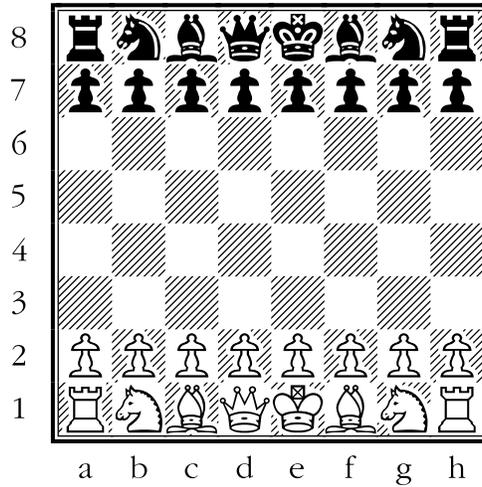


# Fundamentals of Chess: The Rules



## Contest the 5<sup>th</sup> Quadrant

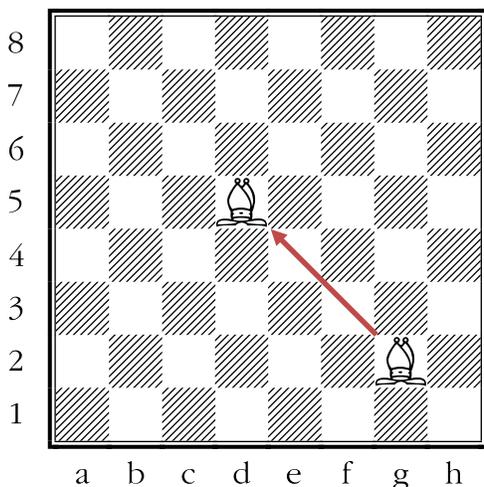
In [Fundamentals of Chess: The Board](#) we looked at the board and what it could tell us  
In [Fundamentals of Chess: The Pieces](#) we looked at our pieces to see how strong they are  
In this article we will consider how the rules of chess will affect our play.

The **Fundamental Rule of Chess** is that the players, in turn, will make a move.

This will be the starting point for our discussion. All of the other “rules” I will be talking about are “MY” rules regarding the fundamental nature of chess.

Our goal here is to understand how the consequences of these rules may lead us to a deeper understanding and insight into how we should play. Unfortunately the effectiveness of our play will be limited by various factors [some of which we can control and improve] and the others... We will try to minimize the damage they could cause us in our quest to play well.

## Let us Begin: With the B.U.G.



In the diagram at left white has just played Bg2xd5...

[I recommend long algebraic notation because I always wanted to have two chances of getting a square correct (I'm not so good at notation, and in English Descriptive {oh my!}) and I also write down the time after each move to glean valuable information regarding thinking patterns.]

Have at it! Before you look at the next page: What will I say?

B. U. G.



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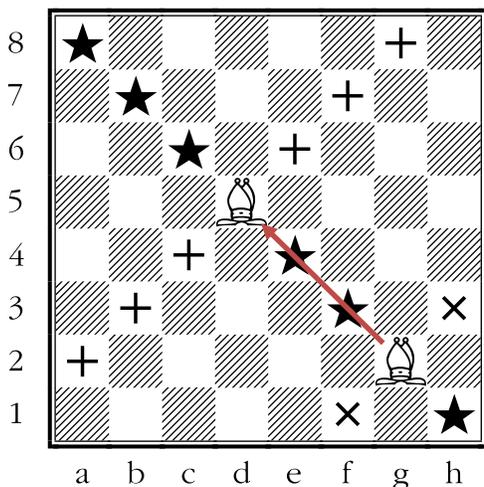
The B.U.G. is an acronym, of course. I sometimes think of it as the GOOD, the BAD, and the UNCHANGED. Alternately, I've thought GOING FORWARD, LEAVING BEHIND, and the UNCHANGED.

A piece moves from one square to another, and so the function that that piece performs on the board is changed. There are new squares that it controls (GOOD), squares that it has left behind (BAD), and those squares that are still controlled (UNCHANGED).

These facts are enough for us to immediately focus our attention.

Those GOOD squares should alert us to what is being threatened now. [Do we need to defend anything?]

The BAD squares that were left behind have been weakened. [Can we take advantage and punish him for his move?]



White has just played Bg2xd5

The GOOD part of this move is the control of the a2-g8 diagonal and I have shown these as a + and those given up [f1 & h3] as a x . Those unchanged [the h1-a8 diagonal] have the ★

Thought Questions:

- Do moves always have three parts? Can a move be only good, or only bad?
- What “type of square” would a piece like to move to?
- How many moves ahead should you look?
- What “type of move” do I need to play?

What other questions might spring to mind??

As I tried to learn and improve at chess I read extensively the ‘best’ manuals out there. All of them purported to have rules for how to play. Amongst the ‘authorities’ many were the same, some had minor differences, but they all had one thing in common!

All of the rules had “exceptions” and the MASTER was the one who knew these exceptions, and thus when to ‘BREAK the RULES’. Ok, this abhorred me. How can they be rules, if they were not rules? Surely, I thought, there must truly be rules that exist, and their rules, and their ‘exceptions’ must surely be conforming to the true rules.

I will return to physics. Newton’s Laws work really well in the “real” world that we know, but in the universe they are known to break down. Thus, I figured chess was no different. I will look for them.

I started with the realization that what was being described by classical chess authors clearly had to have truth to them. Thus I started with the search for the “elements” of chess. Those fundamental things that truly decide what is going on.

## Fundamentals of Chess: The Rules

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Again past scientific history supports this type of investigation. Initially air, fire, water would have been thought to be elements. But today they clearly are not elements, since we know about hydrogen, oxygen et al

The first point of agreement was that there are tactical masters and positional masters. That tactics was 95+% of all chess play. Also in agreement was that a great positional master always seemed to better the tactical ones. Why was that?

So let's consider Positional Play and Tactical Play. What are they?

My definitions (and I'm sticking with it!) are based upon the current position.

I can play that position forward. I can find potential moves and analyse variations, evaluating them at the end as to whether I like them, or not. This is TACTICAL CHESS. Indeed this is how computers play.

For POSITIONAL PLAY I can see the position on the board, but I can visualize ahead a position I would like to have. I then want to play backward from my visualized position to see if I can get there from here. Of course, to do that I DO HAVE to PLAY FORWARD to some extent. This is the essence of the positional master, the HUMAN player. Computers do not presently, and cannot play in this manner.

It explains why the best positional players would often outdo the tactical master, because the positional master has a little bit extra. It also explains why computers could not defeat humans for a long time, but now they can without fail. Their horizon for playing forward in the beginning was not far enough to overcome the human look ahead. Now with the Silicon Monster "capabilities" being so much further, the human has a hard time getting a conception that the computer cannot look ahead even farther.

Having 'found' my definitions I now needed to find answers to my questions:

- **What are the elements of Tactical Play?**
- **What are the associated Tactical Motifs?**
- **What are the elements of Positional Play?**
- **What are the associated Positional Motifs?**
- **How can one tell if the position in front of you is tactical or positional?**

It did not surprise me that finding answers in the tactical realm came much easier and quicker. After all, how things get done on the chessboard, and associated tactical quizzes abound. I would just need to organize and categorize.

In the sense of positional play I knew that I needed to find a way to measure what was happening. I needed to be able to explain how different styles of play (Petrosian and Larsen or Kasparov and Karpov) could be explained easily within the same framework.

**And the last question... I believe I found a very elegant solution there (reminiscent I'd say of Newton!)**

# Fundamentals of Chess: The Rules

To go into detail about all of these Elements and Motifs is the essence of what chess training is all about. It is often difficult, some times easy, but surely always satisfying and worthwhile.

For now, I will say that "Gaining Time" on the chess board is one of the TACTICAL ELEMENTS. How can one 'gain time', or in essence be able to play two moves for one?

Let us return to our hierarchy of pieces. In general, one attacks a higher-level piece with a lower-level one to potentially gain time. But there could be another way... See our Chart.

Level 1		Attacking the king always gains time, but how can it gain time?
Level 2		The queen is always being attacked.
Level 3		The rook stands well against the queen or king.
Level 4		The minor pieces love to harass the rooks or queen.
Level 5		Can one gain time against a pawn? These guys hassle everybody.

## 2018 marked my return to chess training.

*I now currently have only a few spots open for those individuals (or groups) that wish to improve their enjoyment, knowledge, and play of chess by taking advantage of my expertise in unlocking the mysteries of the royal game!*

## Looking to Improve your Game ??

# 2018

### Milestones:

50 years since my first USCF tourney

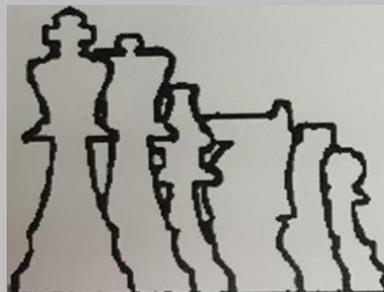
40 years since I became a Master

Top 50 in the U.S.:  
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