

# How to Write Chess Moves

A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS



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## LEARNING CHESS LANGUAGE

You're going to quickly learn everything you need to know about reading and writing chess moves, called "chess notation".

**Algebraic Chess Notation** is the fancy name for today's accepted chess language. There are other styles but algebraic notation has been accepted as the standard by the international chess organization called FIDE. FIDE governs all world-class chess competitions.

Chess notation is easy to learn! You'll understand it like the experts if you read and understand everything that follows. If you don't understand something just ask an experienced adult to help you.

## WHY SHOULD I WRITE DOWN MY CHESS MOVES?

Writing down your moves lets you record your games. Then you can study, replay, and show the game later to your friends!

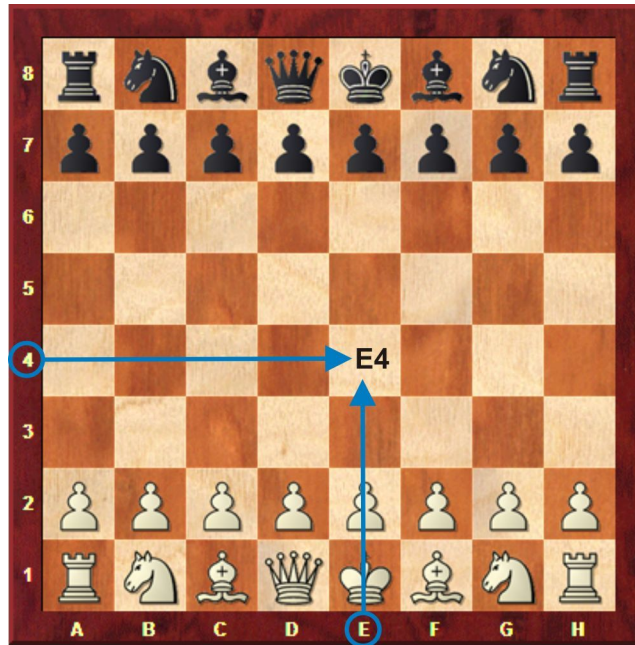
You can also read and play through games of great players to learn and improve your own chess game! Even games played hundreds of years ago!

## LEARN CHESS NOTATION

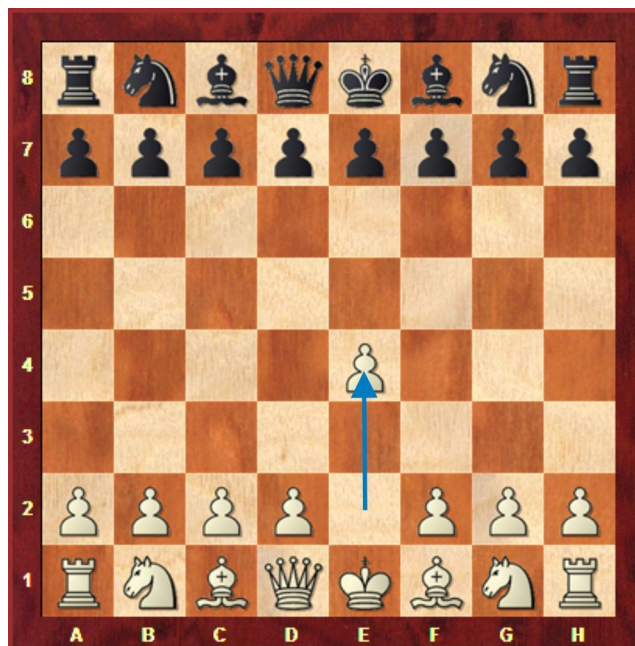
To write chess notation you must indicate the **piece** you are moving and the **square** it's moving to. Notice how each piece is abbreviated with a single letter except the pawn! If no piece is named it's assumed that a pawn move is made. Notice also how the Knight is abbreviated with a "N" not "K"

	<b>King = K</b>
	<b>Queen = Q</b>
	<b>Knight = N</b>
	<b>Bishop = B</b>
	<b>Rook = R</b>
	<b>Pawn =</b>

So the square three places in front of the White King is e4.



In the following diagram White made the first move pawn to **e4**. The name of this move is simply "e4". (since the pawn's name is not written)



Now black has made a pawn move... this is written as **e5**.

Next, White has replied with **Nf3**, knight to f3. Notice how the letter of the piece is written as well as the name of the square.



Now, we're going to fast forward to some special moves. See in the next diagram how white has made a special move called **castling kingside**. This move is written as **0-0**.

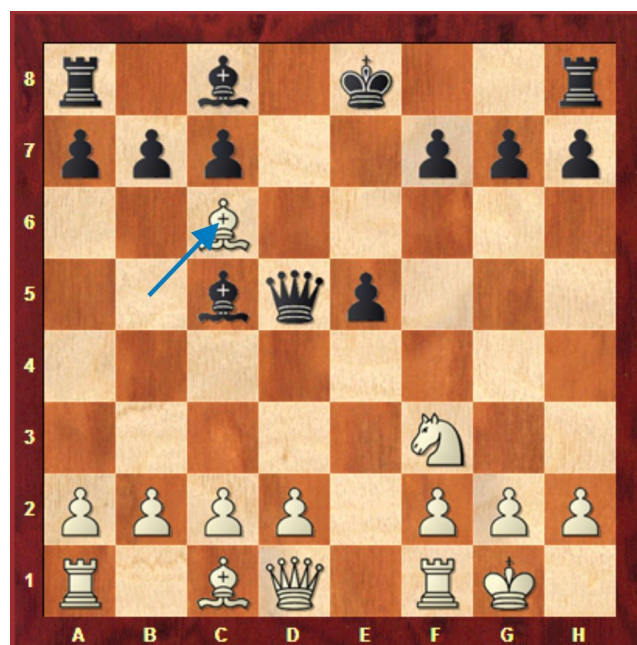
If the King castles on the **queenside** (to the left side of the chessboard) it would be written as **0-0-0**.



In the next diagram, White is going to capture Black's pawn on **d5**. This move is called **exd5**. When a "capture" is made this is indicated with an **x**.



After a couple more moves White captures the Knight on c6. This move is written as **Bxc6+**. Notice the "+" sign. The "+" sign means "check" since Black's King is now in check and must get out of danger.

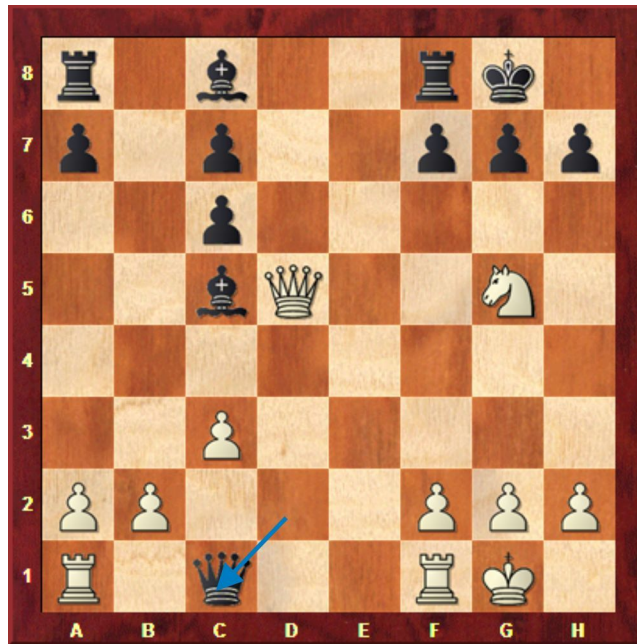


White just moved **d4**. Black's next move is **exd3(e.p.)** The e.p. stands for *en passant* – Black captures white's d4 pawn while moving his pawn to d3.

En Passant is a special move not many people know about!



After several more moves, Black captures White's Bishop on c1 with **dx1Q**. This means black pawn captures a piece on c1 and promotes it to a Queen. Black could promote it to any other piece he chooses, but Queen's are nearly always the best choice.

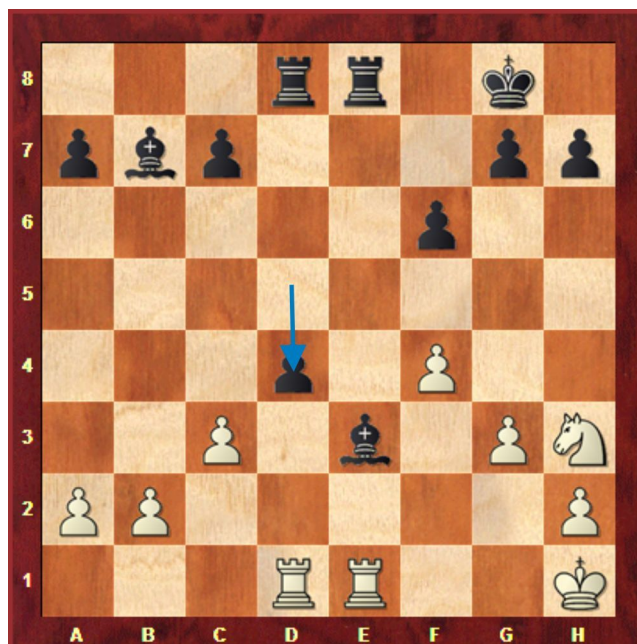


The next move is **Raxc1**. Note that either the rook on **A1** or **F1** can capture the new black queen. **Raxc1** means that the rook on the "a" file is the rook that captures the black queen. If you captured with the other rook, you would write **Rfxc1**.



In this next position, white makes a winning move, **d4++**, pawn to d4 CHECKMATE! Can you see how it is a checkmate? Take a look at the sneaky bishop on b7. This is called a discovered check.

You can also write **d4#** instead of **d4++** which also means checkmate.



That's all there is to know about chess notation!

You've learned the notation standards plus how to write the special moves ...

- +**      **Check**
- (e.p.)**    **en passant**
- O-O**      **Castling Kingside**
- O-O-O**    **Castling Queenside**
- ++ or #**    **Checkmate**

Now you can learn about special symbols which can be written at the end of a move to indicate whether that move was a good move or a bad move.



## CHESS ANNOTATION SYMBOLS



Chess players will often comment on the strengths and weakness of chess moves with chess annotation symbols.

Here's a diagram of the symbols you'll most often see.

- !**     **Good move**
- !!**    **Excellent  
move**
- ?**     **Bad move**
- ??**    **Terrible move  
(blunder)**
- !?**    **Interesting  
move**
- ?!**    **Dubious  
move**
- **Only move**
- ...**   **Black move  
follows**

There are lots of other symbols too but these symbols are the most common.

An example of "Black move follows" would be written like

**...Bf5**

This means Black plays his Bishop to the square f5. Notice the three dots before the move – this shows its a Black move. You will see this in Chess books but not on a scoresheet because scoresheets have a column just for Black.

## A REAL SCORESHEET

Now it is time to show you a real scoresheet! See if you can follow this game on your own chessboard. It is only 4 moves long.

The game was played on 26 September 2012 during the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Little Big River Championship. Whites name was Scholar. And Blacks name was Patzer.

The moves on the left are White moves and the moves on the right are Black moves. Sometimes the scoresheet will have labels for White and Black at the top of the page.

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Scholar</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Patzer</i>	
Tournament <i>Little Big River Championship</i>		
Round <i>1</i>	Date <i>26.09.2012</i>	Result <i>1-0</i>
ECO _____		
1 <i>e4</i>	<i>e5</i>	
2 <i>Bc4</i>	<i>d6</i>	
3 <i>Qh5</i>	<i>Nf6</i>	
4 <i>Qxf7#</i>		
5 _____		

Notice the Result 1-0 – this means White won this game. There are three possible results in Chess and this is how you write them:

**1-0      White Wins**

**½ – ½      Both players agreed a draw**

**0-1      Black Wins**

ECO on the scoresheet stands for Encyclopedia of Chess Openings. Every set of moves at the beginning of a game has an ECO code which tells us what opening was played. There are thousands of openings and therefore thousands of ECO codes. Most players don't even know the ECO code there are so many! So the ECO code is usually only filled in after the game when the players look it up. You will see ECO codes in action soon!

Now you have a solid introduction to chess notation, and a scoresheet that actually shows you how it should look in the real world.

## EXAMPLE GAMES

Here are two of the most beautiful games of Chess ever played and they are both over 150 years old!

You can see from the scoresheets who was White and who was Black, which Tournament the game was played in, when the game was played, the opening the players used (ECO code), all the moves and of course who won the game.

Notice how some of those special symbols we mentioned before have been written on the scoresheet. See if you can work out what the symbols mean.

Enjoy!

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Morphy, Paul</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Isouard, Carl</i>
Tournament <i>Paris it</i>			
Round	Date <i>1858</i>	Result <i>1-0</i>	
ECO <i>C41: Philidor Defence</i>			
1	<i>e4</i>	<i>e5</i>	
2	<i>Nf3</i>	<i>d6</i>	
3	<i>d4</i>	<i>Bg4?</i>	
4	<i>axe5</i>	<i>Bxf3</i>	
5	<i>Qxf3</i>	<i>axe5</i>	
6	<i>Bc4</i>	<i>Nf6?</i>	
7	<i>Qb3</i>	<i>Qe7</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
8	<i>Nc3!</i>	<i>c6</i>	
9	<i>Bg5</i>	<i>b5?</i>	
10	<i>Nxb5!</i>	<i>cxb5</i>	
11	<i>Bxb5+</i>	<i>Nbd7</i>	
12	<i>0-0-0</i>	<i>Rd8</i>	
13	<i>Rxd7!</i>	<i>Rxd7</i>	
14	<i>Rd1</i>	<i>Qe6</i>	
15	<i>Bxd7+</i>	<i>Nxd7</i>	
16	<i>Qb8+!!</i>	<i>Nxb8</i>	
17	<i>Rd8#</i>		

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Anderssen, Adolf</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Dufresne, Jean</i>
Tournament <i>Berlin 'Evergreen'</i>			
Round	Date <i>1852</i>	Result <i>1-0</i>	
ECO <i>C52: Evans Gambit Accepted: 5 c3 Ba5</i>			
1	<i>e4</i>	<i>e5</i>	
2	<i>Nf3</i>	<i>Nc6</i>	
3	<i>Bc4</i>	<i>Bc5</i>	
4	<i>b4</i>	<i>Bxb4</i>	
5	<i>c3</i>	<i>Ba5</i>	
6	<i>d4</i>	<i>exd4</i>	
7	<i>0-0</i>	<i>d3</i>	
8	<i>Qb3</i>	<i>Qf6</i>	
9	<i>e5</i>	<i>Qg6</i>	
10	<i>Re1</i>	<i>Nge7</i>	
11	<i>Ba3</i>	<i>b5</i>	
12	<i>Qxb5</i>	<i>Rb8</i>	
13	<i>Qa4</i>	<i>Bb6</i>	
14	<i>Nbd2</i>	<i>Bb7</i>	
15	<i>Ne4</i>	<i>Qf5</i>	
16	<i>Bxd3</i>	<i>Qh5</i>	
17	<i>Nf6+</i>	<i>gxf6</i>	
18	<i>exf6</i>	<i>Rg8!</i>	
19	<i>Rd1!</i>	<i>Qxf3?</i>	
20	<i>Rxe7+!</i>	<i>Nxe7!?</i>	
21	<i>Qxd7+!!</i>	<i>Kxd7</i>	
22	<i>Bf5+</i>	<i>Ke8</i>	
23	<i>Bd7+</i>	<i>Kf8</i>	
24	<i>Bxe7#</i>		

## **SUMMARY**

We hope you enjoyed those games and that they inspire you to create your own master pieces.

You'll find that once you can read and write chess notation, your world is opened to lots of new chess knowledge.

Once you delve into this more, you'll quickly become a better chess player and you'll be way ahead of your chess playing friends and just about everyone in your family!

If you would like to learn more about Chess,  
visit our website

[www.chesspower.co.nz](http://www.chesspower.co.nz)

and join our **Coaching Programmes** and **fun Tournaments**

