

## **Do's**

Use exchanges and sacrifices as part of your game plan.

Try to outwit your opponent by making advantageous exchanges.

### **Opening:**

Try to control the center of the board.

Develop the minor pieces (Knights and Bishops) early on and prepare to use them to attack.

Move Pawns carefully. Once moved they cannot retreat.

Castle as quickly as you safely can.

Develop pieces with a plan in mind, but be flexible.

### **Middlegame:**

Try to reassess the situation on the board after every move – the balance of power may shift in a short space of time.

Consider what your opponent is planning as well as thinking of your own strategy.

### **Endgame:**

Use the King. In the endgame it can be a vital attacking piece.

Guard your passed Pawns carefully. They are valuable and you should do everything to promote them.

### **Check:**

Give check as a means of forcing your opponent to move. By moving, your opponent may lose time or neglect other pieces – and you can exploit this as part of a plan.

### **Queen:**

Use your Queen's attacking power during the middlegame.

Consider forcing an exchange of Queens if you urgently need to take pressure off your King.

**Rooks:**

Move Rooks to open files when you can.

Use Rooks to give support to your Pawns from behind.

Try to let your Rooks work together. Doubled they are lethal weapons.

Remember that your Rooks are the most powerful pieces after the Queen. Try to keep them until the endgame, when they will prove useful.

**Bishops:**

Develop your Bishops early in the game – possibly using an opening that involves them, like the King's Indian Defense.

Use your Bishops together – they are much more effective when attacking as a pair.

Try to have good Bishops – don't block their progress with your own pieces.

Try not to give up a Bishop unless you exchange it for the opposing Bishop on the same color squares, or you will be more vulnerable to attack.

**Knights:**

Use your Knights to mount surprise attacks on your opponent – they are good at squeeing into gaps between pieces, especially in situations where the board is very crowded with both players' pieces.

Support your Knights with Pawns. Otherwise, they can be vulnerable to attacks from longer-range pieces. This kind of Pawn support for more valuable pieces is called anchorage.

Place your Knights in outposts – these are the squares where they can't be attacked by opposing Pawns.

**Pawns:**

Use your Pawns to dominate the middle of the board during the opening stage of the game if you can.

Activate your Pawns in the middlegame – use them to attack enemy pieces and defend your own.

Give up your Pawns if necessary, to help other pieces advance.

Conserve some of your Pawns until the endgame, when they will become powerful if they can promote.

Use your Pawns to support each other.

Try to have passed Pawns.

Use Pawns to support more valuable pieces.

**King:**

Castle early to protect your King.

Use your army of pieces to help defend your King.

Use your King as an attacking piece in the endgame.

Keep your King and minor pieces together for safety if they are all you have left.

Use Bishops or Rooks together if you have both, to form a barrier that a King cannot cross.

## **Don'ts**

Rely too much on the values of the pieces when you are trying to work out whether a sacrifice is a good idea – they are only intended as a guide.

Forget that some pieces become more valuable later in the game – such as Pawns.

### **Opening:**

Move pieces more than once at this stage, unless it is part of a plan. Otherwise you will waste time and fall behind in development.

Sacrifice pieces for no reason at this stage

Start attacking too early.

Expose the Queen to attack.

Move without thinking – every move counts.

### **Middlegame:**

Allow yourself to get caught by surprise attacks – keep your eyes peeled for ambushes and traps from every direction.

Relax – even though things may be going to plan, this can change very quickly!

### **Endgame:**

Allow your opponent to promote Pawns or you will be at a great disadvantage.

Let your pieces get blocked in so you can't use them to their full attacking potential.

### **Check:**

Give check unnecessarily. It may make you feel powerful, but should only be done as part of a plan.

Say "check" if you are playing in a chess competition. It is good manners to let your opponent notice this.

Accidentally put your opponent in a perpetual check if you want to win the game – but it is fine if you want a draw.

**Queen:**

Bring your Queen into play too early. If you have to retreat, you may waste valuable time that could be spent developing pieces.

Let your Queen be taken without a very good reason, for example to divert attention away from your King if it is under attack.

**Rooks:**

Let your Rooks become trapped on blocked ranks or files.

Hamper a Pawn's chances of promotion by positioning your Rook in front of a Pawn that is trying to reach the other end of the board.

Sacrifice Rooks carelessly – they are valuable.

**Bishops:**

Sacrifice your Bishops if you can avoid it. They are a useful checkmating force in the endgame.

Allow bad Bishops (blocked in by your own Pawns).

Let your opponent take advantage of undefended diagonals if you only have one Bishop.

**Knights:**

Confine your Knights to the edges of the board. The number of squares they can move to is limited. They are even more restricted in the corners where they only have two possible squares that they can move to.

**Pawns:**

Give up Pawns unnecessarily. They may be worth more than you think – if not now, then later!

Move the Pawns on the flanks during the opening if you can avoid it – concentrate on the central Pawns.

Have isolated Pawns.

Structure your Pawns in such a way as they impede the movements of your other pieces.

Have doubled or tripled Pawns. They cannot support each other.

Let Pawns get left behind the others. Pawns cannot rely on the support of other Pawns.

Scatter Pawns across the board in small islands. Your enemy will have little trouble capturing them.

**King:**

Leave your King to cope on its own – if it becomes isolated it will become more vulnerable.

Allow your opponent to get his King to a square where it will be safe from attack, or you will be unable to checkmate and have to settle for a draw.

Block your King's escape routes with your own pieces.

Leave your King exposed or undefended.

Try to use your King as an attacking piece too early in the game.