Playing chess

The game of chess has been described as an art, a science and a sport. Almost anyone can learn how to play. Some top chess champions can earn millions – so it could be worth spending time on improving your game.

The mission

The main objective in chess is to trap your opponent's King. Don't forget – all the other moves that you make in the game should build towards this.

Stages of the game

The game has three stages:

♟ **The opening**
When you try to bring all your pieces into play and develop your plan of attack. (See pages 32–43.)

Forward march!

♟ **The middlegame**
When you and your opponent battle for control of the board by taking each other's pieces. (See pages 44–49.)

Out of my way!

♟ **The endgame**
When there are very few pieces left. Your King may become a more active attacking piece as it is in less danger of being attacked. (See pages 62–69.)

Gotcha!

A way of thinking

Wherever you are in a game, you should have a plan that governs how you move your pieces. Stay flexible, though, and change your plan if your opponent does something unexpected.

Don't try to plan too many moves in advance. Even champions don't tend to think ahead very far during a game of chess. There are just too many possibilities.

You can use various tactics, tricks and traps to outwit your opponent.

Setting up the board

The chess board has 64 squares of alternating colours. A "white", or lighter-coloured, square is always positioned at the player's right. The pieces are placed as shown below.
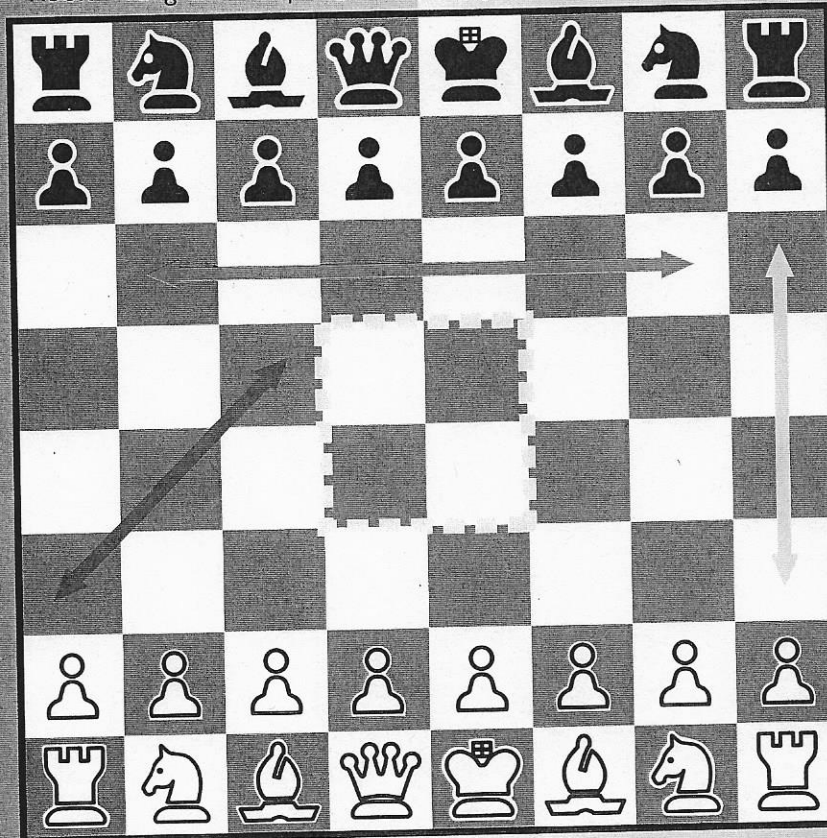
QUEENSIDE   KINGSIDE

Rook Knight Bishop Queen King Bishop Knight Rook

Pawns

The *flanks* are the two side areas of the boards. Pieces are less powerful here, as they have fewer places to move to.

The Queen always starts on a square of her own colour.

The "major pieces" are the Queens and the Rooks. Bishops and Knights are "minor pieces". All the major and minor pieces start on the back rank. The Pawns start on the second rank.

An *open file* is one that is not blocked by Pawns.

You will be at an advantage if you control the four central squares early in the game.

Key

| | A *rank* is a line of squares that runs across the board. | A *file* is a line of squares that runs from top to bottom of the board. | A line of squares that runs diagonally is called a *diagonal*. | The central part of the board. |

Key words

diagonal A line of diagonal squares.

file A line of squares from top to bottom.

rank A line of squares from left to right.

flank One of the side areas of the board.

Kingside The four files on the King's side.

open file A file that is not blocked by Pawns.

Queenside The four files on the Queen's side.

Did you know?

Some chess sets are fabulously expensive, made of silver, gold, carved stone or jade. The pieces shown here are from a set made entirely of glass. The "white" pieces are clear and the "black" pieces are frosted.
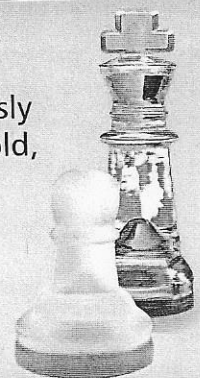
Writing chess down

The standard way to record chess moves and games of chess is called *algebraic notation*. You will see this kind of notation in chess books, newspapers or on Web sites. Each square on the board has a different code, and so does each chess piece.

How the squares are coded

Each file is given a letter and each rank has a number. This means that each square has its own code. The letter comes first when you write down the code of a square. For example, the white King is on square e1.

In diagrams, White always starts on the first two ranks, at the bottom of the board. Black always starts on ranks seven and eight, at the top of the board.
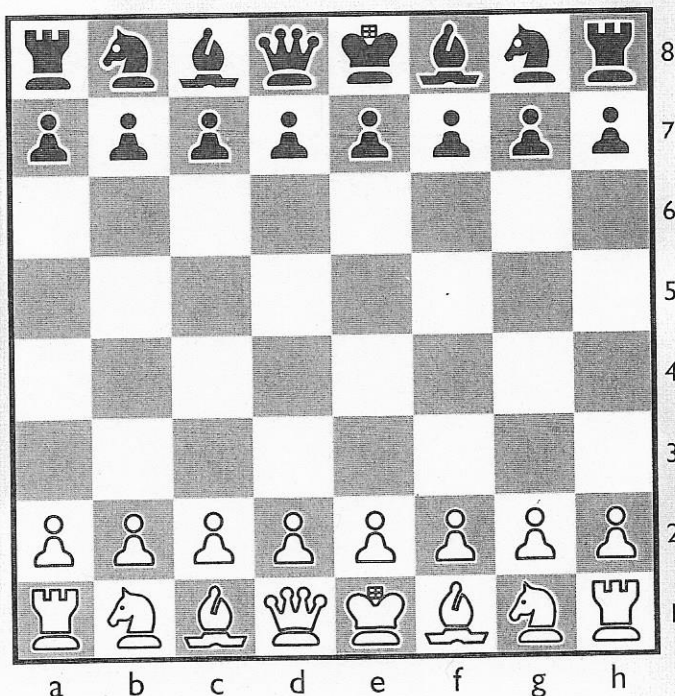
The board diagrams in this book are numbered and lettered to help you work out the code for each square.

How the pieces are coded

All the pieces except the Pawns have codes:

King = K   Knight = N

Queen = Q   Bishop = B

Rook = R   Pawn = no code

Other letters can be added after the move code to describe the move further:

+	Check	(Q)	Pawn promotes to Queen
++	Checkmate		
0-0	Kingside castle	(N)	Pawn promotes to Knight
0-0-0	Queenside castle	x	A capture
!	Good move		(this is written immediately after the piece code)
=	Neither side has the advantage		

All these terms are explained later on.

Writing moves down

Number each pair of moves – write White's move first. Write the code letter of the piece, then the letter and number of the square it is moving to. (For a Pawn, just write down the square it is moving to.) For example:

1. d4 d5   **2. e4 c6**   **3. e5 Bf5**

(Black's moves are written as **1... d5**. The dots after the number show that White's move is missing.)

Did you know?

The number of possible different games of chess is greater than the number of atoms in the known universe.

How the diagrams work

The games and puzzles in this book are described using diagrams as well as algebraic notation. Here is what the different symbols on the diagrams mean:
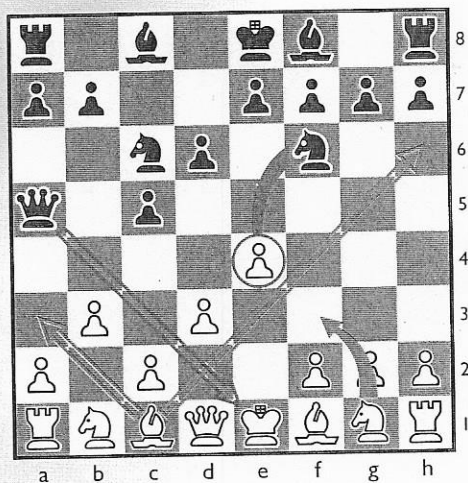
A move The new position of a piece after one turn.
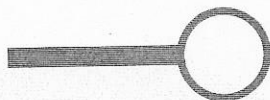
A capture A piece taken when an enemy lands on its square.

An attack A possible move that would result in capture.

A possible move A square that a piece could be moved to.

Key words

algebraic notation The standard method of writing down chess games, using letters and numbers to identify squares on the board, and letter codes for the pieces.

Internet link
For a link to a website where you can find an online guide to notation and browse a selection of beginners' chess games, go to **www.usborne-quicklinks.com**

How chess pieces move

The six types of chess piece have different moves:

King
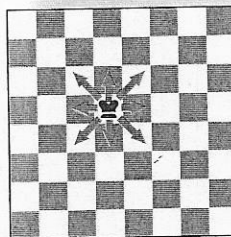
Can move one square in any direction. Cannot move to a square that is under attack from an opposing piece or jump over pieces.

Queen
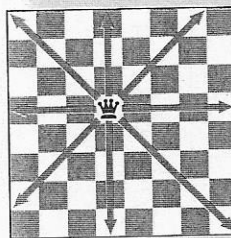
Can move any number of squares in a straight line along any open rank, file or diagonal. Cannot jump over pieces.

Rook
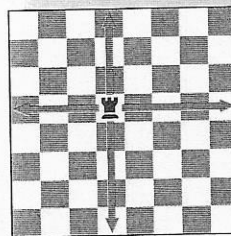
Can move any number of squares in a straight line along any open rank or file. Cannot jump over pieces.

Bishop
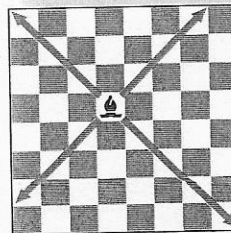
Can move any number of squares in a straight line along open diagonals. Always stays on squares of the same colour. Cannot jump over pieces.

Knight
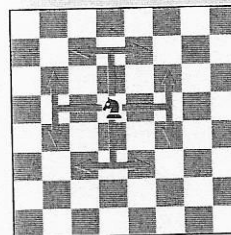
Can move in an "L" shape in any direction — two squares forward and one square to the left or right. Can jump over other pieces.

Pawn
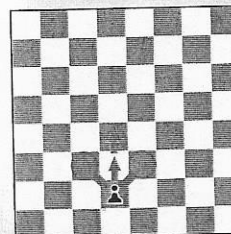
Can move one square forward, except first move, when it may move forward two squares. Can capture on either of two squares diagonally ahead.

Sheet 1-1: Names of Squares

1. Put an "X" on these squares:
    a1, e4, c2, g7, h5, b8
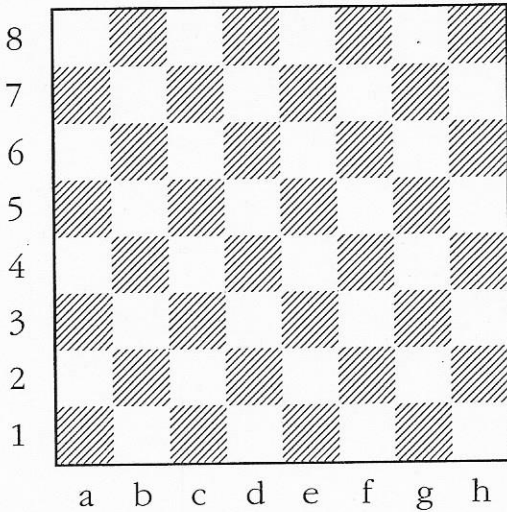
3. Print the names of the squares with the ★ on them:
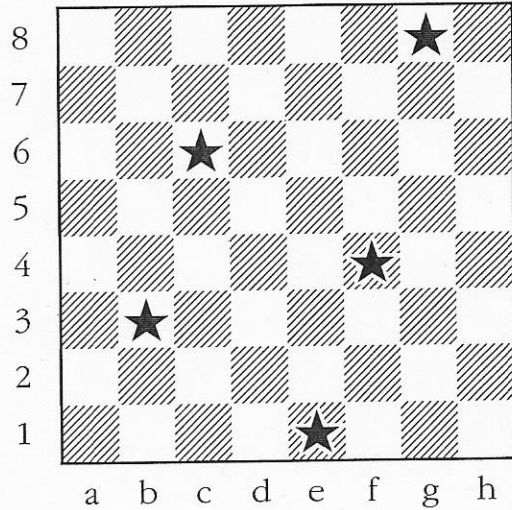
2. Put an "X" on these squares:
    g3, c6, f1, b4, h8, d2
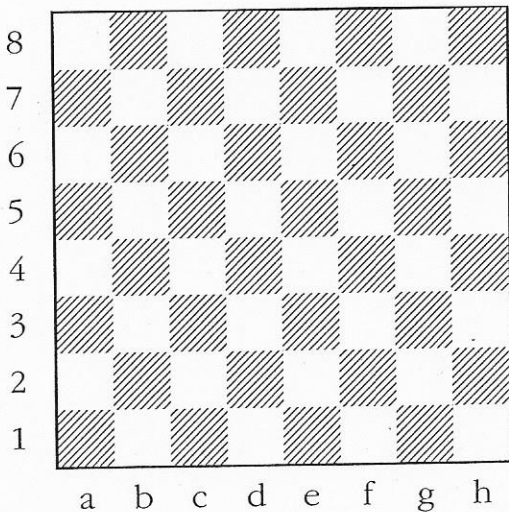
4. Print the names of the squares with the ★ on them:
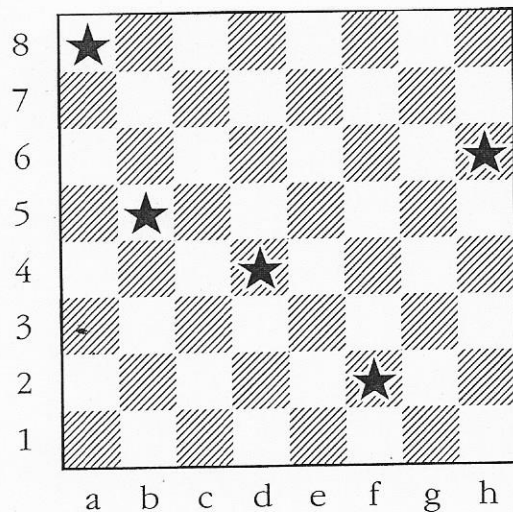
Sheet 1-2: How Pawns Move and Take
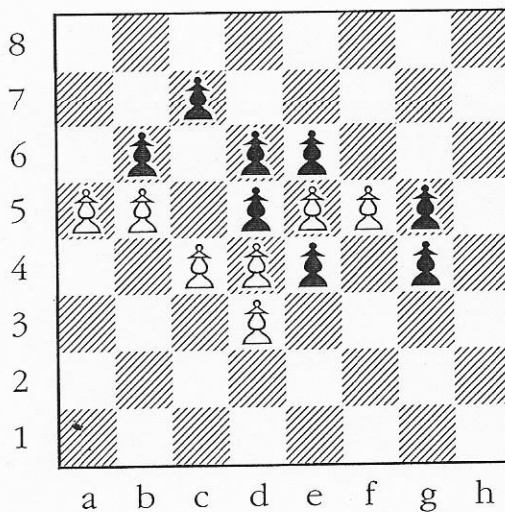
1. Circle all of the pawns that can move.
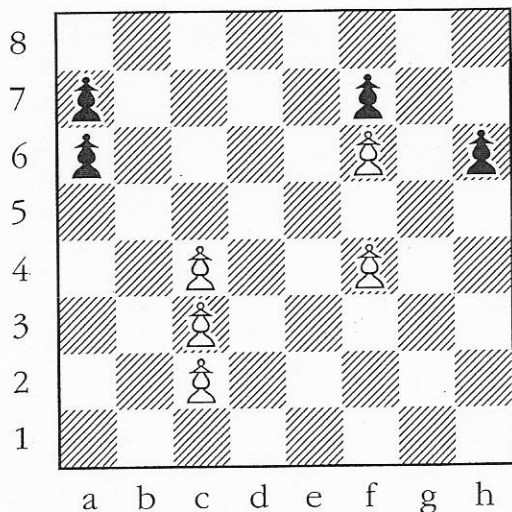
3. Circle all of the pawns that can take other pawns.
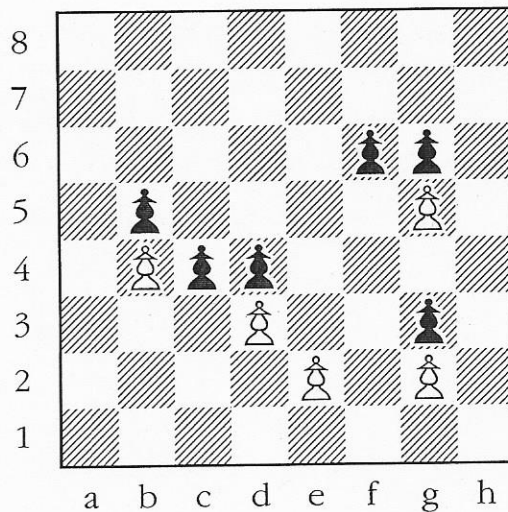
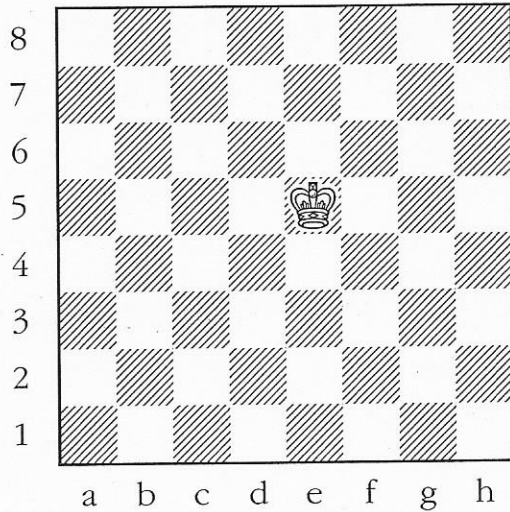2. Circle all of the pawns that can move forward **two** squares.
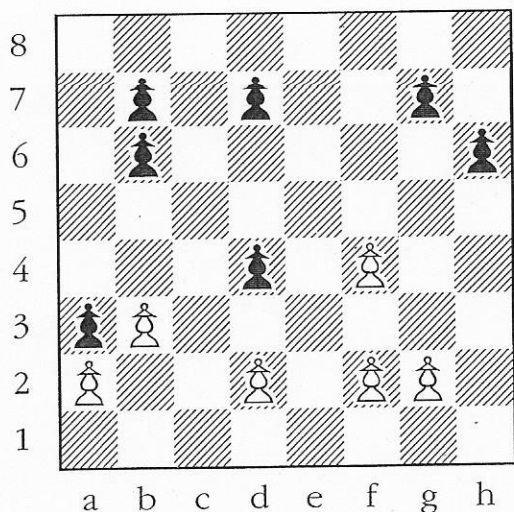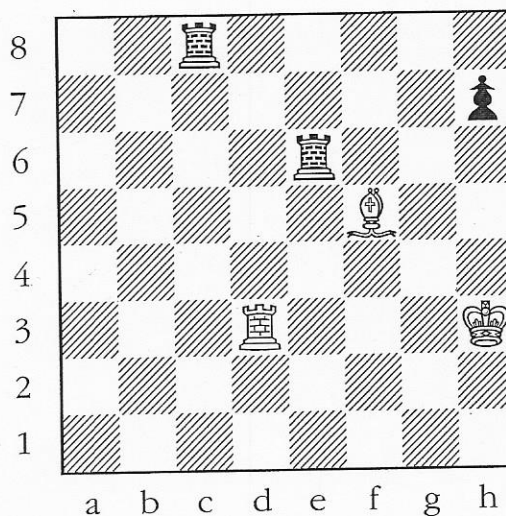

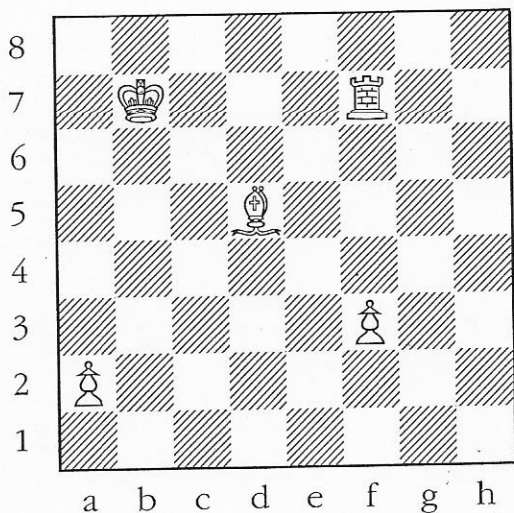4. Circle all of the pawns that can take other pawns.

Sheet 2-1: How Kings Move and Take

1. Put an "X" on all of the squares the king can move to next.

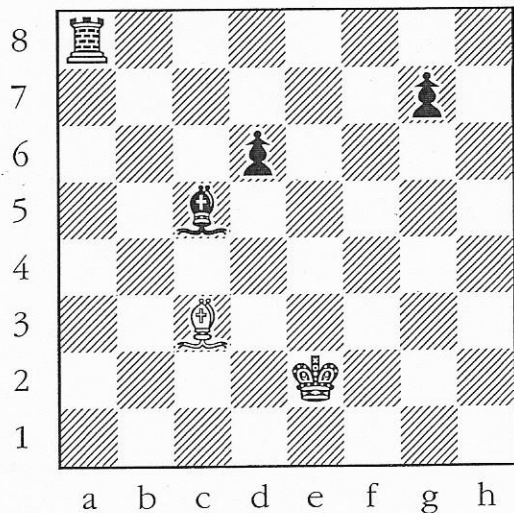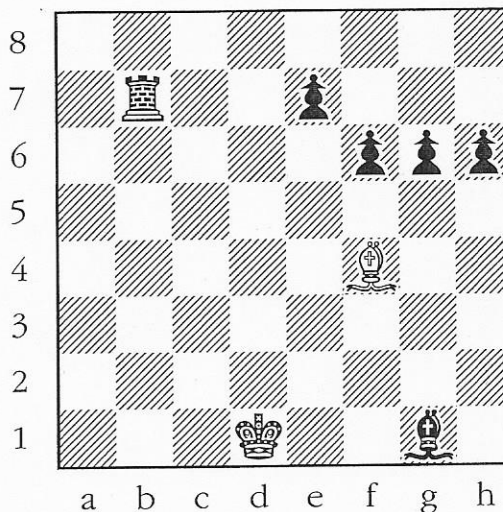2. Put an "X" on all of the squares the king can move to next.
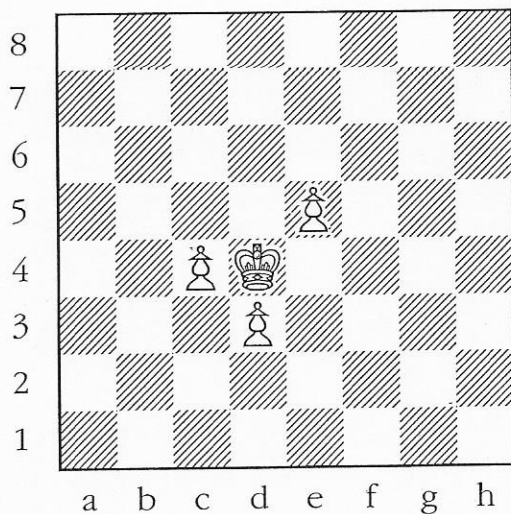
3. Put an "X" on all of the safe squares the white king can move to next. Remember, you must not be attacked.
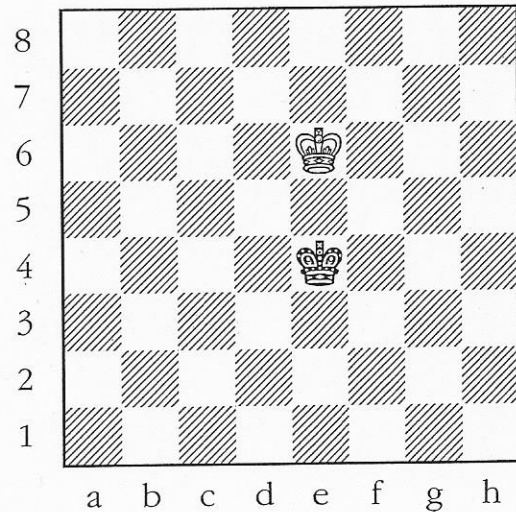
4. Put an "X" on all of the safe squares the white king can move to next. Remember, you must not be attacked.
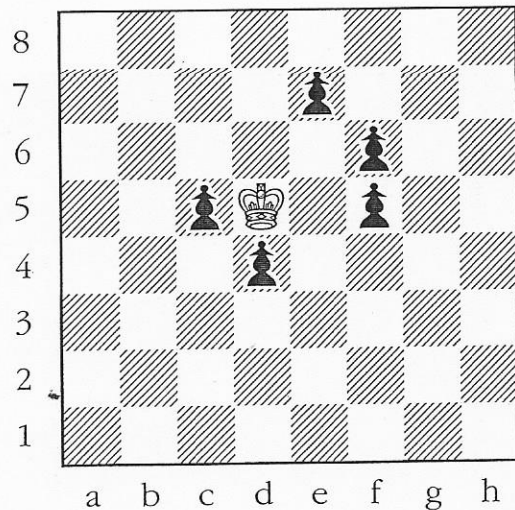
Sheet 2-1: How Kings Move and Take

5. Put an "X" on all of the safe squares the white king can move to next. Remember, you must not be attacked.
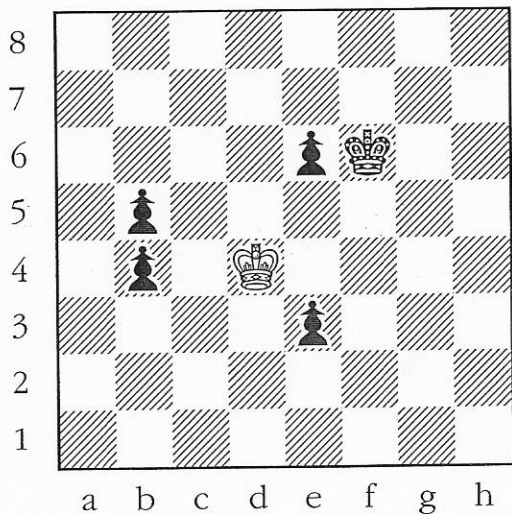
6. Put an "X" on all of the safe squares the white king can move to next. Remember, you must not be attacked.
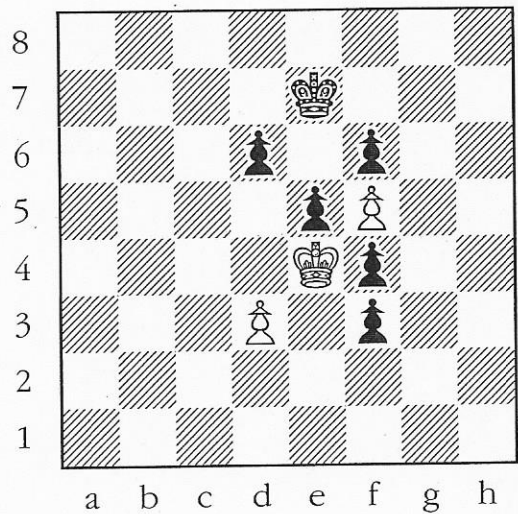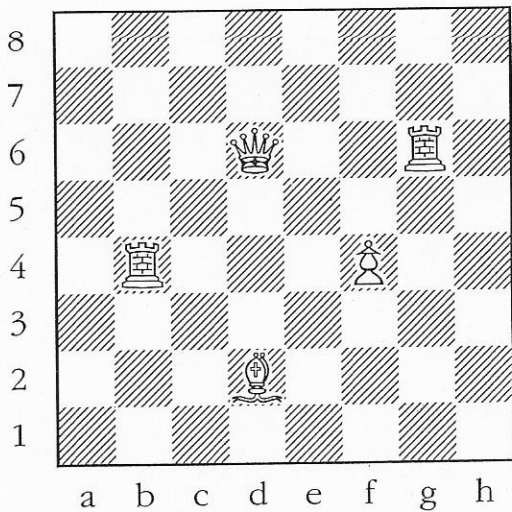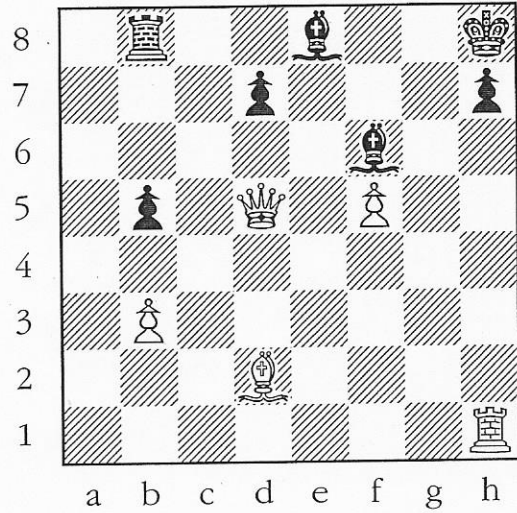
Sheet 3-1: How Rooks Move and Take

1. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next.
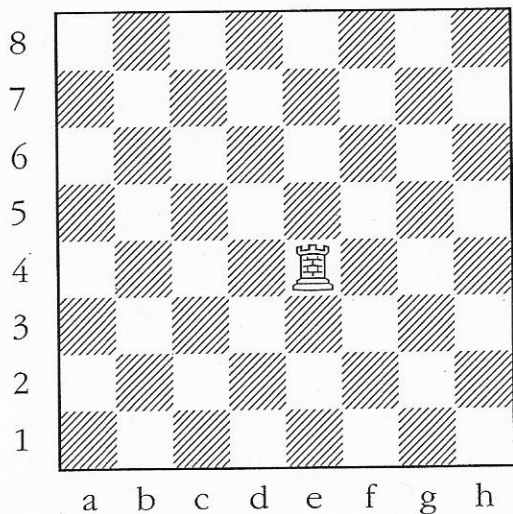
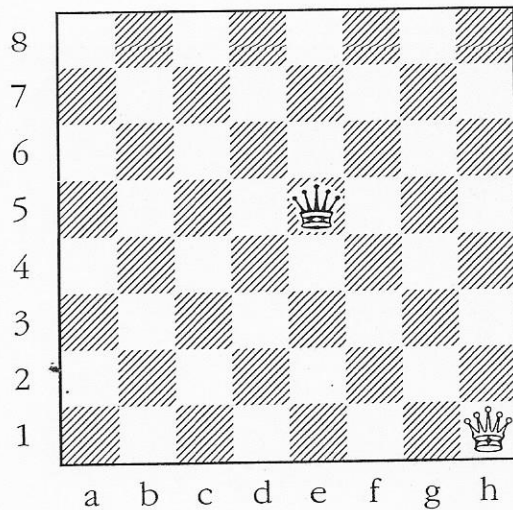2. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next.
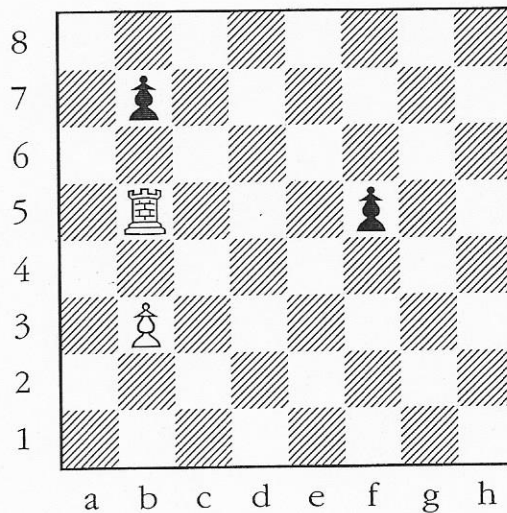
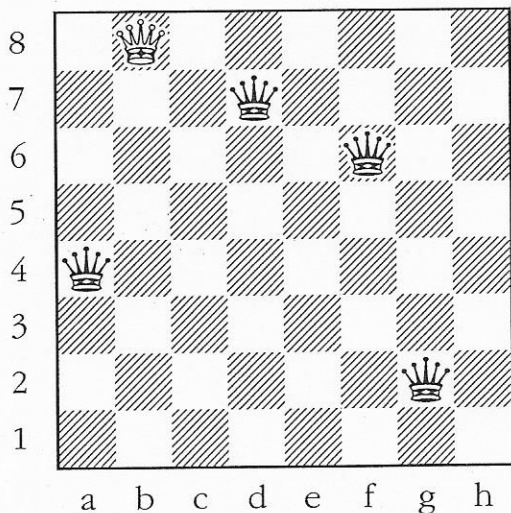3. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next.
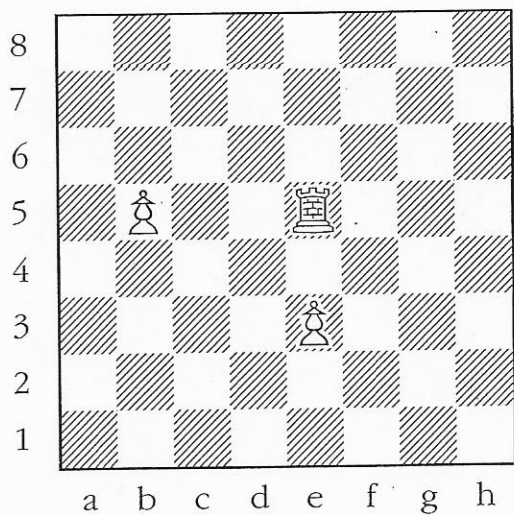
4. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.
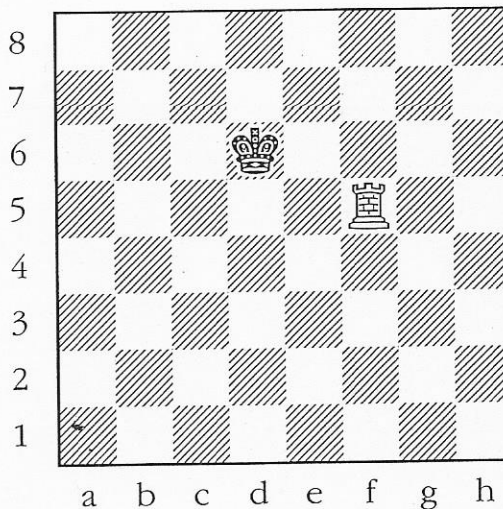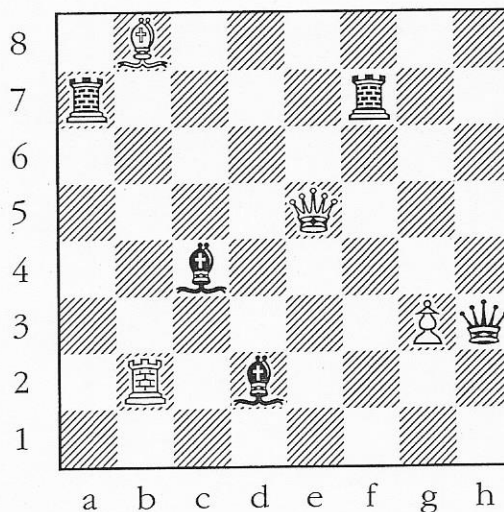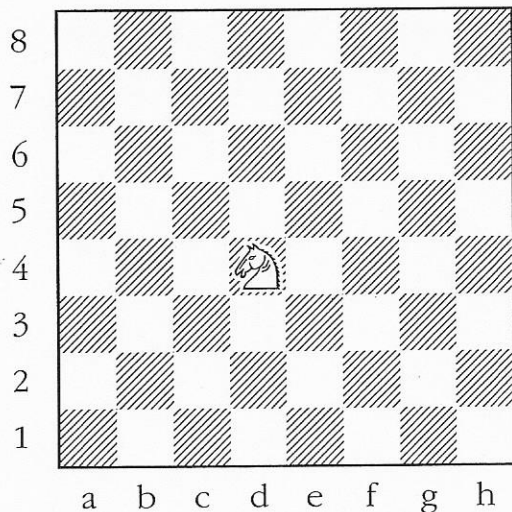
Sheet 3-1: How Rooks Move and Take

5. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.
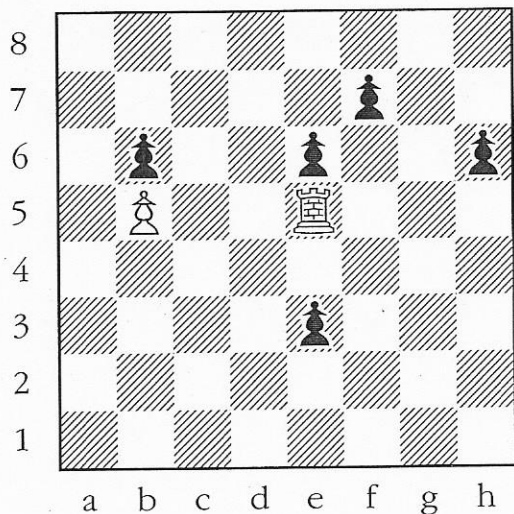
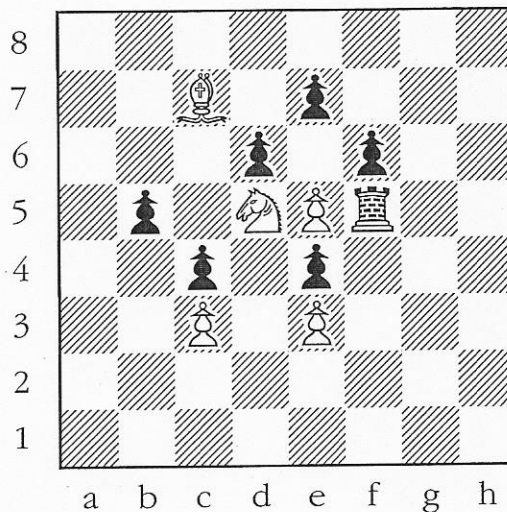6. Put an "X" on all of the squares the rook can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.
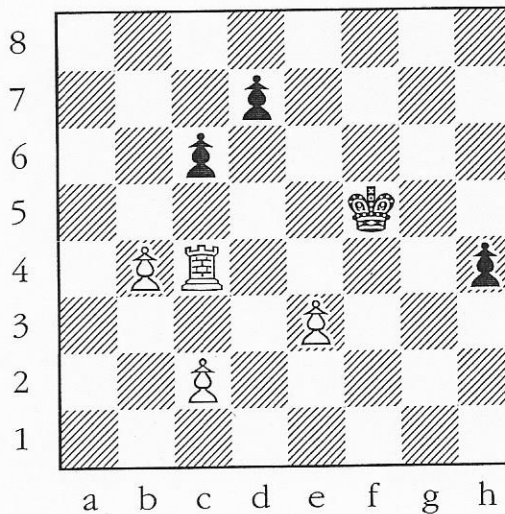
Sheet 4-1: How Bishops Move and Take
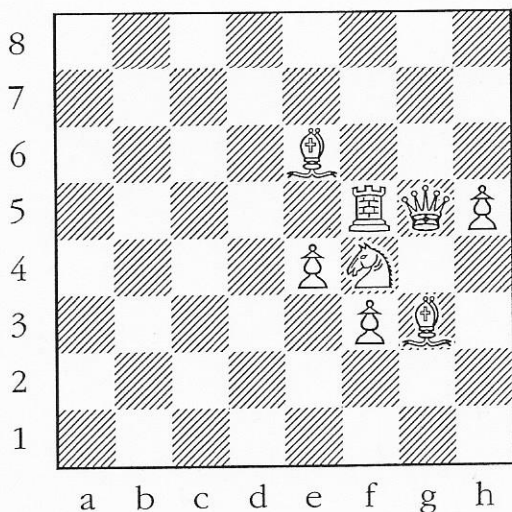
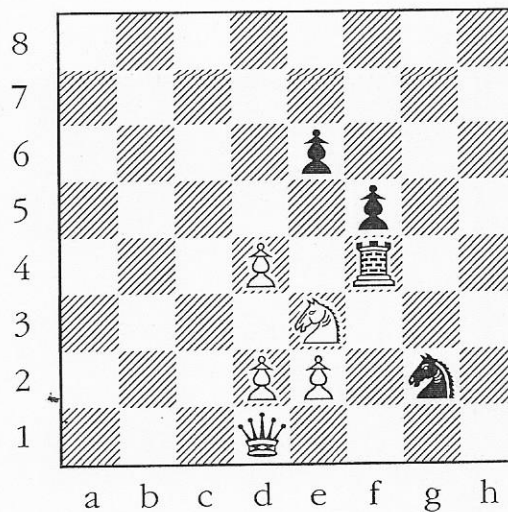1. Put an "X" on all of the squares the bishop can move to next.

2. Put an "X" on all of the squares the bishop can move to next.

3. Put an "X" on all of the squares the bishop can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.
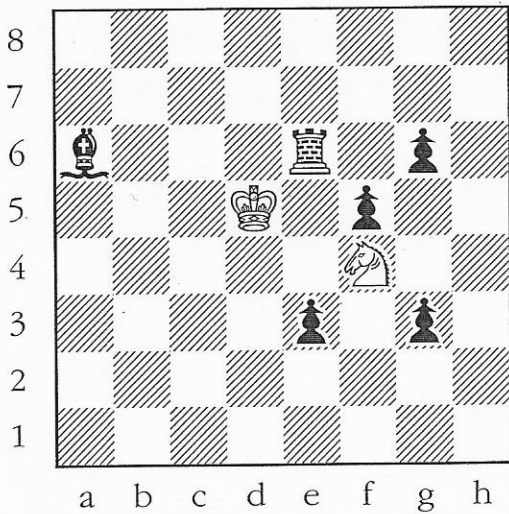

4. Put an "X" on all of the squares the bishop can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.
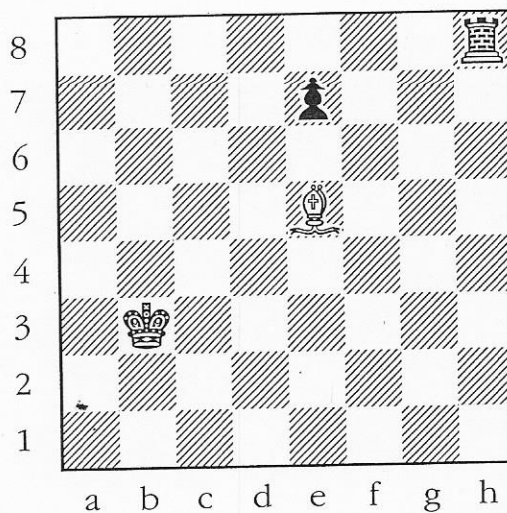
Sheet 4-1: How Bishops Move and Take

5. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white bishop can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.

6. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white bishop can move to next <u>without being taken</u>.

Sheet 5-1: How Queens Move and Take

1. Put an "X on all of the squares the queen can move to next.
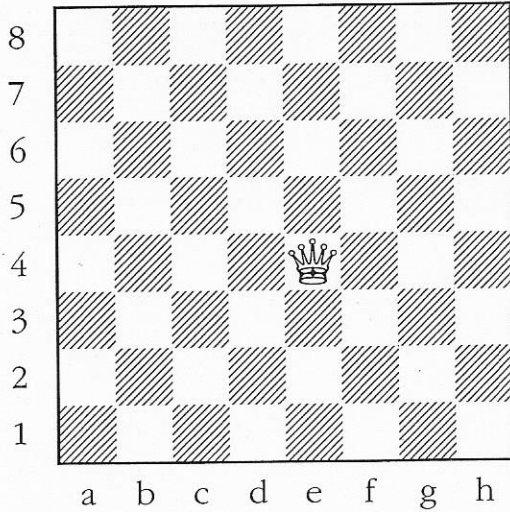
2. Put an "X" on all of the squares the queen can move to next.

3. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white queen can move to <u>without being taken</u>.

4. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white queen can move to <u>without being taken</u>.

Sheet 5-1: How Queens Move and Take

5. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white queen can go to without being taken.

6. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white queen can go to without being taken.

Sheet 6-1: How Knights Move and Take

1. Put an "X" on all of the squares the knight can move to next.

3. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white knight can move to next.

2. Put an "X" on all of the squares that the knight can move to next.

4. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white knight can move to <u>without being taken</u>.

Sheet 6-1: How Knights Move and Take

5. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white knight can move to <u>without being taken</u>.

6. Put an "X" on all of the squares the white knight can move to <u>without being taken</u>.
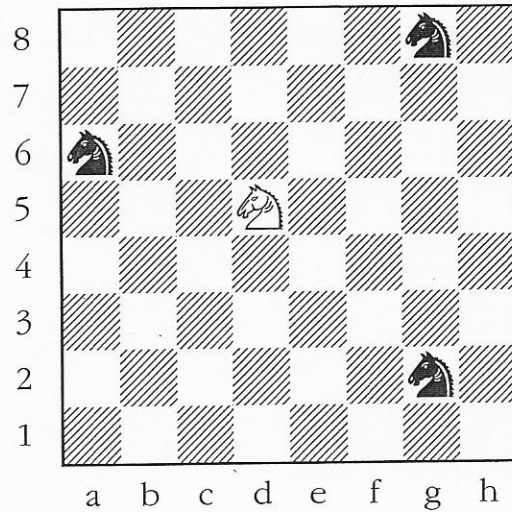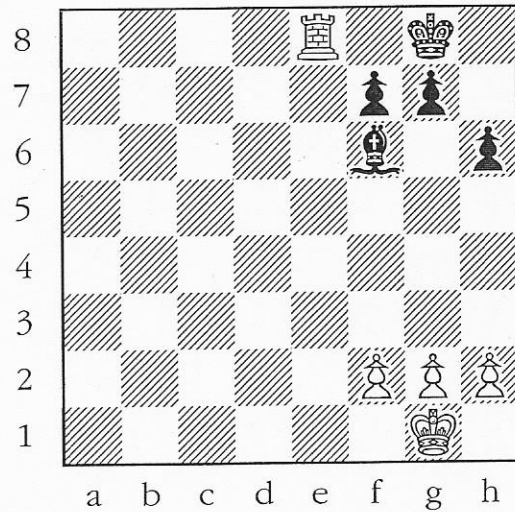
Sheet 7-1: Check or Checkmate

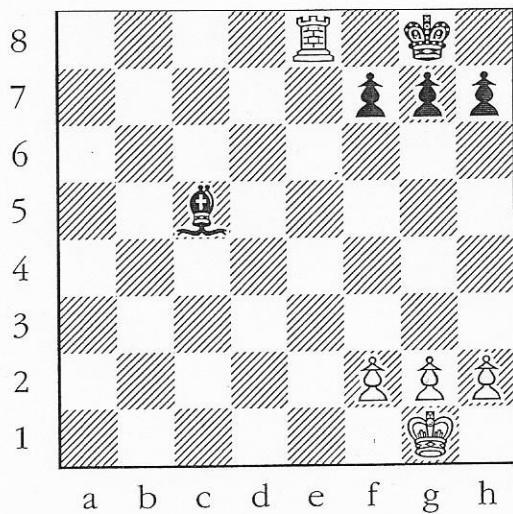Is the black king in check or in checkmate? If it is in check, draw an arrow to show how black gets out of check.
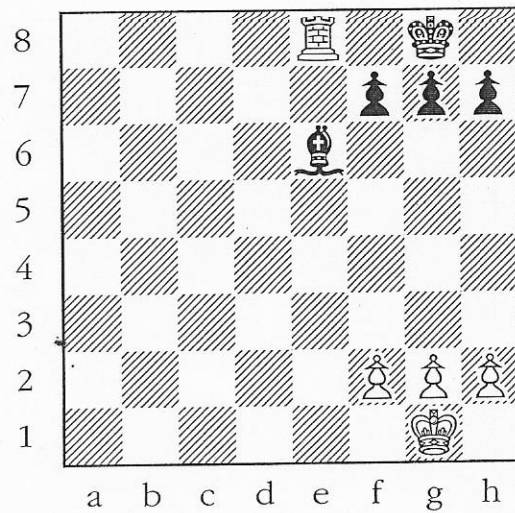
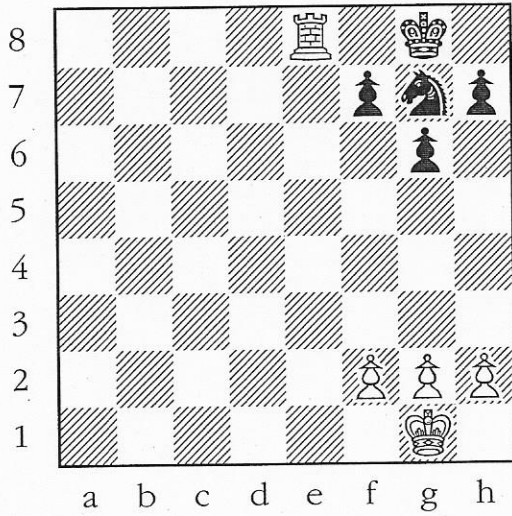## 1. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
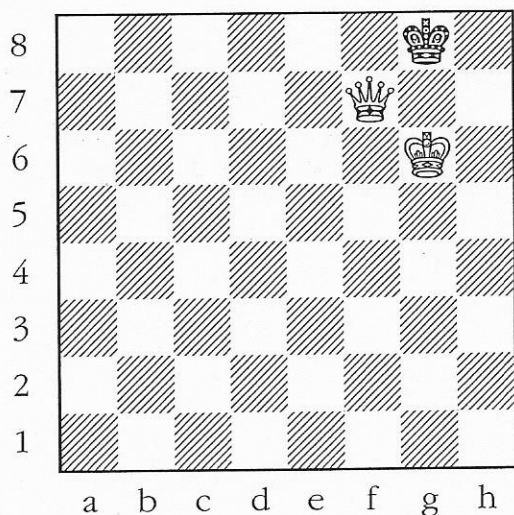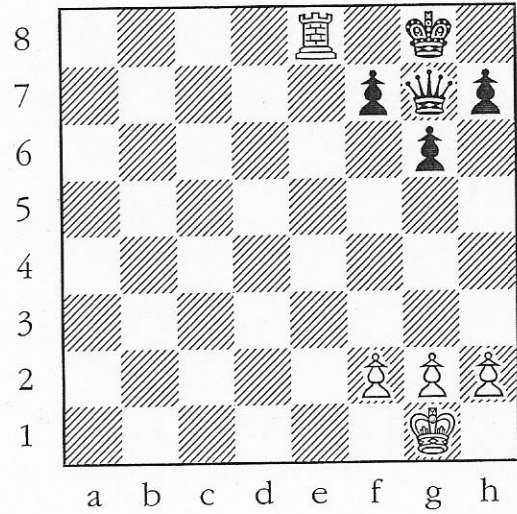
3. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
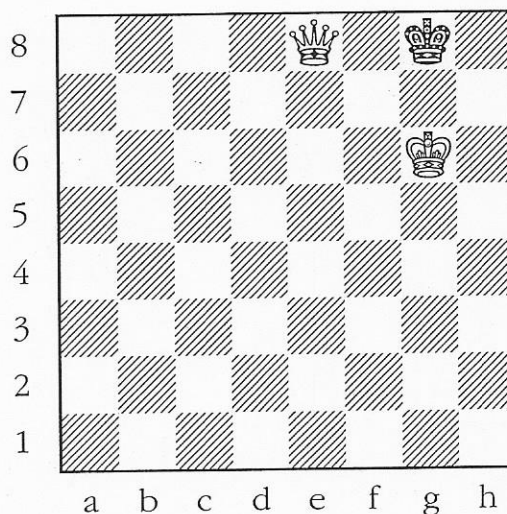
2. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
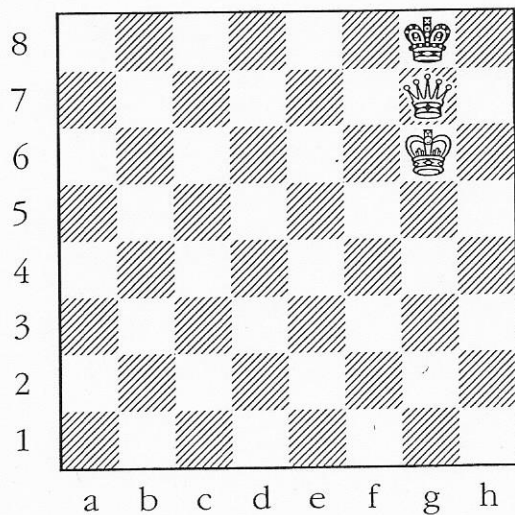
4. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
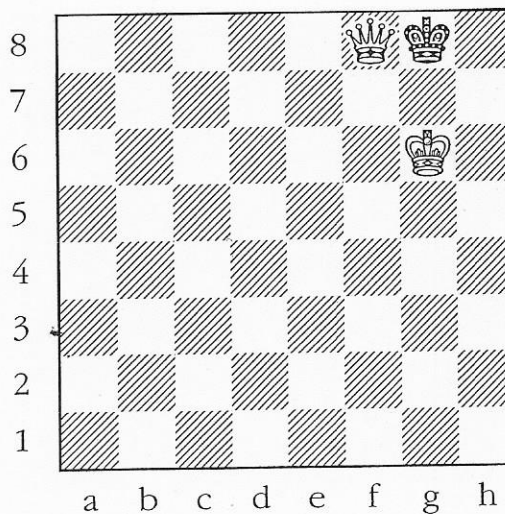
Sheet 7-1: Check or Checkmate

5. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
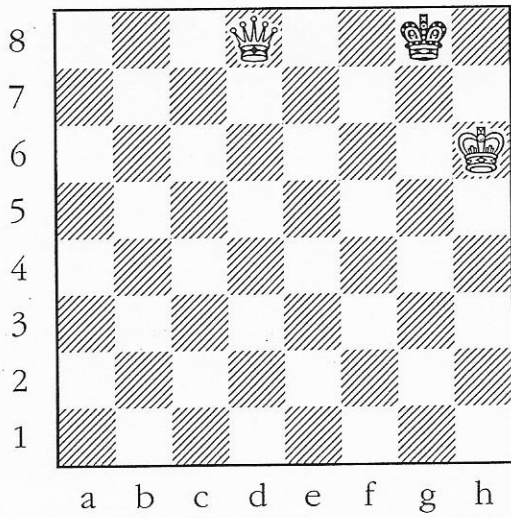
6. CHECK or CHECKMATE?
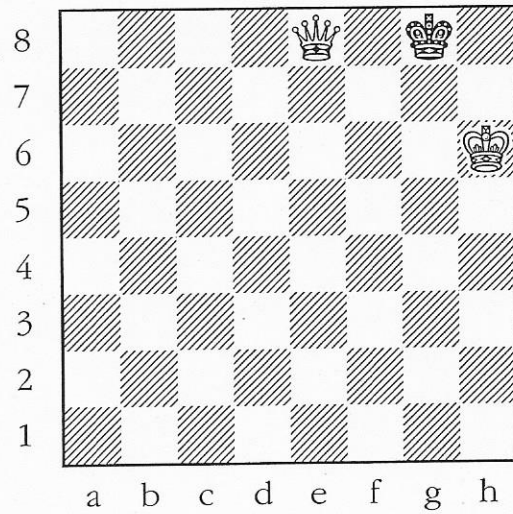
Sheet 7-2: Check or Checkmate
II

Is the black king in check or in checkmate?
If it is check draw an arrow to show how
black gets out of check.
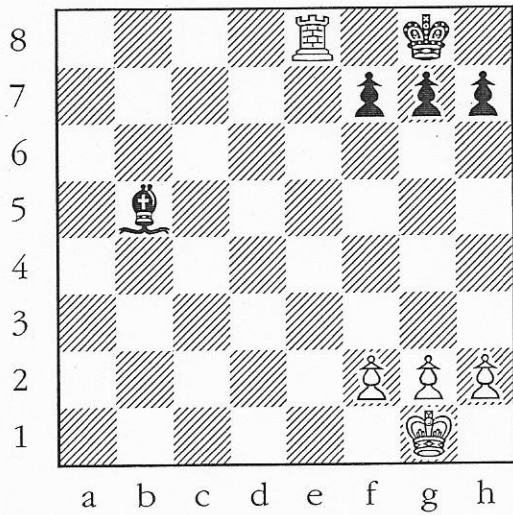
1. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

3. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

2. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

4. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

5. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

6. CHECK or CHECKMATE?

Sheet 8-1: Stalemate or Checkmate

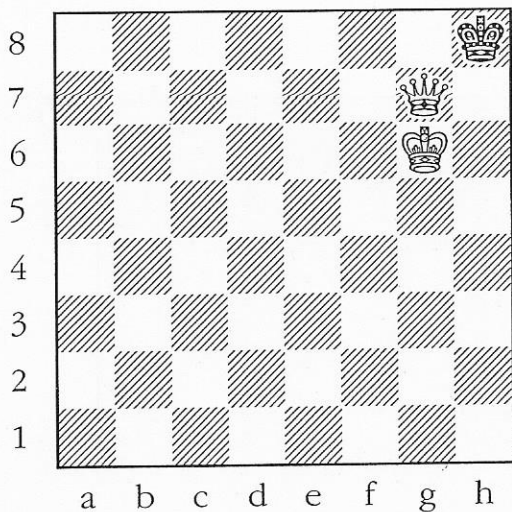Is the black king in stalemate or in checkmate?

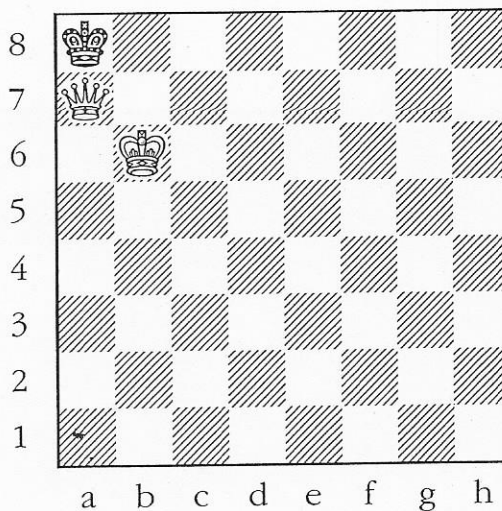## 1. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?
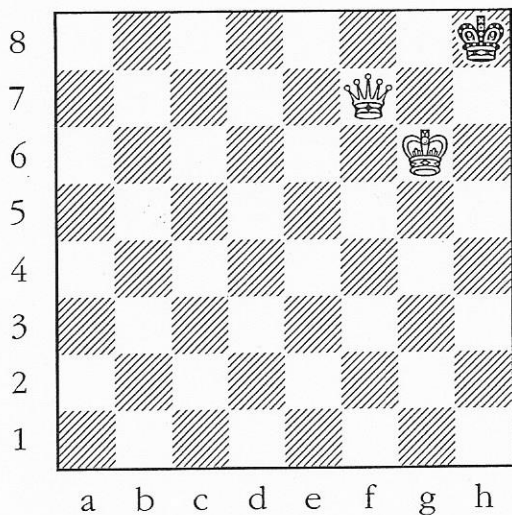
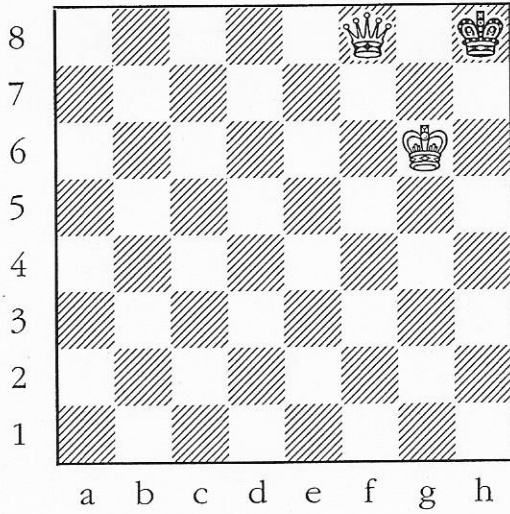## 3. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?
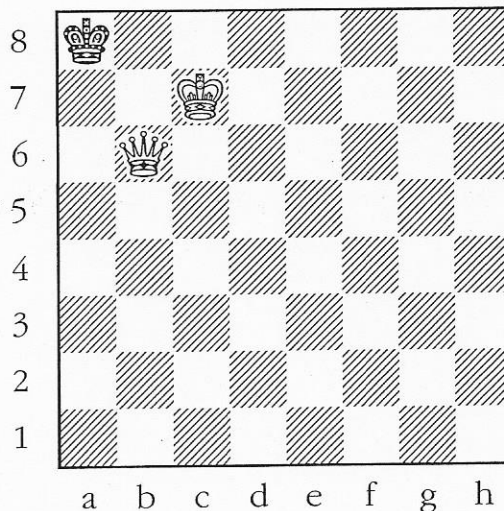
2. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?
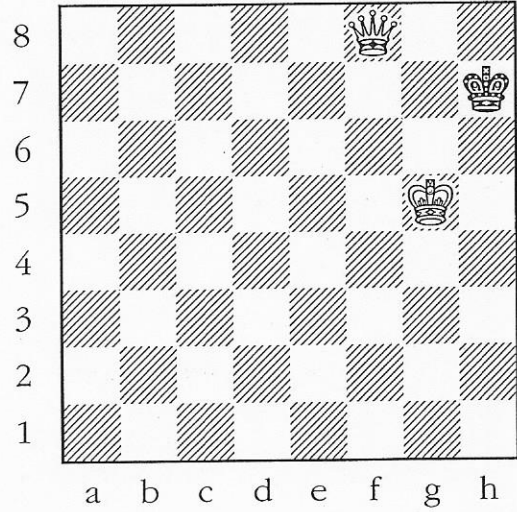

4. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?

Sheet 8-1: Stalemate or Checkmate

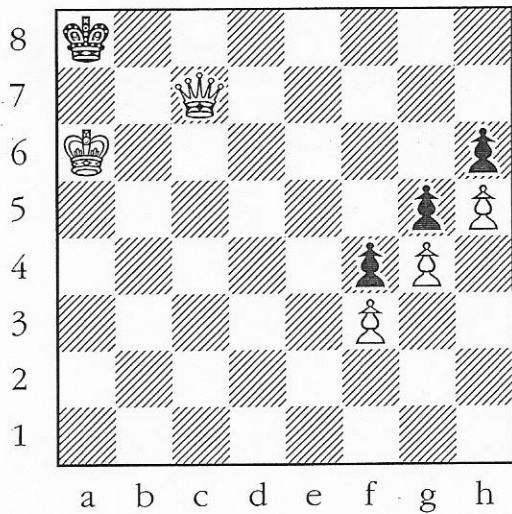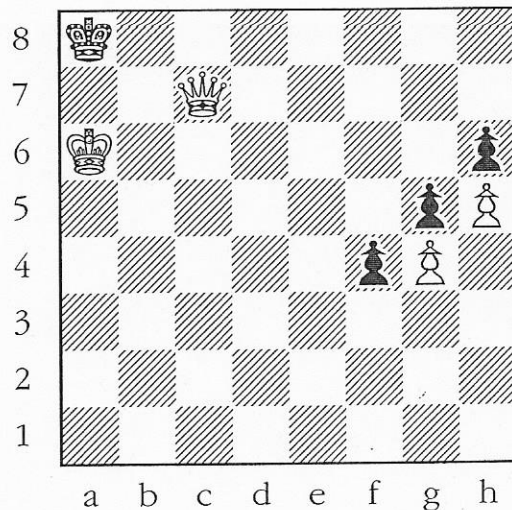## 5. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?

6. STALEMATE or CHECKMATE?

Sheet 8-2: Stalemate, Check, Checkmate, or None of Them

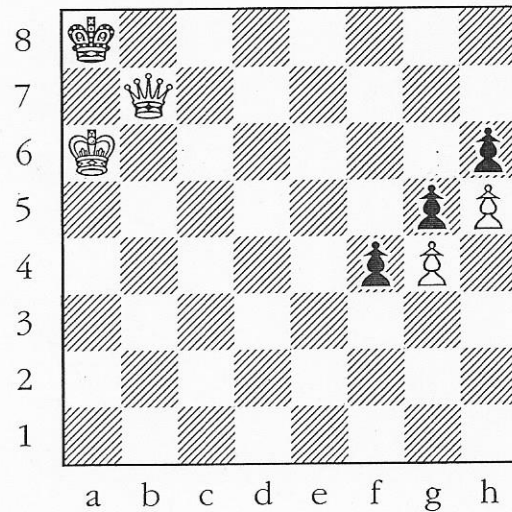In the following diagrams, is the black king in stalemate, checkmate, check, or none of them?

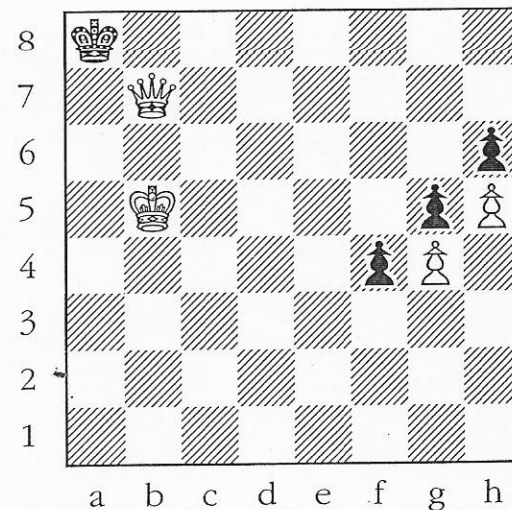1. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK or NONE OF THEM?
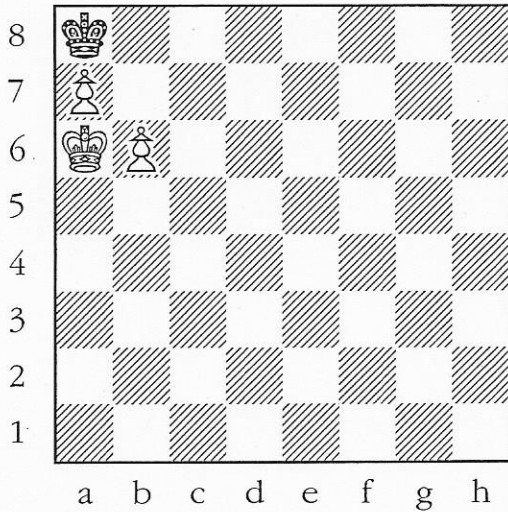
3. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

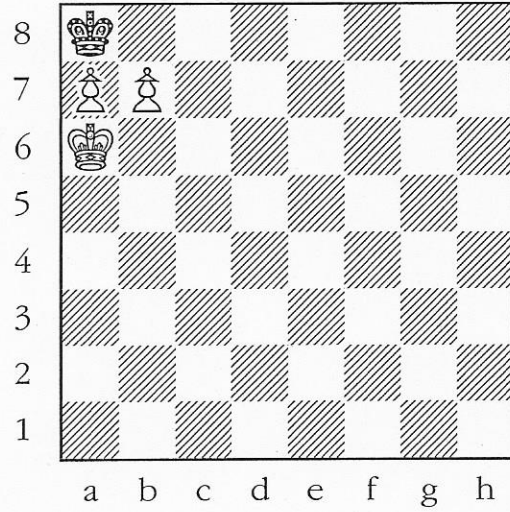2. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

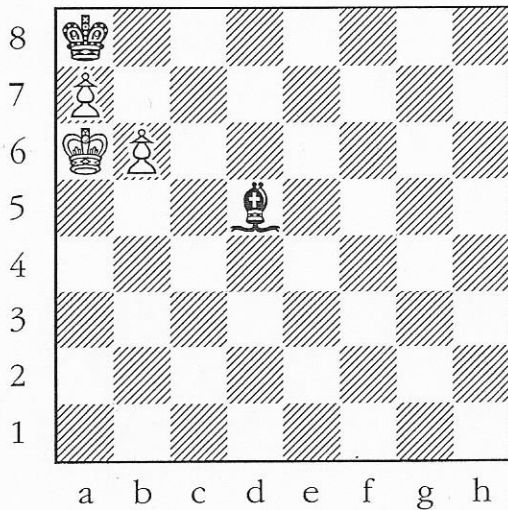4. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

5. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

7. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

6. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?

8. STALEMATE, CHECKMATE, CHECK, or NONE OF THEM?