ADOUBE.—Expression used when a piece is adjusted on its square.

This translation is the copyright of the British Chess Federation and must not be reproduced in whole or part without the written permission of the Secretary of the Federation.