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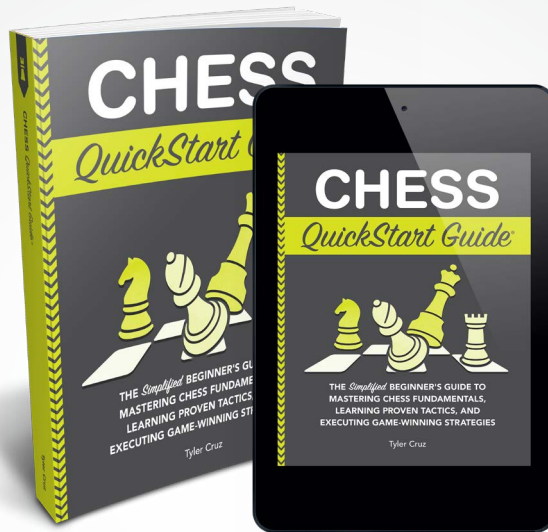
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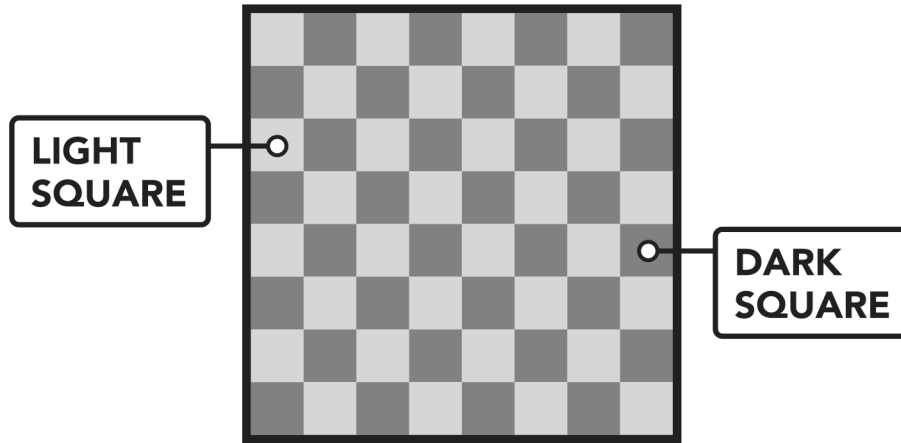
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CHAPTER 1

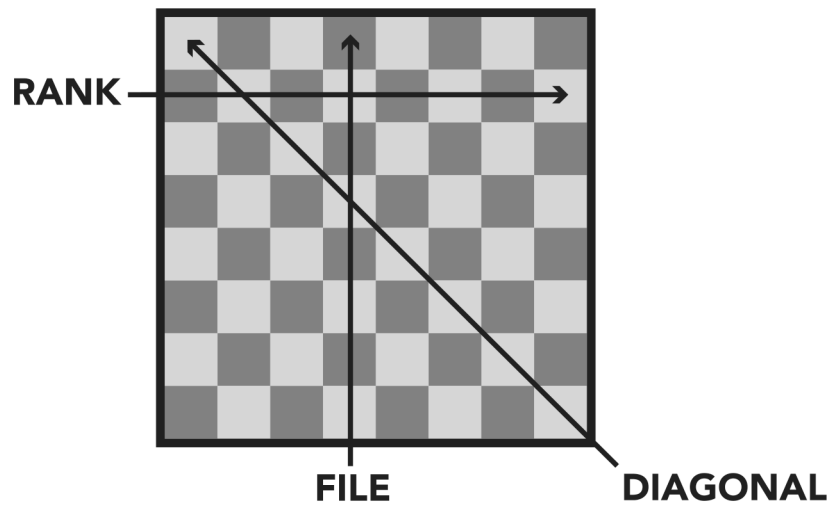
Setting Up

fig. 1.1



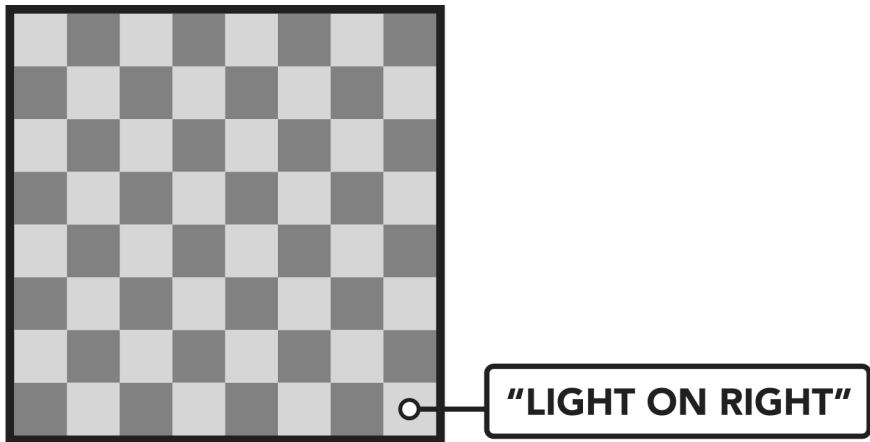
The 64 squares of a chessboard.

fig. 1.2



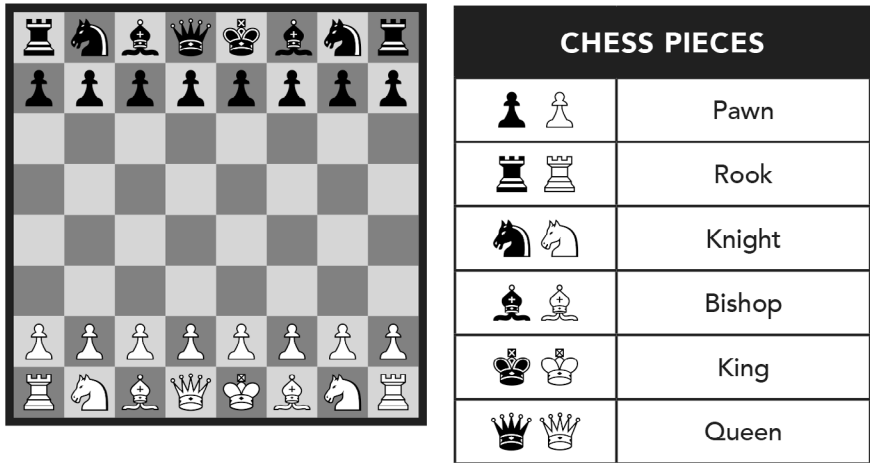
Ranks, files, and diagonals—oh my!

fig. 1.3



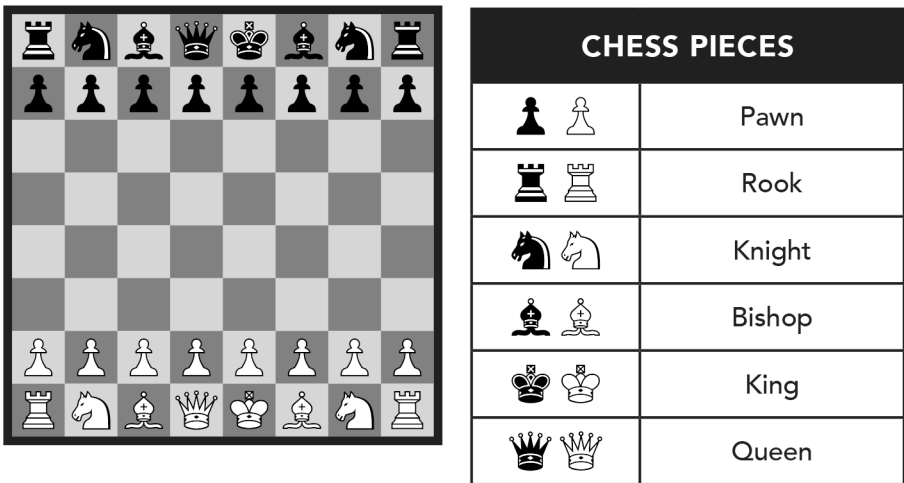
The correct orientation of a chessboard.

fig. 1.4



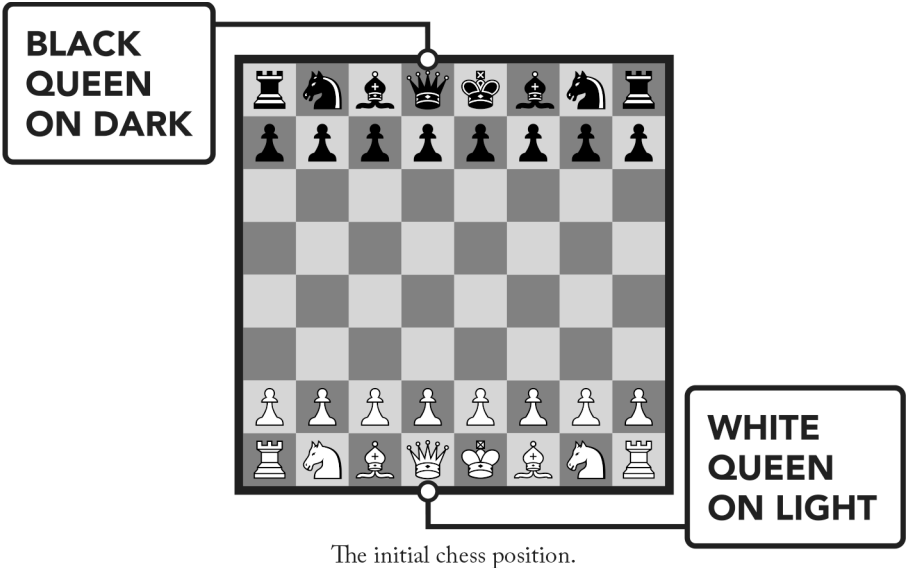
You will become well acquainted with these pieces.

fig. 1.4



You will become well acquainted with these pieces.

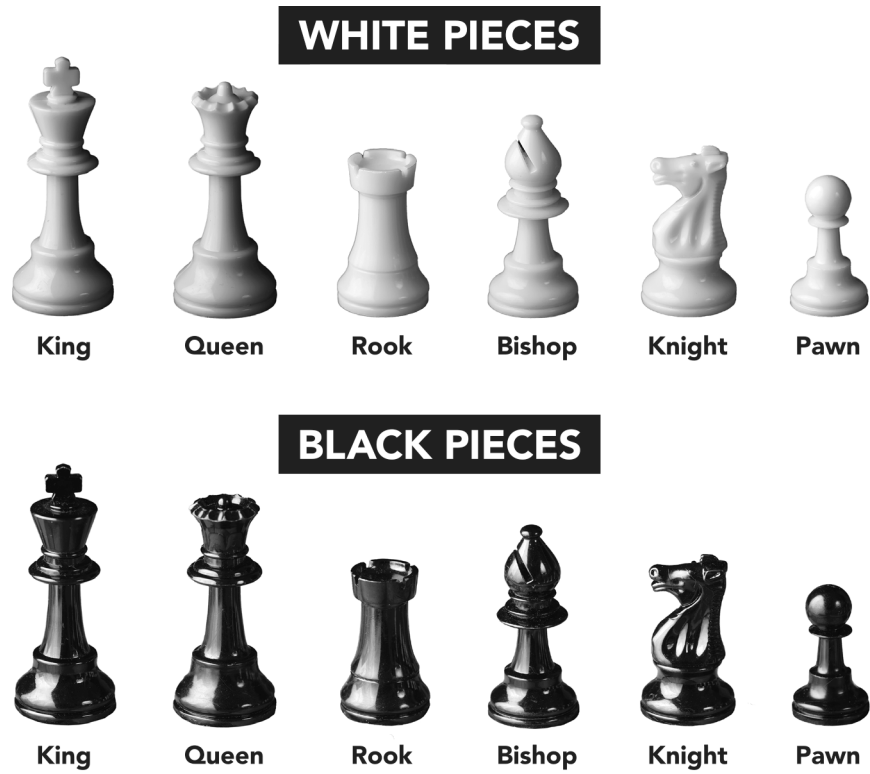
fig. 1.5



CHAPTER 2

The Pieces

fig. 2.1



A Staunton-style chess set. Image from Michael Maggs via Wikimedia Commons.

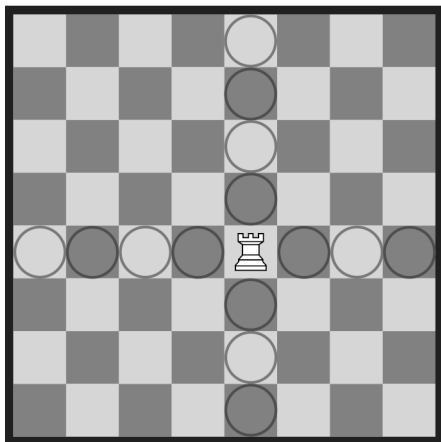
fig. 2.2

ROOK

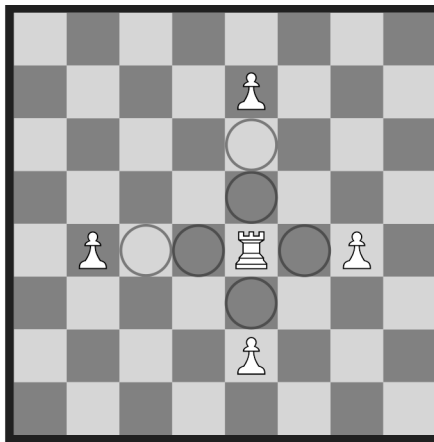


The medieval-styled rook, which looks like a turret.

fig. 2.3 and
fig. 2.4

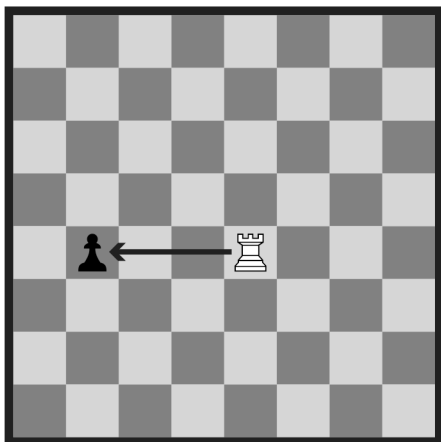


The rook can cover a lot of ground.

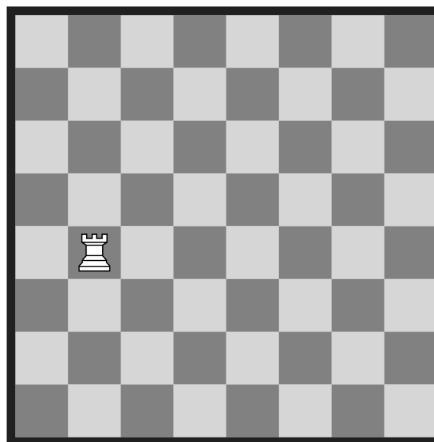


Rooks and other pieces (except for knights)
cannot move through pieces in their path.

fig. 2.5 and
fig. 2.6



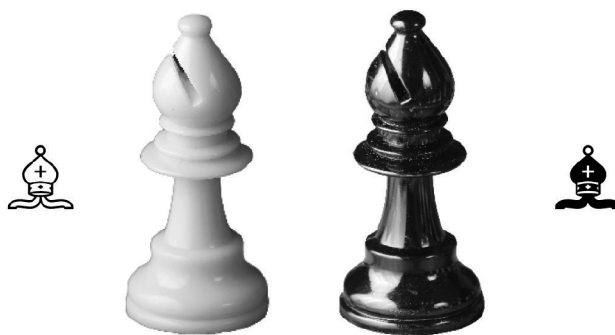
The rook capturing an enemy pawn.



The position after the rook captures black's
pawn. No witnesses left behind!

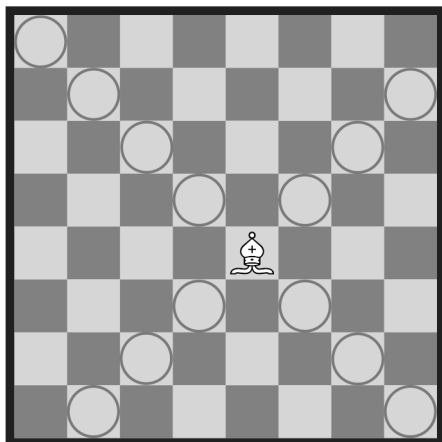
fig. 2.7

BISHOP



Bishop pieces often have a slit cut into the top and/or a rounded tip.

fig. 2.8



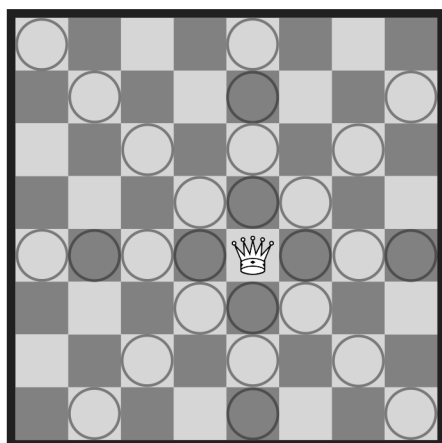
The diagonal mobility of a bishop

fig. 2.9



Queens are about as tall as kings and sport a crown.

fig. 2.10



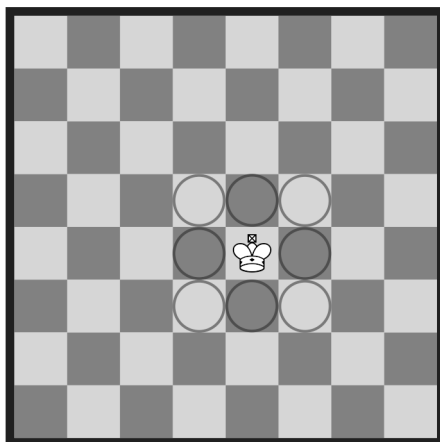
The mighty queen. Look at that board coverage!

fig. 2.11



The cross atop the king is a defining characteristic.

fig. 2.12



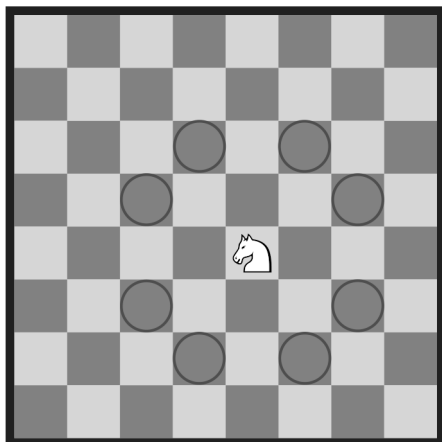
The extremely limited mobility of the king.

fig. 2.13



The elegant and tricky knight.

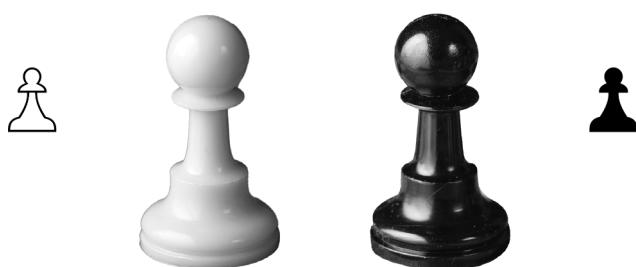
fig. 2.14



The L-shaped movement pattern of a knight.

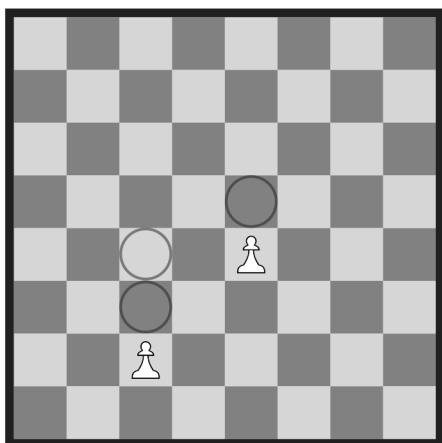
fig. 2.15

PAWN



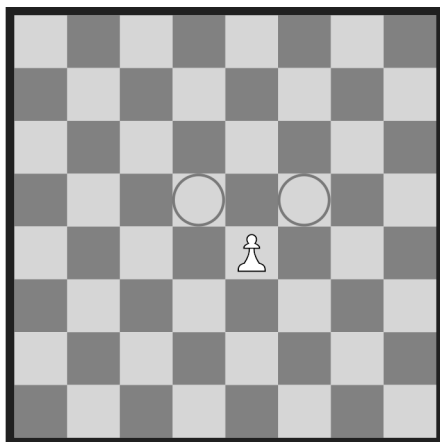
Each side starts out with eight pawns.

fig. 2.16



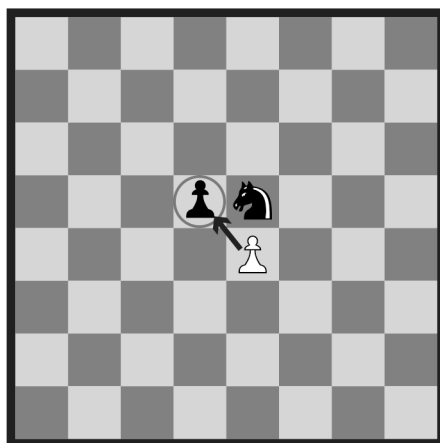
A pawn can move either one square or two on its first move, and only one square per move thereafter.

fig. 2.17



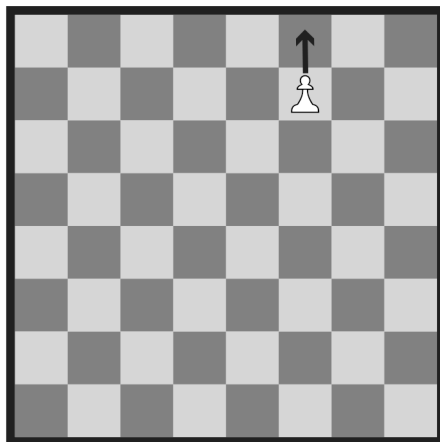
Pawns can only capture diagonally ahead one square.

fig. 2.18



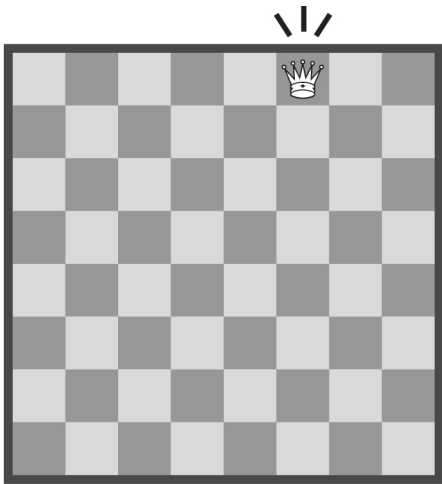
The pawn's only option in this position is to capture the black pawn.

fig. 2.19



This pawn has managed to make it to the seventh rank and proceeds to move to the eighth rank.

fig. 2.20



The lowly pawn has metamorphosed into a powerful queen!

fig. 2.21

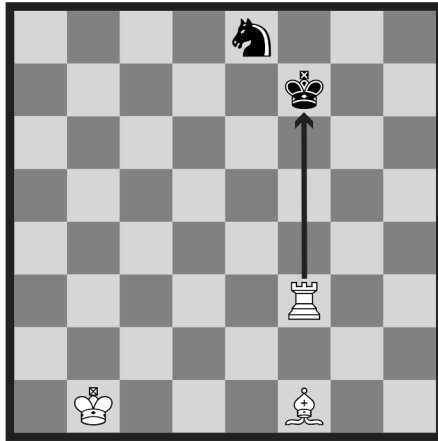
PIECE	 	 	 	 	 
	Pawn	Knight	Bishop	Rook	Queen
VALUE	1	3	3	5	9

The relative value of pieces. Commit this to memory!

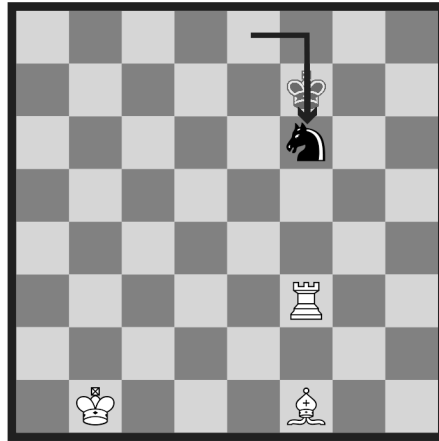
CHAPTER 3

The Rules

fig. 3.1 and
fig. 3.2

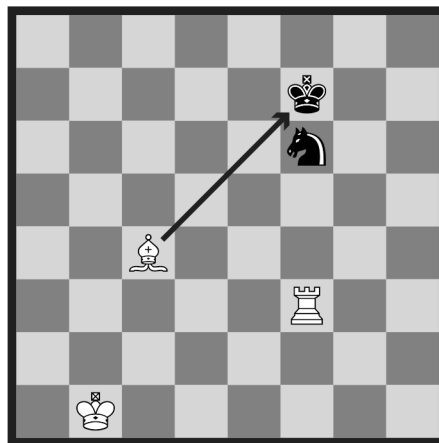


White announces "Check!"



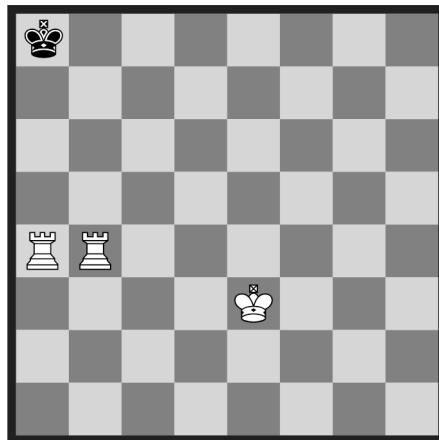
Black blocks the check

fig. 3.3



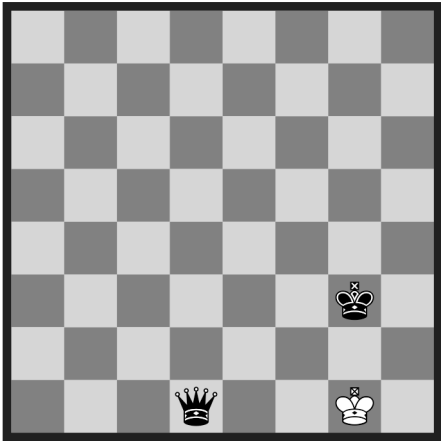
White insists on giving another check.

fig. 3.4



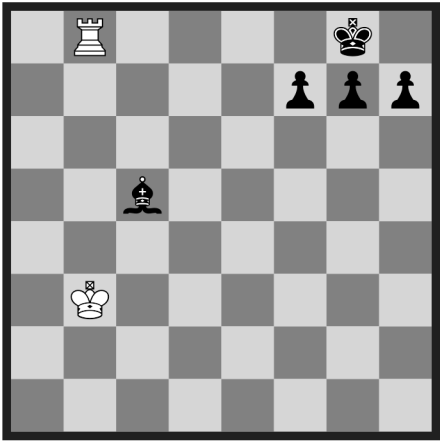
The black king is cornered and has nowhere to escape.
White has delivered checkmate.

fig. 3.5

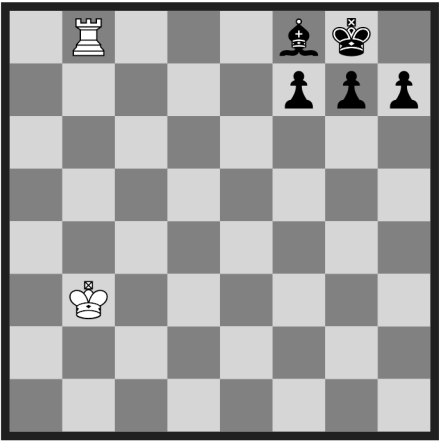


White has been checkmated by black's royal duo!

fig. 3.6 and
fig. 3.7



White checks black's king.



Black's bishop saves the day.

fig. 3.8 and
fig. 3.9

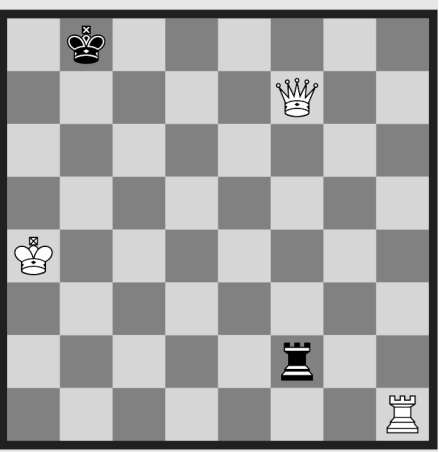
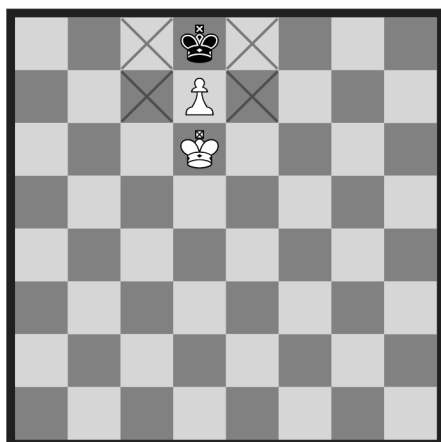


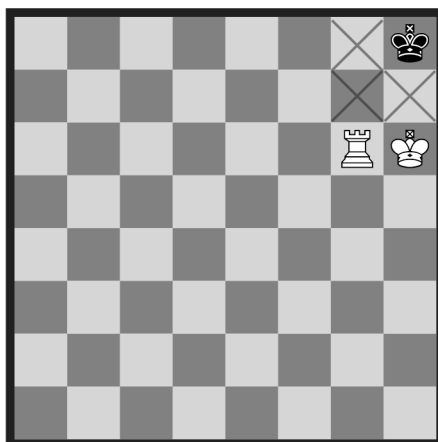
fig. 3.10



fig. 3.11 and
fig. 3.12



With black to move, this is stalemate.



Silly white has once again managed to
stalemate black.

fig. 3.13

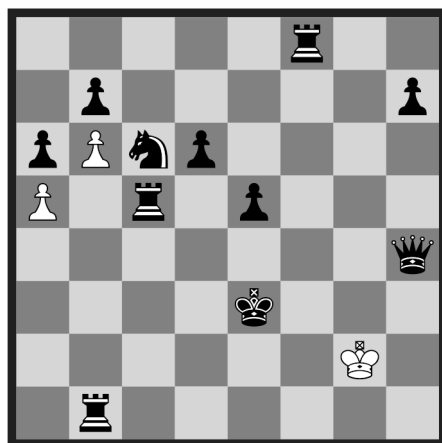


fig. 3.14

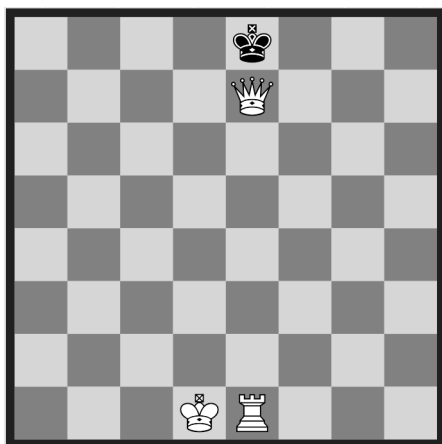


fig. 3.15 and
fig. 3.16

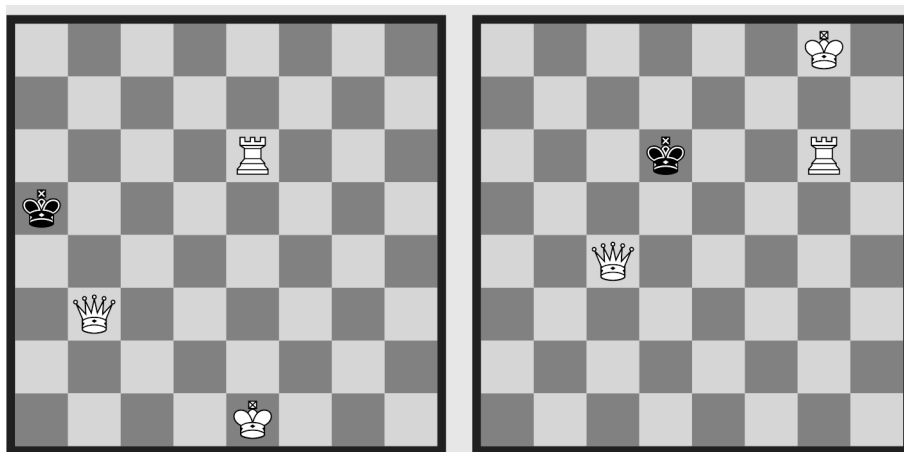
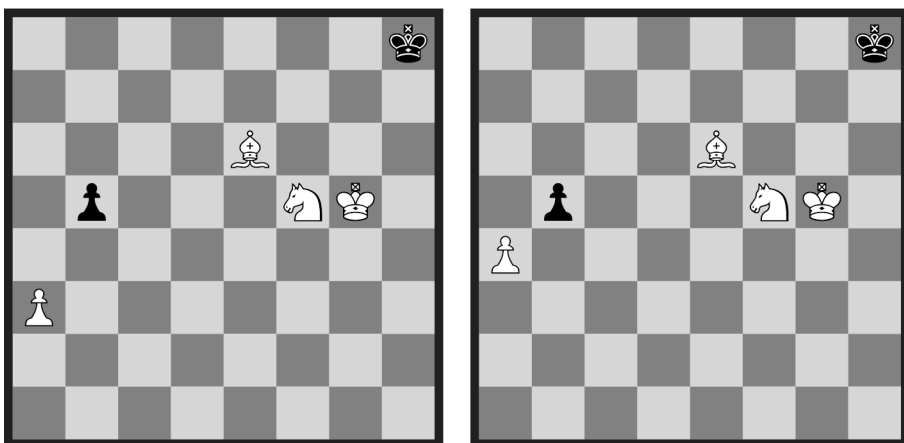


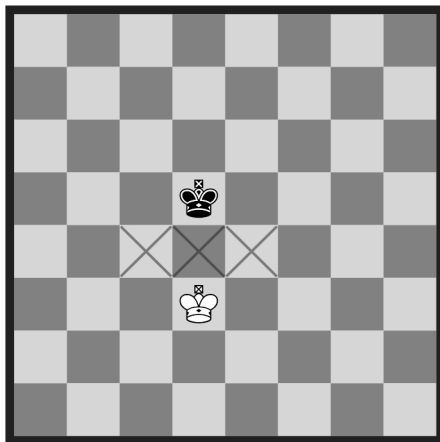
fig. 3.17 and
fig. 3.18



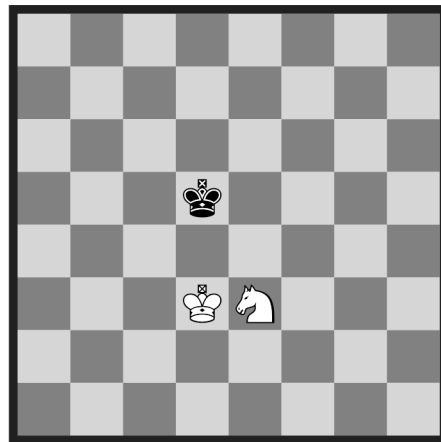
It has been forty-nine moves since the last pawn move or capture. Black is just one move from drawing.

Black now has to endure at least another fifty moves for the fifty-move rule to take effect.

fig. 3.19 and
fig. 3.20

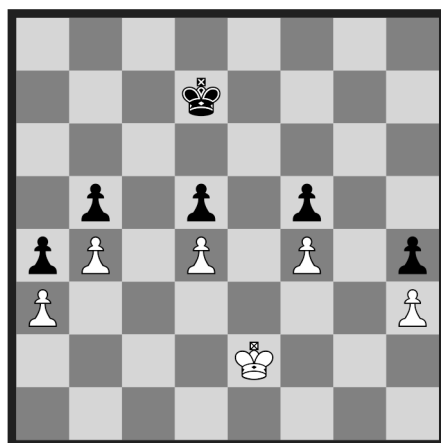


A draw by insufficient material.



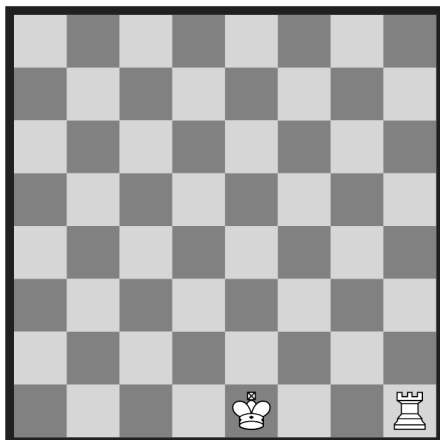
Another example of a draw by
insufficient material.

fig. 3.21

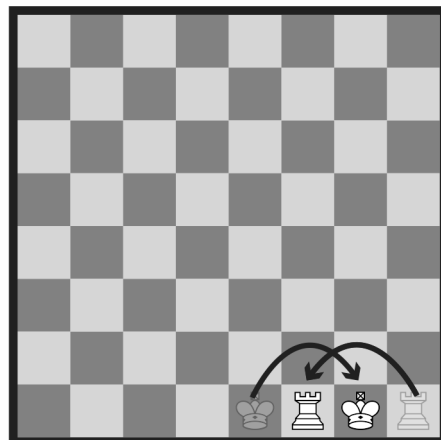


A dead position.

fig. 3.22 and
fig. 3.23

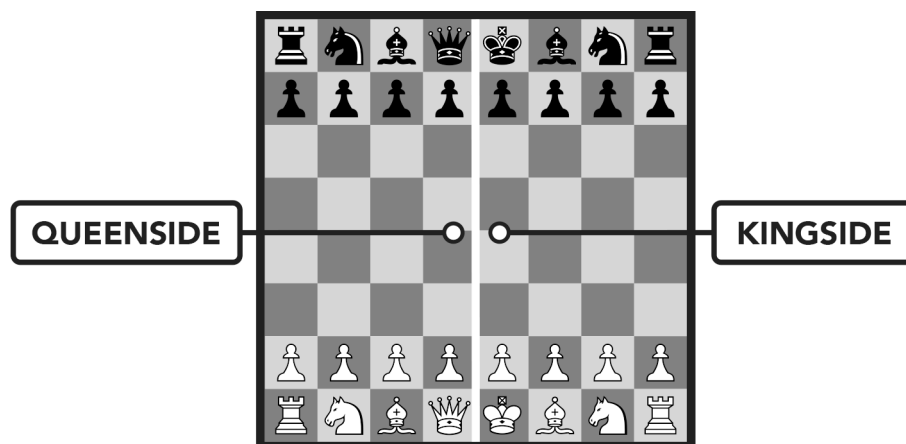


The position before castling.



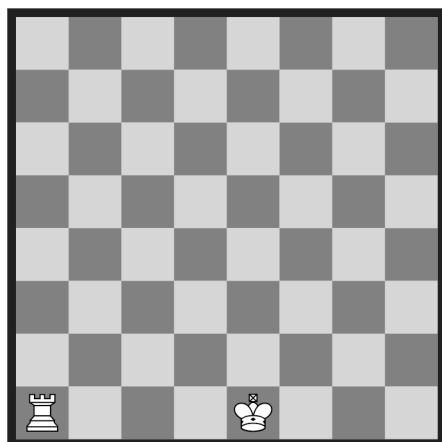
The position after castling.

fig. 3.24

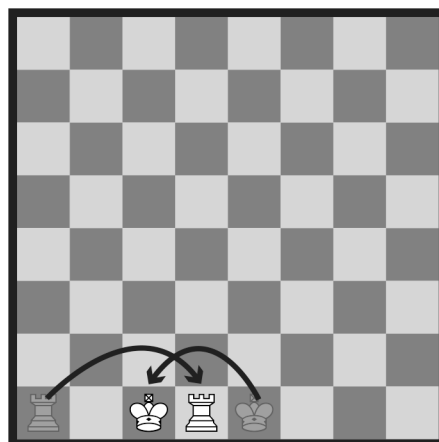


The queenside and kingside of the chessboard.

fig. 3.25 and
fig. 3.26



The position before castling queenside.
Notice how both the king and the queen
are on their original starting squares.



The position after queenside castling.

fig. 3.27

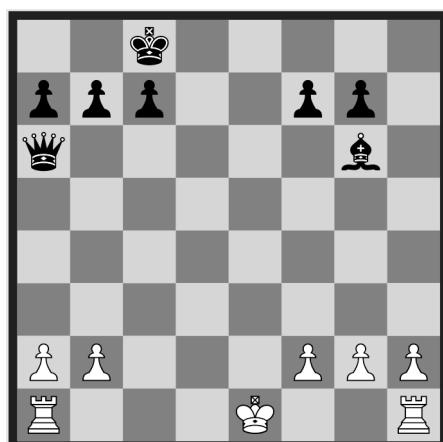
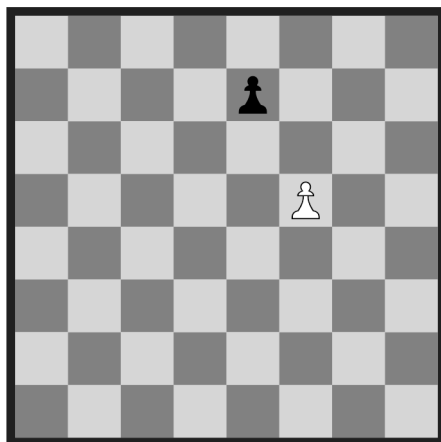
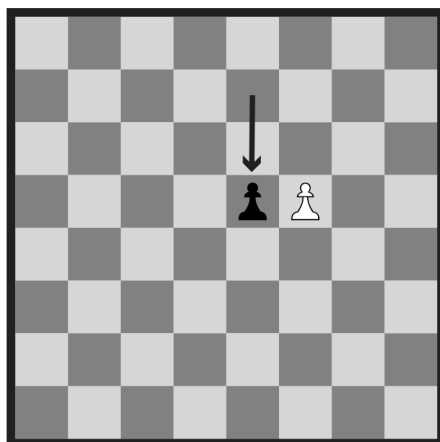


fig. 3.28

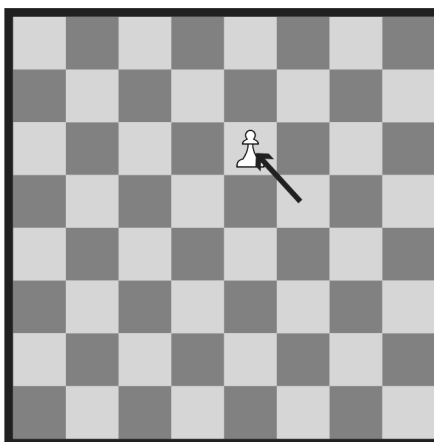


It's black's turn to move.

fig. 3.29 and
fig. 3.30



Black pushes their pawn up two squares on their turn.



White moves their pawn in front of black's pawn, capturing it en passant.

fig. 3.31 and
fig. 3.32

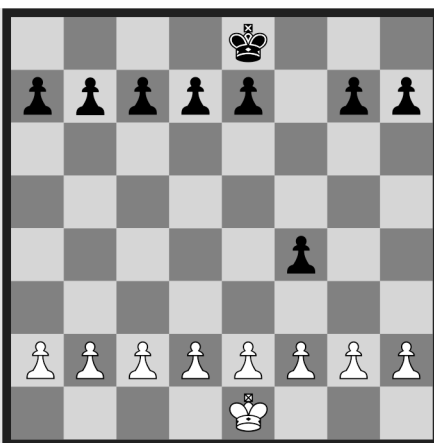
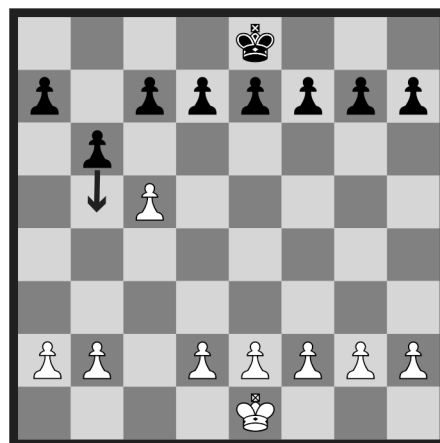
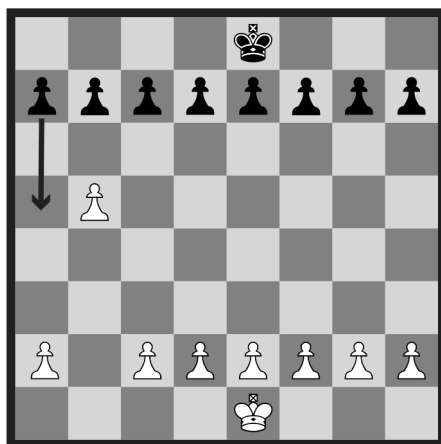


fig. 3.33



CHAPTER 4

Chess Notation

fig. 4.1 and
fig. 4.2

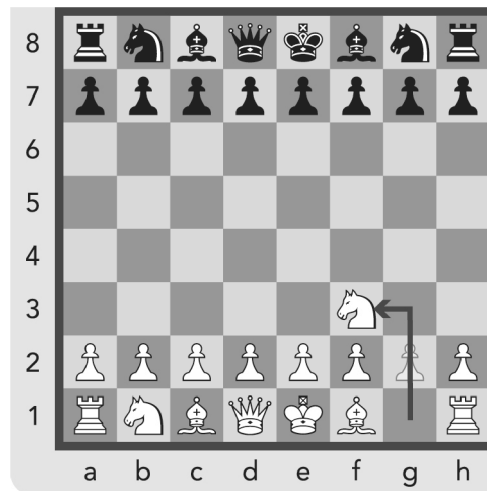
8	a8	b8	c8	d8	e8	f8	g8	h8
7	a7	b7	c7	d7	e7	f7	g7	h7
6	a6	b6	c6	d6	e6	f6	g6	h6
5	a5	b5	c5	d5	e5	f5	g5	h5
4	a4	b4	c4	d4	e4	f4	g4	h4
3	a3	b3	c3	d3	e3	f3	g3	h3
2	a2	b2	c2	d2	e2	f2	g2	h2
1	a1	b1	c1	d1	e1	f1	g1	h1
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h

1	h1	g1	f1	e1	d1	c1	b1	a1
2	h2	g2	f2	e2	d2	c2	b2	a2
3	h3	g3	f3	e3	d3	c3	b3	a3
4	h4	g4	f4	e4	d4	c4	b4	a4
5	h5	g5	f5	e5	d5	c5	b5	a5
6	h6	g6	f6	e6	d6	c6	b6	a6
7	h7	g7	f7	e7	d7	c7	b7	a7
8	h8	g8	f8	e8	d8	c8	b8	a8
	h	g	f	e	d	c	b	a

The sixty-four chess coordinates.

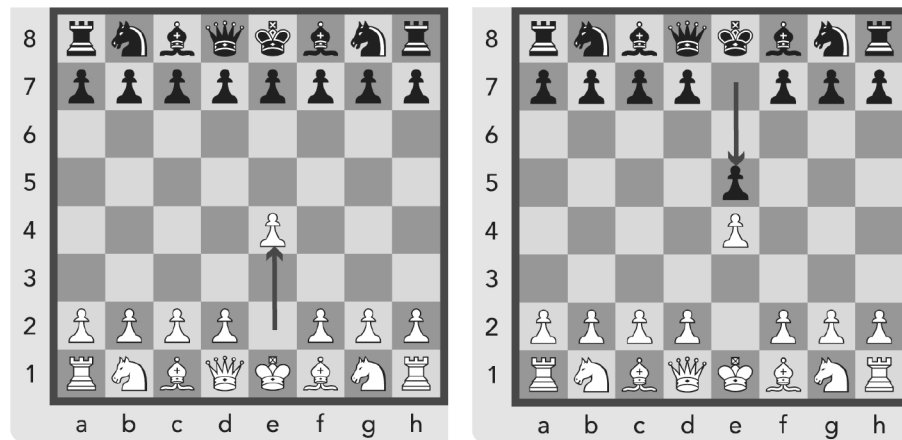
Coordinates from black's perspective.

fig. 4.3



“The white king commands his owne knight
into the third house before his owne bishop.”

fig. 4.4 and
fig. 4.5



1. e4

1... e5

fig. 4.6 and
fig. 4.7

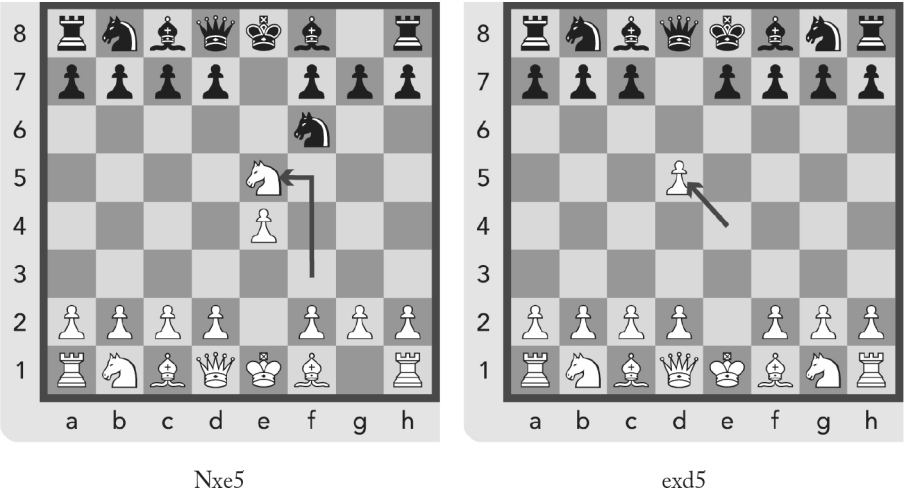


fig. 4.8

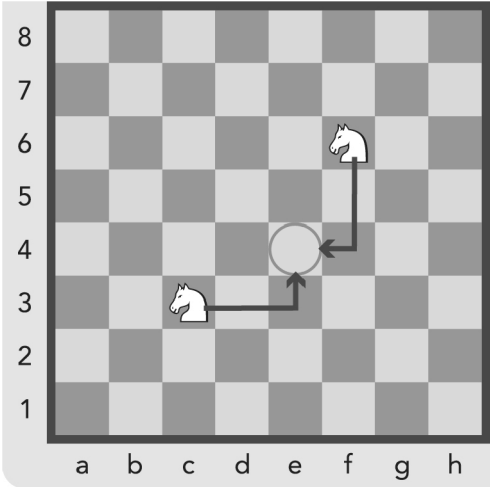


fig. 4.9

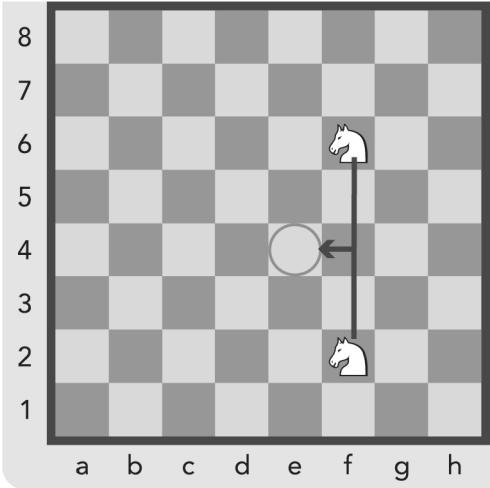


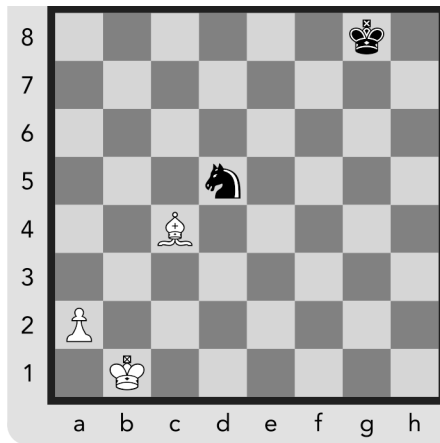
fig. 4.10

ANNOTATION	MEANING
+	Check
#	Checkmate
!	Good move
!!	Brilliant move
?!	Dubious move
!?	Interesting move
?	Mistake
??	Blunder
+/= (or $\pm$)	White has a slight advantage
=/+ (or $\mp$)	Black has a slight advantage
+/- (or $\pm$)	White has a notable advantage
-/+ (or $\mp$)	Black has a notable advantage
+ -	White has a winning advantage
- +	Black has a winning advantage
=	Draw offer (can also denote an equal position)
$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$	Draw
1-0	White won the game
0-1	Black won the game

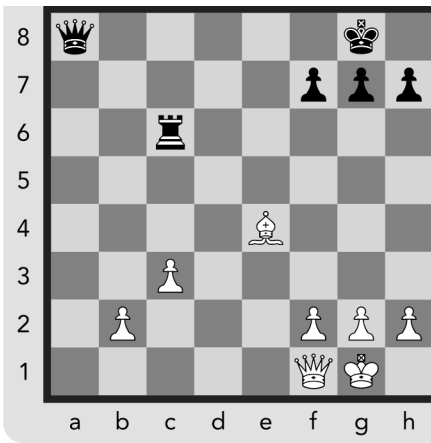
CHAPTER 5

Tactical Motifs

fig. 5.1 and
fig. 5.2

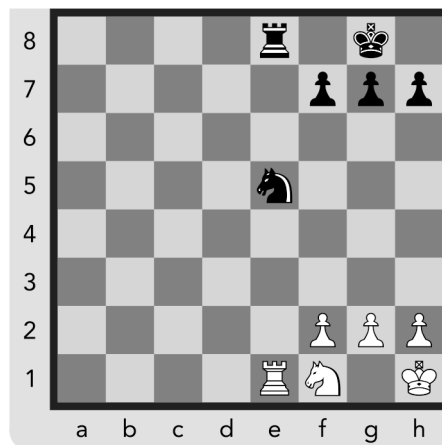


Black's knight is pinned and cannot move.



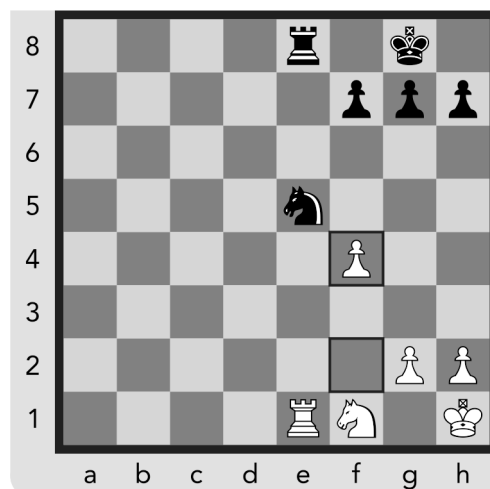
Black's rook is pinned and cannot move without losing their queen.

fig. 5.3



Black's knight is pinned. How can we exploit that?

fig. 5.4



Black must choose whether to lose the knight or the rook—one of them must go!

fig. 5.5

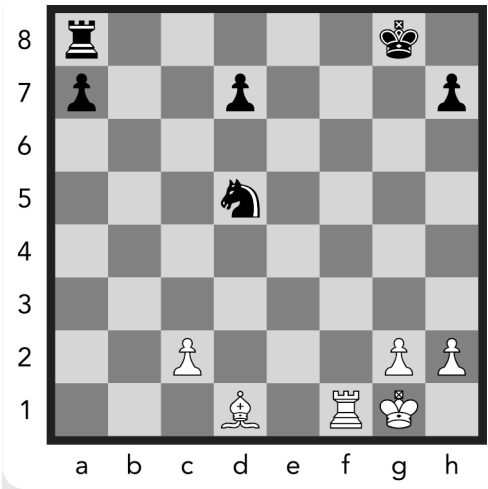
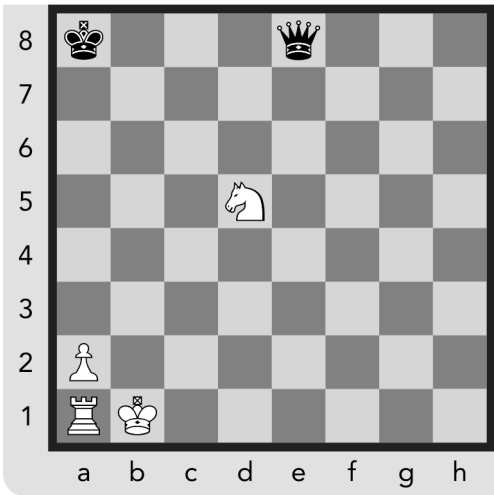
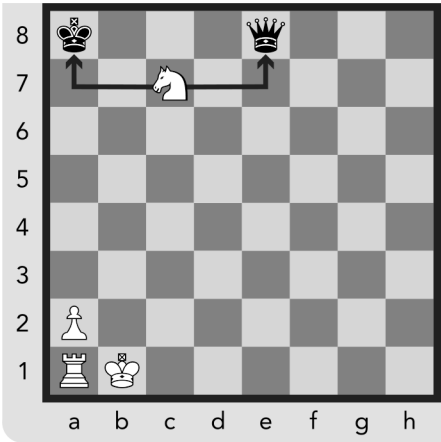


fig. 5.6

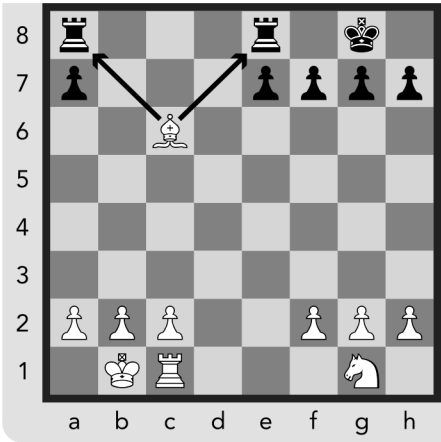


White is ready to pounce with a tactic.

fig. 5.7 and
fig. 5.8



The royal couple in peril.



Even if it's black's move, white will win a rook for the bishop.

fig. 5.9

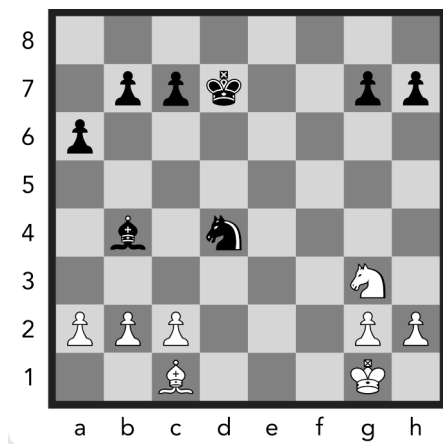
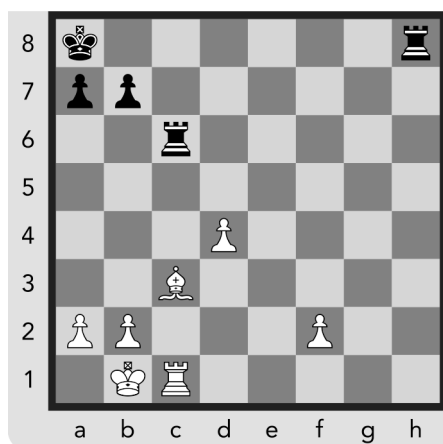
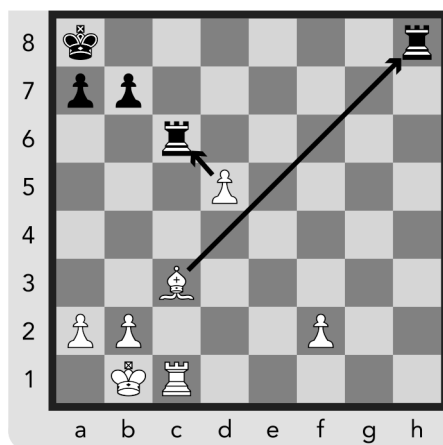


fig. 5.10



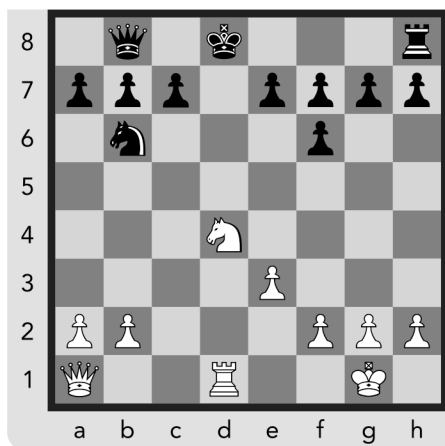
White has something up their sleeve.

fig. 5.11

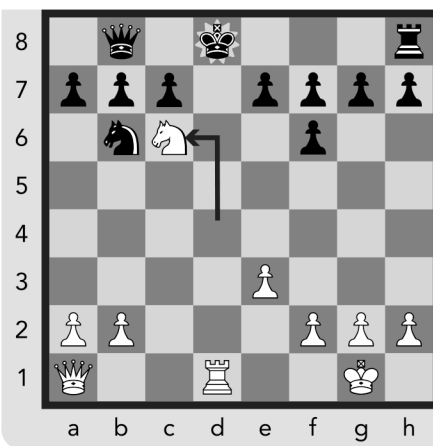


One pawn's move causes two rooks across the board to be attacked!

fig. 5.12 and
fig. 5.13



White to move, with devastating effect.



The power of the discovered check.

fig. 5.14

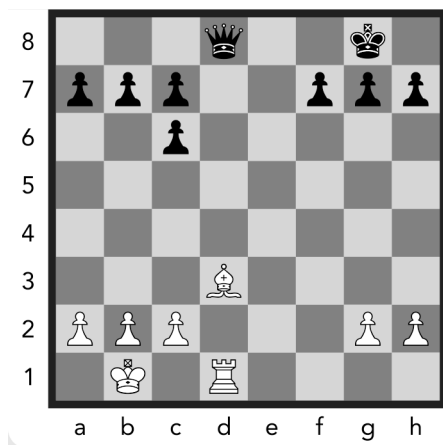
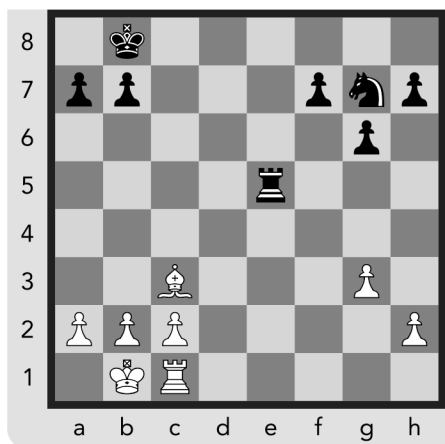
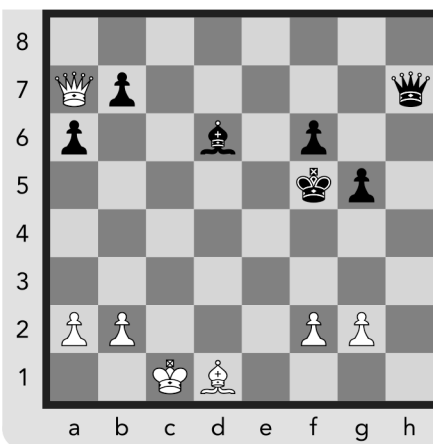


fig. 5.15 and
fig. 5.16

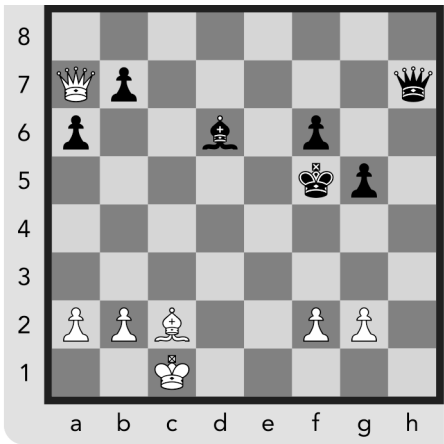


White has skewered black's rook to their knight.



Equal material, but not for long!

fig. 5.17



Black's king must now move and say goodbye to his queen.

fig. 5.18

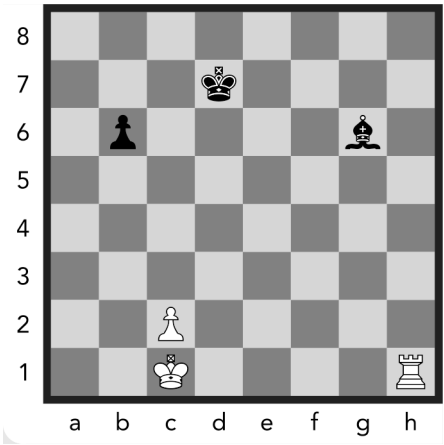
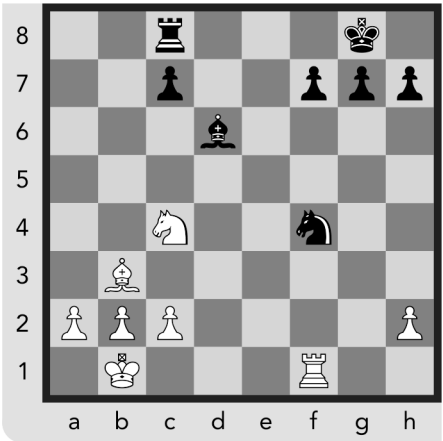
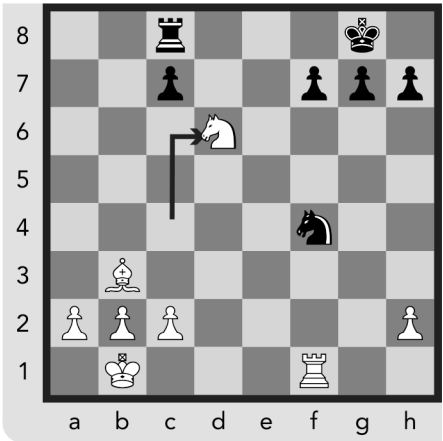


fig. 5.19 and
fig. 5.20

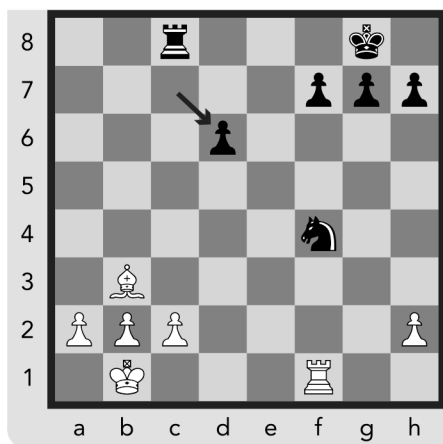


The environment is right for removing
the defender.

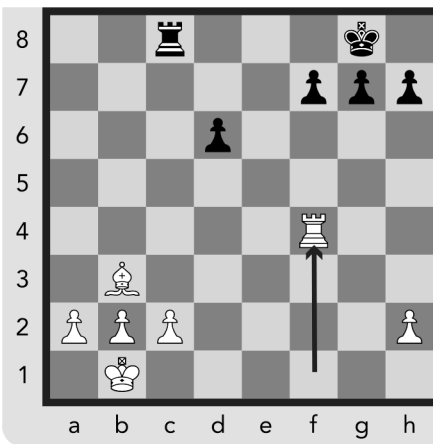


White continues with their plan.

fig. 5.21 and
fig. 5.22



Black captures white's knight.



White enjoys the fruits of their labor.

fig. 5.23

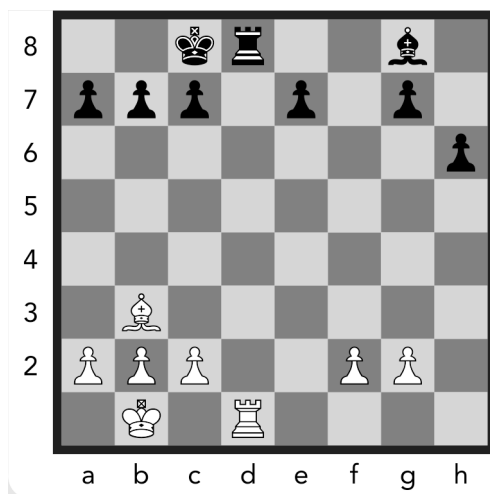
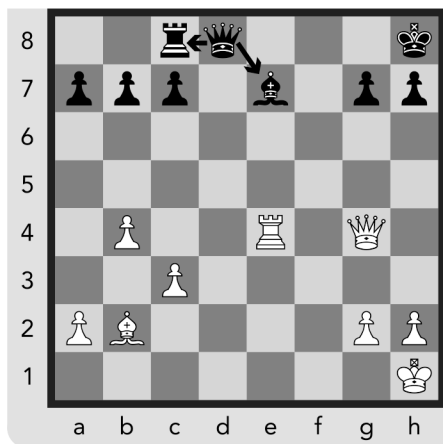
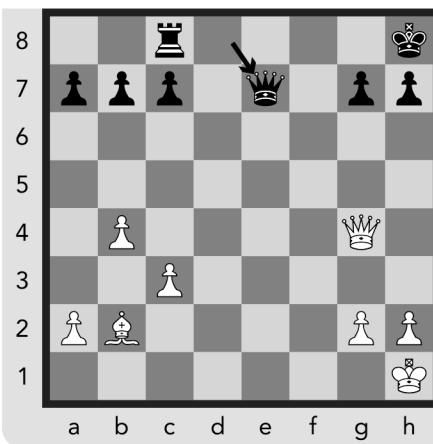


fig. 5.24 and
fig. 5.25

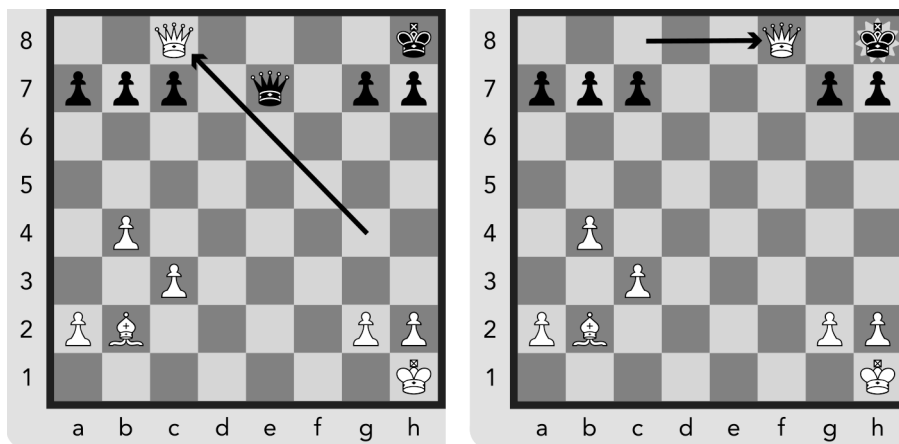


Black's queen has too much responsibility.



After capturing white's rook on e7, black's queen is no longer defending c8.

fig. 5.26 and
fig. 5.27



White's earlier rook sacrifice was not in vain. A dangerous result from the exploitation of an overloaded piece.

fig. 5.28

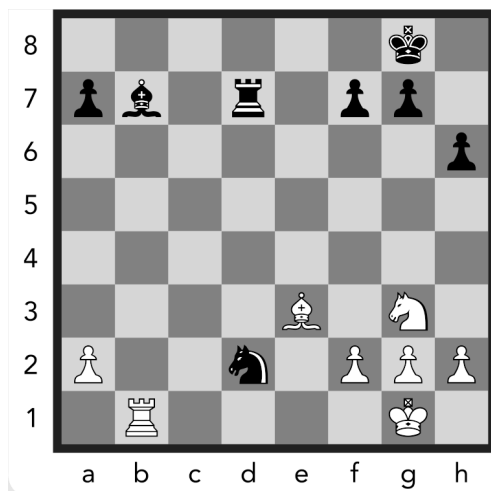
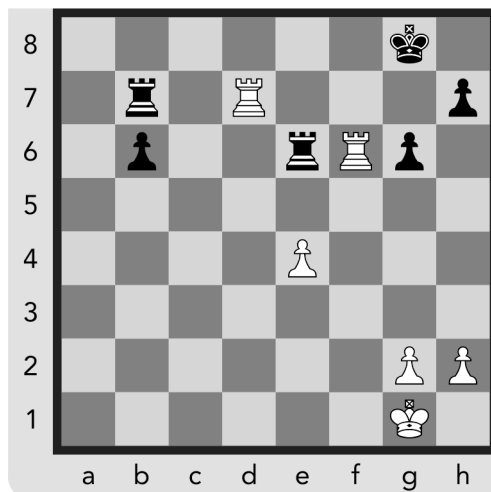
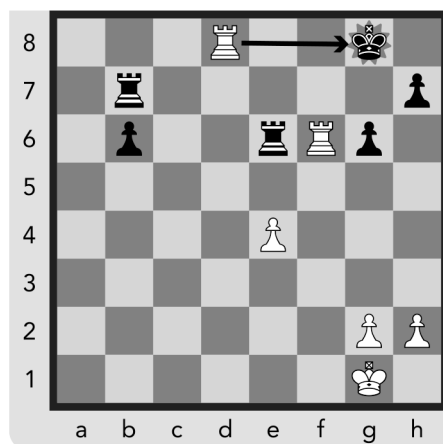


fig. 5.29



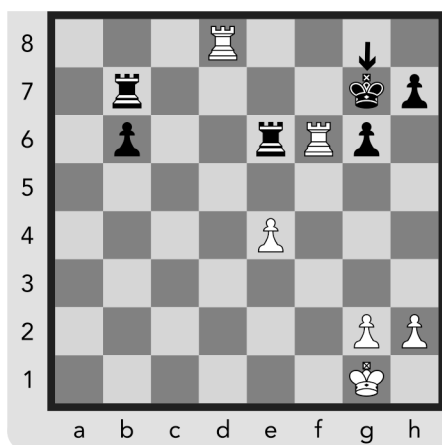
White to move and find a Zwischenzug.

fig. 5.30

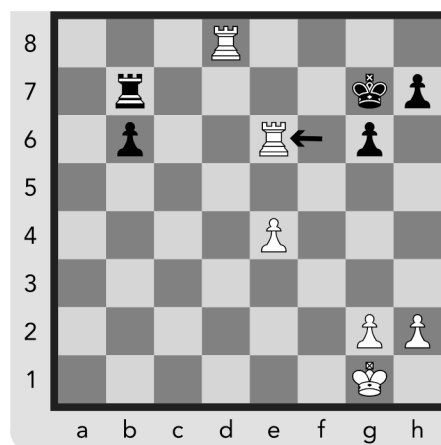


White finds the strong in-between move Rd8+!

fig. 5.31 and
fig. 5.32



Black is forced to move their king or block
with and lose their rook.



White wins a rook.

fig. 5.33

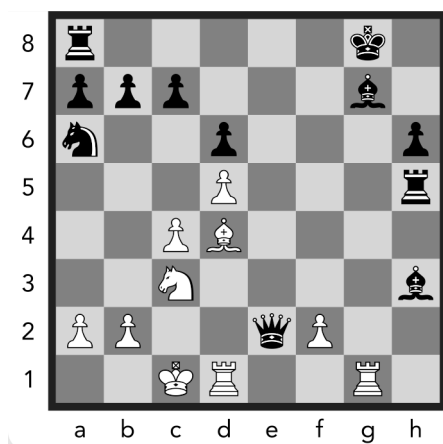


fig. 5.34

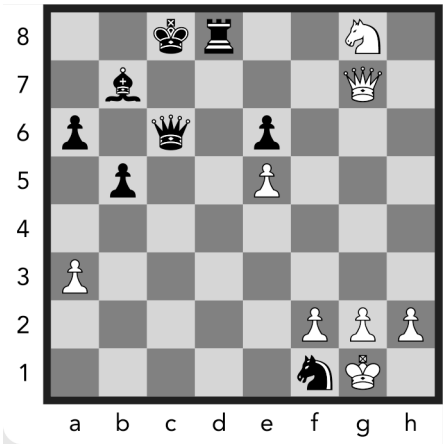
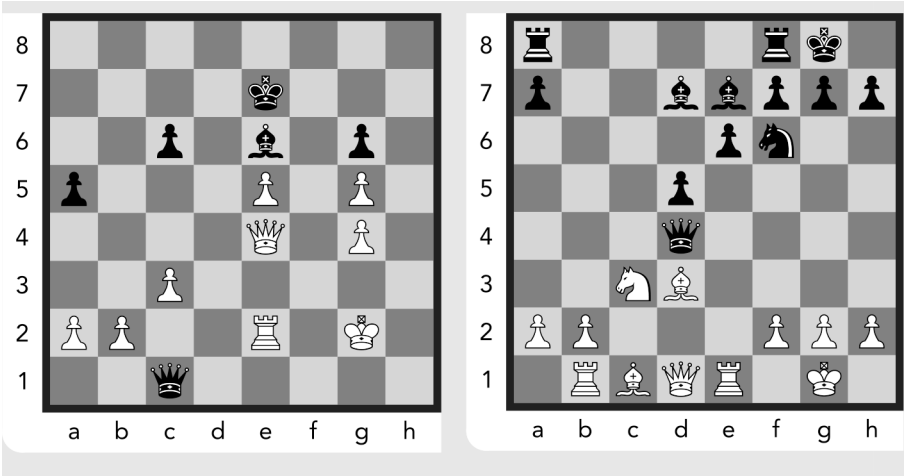


fig. 5.35 and
fig. 5.36



CHAPTER 6

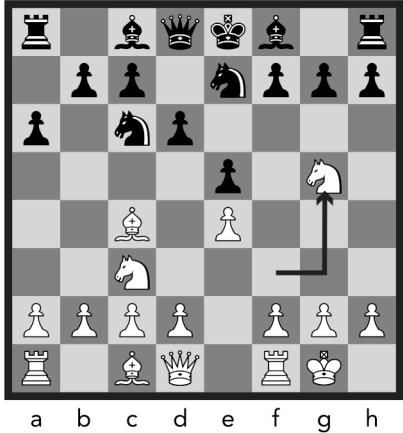
Opening Principles

fig. 6.1

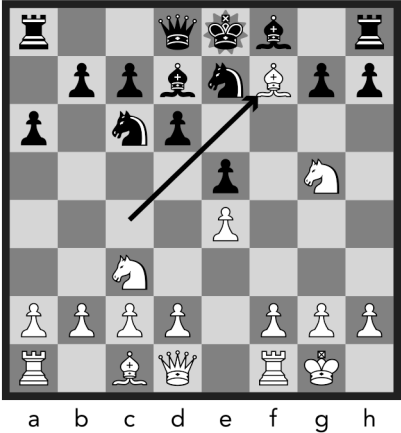
ROUND	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	12	13	10	6	20*	20*	7
	20*	20*	9	20*	20*	20*	7
	9	11	10	10	7	7	9
	10	11	20*	9	4	5	4
	7	5	6	11	7	6	7
	21	5	10	15	8	6	4
	10	6	20*	16	7	4	11
	10	6	4	6	9	14	13
AVG	12	10	11	12	10	10	8
TOTAL AVG	10						

The first half of the 2022 Candidates Tournament: move numbers on which players castled.

fig. 6.2 and
fig. 6.3

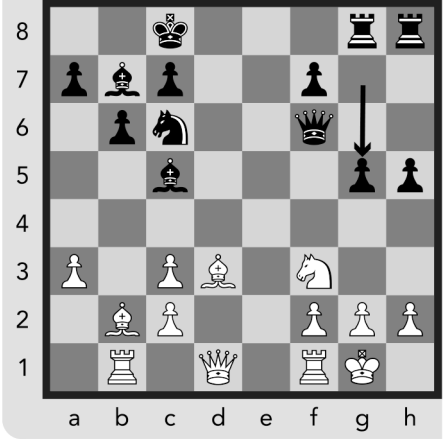


White's king is castled and safe; black's is not.



An embarrassing end to black's king, who never left his throne.

fig. 6.4

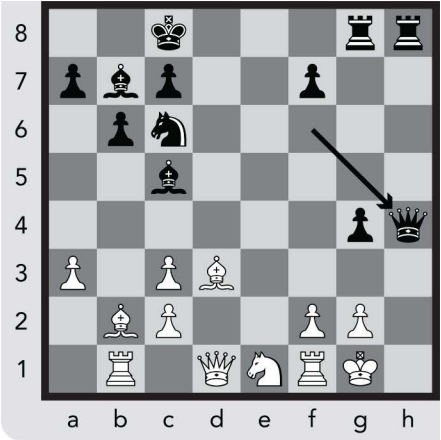


White has castled, but that doesn't make their king immune to danger.

fig. 6.5 and
fig. 6.6

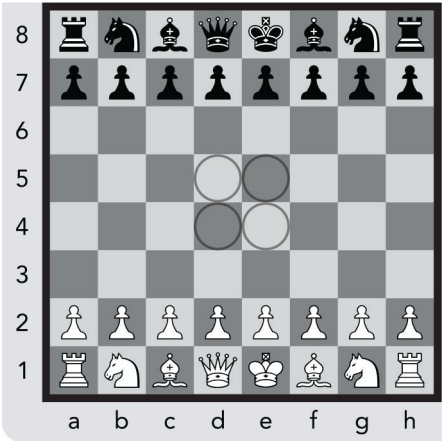


Black does not slow down.



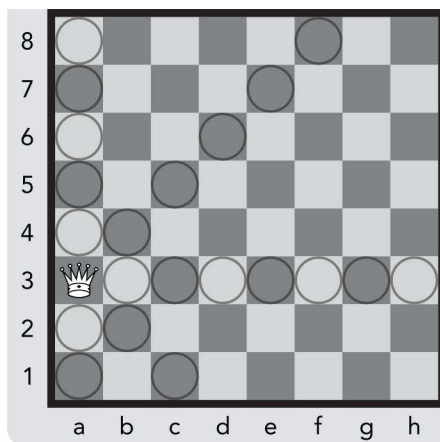
The position after 2. hxg4 hxg4 3. Ne1 Qh4

fig. 6.7

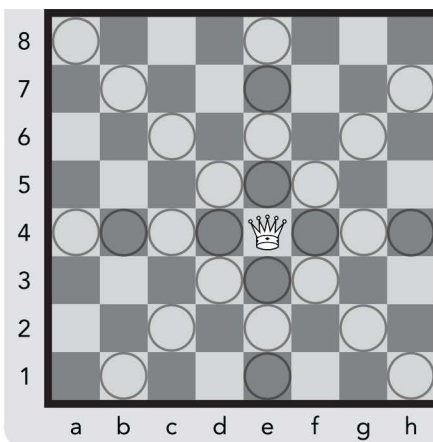


The "center": d4, d5, e4, e5.

fig. 6.8 and
fig. 6.9

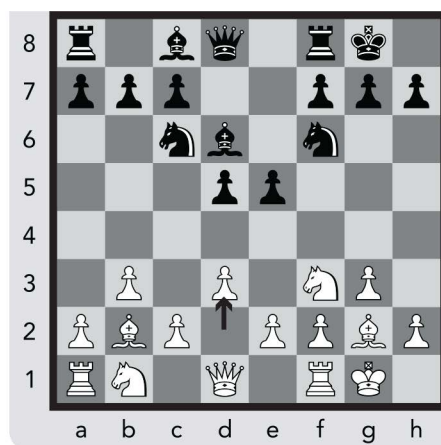


The coverage of the board with
the queen on a3.



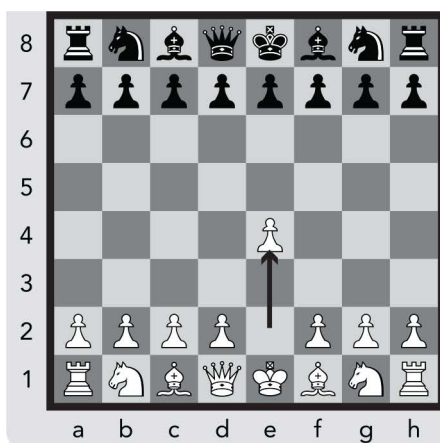
The coverage of the board with
the queen on e4.

fig. 6.10

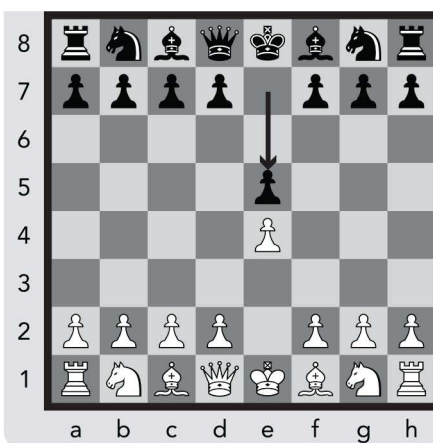


The classical method of controlling the center versus the hypermodern style.

fig. 6.11 and
fig. 6.12

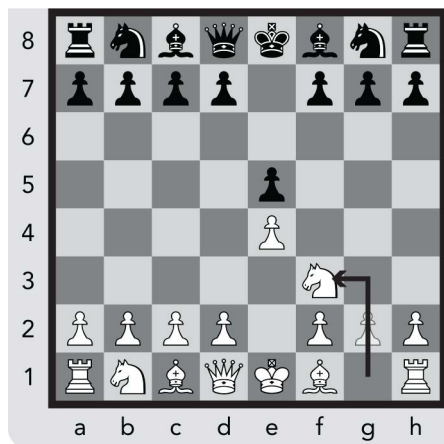


Wendy plays 1... e4.



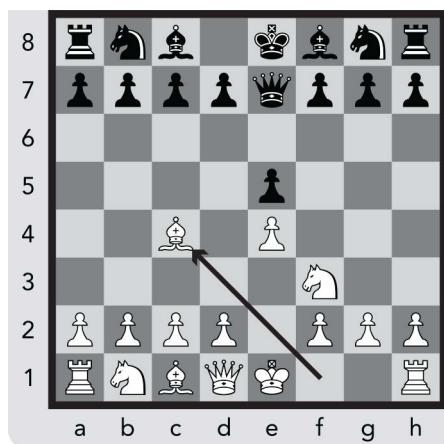
Ben plays 1... e5.

fig. 6.13



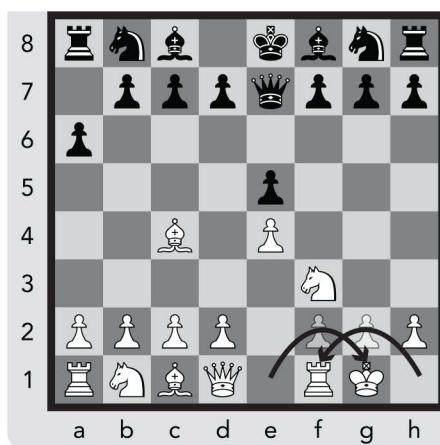
Wendy plays 2. Nf3.

fig. 6.14

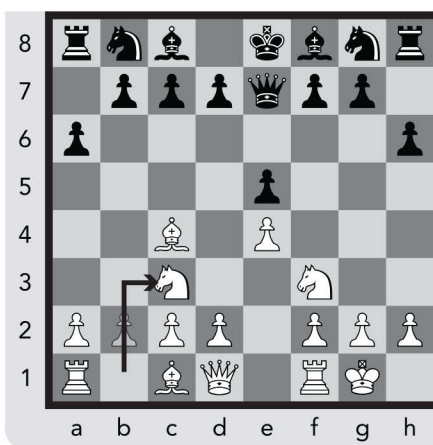


The position after 3. Bc4.

fig. 6.15 and
fig. 6.16

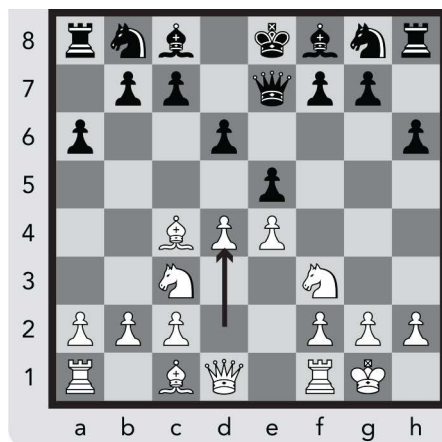


The position after 4. 0-0.
Wendy has already castled!

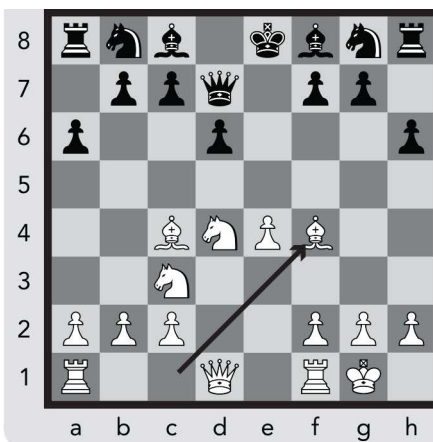


The position after 5. Nc3.

fig. 6.17 and
fig. 6.18

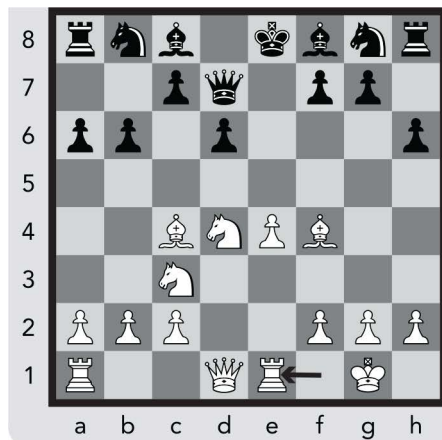


The position after 6. d4.

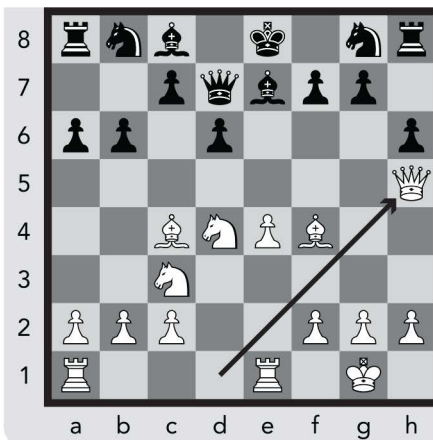


The position after 8. Bf4.

fig. 6.19 and
fig. 6.20

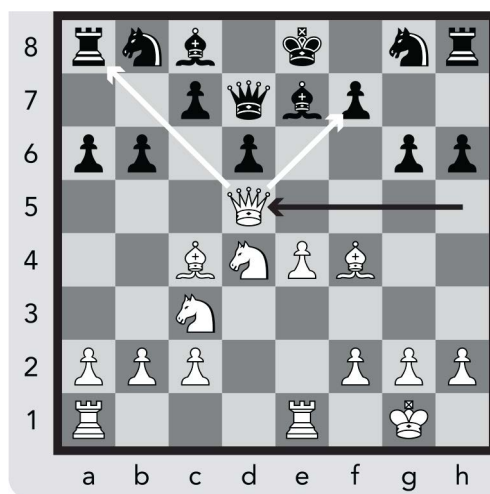


The position after 9. Re1.



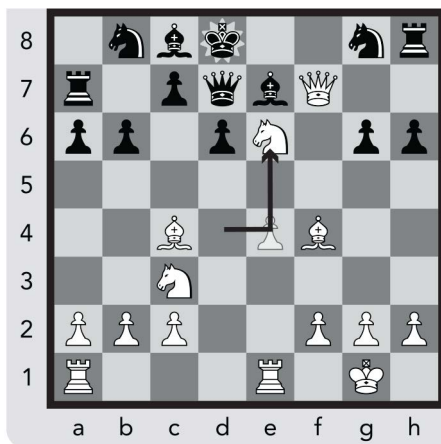
The position after 9. Qh5.

fig. 6.21



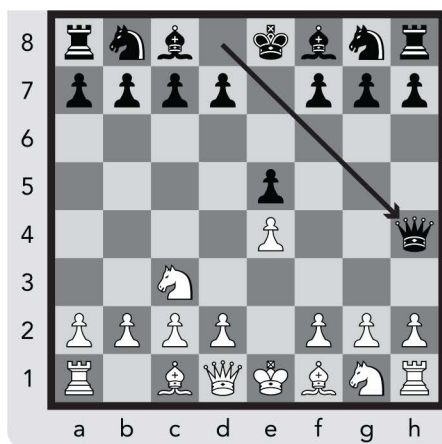
The position after 10. Qd5.

fig. 6.22

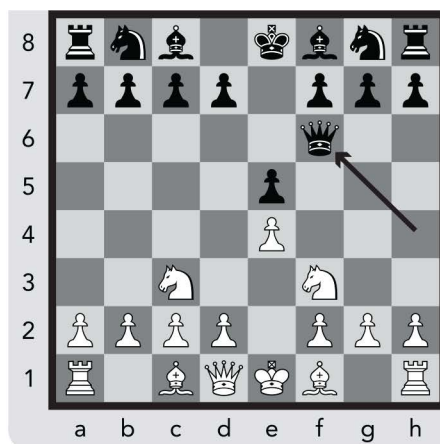


After 12. Ne6+, black has had enough and resigns.

fig. 6.23 and
fig. 6.24

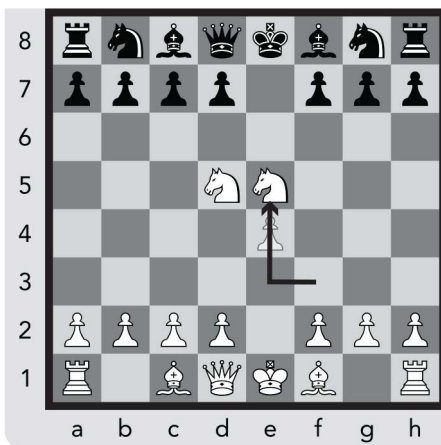


Black brings out their queen on move 2.



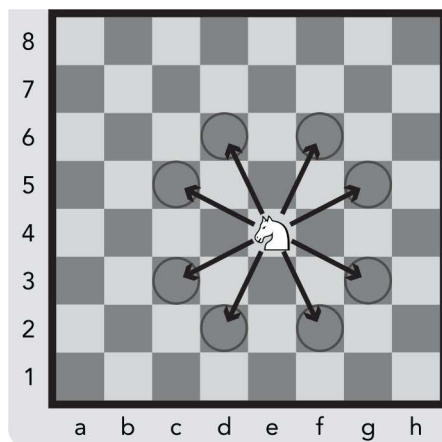
The position after 3... Qf6.

fig. 6.25

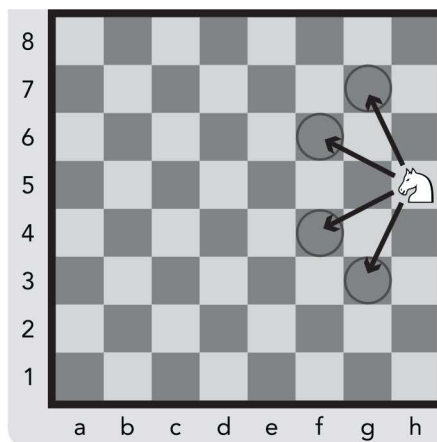


Black's sad position after their failed queen mission.

fig. 6.26 and
fig. 6.27

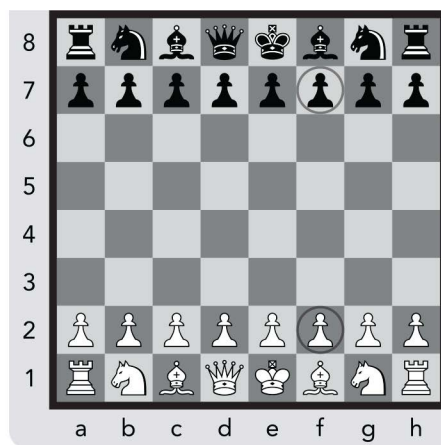


A centralized knight is a force to be reckoned with.



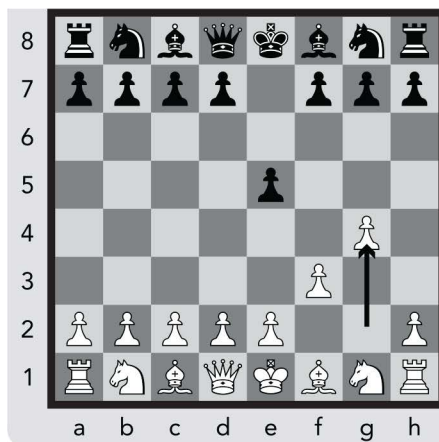
A knight's mobility is severely weakened from the edge of the board.

fig. 6.28

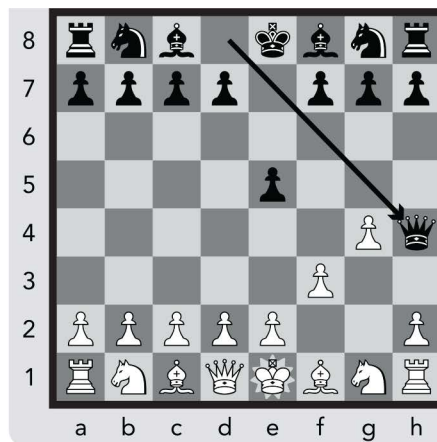


f2 and f7 are the weakest squares for white and black, respectively.

fig. 6.29 and
fig. 6.30

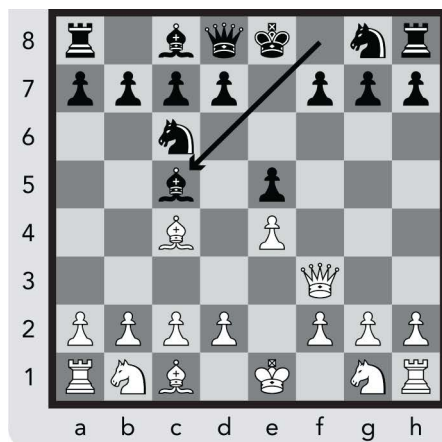


"I'm in danger!" – Ralph Wiggum

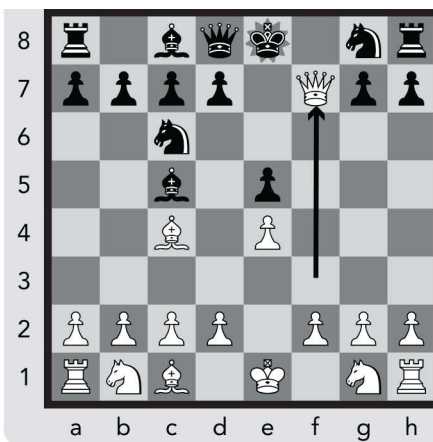


An embarrassing two-move checkmate.

fig. 6.31 and
fig. 6.32

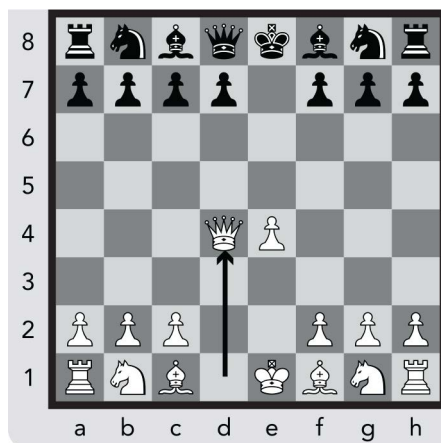


White to move and win.



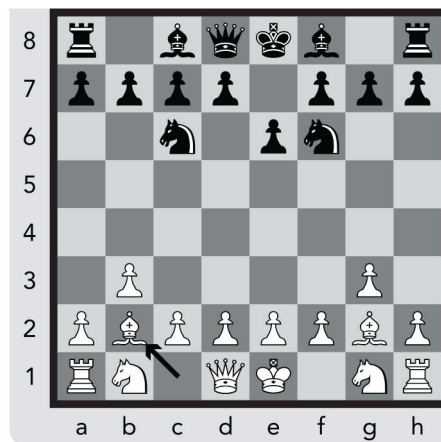
White seals the deal early with Qxf7#.

fig. 6.33



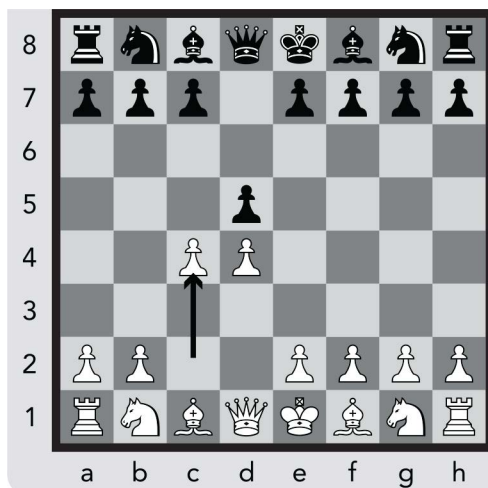
Black to move and avoid slow moves.

fig. 6.34



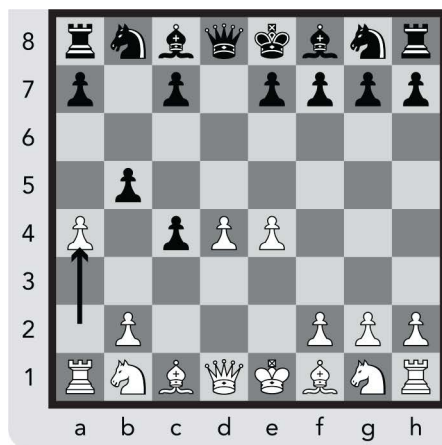
White has fianchettoed on both the kingside and the queenside.

fig. 6.35

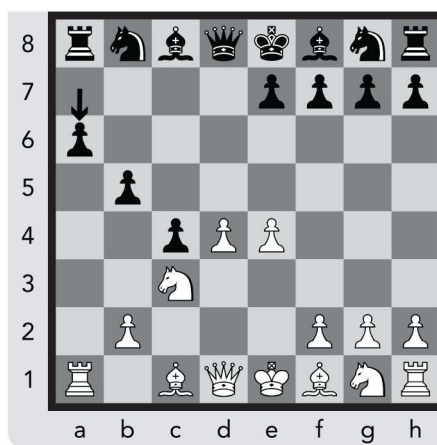


The Queen's Gambit.

fig. 6.36 and
fig. 6.37

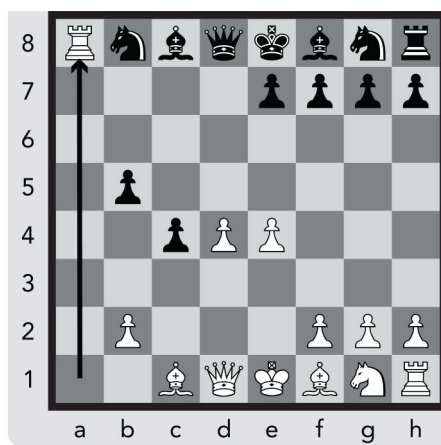


The Queen's Gambit position after
3. e4 b5 4. a4.



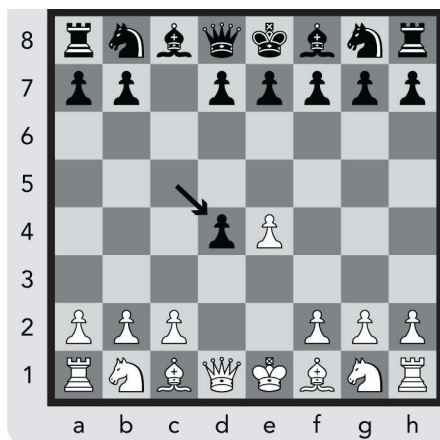
The position after 6. Nc3 a6.

fig. 6.38

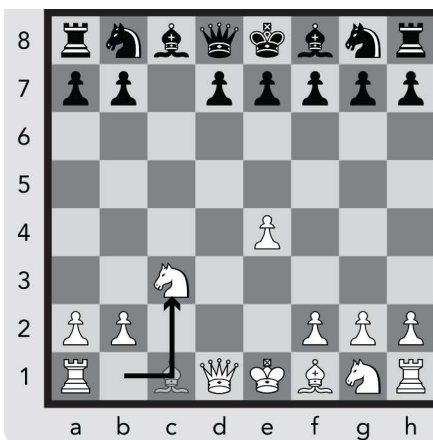


An imbalanced position from the Queen's Gambit accepted.

fig. 6.39 and
fig. 6.40

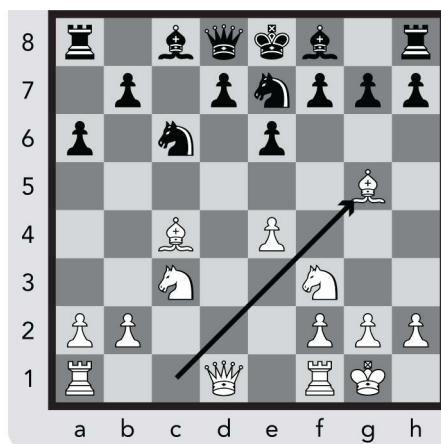


White could choose to retake the pawn, but it isn't part of their plan.



The position after 4. Nxc3 in the Smith-Morra Gambit.

fig. 6.41

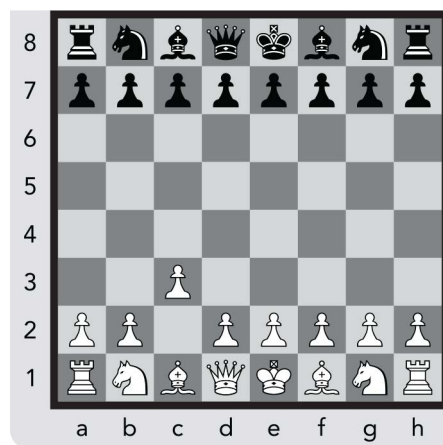


A common position in the Smith-Morra Gambit.

CHAPTER 7

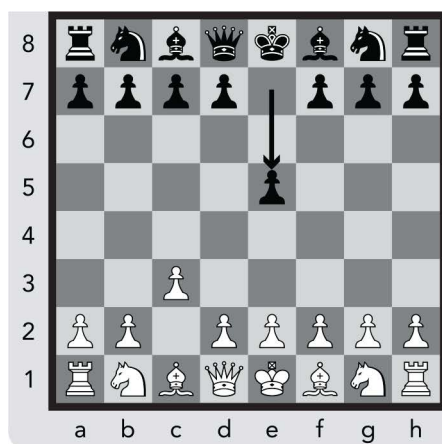
Tempo

fig. 7.1

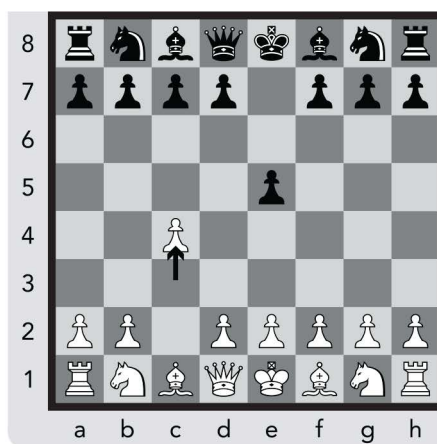


White opens with 1. c3.

fig. 7.2 and
fig. 7.3

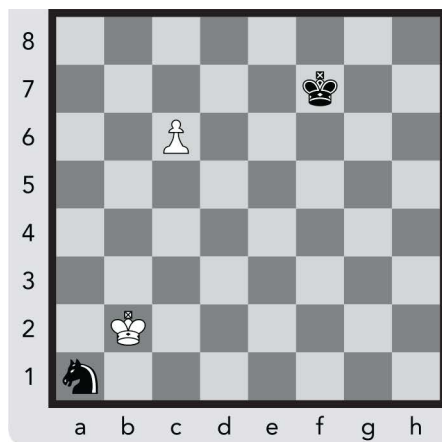


The position after 1... e5.

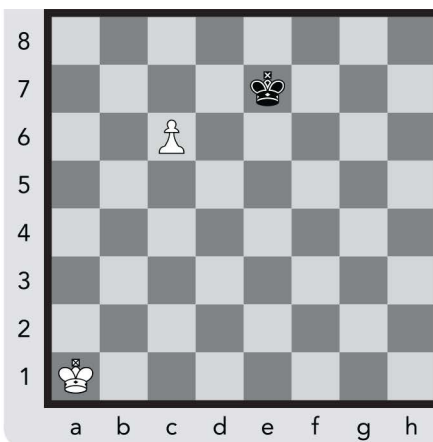


White wastes a tempo.

fig. 7.4 and
fig. 7.5

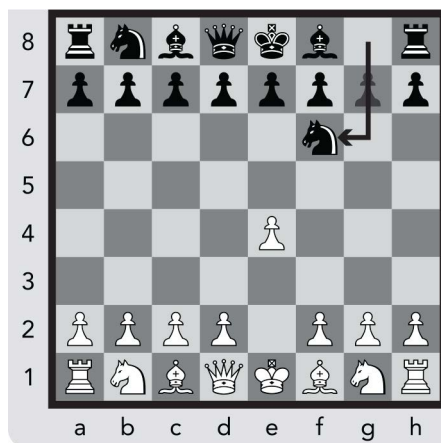


White to move. The knight is trapped and can be taken, but should it be?



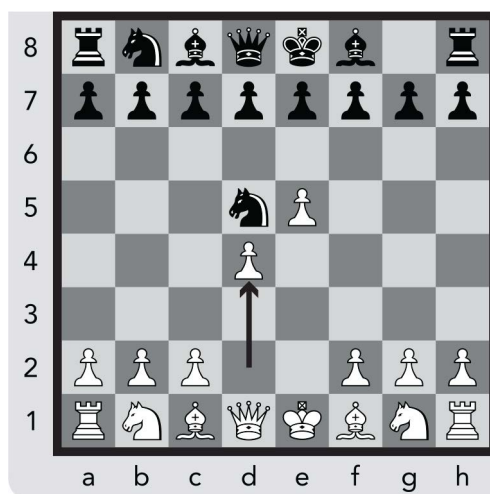
White's greed has allowed black to stop the c-pawn from promoting.

fig. 7.6



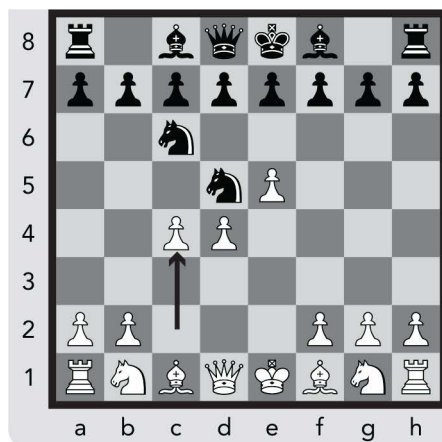
1. e4 Nf6 – the Alekhine Defense.

fig. 7.7

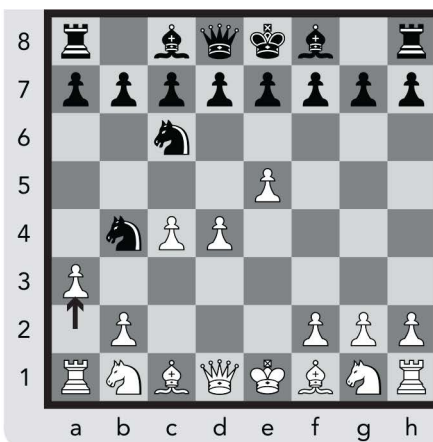


The Alekhine Defense after move 3.

fig. 7.8 and
fig. 7.9

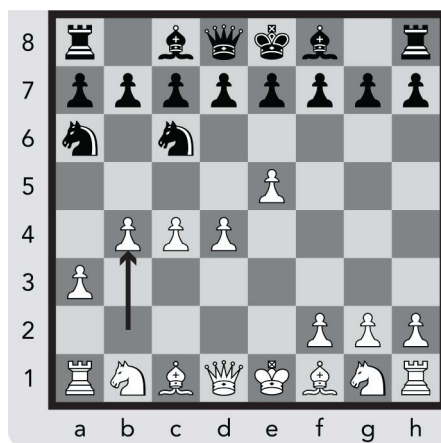


White gains a tempo on black's knight
yet again.



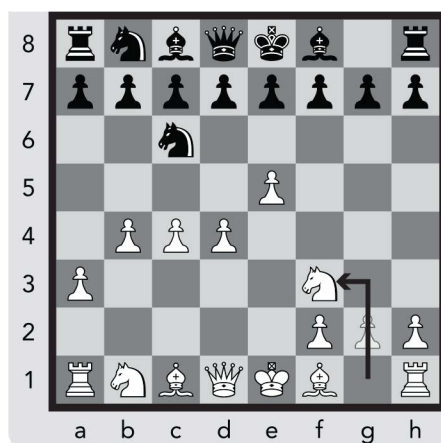
Black's knight can't catch a break from
white's pawns.

fig. 7.10



A real "knightmare" for black.

fig. 7.11

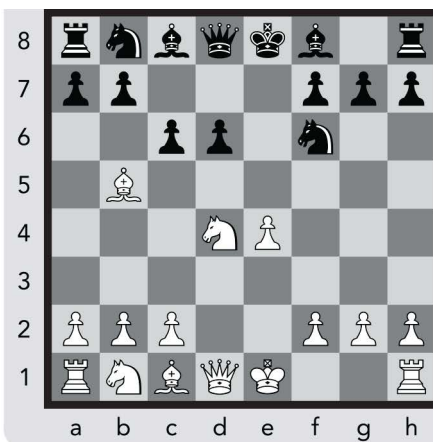


After seven moves, black has only one developed knight to show for it.

fig. 7.12 and
fig. 7.13

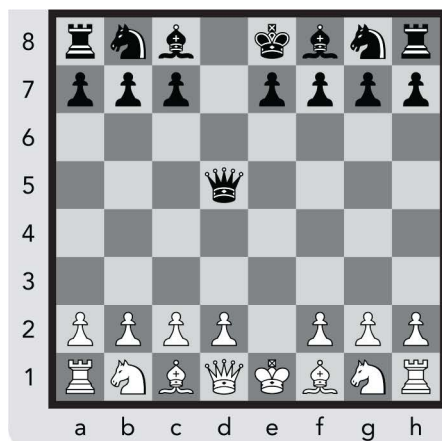


The wasteful Bb5+ here can tempt many newcomers.

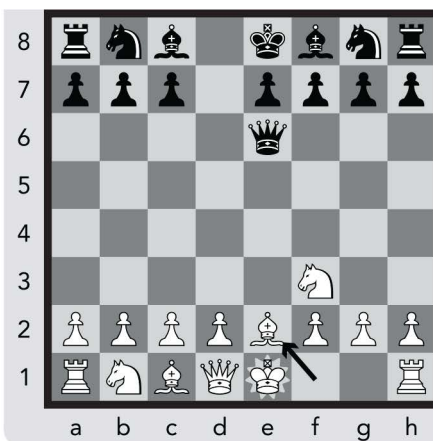


Black gains a tempo on white's bishop.

fig. 7.14 and
fig. 7.15

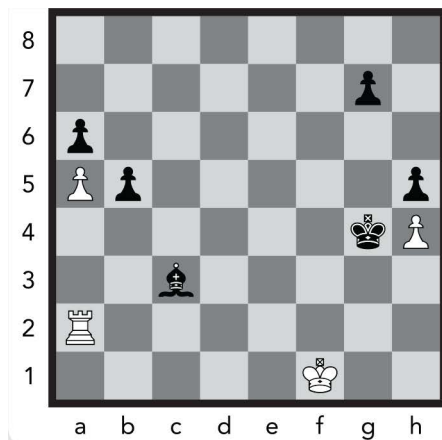


The position after 1. e4 d5 2. exd5 Qxd5.

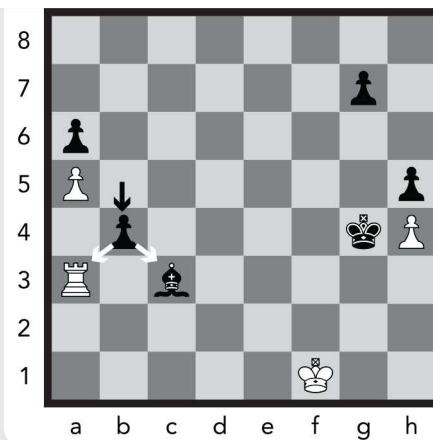


Black has assisted white in developing.

fig. 7.16 and
fig. 7.17



White to move. Time is of the essence.



Black's pawn push defends and attacks at the same time.

fig. 7.18

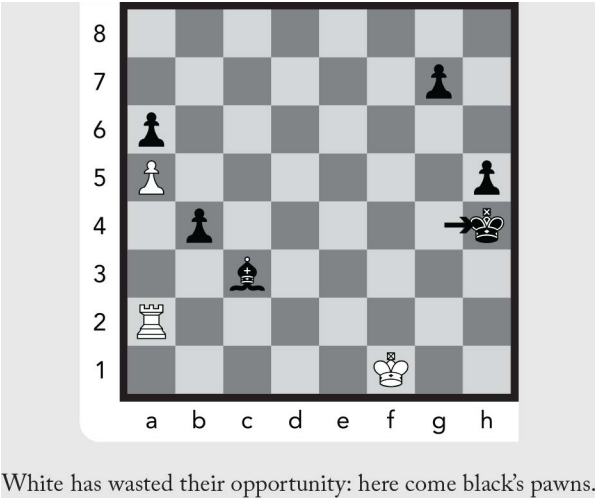


fig. 7.19 and
fig. 7.20

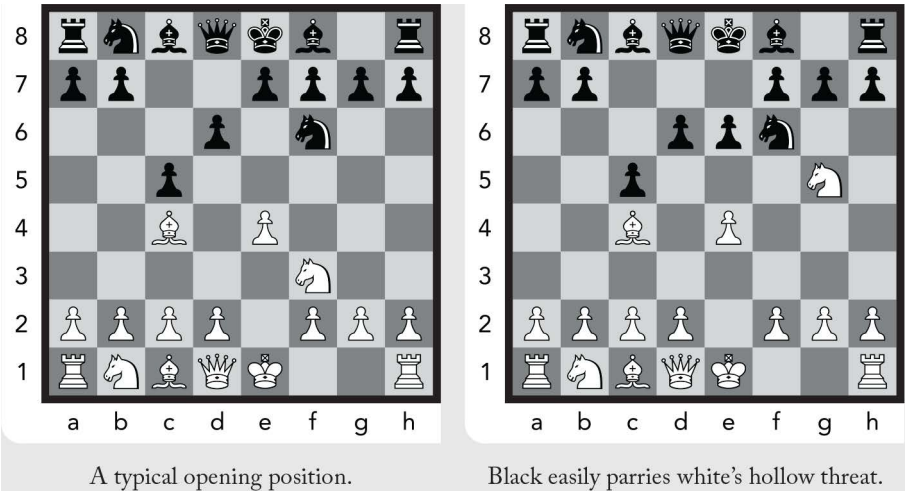
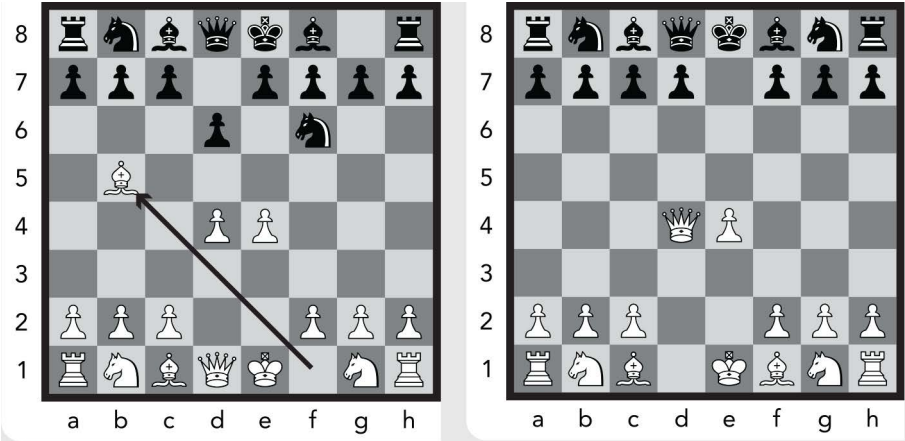


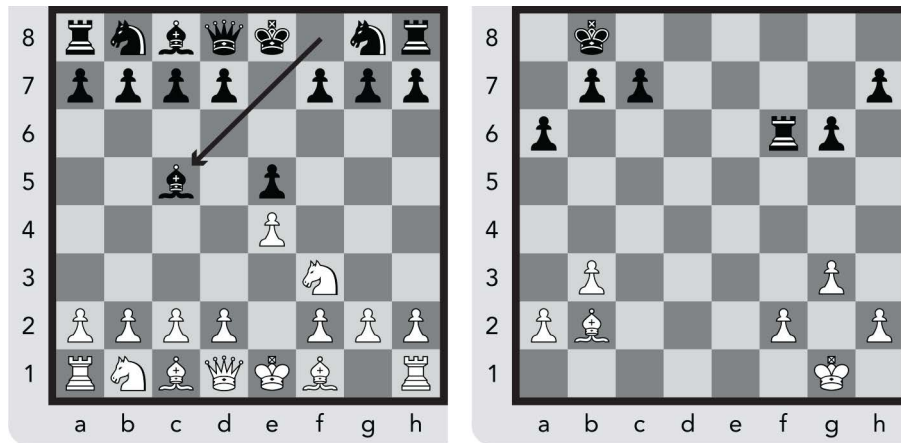
fig. 7.21 and
fig. 7.22



CHAPTER 8

Middlegame Strategy

fig. 8.1 and
fig. 8.2



Black's pawn is en prise.

Black's rook is en prise.

fig. 8.3



fig. 8.4



fig. 8.5

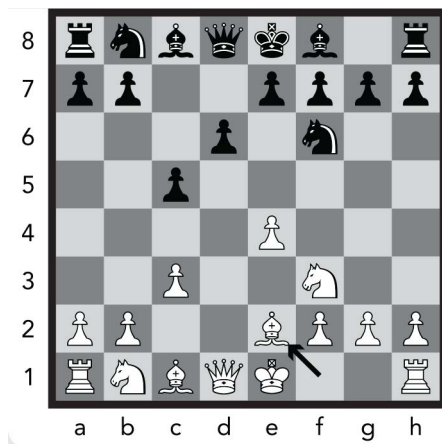
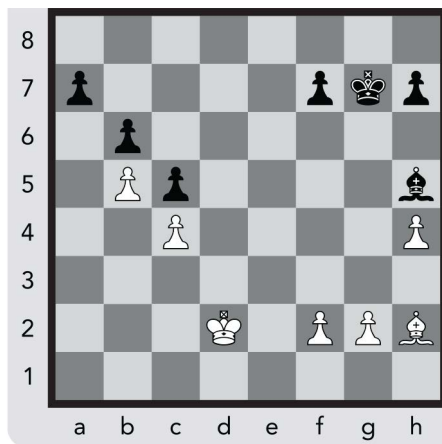


fig. 8.6



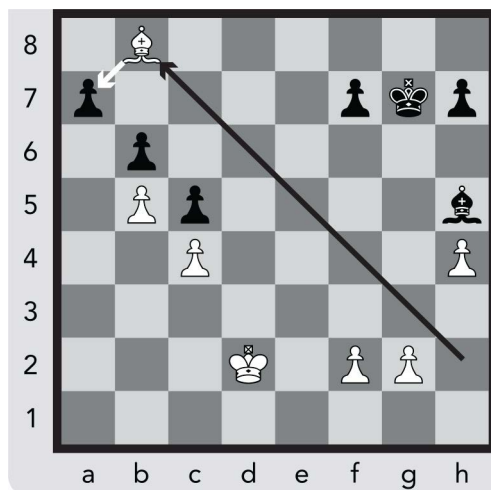
Does black have any weaknesses?

fig. 8.7



Black has an obvious weakness. Can you spot it?

fig. 8.8



White has exploited black's weakness!

fig. 8.9

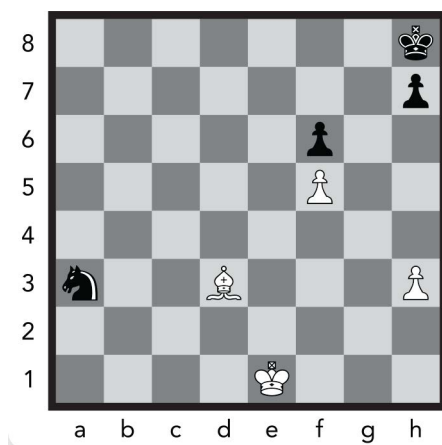
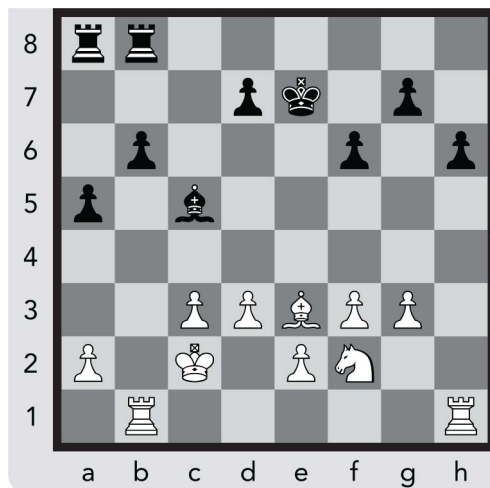
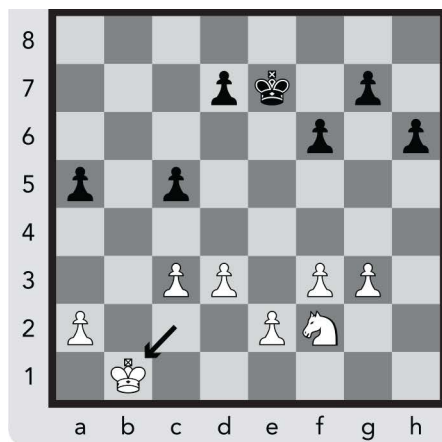


fig. 8.10

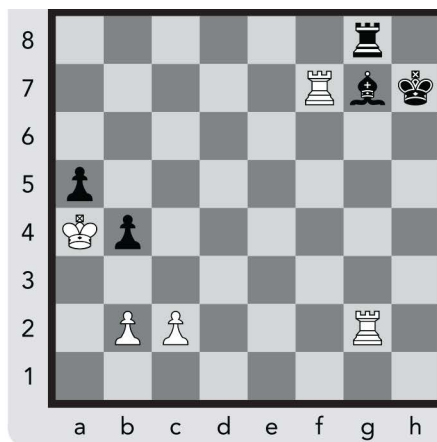


White to move and simplify the position.

fig. 8.11 and
fig. 8.12

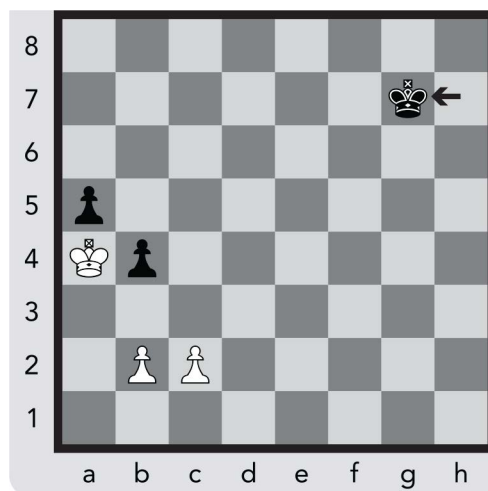


The battlefield after a series of equal trades.



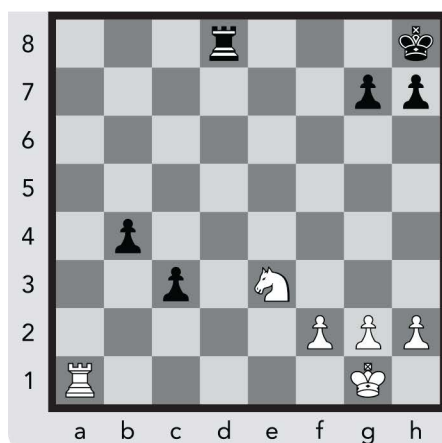
White is completely winning but can
simplify the position.

fig. 8.13

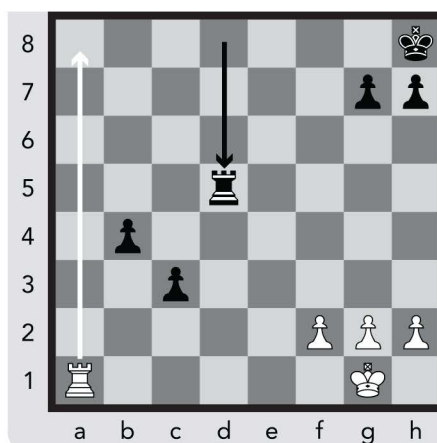


White has simplified the position.

fig. 8.14 and
fig. 8.15

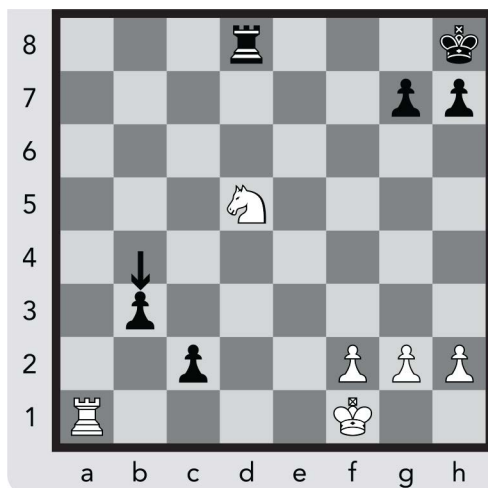


White to move. Black's pawns are marching
up the board.



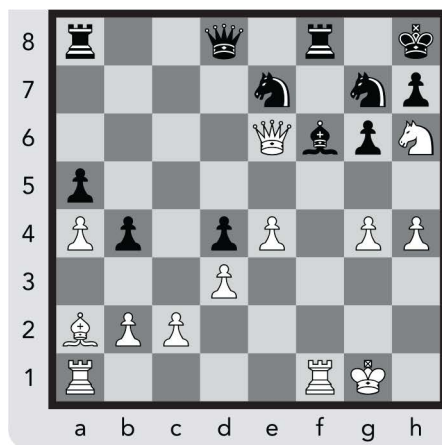
White's plan if black takes the bait.

fig. 8.16



It's white to move, but ...b2 cannot be stopped.

fig. 8.17 and
fig. 8.18

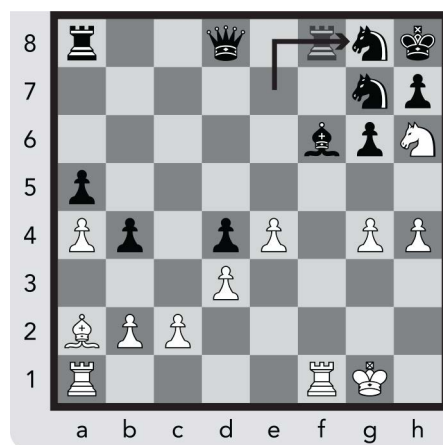


White has the possibility of a queen sacrifice
followed by a smothered mate!



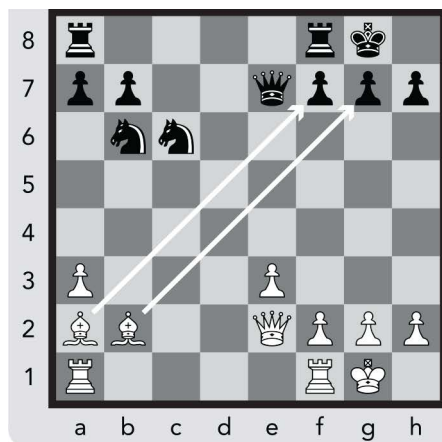
A smothered mate!

fig. 8.19

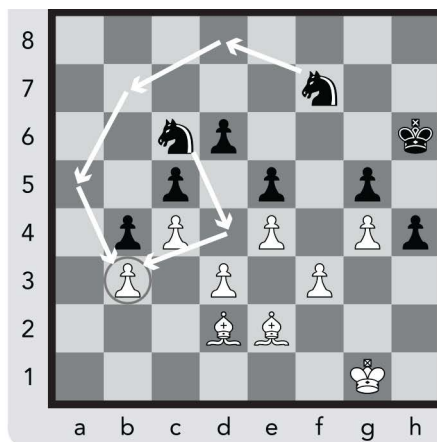


White can no longer play Nf7#.

fig. 8.20 and
fig. 8.21

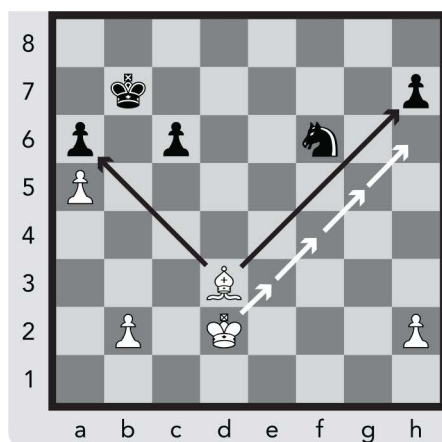


Bishops love open positions.

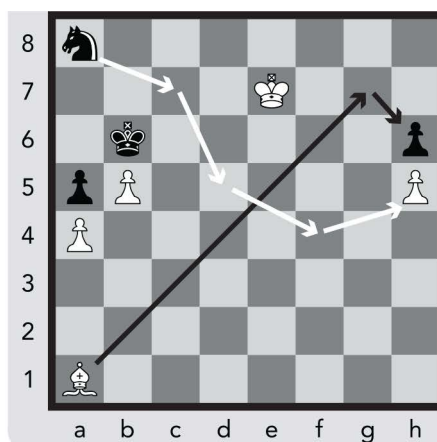


Knights tend to favor closed positions.

fig. 8.22 and
fig. 8.23

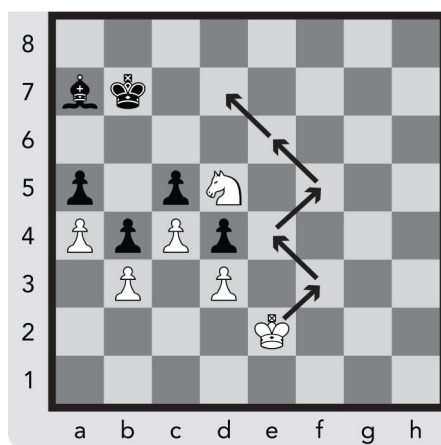


The bishop's scope controls more of the
chessboard.



The difference in speed between the knight
and the bishop.

fig. 8.24

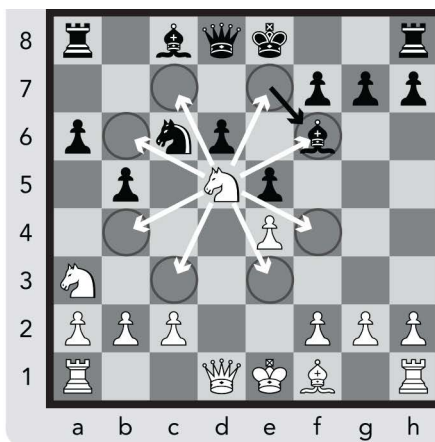


With pawns on the same side of the board,
a knight is usually no weaker than a bishop.

fig. 8.25 and
fig. 8.26

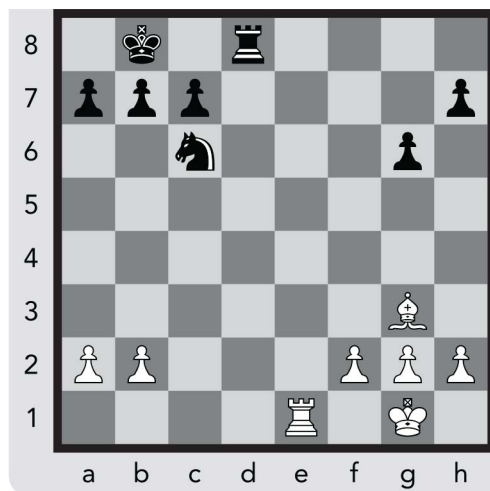


A common position in the
Sveshnikov variation.



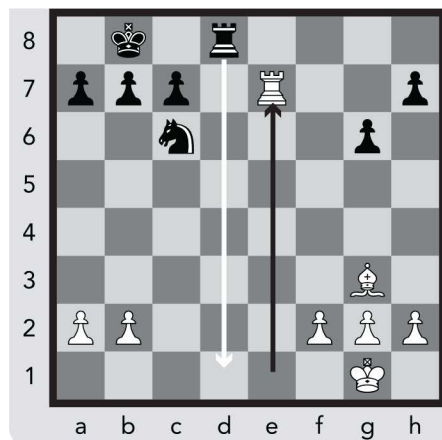
A knight, or "octopus," on a
centralized outpost.

fig. 8.27

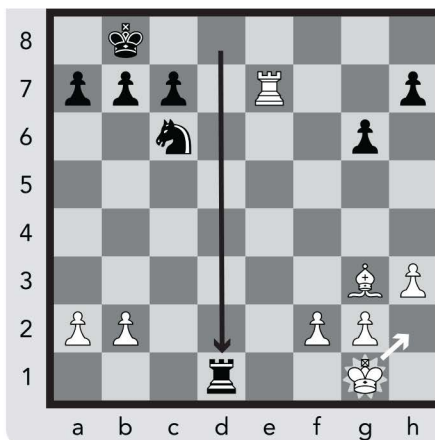


1. h3 here would be an example of a prophylactic move.

fig. 8.28 and
fig. 8.29

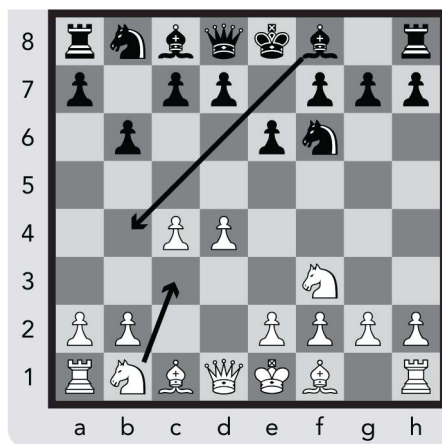


A possible back-rank mate scenario.



White's escape hatch!

fig. 8.30



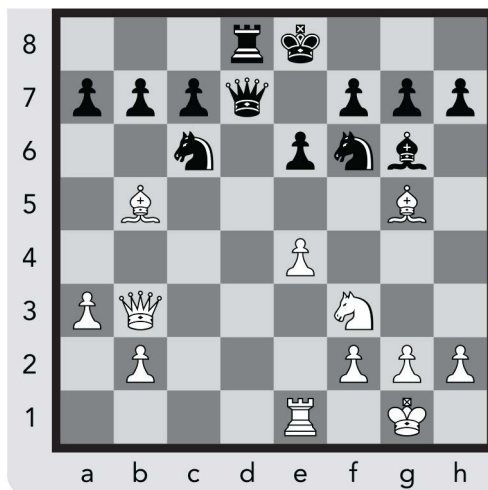
If white plays 4. Nc3 and black plays 4... Bb4, the position will be transposed to a Nimzo-Indian Defense.

fig. 8.31



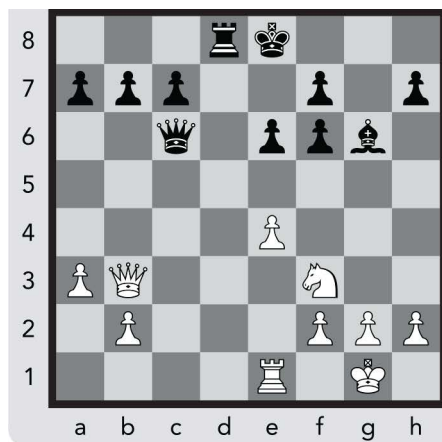
White found a way to play Nc3 while avoiding the Nimzo transposition!

fig. 8.32

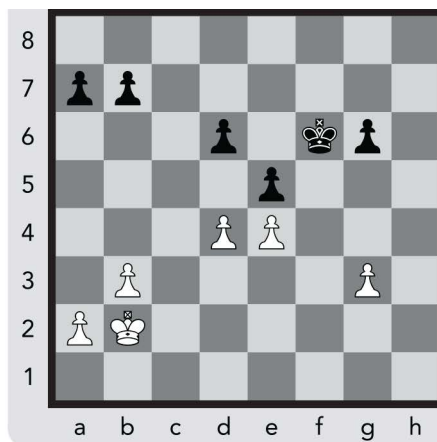


White has a dream position, despite being a pawn down.

fig. 8.33 and
fig. 8.34

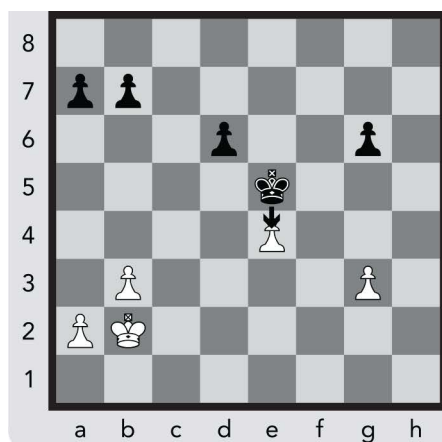


The position after white has released
the tension prematurely.

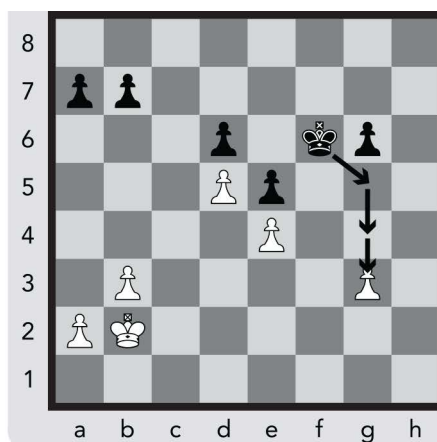


There is tension between the
d4 and e5 pawns.

fig. 8.35 and
fig. 8.36



The position after 2. dxe5+?? Kxe5.



Black's plan after white releases the tension
with d5.

CHAPTER 9

Playing with a Chess Clock

fig. 9.1



The first mechanical chess clock.

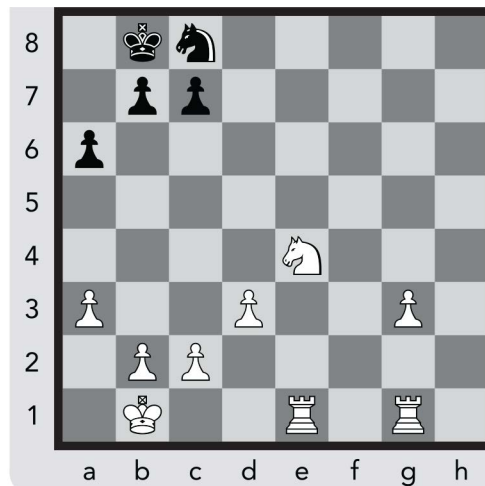
fig. 9.2



A modern digital chess clock.

Source: Wikipedia Commons, username Ajepbah.

fig. 9.3

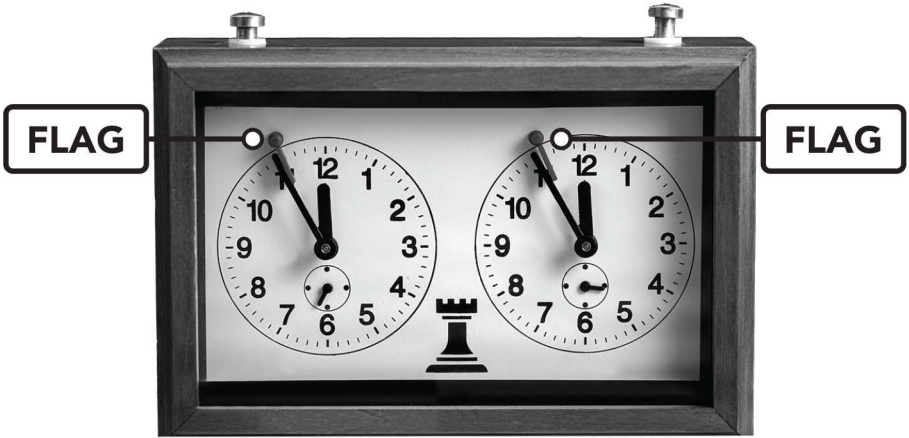


White has only fifteen seconds left, and black has five minutes.

fig. 9.4

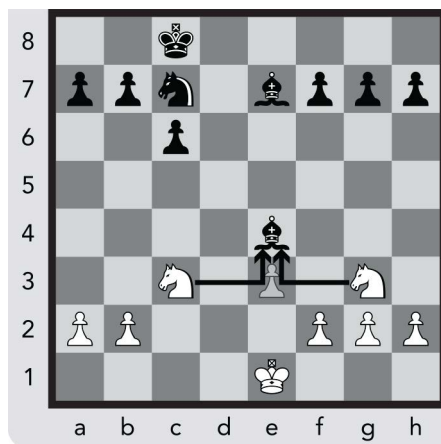
	Chess.com	Lichess.org	FIDE
Based on # of Moves for Increment	40	40	60
Bullet	<3 min	<3 min	N/A
Blitz	3–10 min	<8 min	<= 10–60 min
Rapid	>10 min	<25 min	>10–60 min
Classic/ Standard	N/A	>=25 min	60+ min

fig. 9.5



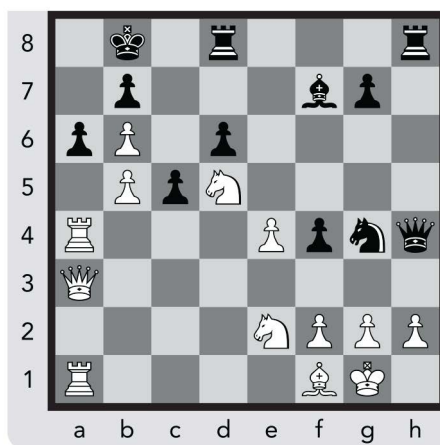
An analog clock with flags.

fig. 9.6



White has a choice to make.

fig. 9.7



White to move in a complicated and dangerous position.

CHAPTER 10

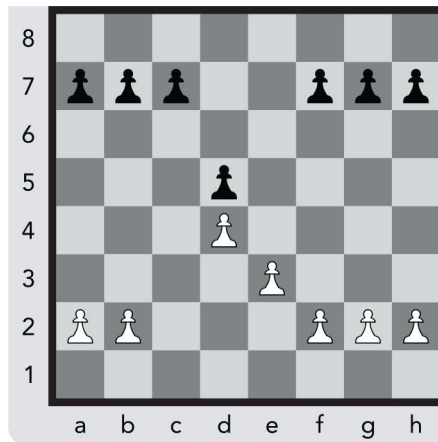
Pawns: The Soul of Chess

fig. 10.1

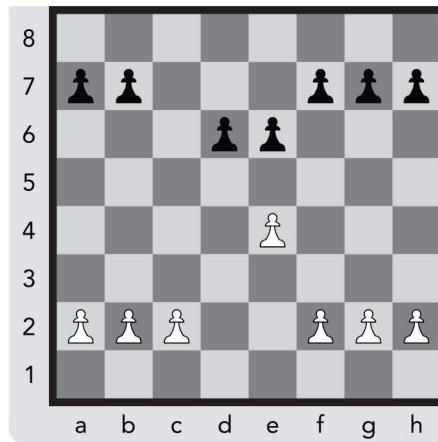


After white's sixth move in the Queen's Gambit Declined.

fig. 10.2 and
fig. 10.3

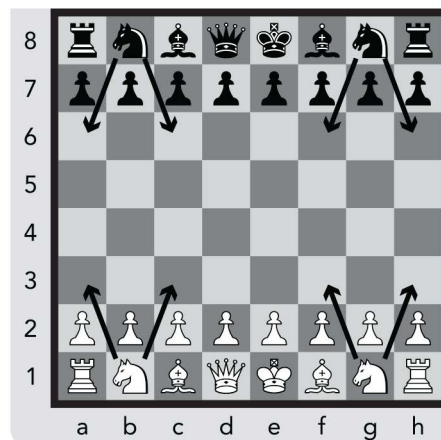


Pawn structure.



The Scheveningen pawn structure.

fig. 10.4



The starting pawn structure blocks all the pieces but the knights.

fig. 10.5

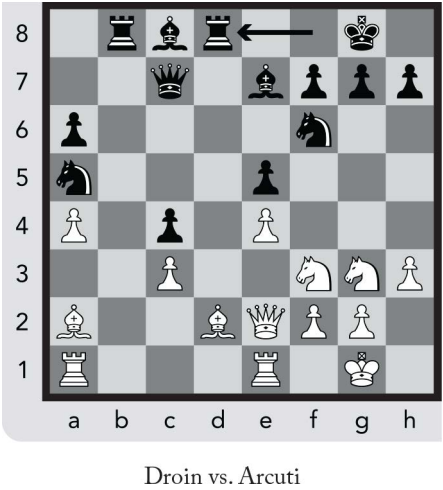
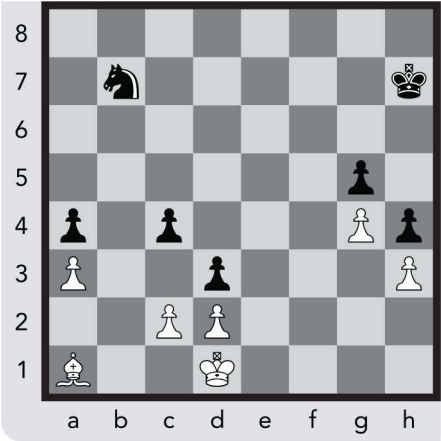
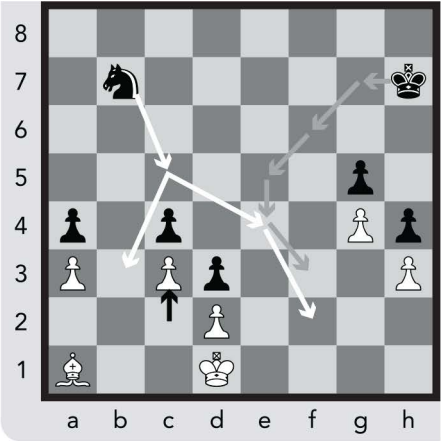


fig. 10.6 and
fig. 10.7

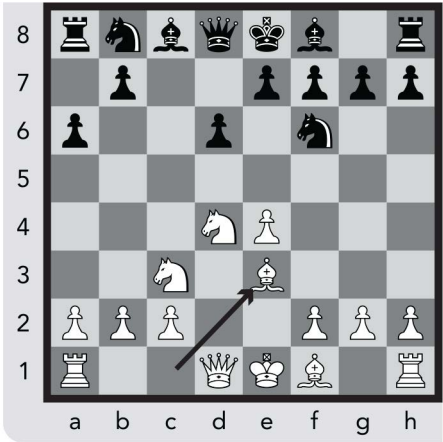


White to move in an equal position.



With white's bishop out of play, white has only a king to play with.

fig. 10.8



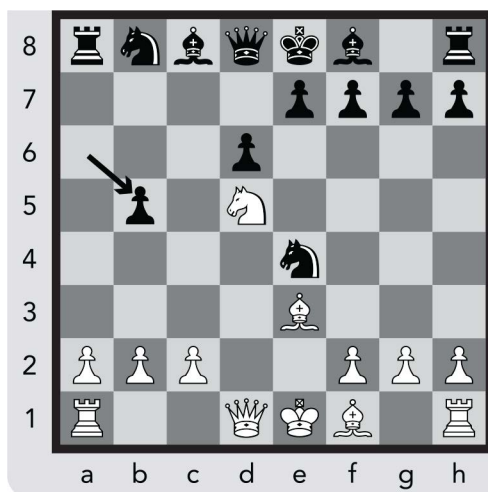
An extremely theoretical opening in the Sicilian Najdorf.

fig. 10.9



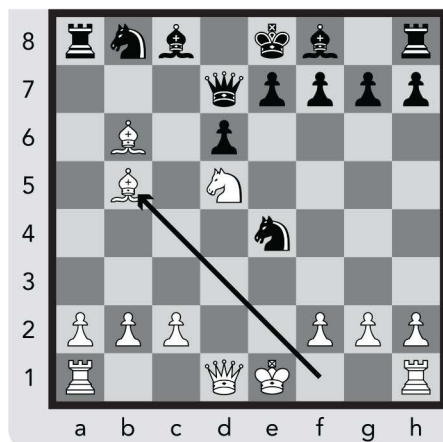
6... b5?! here is a premature pawn move.

fig. 10.10

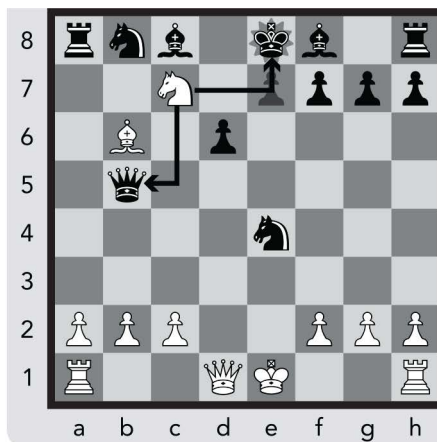


The position after 7... Nxe4 8. Nxb5!! axb5.

fig. 10.11 and
fig. 10.12

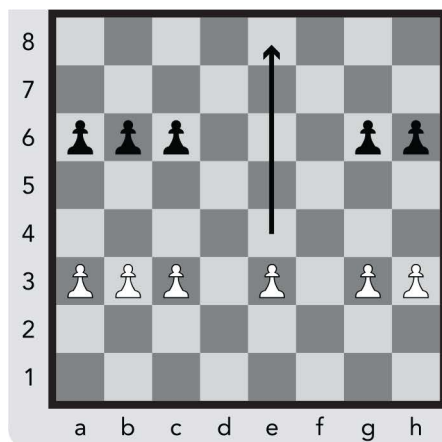


The position after 9. Bb6 Qd7 10. Bxb5

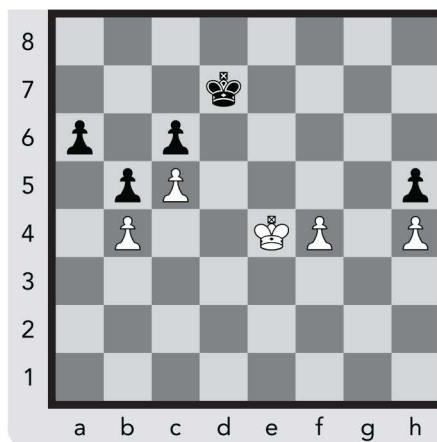


The position after 10... Qxb5 11. Nc7+.

fig. 10.13 and
fig. 10.14

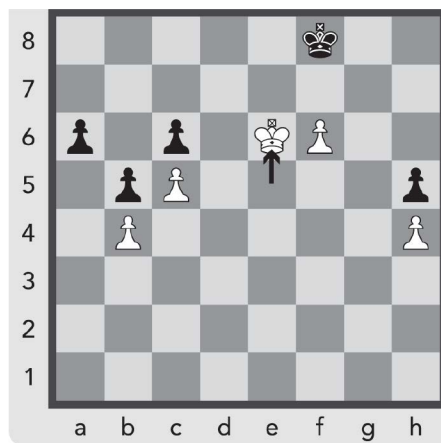


White's e-pawn is a passed pawn.



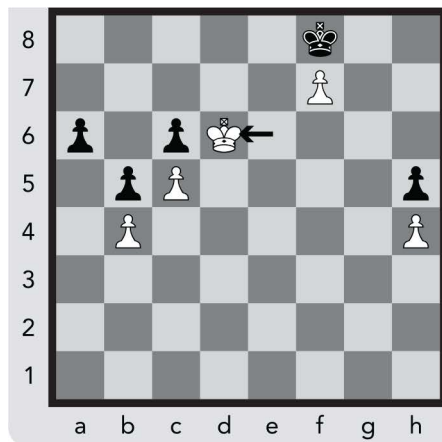
White has a passed pawn on f4.

fig. 10.15

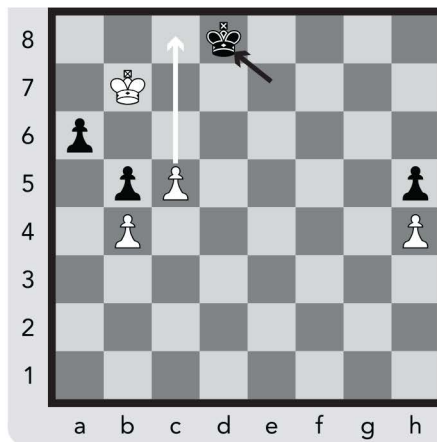


White first pushes their f-pawn and drives back black's king.

fig. 10.16 and
fig. 10.17

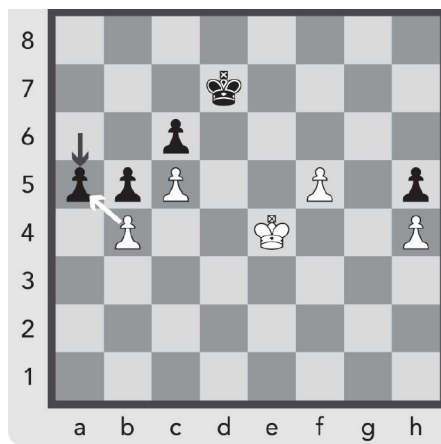


The f-pawn has served its purpose,
distracting black's king.



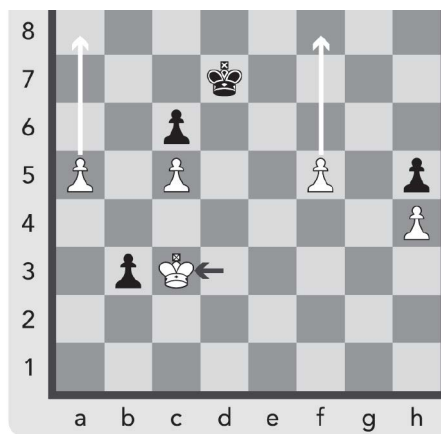
White will promote to a queen
in three moves.

fig. 10.18



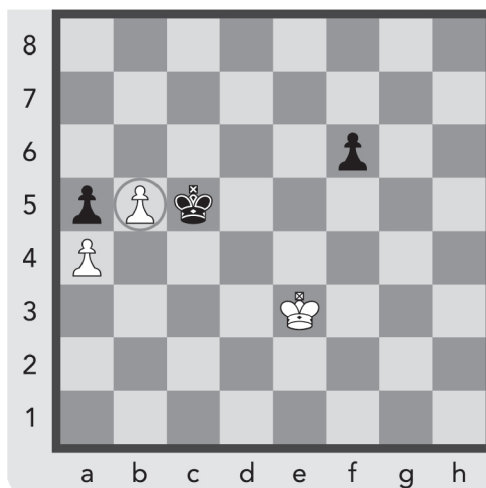
Black will create a passed pawn of their own.

fig. 10.19



Black is helpless against white's two passed pawns.

fig. 10.20



b5 is a protected passed pawn.

fig. 10.21

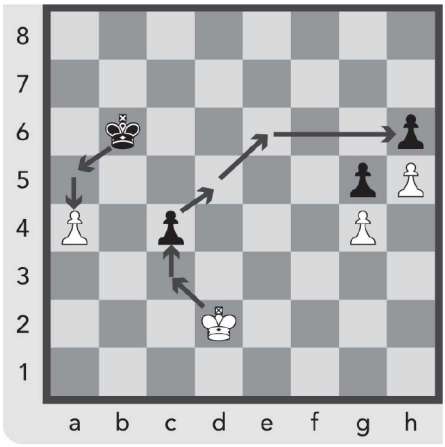


fig. 10.22

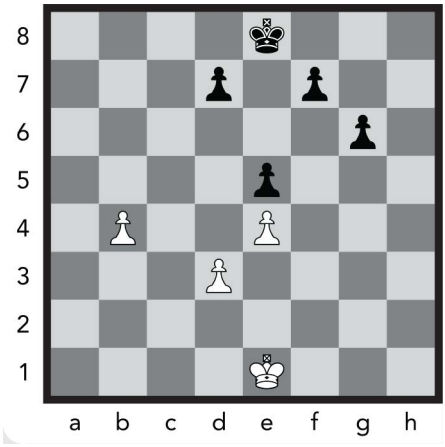


fig. 10.23 and
fig. 10.24

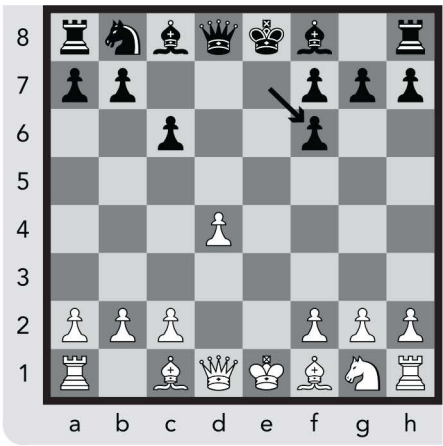
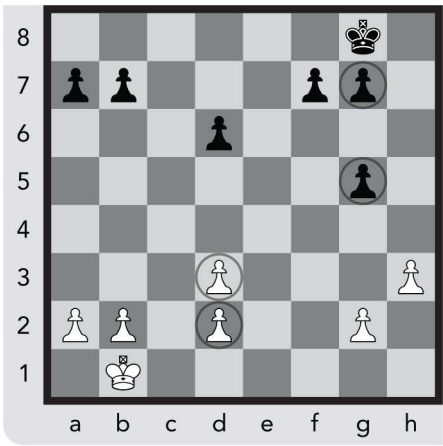
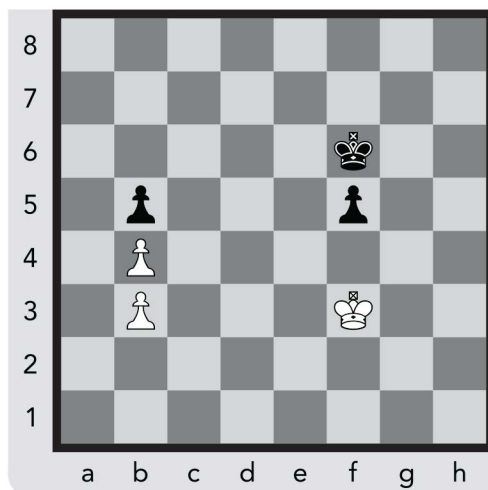
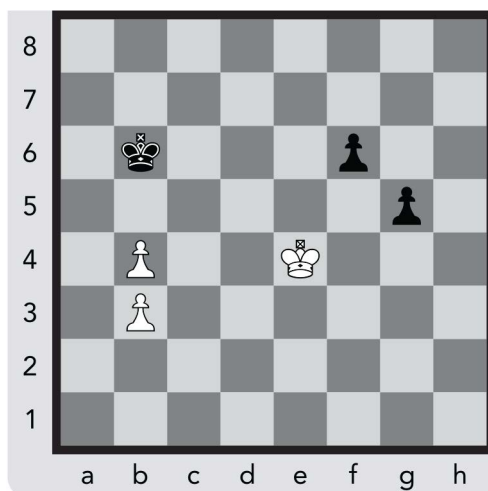


fig. 10.25



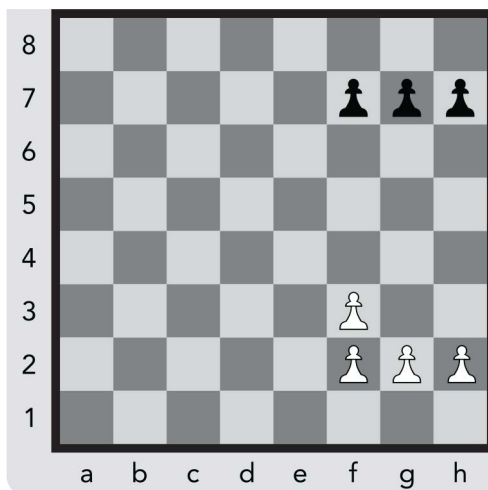
Doubled pawns can become real liabilities in the endgame.

fig. 10.26



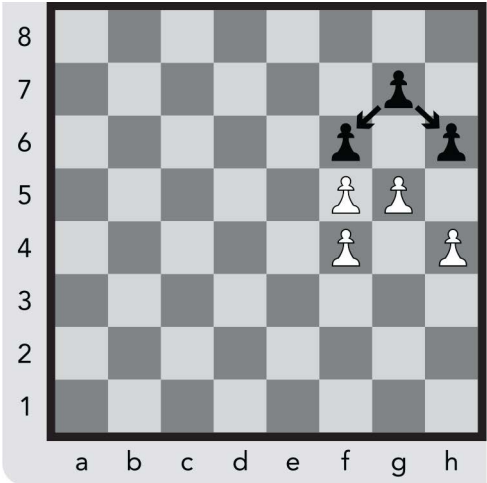
Black's pawns defend themselves, and white's pawns do not.

fig. 10.27



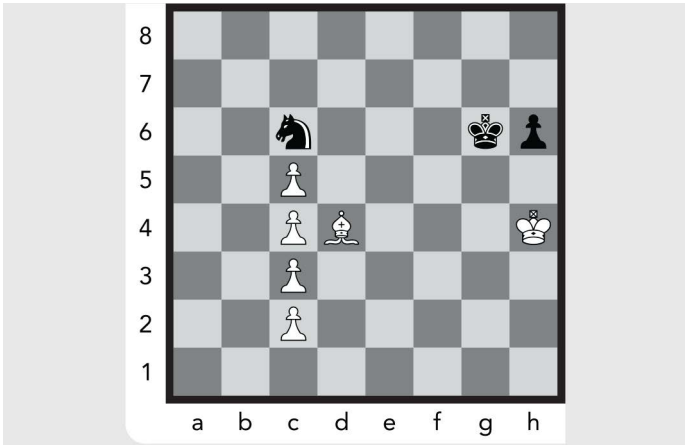
White has a crippled majority.

fig. 10.28



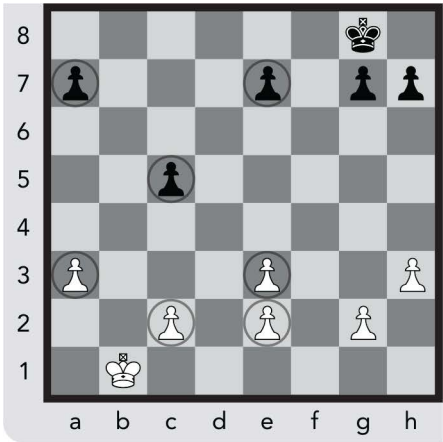
Black has an impenetrable defense despite facing a majority of pawns.

fig. 10.29

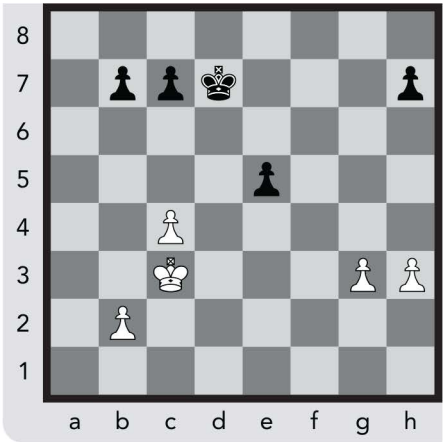


The final position of Kovacs–Barth, where the players agreed to a draw.

fig. 10.30 and
fig. 10.31

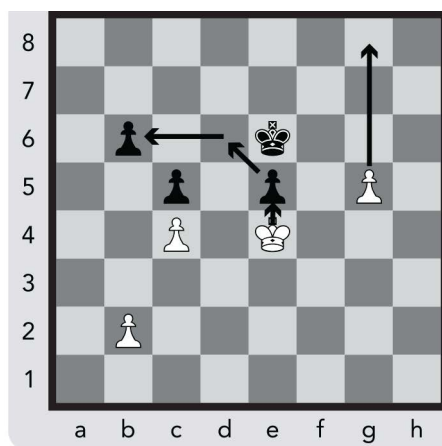


A position with six isolated pawns.



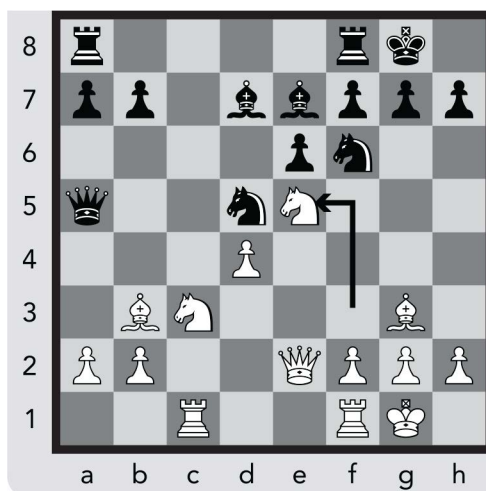
White should start by blockading black's isolated pawn.

fig. 10.32



Black cannot defend both their pawns and the running g-pawn.

fig. 10.33



The position after 14. Ne5.

fig. 10.34

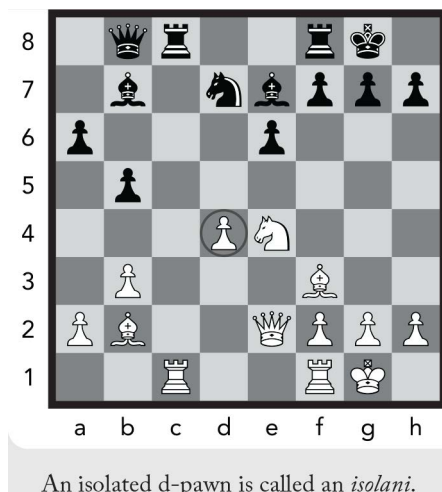


fig. 10.35

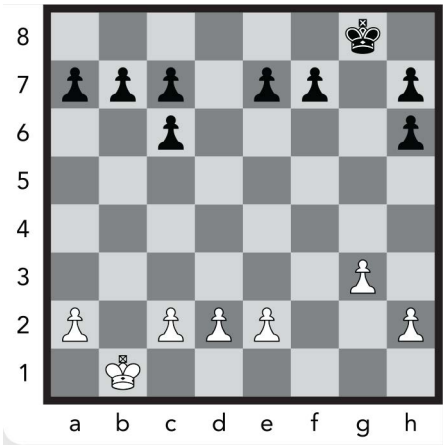
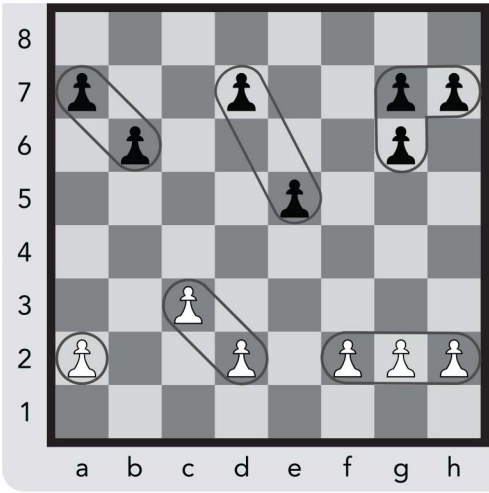
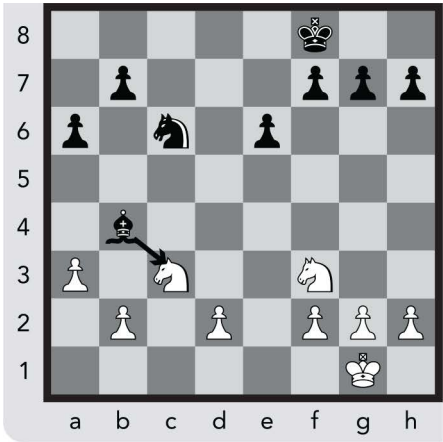


fig. 10.36

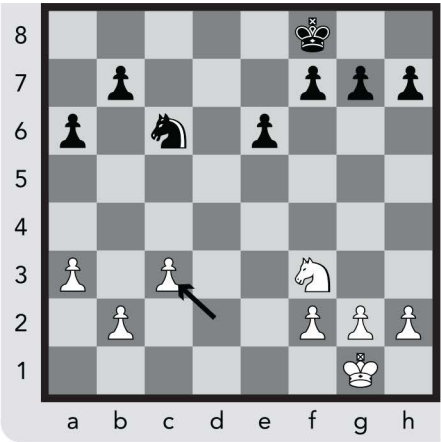


Six pawn islands.

fig. 10.37 and
fig. 10.38



If black takes white's knight on c3, white has two ways to recapture it, but one way is better than the other.



White's pawn structure is slightly improved!

fig. 10.39

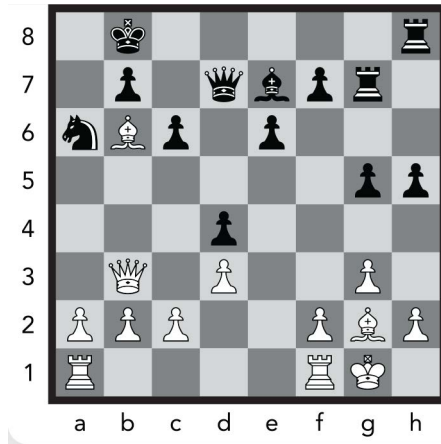
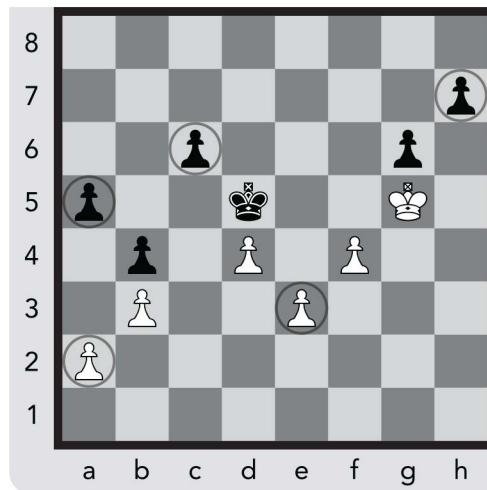


fig. 10.40

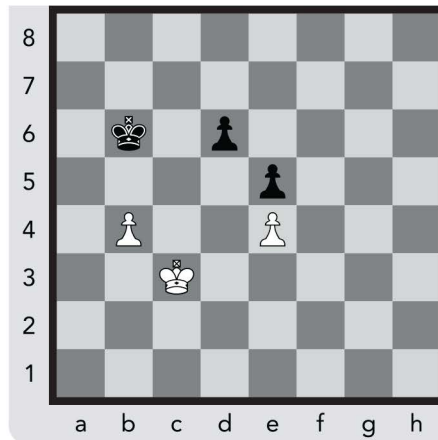


Who ordered all the backward pawns?

fig. 10.41 and
fig. 10.42

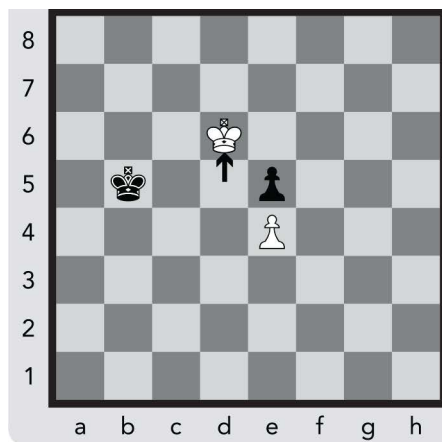


Black's backward d6 pawn is blockaded by white's knight.

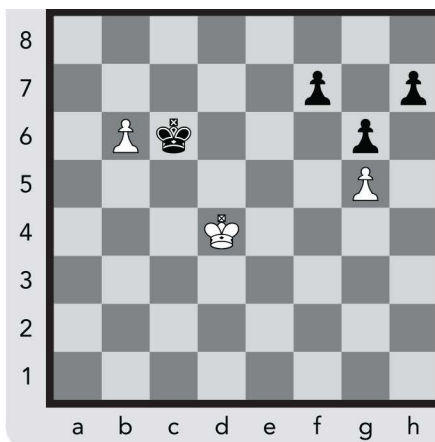


A weakness of backward pawns: one pawn stops two.

fig. 10.43 and
fig. 10.44

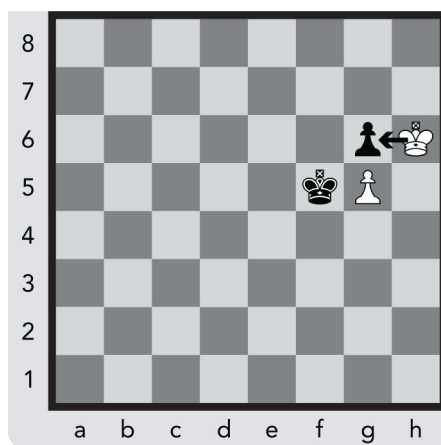


Black is helpless.



One pawn stops three!

fig. 10.45



White's g5 pawn was the MVP!

fig. 10.46

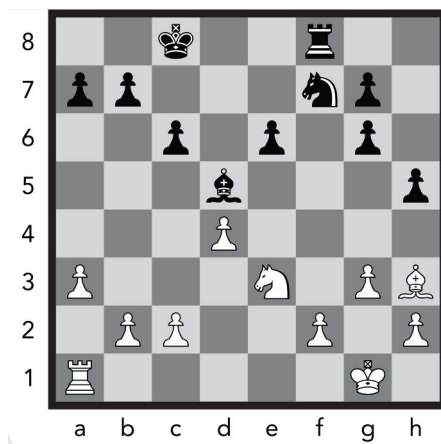
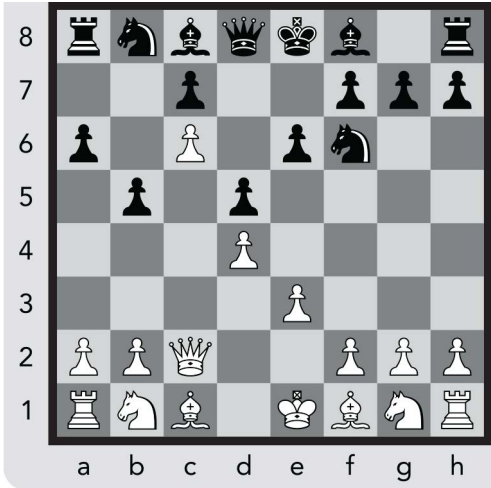
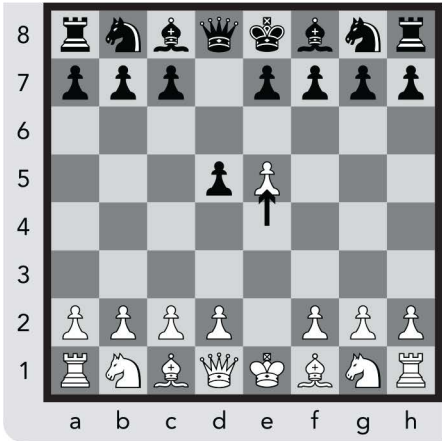


fig. 10.47

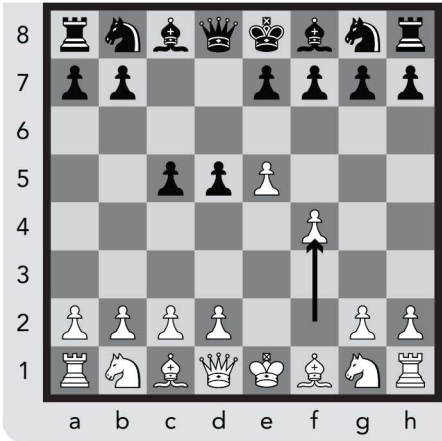


White's pawn on c6 has ventured too far.

fig. 10.48 and
fig. 10.49

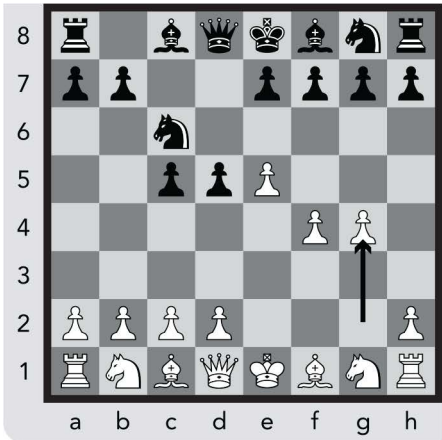


The position after 1. e4 d5 2. e5?!



White thrusts his pawns boldly.

fig. 10.50 and
fig. 10.51



White's aggressive pawn play continues.

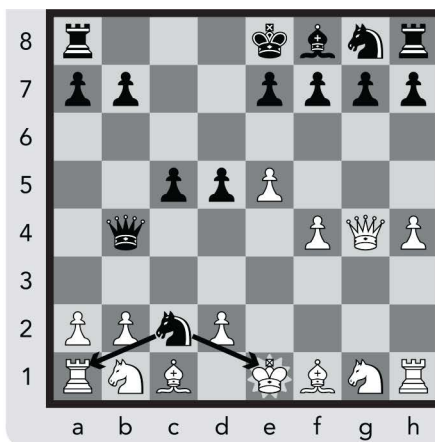


Attacking Andy recklessly thrusts
his pawns forward.

fig. 10.52 and
fig. 10.53

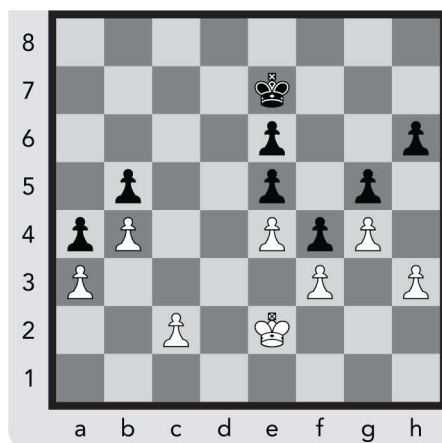


Black's queen is hungry for some pawns.

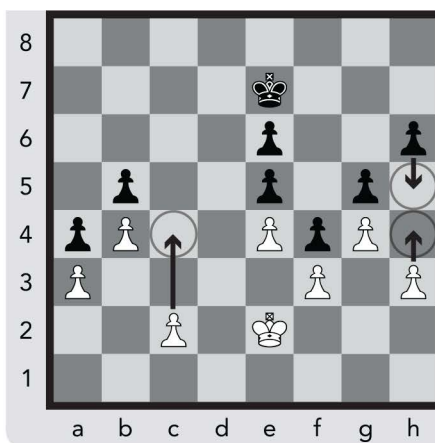


White's overextended pawns cost him dearly.

fig. 10.54 and
fig. 10.55

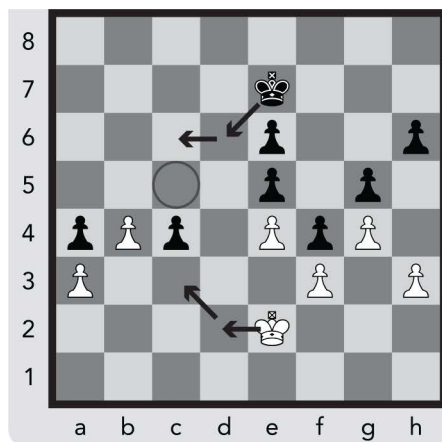


With only king moves, no progress
can be made.

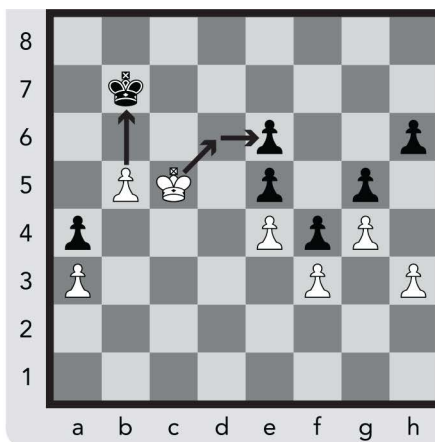


The available pawn breaks in the position.

fig. 10.56 and
fig. 10.57



White has created room to make progress.



White's pawn break has allowed them to
execute a winning plan.

fig. 10.58 and
fig. 10.59

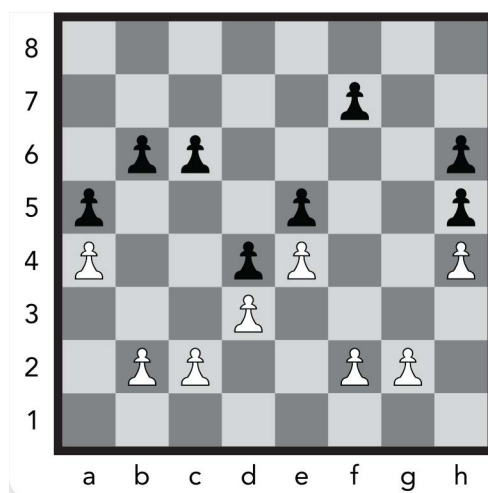


A thematic pawn break in the
French Defense.



White to move and break open the position.

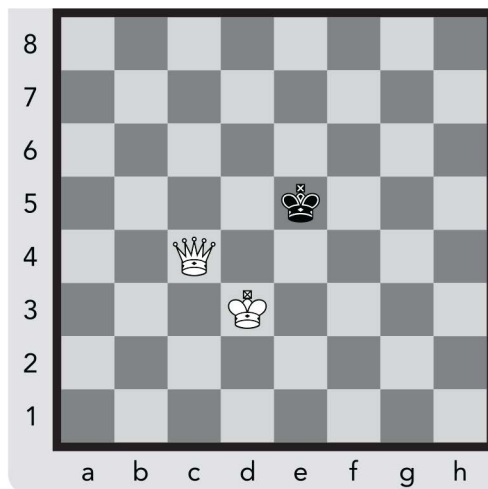
fig. 10.60



CHAPTER 11

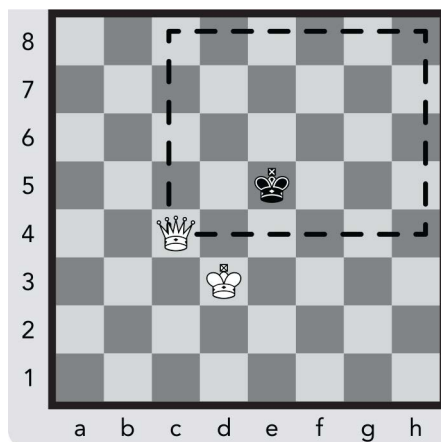
Endgame Essentials

fig. 11.1



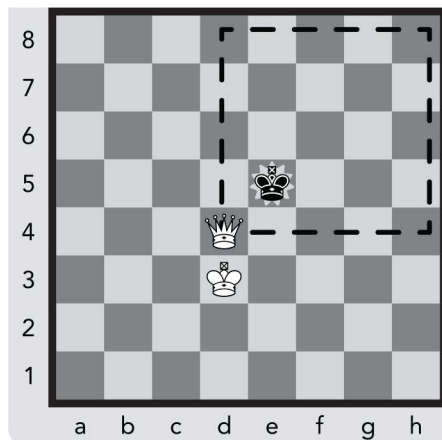
Any chess player should have no problem delivering checkmate from here.

fig. 11.2

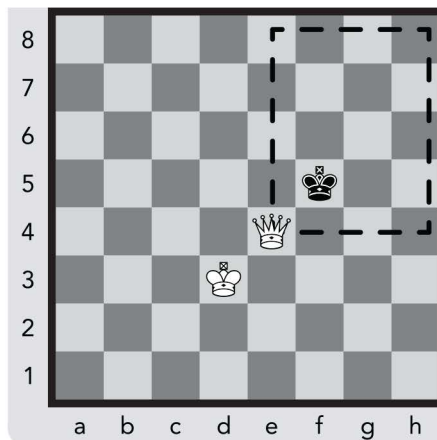


Black's king is trapped in a rather large "box."

fig. 11.3 and
fig. 11.4

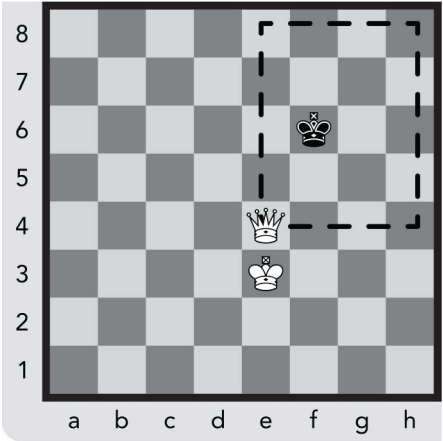


Black's box has shrunk slightly.



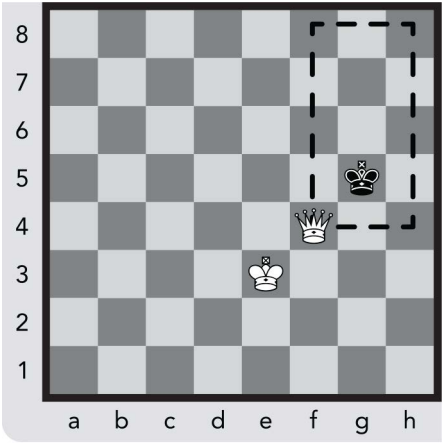
After 1... Kf5, white can continue to shrink the box by playing 2. Qe4+.

fig. 11.5



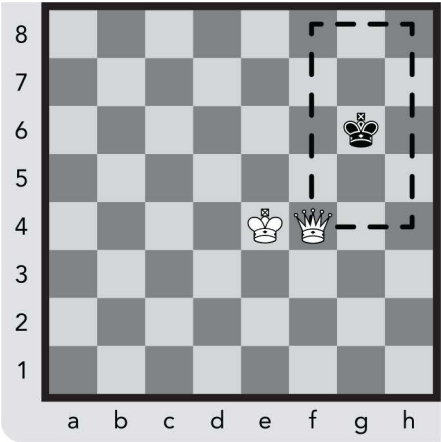
White spends a turn to bring the king closer.

fig. 11.6

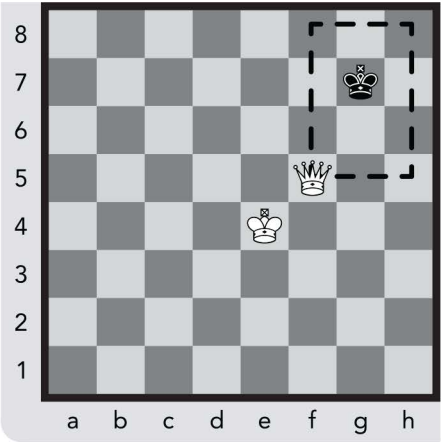


White is making slow but steady progress.

fig. 11.7 and
fig. 11.8

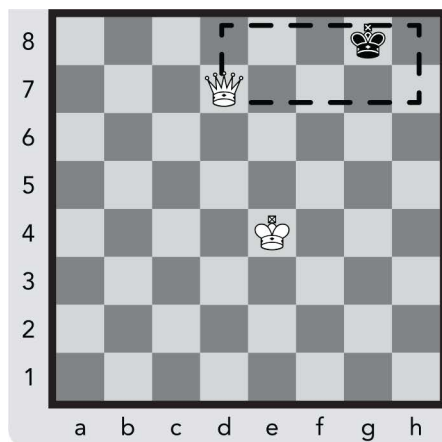


White's king steps one square closer
to the action.

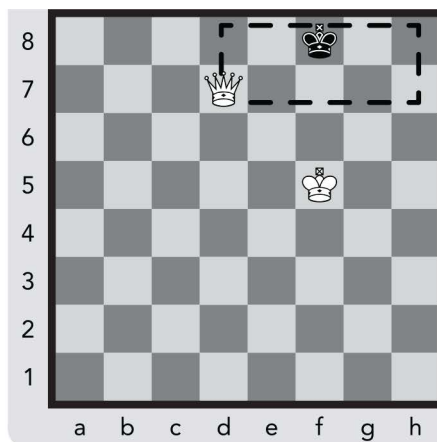


Black's jail cell barely leaves the king enough
room to pace around.

fig. 11.9 and
fig. 11.10

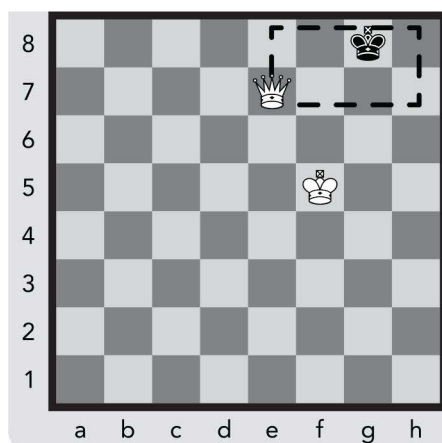


Black's king is forever restricted to the edge of the board.

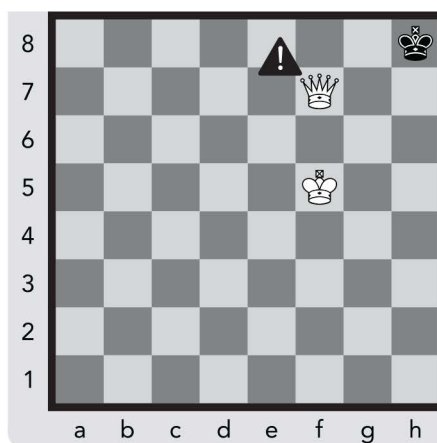


White's king once again makes its way toward the enemy king.

fig. 11.11 and
fig. 11.12

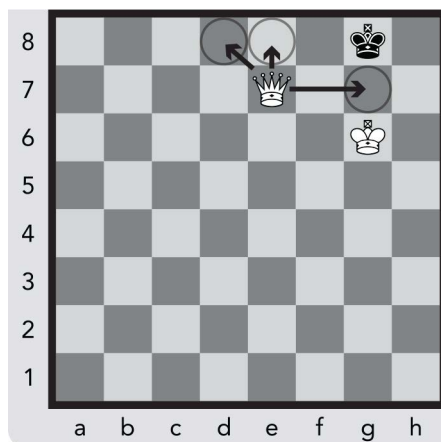


This is the smallest box you can put the king in.



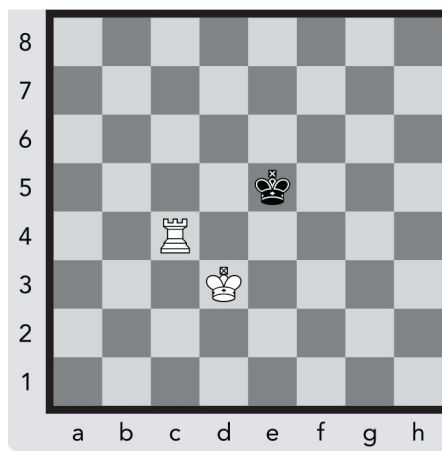
Watch out for stalemate!

fig. 11.13



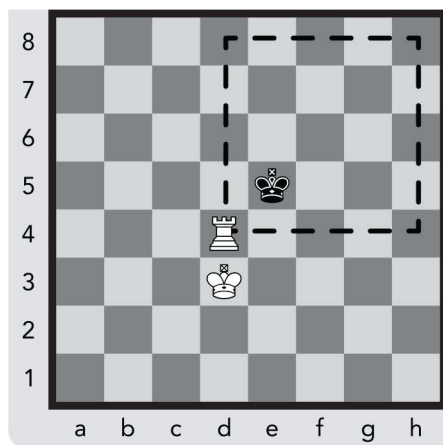
White is spoiled for choice.

fig. 11.14

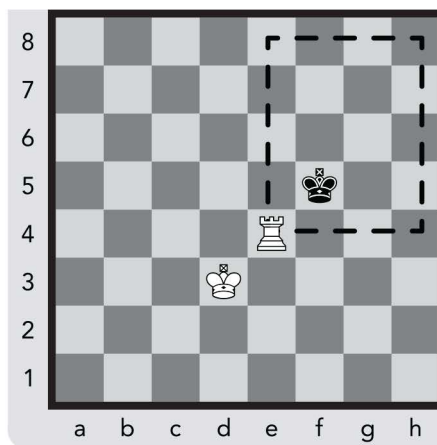


A common endgame: rook against king.

fig. 11.15 and
fig. 11.16

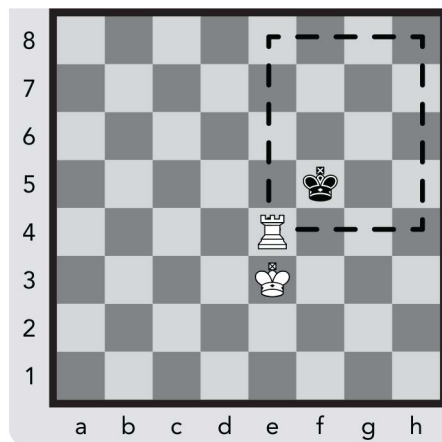


A familiar jail.



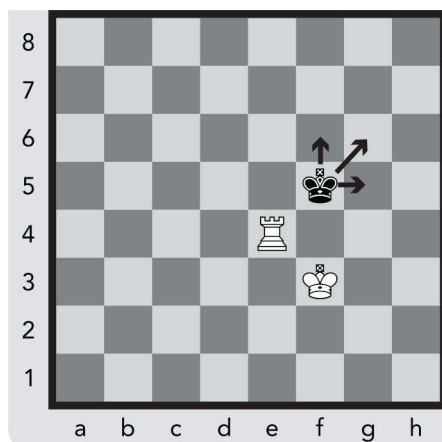
Our beloved box technique in
action once again.

fig. 11.17

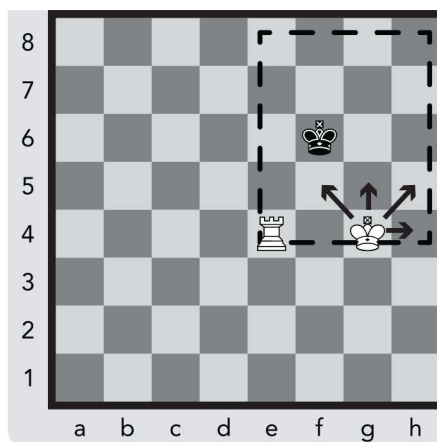


White is making slow progress, but progress nonetheless.

fig. 11.18 and
fig. 11.19

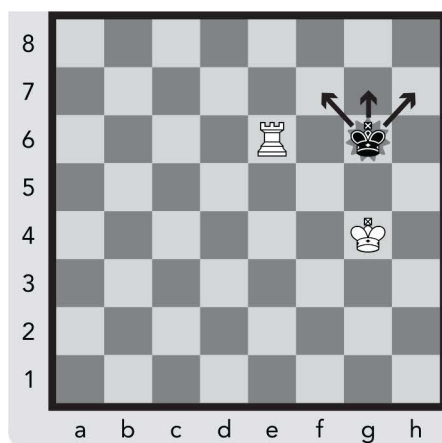


Black's king must vacate the f5 square.

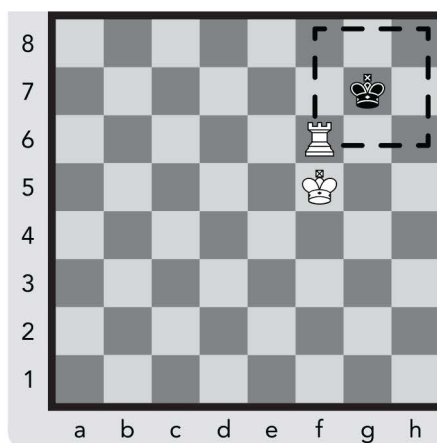


White's king assists the rook in driving the enemy king back.

fig. 11.20 and
fig. 11.21

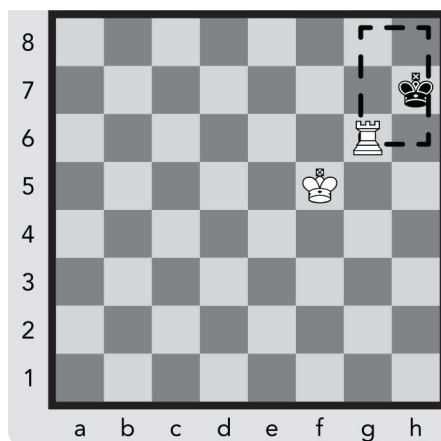


The position after 5... Kg6 6. Re6+.



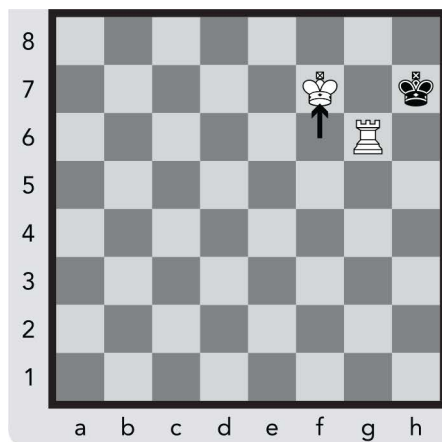
Black cannot forestall moving to the edge forever.

fig. 11.22

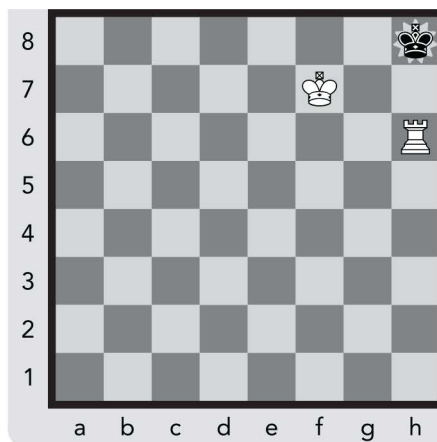


The enemy king finally forced to the edge!

fig. 11.23 and
fig. 11.24

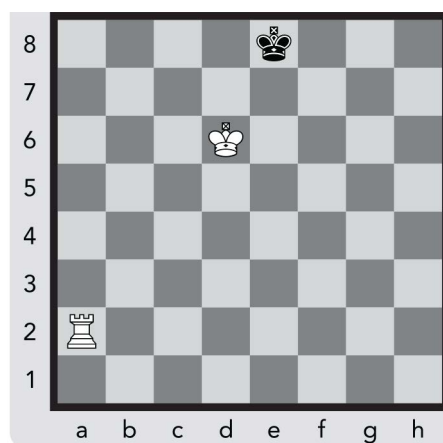


Setting up the kill.



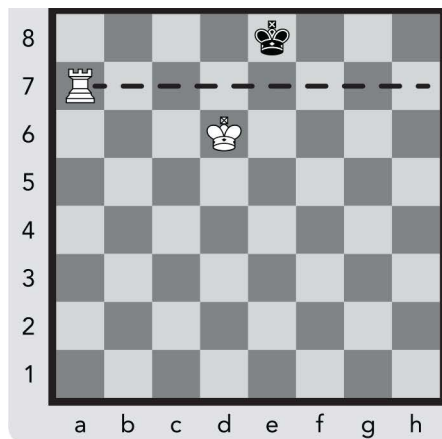
Black's king could not escape
checkmate forever.

fig. 11.25

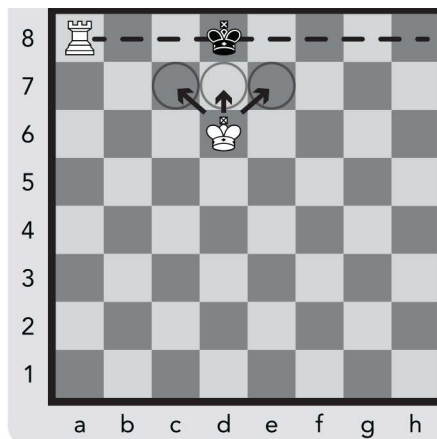


Black's king is already on the edge of the board.

fig. 11.26 and
fig. 11.27

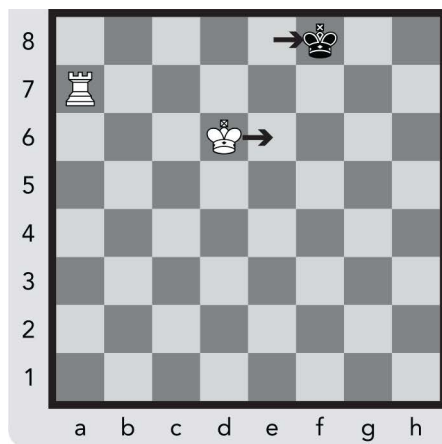


Keeping black's king restricted to the
edge of the board.

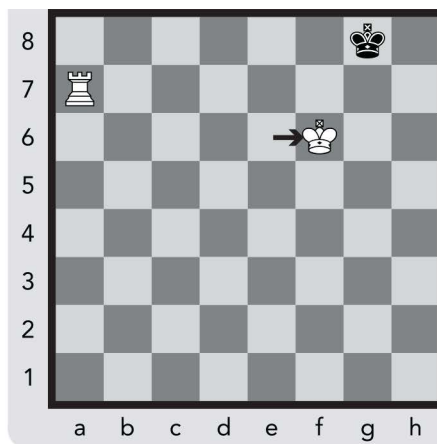


Checkmate. Remember the setup
of these pieces.

fig. 11.28 and
fig. 11.29

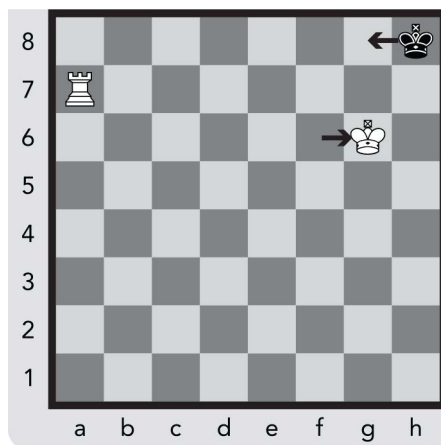


The hunt is on!



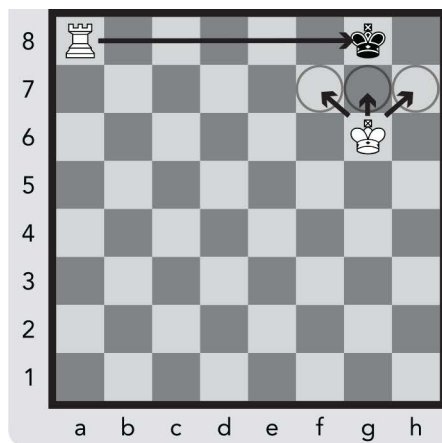
"You can run, but you can't hide."

fig. 11.30

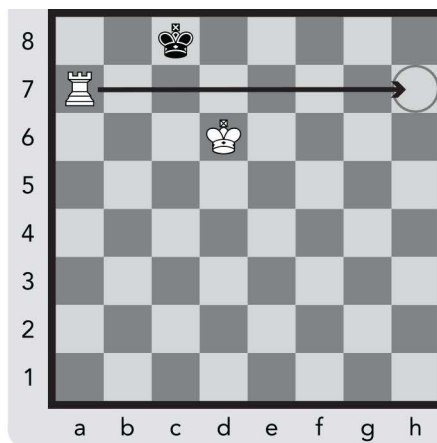


The "bounce" technique.

fig. 11.31 and
fig. 11.32

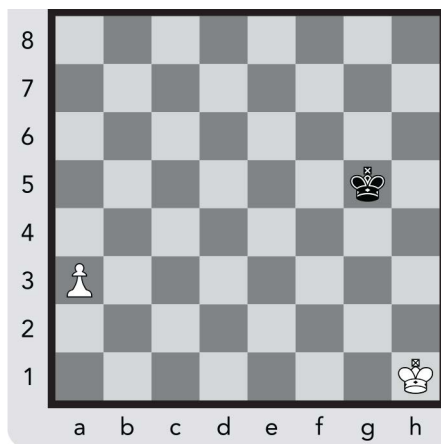


Checkmate!



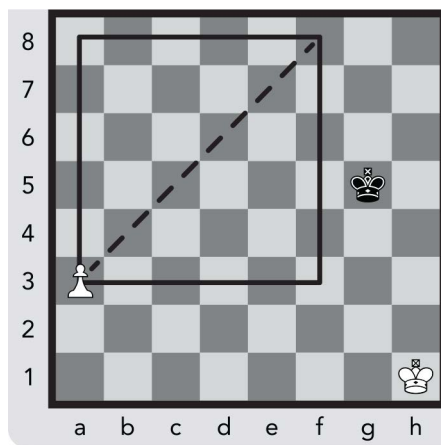
Slide your rook to the other side to keep
the enemy king from attacking it.

fig. 11.33



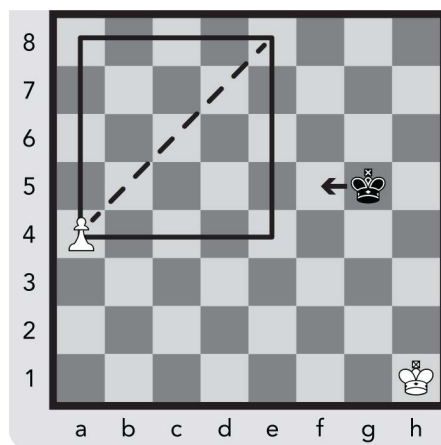
Can black catch white's pawn with black to move?

fig. 11.34



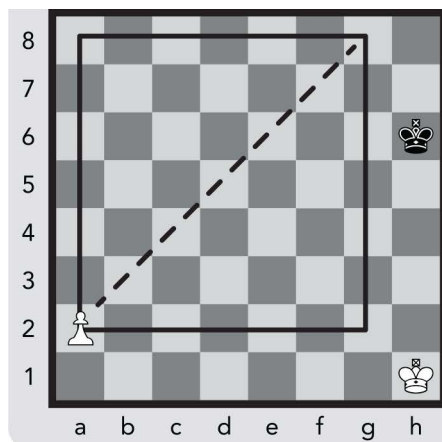
"The Square of the Pawn"

fig. 11.35

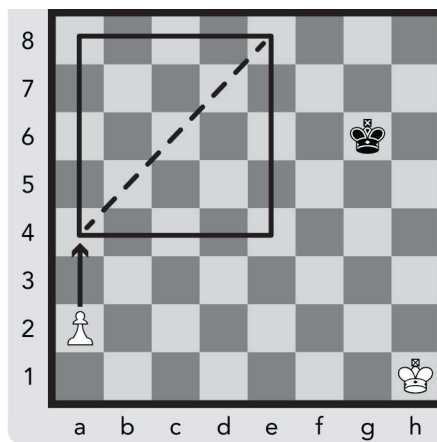


With the pawn on a4, black can no longer get into the square.

fig. 11.36 and
fig. 11.37

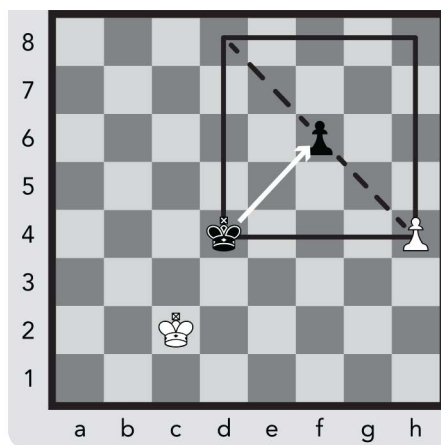


Black can move to the g-file and enter the square...



...but if the enemy pawn advances two squares in one move, the king will be too far outside the square to stop it from promoting!

fig. 11.38



Despite a king being in the square, a pawn blocks the king's path and prevents it from defending the queening square in time.

fig. 11.39

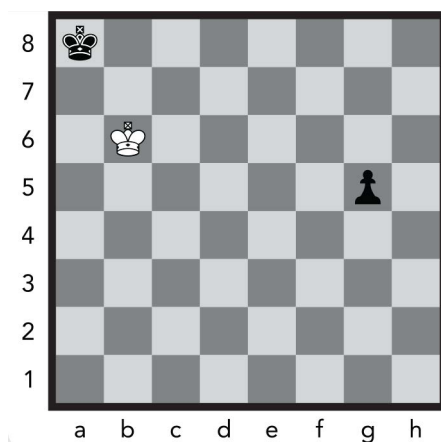
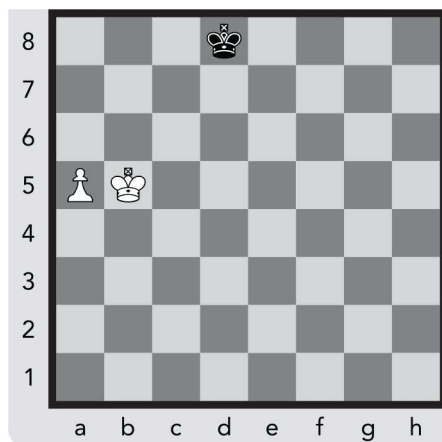
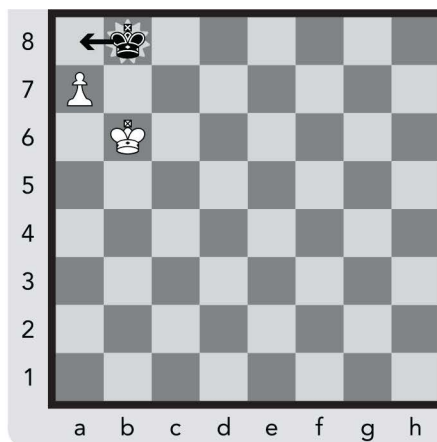


fig. 11.40 and
fig. 11.41

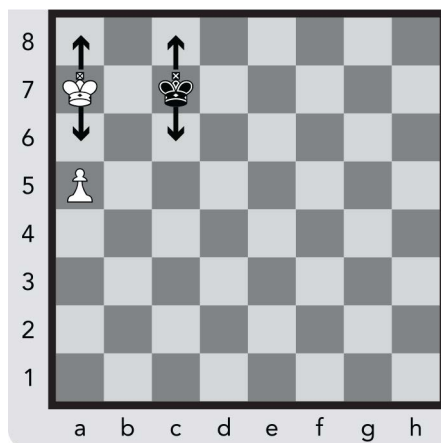


Even with white to move, this will lead
to a draw.



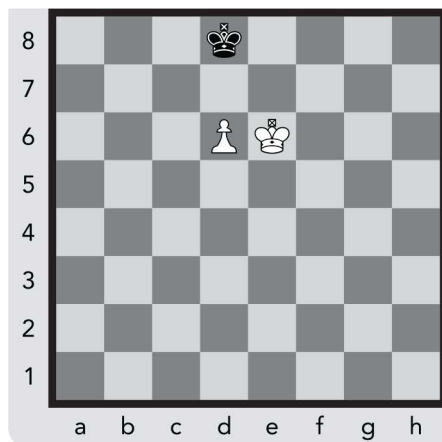
Black can always hide in front of the pawn.

fig. 11.42

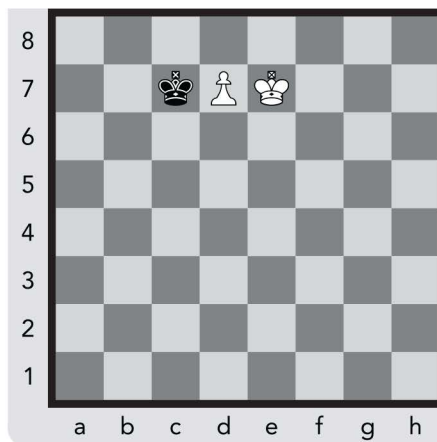


White's king is stuck!

fig. 11.43 and
fig. 11.44

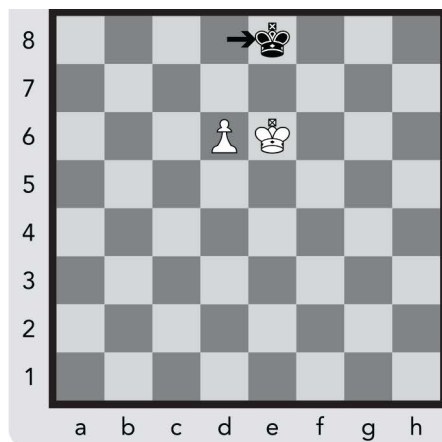


Is this a win or a draw?
The answer depends on whose move it is.

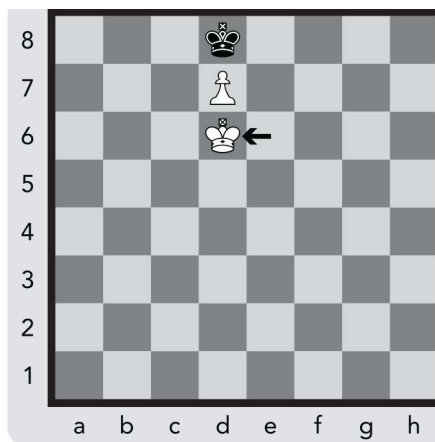


Black cannot prevent white from queening.

fig. 11.45 and
fig. 11.46

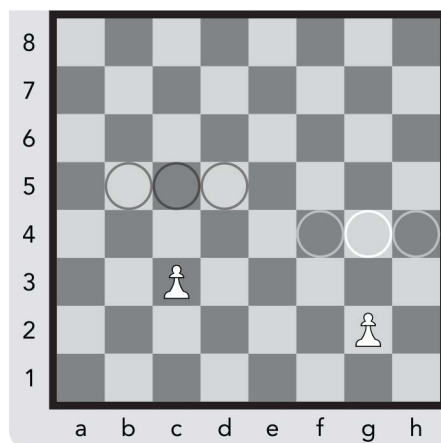


Black steps in front of the opposing king.



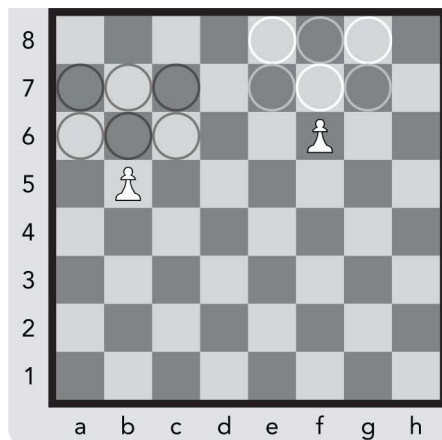
Black breathes a heavy sigh of relief.

fig. 11.47

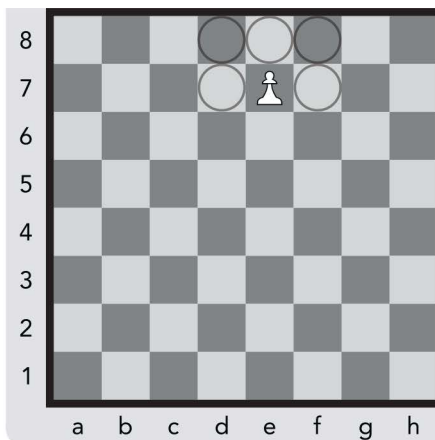


The key squares are always the three squares directly two ranks above the pawn if the pawn is on the bottom half of the board.

fig. 11.48 and
fig. 11.49

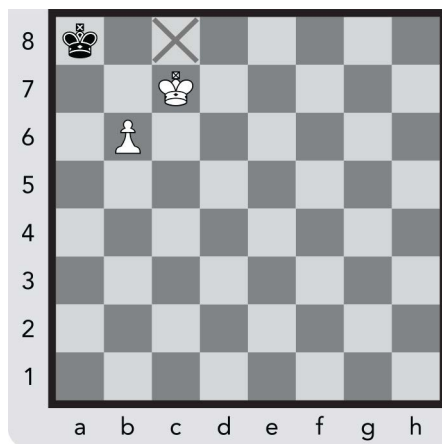


The key squares when the pawn is on the fifth or sixth rank.



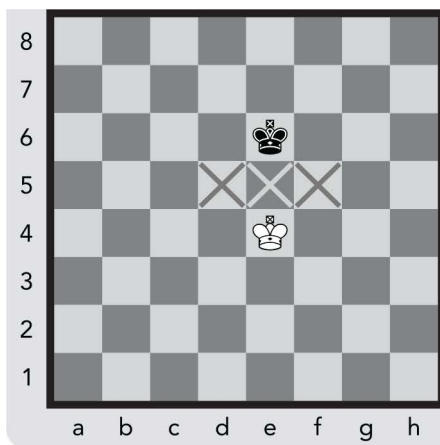
The key squares when the pawn is on the seventh rank.

fig. 11.50

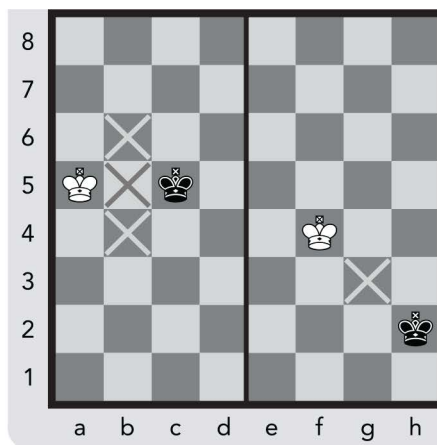


Always watch out for stalemate!

fig. 11.51 and
fig. 11.52

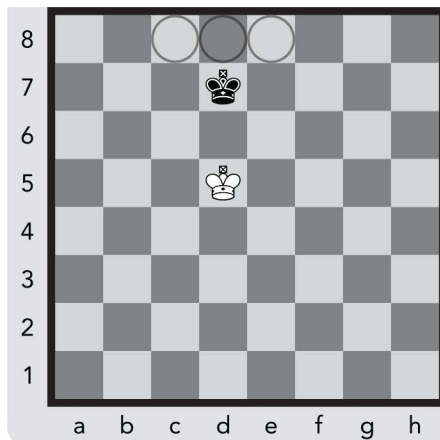


The kings are in opposition.

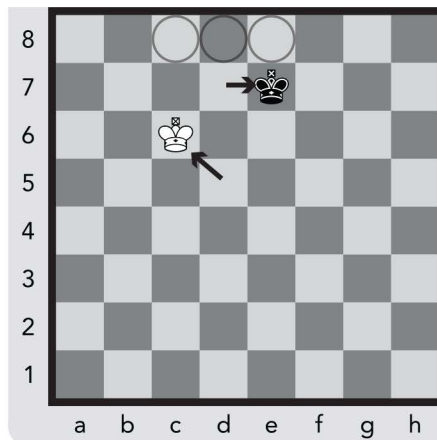


More examples of opposition.

fig. 11.53 and
fig. 11.54

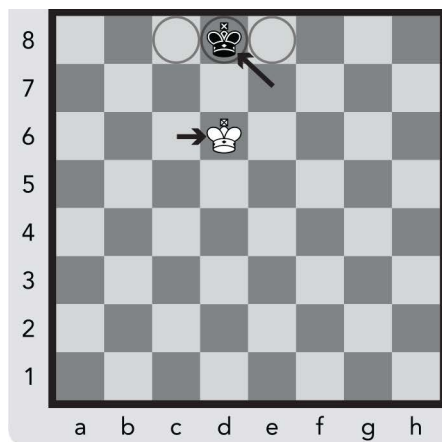


How can white get to one of the targets?

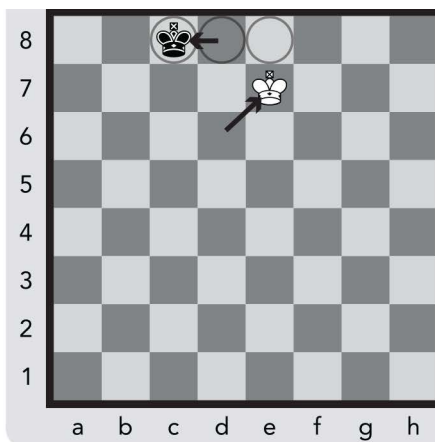


Having the opposition has already forced black's king away.

fig. 11.55 and
fig. 11.56

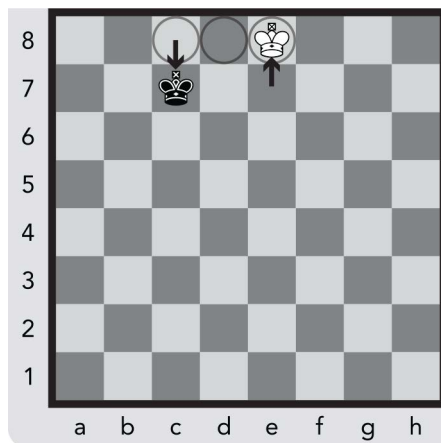


The same position that we started with, but
moved up a rank.



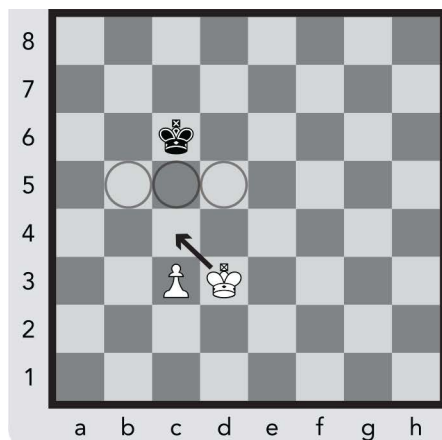
The dance continues.

fig. 11.57

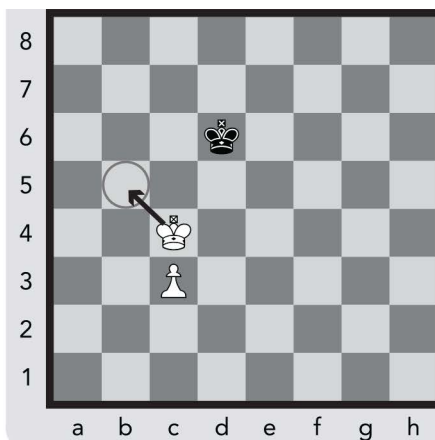


White has reached the target!

fig. 11.58 and
fig. 11.59

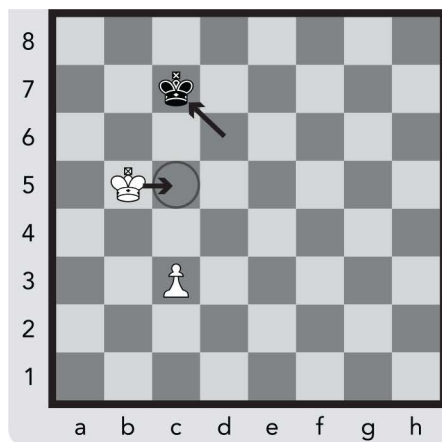


Getting the opposition is elemental.

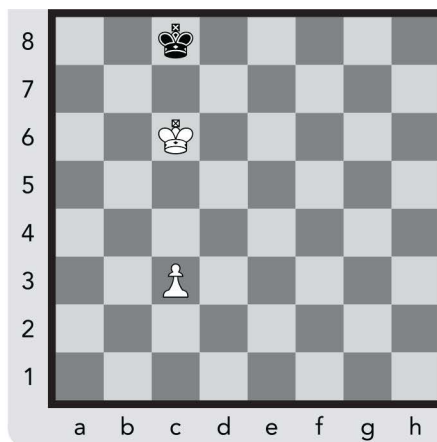


White acquires a key square.

fig. 11.60 and
fig. 11.61

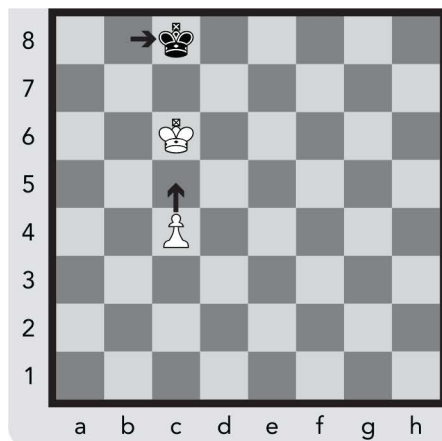


White can once again take the opposition with 3. Kc5.

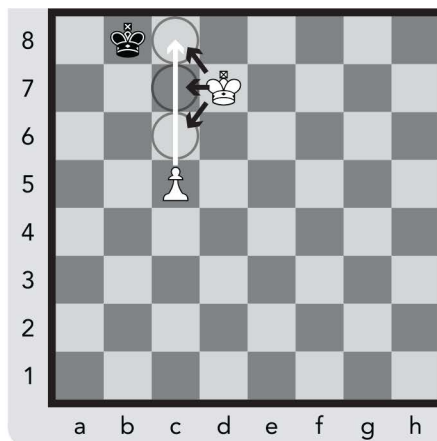


The position after 4... Kc8 5. Kc6.

fig. 11.62 and
fig. 11.63

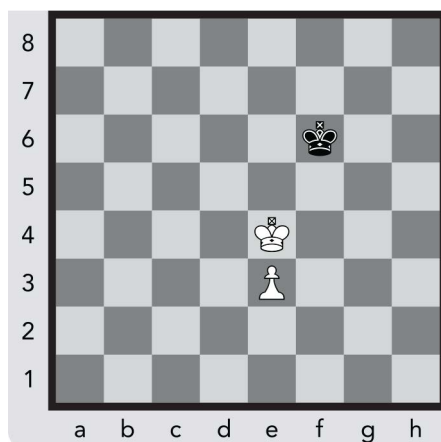


Black gets the opposition, but white doesn't have to move their king anywhere.



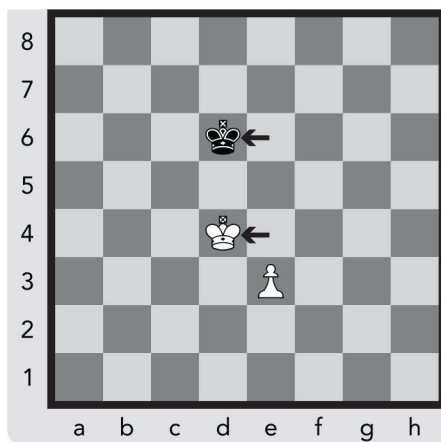
Black's king is powerless to stop the pawn from promoting.

fig. 11.64

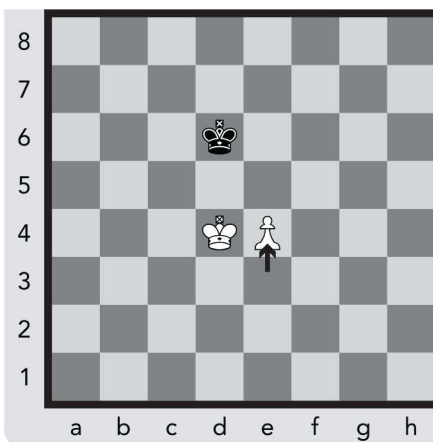


Black to move and defend.

fig. 11.65 and
fig. 11.66

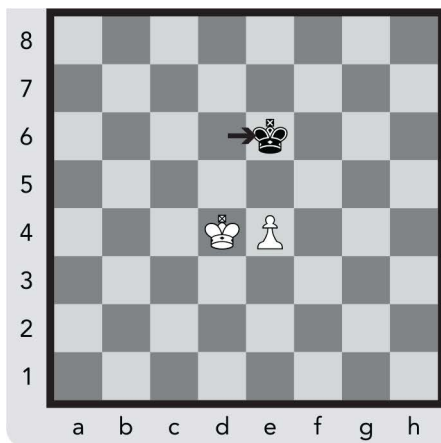


Having the opposition is mandatory when both attacking and defending this endgame.

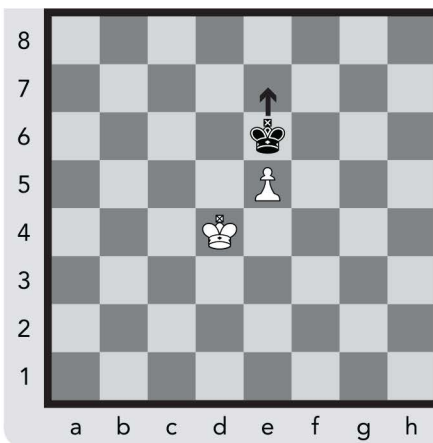


White pushes a pawn, since no progress can be made with the king.

fig. 11.67 and
fig. 11.68

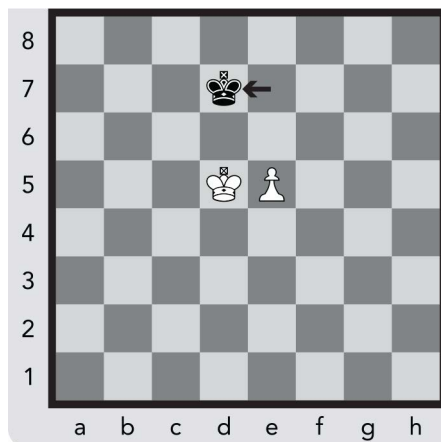


3... Ke6 is the only move that leads to a draw.



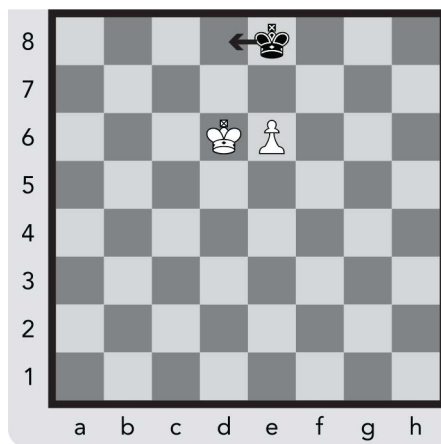
Black's most principled reply.

fig. 11.69



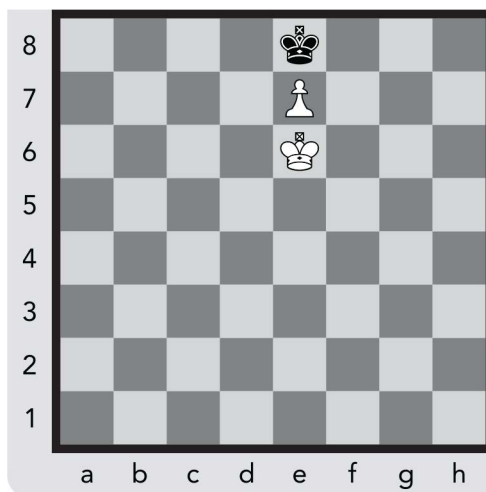
Taking the opposition whenever possible.

fig. 11.70



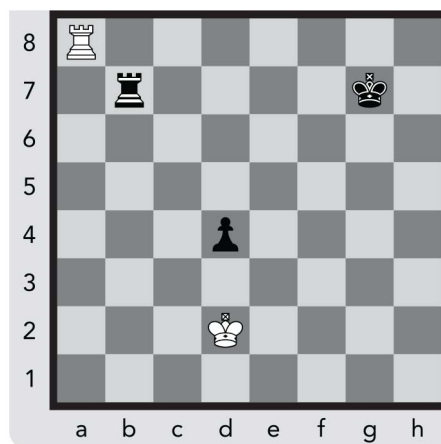
Black defends fearlessly with the opposition.

fig. 11.71



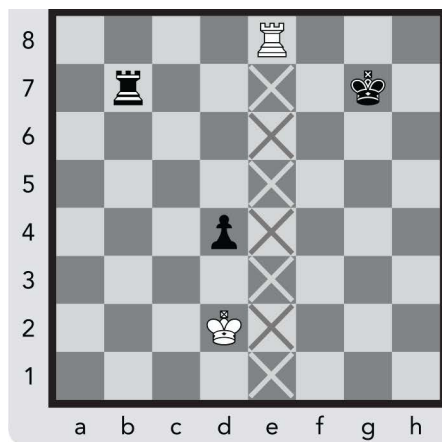
Stalemate!

fig. 11.72

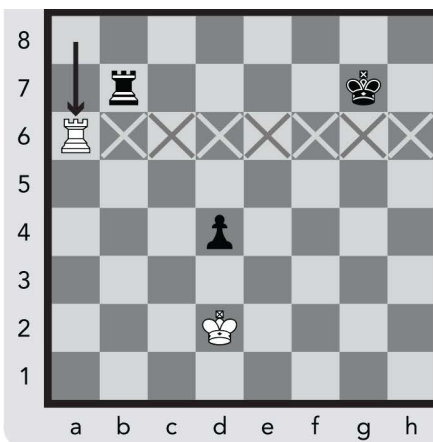


White to move and stop black's king in his boots.

fig. 11.73 and
fig. 11.74

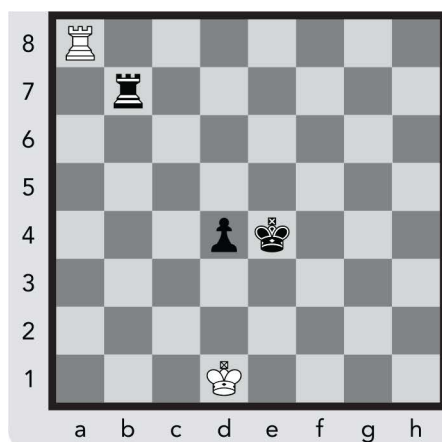


White creates an impassable wall.

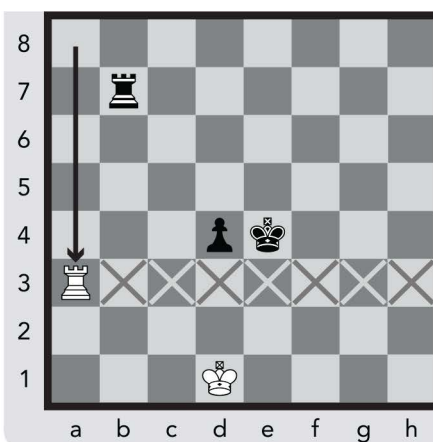


White can also cut off black's king laterally.

fig. 11.75 and
fig. 11.76

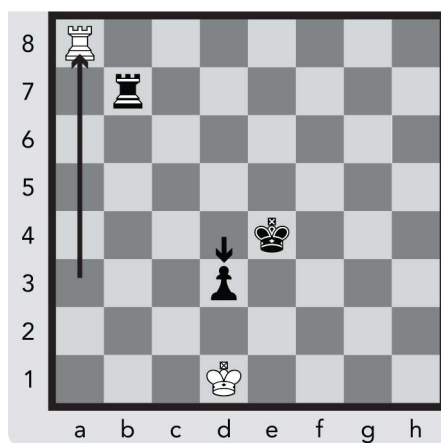


White to move and employ the
Philidor Position.



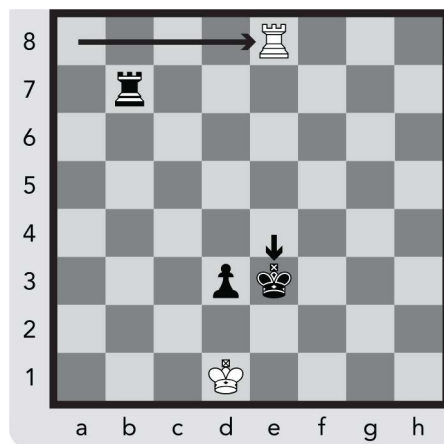
The Philidor Position.

fig. 11.77



Once the pawn moves to the third rank,
drive the rook to the far back rank.

fig. 11.78



White gives checks from behind.

fig. 11.79

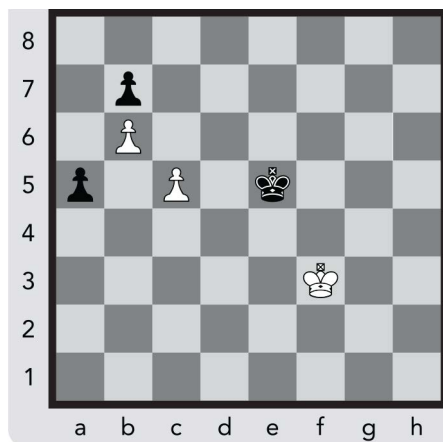
PAWNLESS ENDGAMES			
STRONGER SIDE	WEAKER SIDE	DIFFICULTY	NOTES
		Extremely easy	The queen versus king endgame is a simple win for the side with the queen. Therefore, any material in addition to the queen is a bonus; checkmating with two queens is a simple endeavor, for example. But watch out for stalemate!
		Very easy	Just remember the box technique, and this is an easy win.
		–	This is a draw. Even if your opponent helps you, it is impossible to deliver checkmate.
		–	This is a draw. Checkmate is not possible.
		Moderate	This is usually a draw if the knight remains close to its king and away from the corner of the board. If the knight becomes separated far from the king it can usually be captured, and there are some positions in the corner where the stronger side can win. To defend, keep your knight close to your king, and stay away from the corner.
		Easy	This is a simple draw except in rare positions where the bishop threatens the enemy king and the defending king is not in the corner. To defend, position your king in the opposite-colored corner from the bishop and keep the bishop on the diagonal, aiming for the square next to the corner (e.g., king on h8 and bishop controlling g8). Place the bishop on g8 only when necessary to avoid check; otherwise, you risk losing. Keep the bishop as distant as possible.
		Moderate	This endgame is considered a theoretical draw, save for exceptional cases where the side with the rook and knight can win if the opposing king is poorly placed or the rook is unable to defend effectively.

PAWNLESS ENDGAMES			
STRONGER SIDE	WEAKER SIDE	DIFFICULTY	NOTES
		Moderate	This is a win that requires some technique. However, it is an extremely rare endgame to get. I have personally never had this endgame in all my years of playing chess. It is therefore not pragmatic to invest time in learning it for practical game scenarios. However, studying how the bishops work together from an exercise standpoint can still offer valuable educational insights.
		Very difficult	This is a theoretical win, but a complicated one that requires knowing the technique. First, it should be noted that this is an extremely rare endgame to have. Most chess players might see it maybe two or three times in their lifetimes. However, some players, myself included, enjoy the challenge of learning this very technical endgame. It's also educational to see how the bishop and knight can work and synergize together. Checkmate can only be forced in two of the four corners, as the corner mating square must be the same color as the bishop. To drive the king there, two methodical techniques exist: the W maneuver and the Delétang triangle method. There are many YouTube videos and online guides explaining these endgame techniques if you'd like to learn them.
		Extremely difficult	This is a win unless the starting position allows an immediate stalemate or a perpetual check. However, with strong defense, this is arguably the most difficult pawnless endgame in chess. Even strong grandmasters regularly mess it up, both from the defending and attacking side. At lower levels, the side with the queen will usually win, because proper defense can be difficult (especially for fifty moves). If you'd like to learn the queen-versus rook-endgame, there is a position in it called the Philidor position which is crucial to know. Beyond that, there is an exhaustively comprehensive free book on Chessable.com called <i>The Queen vs. Rook Endgame</i> , but I warn you: it is not for the fainthearted!

PAWNLESS ENDGAMES

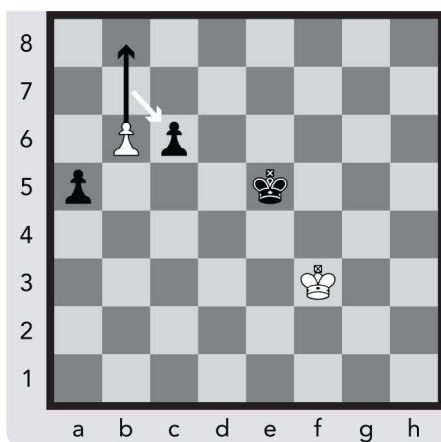
STRONGER SIDE	WEAKER SIDE	DIFFICULTY	NOTES
		Very difficult	This is considered a theoretical draw, but in practical play, maintaining accurate defense for fifty moves can be challenging, especially against strong opponents. Even top players frequently mishandle this endgame! To defend, two techniques can be employed: the Cochrane defense and the second-rank defense. Since the former ends up transitioning to a second-rank defense, I recommend only learning the latter. In the second-rank defense, position the king and rook on the second rank, keeping them in close proximity. Avoid the corners whenever possible and consider placing the king on the edge of the board, with the rook on the second rank. This configuration enables the rook to safeguard the king, deliver checks to the opponent's king, and set up stalemate opportunities. It's important to note that the second rank can be rotated to any side of the board (e.g., b and g files, and second and seventh ranks). To win this endgame with the rook and bishop, you will need to learn the Philidor position (this is a different Philidor position from the queen-versus-rook and rook-and-pawn-versus-rook endgames), which forces a win once the specific position is reached. It is a fairly complicated technique, however, and you will need to learn how to respond to the numerous defenses and responses against it.
		—	Surprisingly, this is a theoretical draw due to stalemate considerations. The two knights cannot force checkmate. However, if the weaker side has another piece or even a single pawn, a forced checkmate is possible since stalemate can be avoided. This is another extremely rare endgame.

fig. 11.80

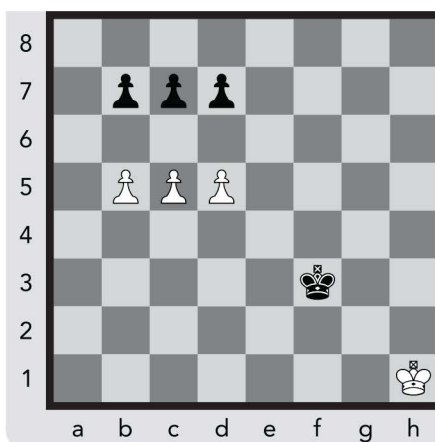


White to move and win via a pawn breakthrough.

fig. 11.81 and
fig. 11.82

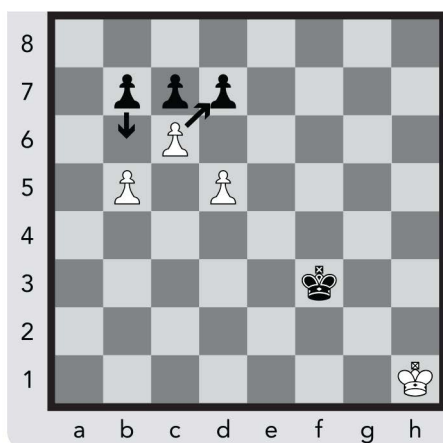


White has created a pawn breakthrough.



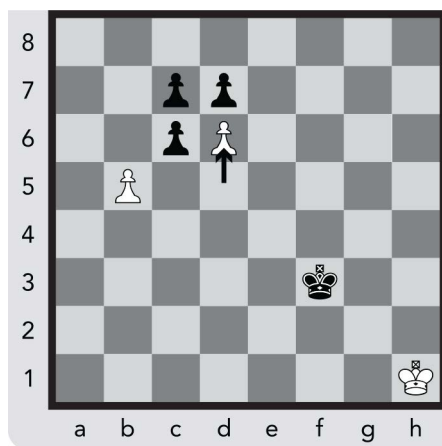
White to move and win.

fig. 11.83



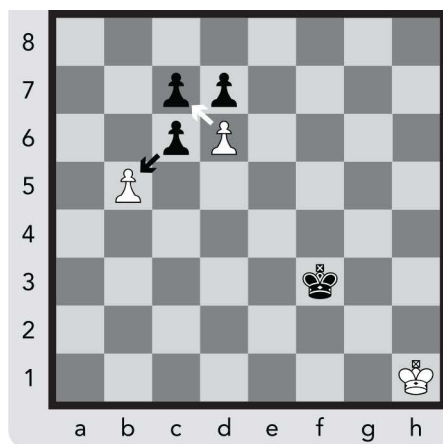
1... b6 and 1... d6 allow white to capture on d7 and b7, respectively.

fig. 11.84

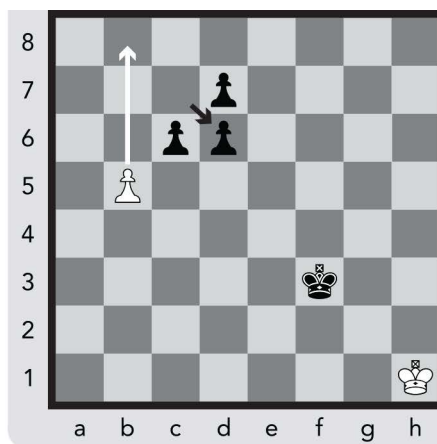


White gifts another pawn!

fig. 11.85 and
fig. 11.86



Black cannot ignore the d6 pawn or else it
will promote in two moves.



The point of the two previously
sacrificed pawns!

fig. 11.87

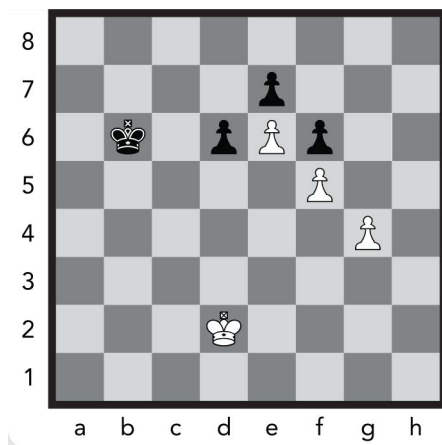
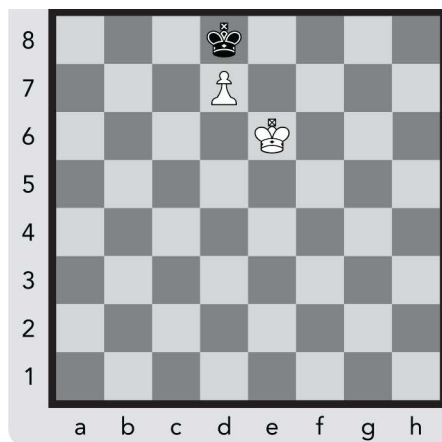
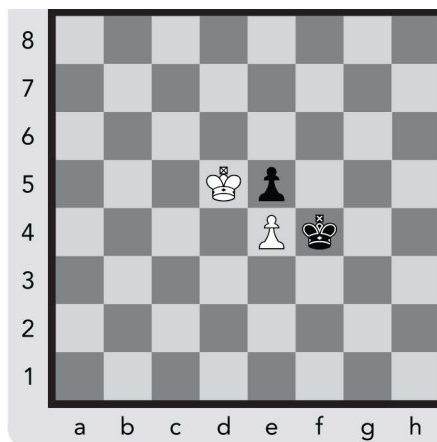


fig. 11.88 and
fig. 11.89

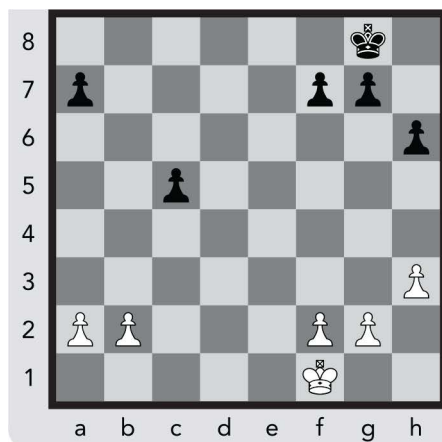


White to move.

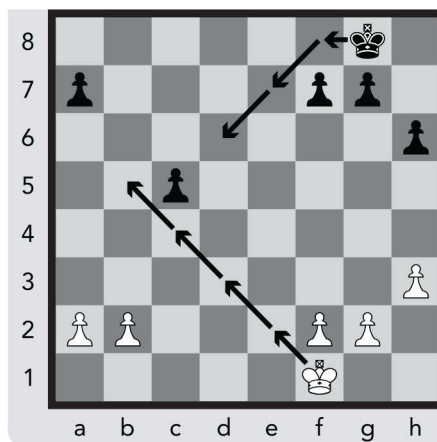


A trébuchet is a case of reciprocal zugzwang.

fig. 11.90 and
fig. 11.91

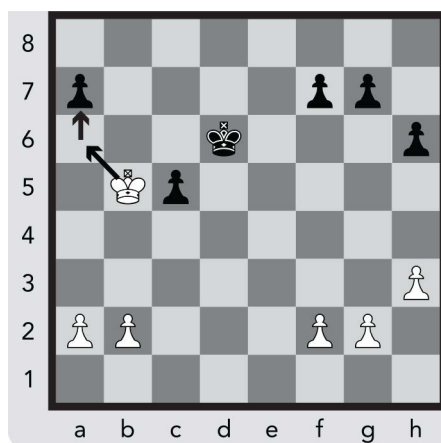


A typical endgame position.



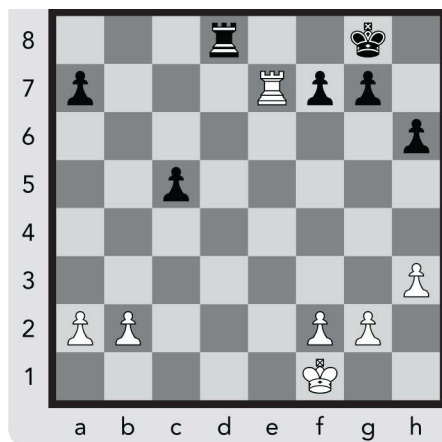
Endgames often see the king take
an active role.

fig. 11.92

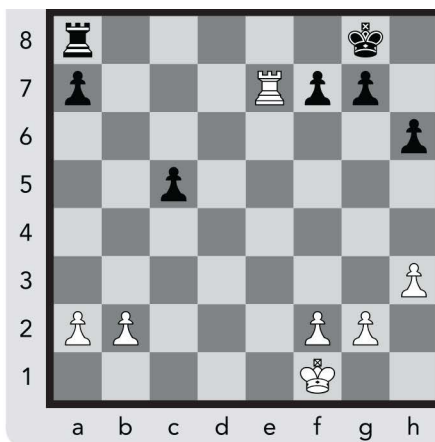


White's active king leads the army to victory.

fig. 11.93 and
fig. 11.94

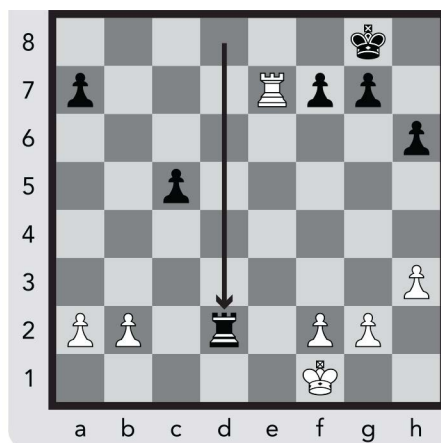


Black can choose to play passively
or actively here.



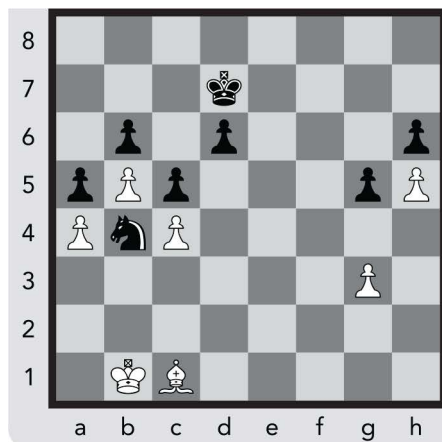
Black's rook on a8 is about as passive
as you can get.

fig. 11.95

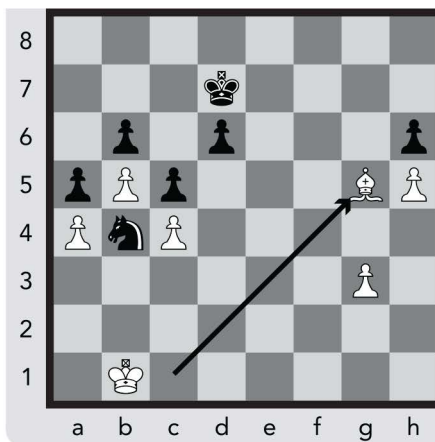


Staying active is good for your health—and your pieces!

fig. 11.96 and
fig. 11.97

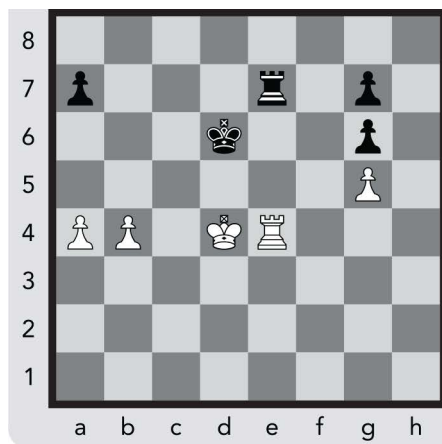


An opportunity lurking in the shadows.

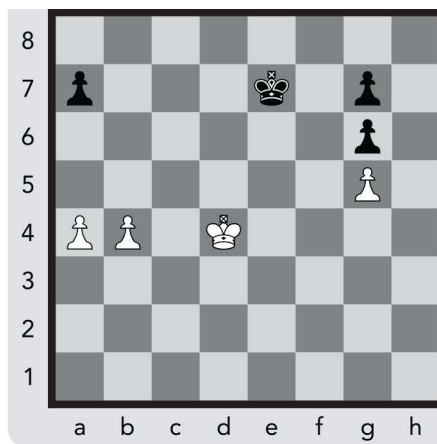


1. Bxg5! makes a bold statement.

fig. 11.98 and
fig. 11.99



Black's doubled pawns can be exploited immediately.

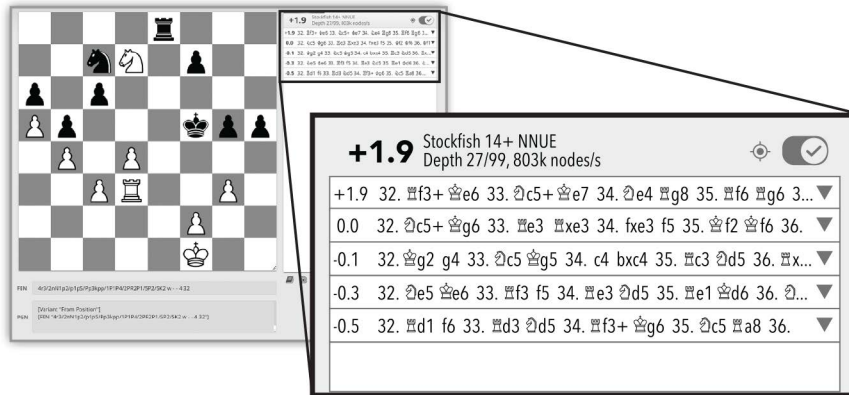


With the rooks traded off, black's pawn structure weakness is further highlighted.

CHAPTER 12

Continuing the Journey

fig. 12.1



An analysis screen with engine lines.

Appendix

fig. A.1

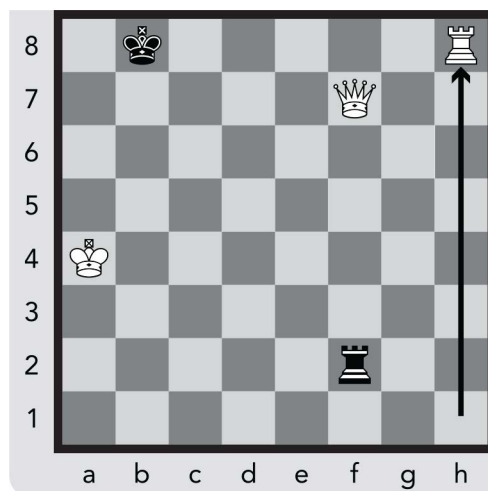


fig. A.2

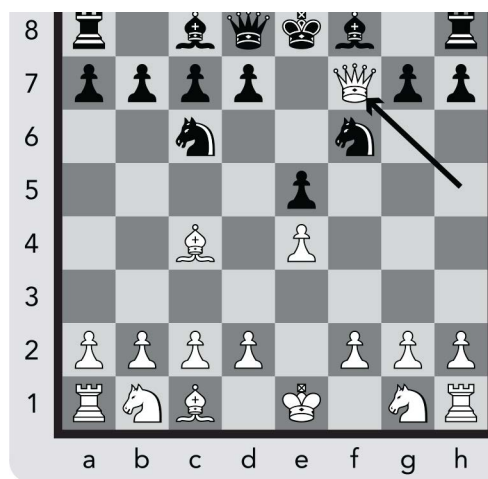
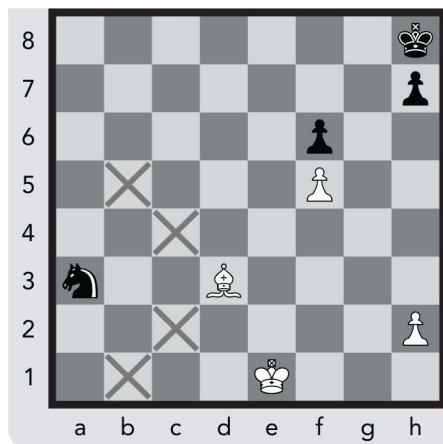


fig. A.3

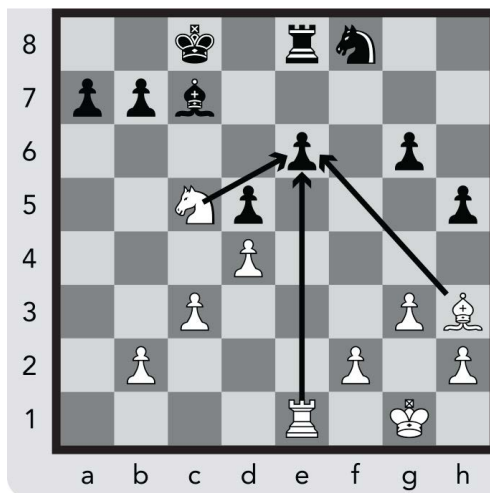


fig. A.4



White's bishop dominates black's knight. The knight is a weakness

fig. A.5



Black's backward e6 pawn is a liability

fig. A.6

