

chess lessons



ALEXANDER FEIL SCHOLARSHIP

Chess Lesson 1: Illegal Moves

1 Introduction

Losing a game due to an illegal move can be frustrating, especially when you're winning. If you struggle with avoiding illegal moves, this lesson is for you. We'll first review some important rules that players often forget and then practice with exercises.

2 Rules to Keep in Mind

The King is in Check:

When your king is in check, you **must** respond immediately. You can get out of the check in three ways:

- Moving the king to a safe square
- Blocking the attack with another piece
- Capturing the attacking piece

If none of these options work, you are in checkmate. But simply doing an illegal move is also not an option - this will also lead to you losing the game.

Moving into Check:

Similar to the above point, it is also illegal of course to make a move that leads you to being in check. There are two possibilities for this to happen:

- Moving your king into check
- Moving another piece that uncovers a check. For example, a rook may attack your queen. But behind the queen is your king, so if you move the queen away, your king is in check. Moving your queen away is therefore an illegal move.

Castling

With castling, there are many mistakes you can make. To remind you, castling is a special move you can do only once in the game. When you castle, you move your king two fields towards a rook, and the rook jumps over the king, standing right next to him. This is very powerful, but you can only do it on these conditions:

- The king and the rook haven't moved
- There are no pieces between the king and the rook
- The king is not in check
- The field the king jumps over and the field he ends on are NOT attacked by an opposing piece

If any of the above rules is broken when you do your castle, it is an illegal move.

Touch-Play or Touch-Move

In a tournament situation, you **HAVE TO** move the first piece that you touch when it is your turn. The only exception is when all the moves you could do with this piece are illegal (for example if your king is in check and this piece cannot protect the king. Then it is more important that you protect your king and touch-move doesn't count). Therefore, it is so important that you only touch your piece if you are completely sure you want to play it. If you just want to adjust a piece because it is not in the middle of its square, you can say "I adjust" before you touch the piece and then touch-play doesn't count.

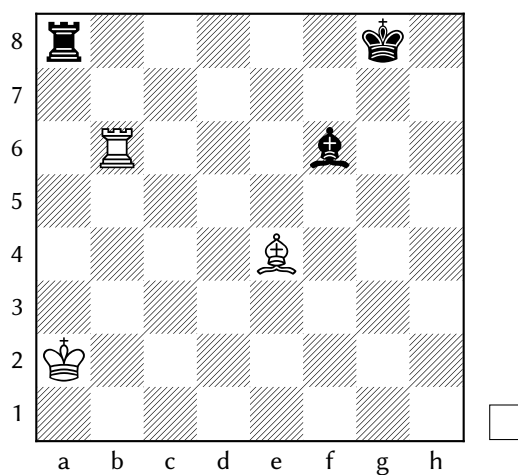


3 Exercises

Exercise 1: What are the three ways to defend your king when he is in check?

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In the below diagram, identify what black piece is attacking the king. Then, try to protect your white king. We learned three ways to protect the king. Can you find an example for each way to protect him?



Exercise 2: We learned that there are two ways for you to put your own king in check. Do you remember them?

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In the diagram below, identify all the illegal moves where white is putting their king in check. *Hint: There are 3*

