

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS CHESS TEAMS COMPETITION

# NOTES ON THE LAWS OF CHESS

The FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs, the World Chess Federation) Laws of Chess apply throughout the competition. [The FIDE Laws of Chess may be found on the FIDE website, [www.fide.com](http://www.fide.com) – click on “FIDE Handbook” then “E.I Laws of Chess”.] The following notes are just a guide, to assist with rules that are sometimes forgotten or misunderstood. The basic moves of the pieces are not covered here. Please consult a standard chess reference, and have one available at all matches.

### SETTING UP THE BOARD

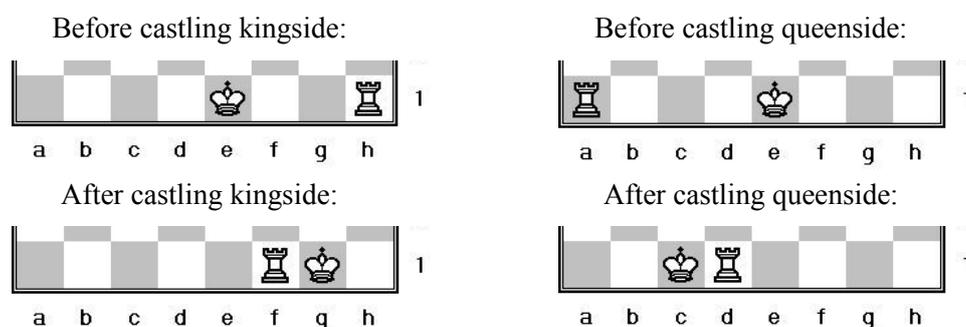
The Board is placed with a white square in the near right hand corner. The queen stands on the square of her own colour. The first to move is the player with the White pieces (the first-named team in each pairing has White on boards 2 and 4).

**Note: Incorrect setting:** If during a game it is found that the initial position of the pieces was incorrect, the game shall be cancelled and a new game played. If during a game it is found that the only error is that the board has been placed incorrectly the position should be transferred to a correctly placed board.

### THE MOVES

Some of the most commonly misunderstood rules are summarised below.

- a. Castling:** Castling is a move involving both the king and **either rook** moving together. The player should touch the *king first*. If the rook is touched first, then a rook move must be played. Castling may occur on either the kingside or the queenside of the board. The castled position is as follows:



Note: A player may NOT castle in the following circumstances:

- (i) if there are pieces between the king and the rook;
  - (ii) if king or rook have previously moved;
  - (iii) if the king is in check;
  - (iv) if the king passes across, or to, a square which is under attack from an opponent's piece.
- b. Check:** The king is in check when it is attacked by one or two of the opponent's pieces. The king must on *the next move* be brought out of check by: moving the king, blocking the check, or taking the attacking piece. It is not obligatory to say "check", but if the opponent does not move out of check on his next move, that move is illegal and must be retracted and a legal move played instead (see d. below).

- c. En passant:** If a player moves one of his pawns two squares on its initial move, and if his opponent has a pawn that could have captured it had it only moved forward one square, then on his next turn, but only his next turn, the second player may take the advanced pawn as if it had indeed only advanced one square.
- d. Illegal move:** An illegal move (any incorrect move made with any piece) may be pointed out by the player's opponent or by the supervisor (or suitably experienced spectator), and a legal move must be played instead, subject to the touch move rule (see f. below). Please note, this is one of only a very few specific occasions where a supervisor or spectator is permitted to make comment on a game in progress. A commonly made illegal move is for a player to move or leave his king in check (see b. above).
- e. Touching the pieces:**
- (i) A player may not touch the pieces or the board during his opponent's turn.
  - (ii) If a player at his turn deliberately touches one or more of his pieces he **MUST** move the first piece touched that has a legal move.
  - (iii) If a player at his turn deliberately touches one or more of his opponent's pieces, then he must take the first piece touched that it is legally possible to take.
  - (iv) If a player deliberately touches his own piece and an opponent's piece, he must take the opponent's piece with his own if this is a legal move. If this capture is not possible, and it cannot be determined whether he touched his own or his opponent's piece first, he shall be deemed to have touched his own piece first and he must move it.
  - (v) If none of the touched pieces can be legally moved or taken, the player is free to make a legal move with another piece.
  - (vi) If, during his turn, a player wishes to adjust the position of one of the pieces on its square he may do so by saying "Adjusting" (or "J'adoube") **BEFORE** touching the piece.
- Note:** "*Deliberately touches a piece*" implies that the piece is touched with the intention of moving or taking it. The touch rule should not be claimed if, for example, a piece is brushed accidentally as a player's hand moves towards another piece.
- f. Completion of the move:** A move is deemed to be completed once the player's hand has left the piece, after which the player cannot change the position of the piece in that turn unless the move was illegal.
- g. Promotion:** A pawn may be promoted to any piece (apart from the king) upon reaching the end of the board. The piece to which it is promoted does not need to have been previously taken. (In theory you may have nine queens on the board!) The promotion must be carried out, and the new piece placed on the board (replacing the pawn), as part of the move in which the pawn reaches the last rank.

## THE RESULT

The result of a game may be a win for one player or a draw (or a double forfeit if both players are absent). Players should not leave the board to report the result until the result has been agreed upon between them.

- a. Win:** A win is achieved as follows:
- (i) **Checkmate:** The game is won by a player who has checkmated the opponent's king. This occurs when the king is attacked and there is no way to avoid the attack (i.e. by moving the king out of any attack, blocking the attack, or taking the attacking piece). Checkmate immediately ends the game, but the win should not be reported until the loser has conceded. (The player claiming checkmate may be incorrect!) Both players should remain at the board until agreement is reached. *No person (including the supervisor) may be consulted* as to whether a claim of checkmate is correct - it is up to the "attacked" player to examine his own position. Once a player concedes to a claim of checkmate verbally or by shaking hands or

leaving the board, the result stands, even if the claim of checkmate turns out to be incorrect. Agreement on checkmate is part of the game and up to the players alone.

**(ii) Resignation:** The game is won by a player whose opponent resigns. (This is common between good players when one considers his position hopeless.) Once offered, a resignation cannot be retracted.

**(iii) Forfeit:** The game is won by a player when his opponent is absent.

**b. Draw:** A game is drawn as follows:

**(i) By agreement:** Players are permitted to agree to a drawn game. It is up to the two players to agree to this without recourse to spectators or supervisors regarding the position, and once agreement has been made it cannot be retracted. (NOTE: Players may not agree to a draw before any moves have been made.)

**(ii) Insufficient material:** It is not possible to checkmate with only two kings on the board, king and knight v. king, king and bishop v. king, or king and bishop v. king and bishop of the same colour (i.e. the two bishops on squares of the same colour). The result in these cases can only be a draw.

**(iii) 50-move rule:** Where at least 50 consecutive moves each are played without the capture of a piece or pawn or the movement of a pawn, then a draw may be claimed by the player having the move. A player wishing to invoke the 50-move rule in the hope of claiming a draw should call the supervisor to arrange a witness as the 50 moves are counted (unless a written record of these moves is being made).

**(iv) Repetition:** If the same position occurs three times during a game, with the same player to move, and the same potential for all pieces (i.e. possibility of castling and en passant capture) then a draw may be claimed by the player having the move (not by the supervisor). Perpetual check is the most common example of a draw by repetition.

**(v) Stalemate:** The game is drawn by stalemate when a position is reached in which the player to move is unable to make a legal move with any of his remaining pieces but his king is not in check. Stalemate (like checkmate) immediately ends the game, but the result should not be reported until both players agree (in case the claim of stalemate is incorrect).