THE KNIGHT'S NOTEBOOK

BEGINNER



Notebook No. 1

First Patterns

FREE SAMPLE · FOUR POSITIONS

600 – 1000 Elo

This notebook belongs to

KNIGHTSNOTEBOOK.COM

How to use this notebook

1. This sample is the start of Notebook No. 1: the page that opens its first chapter, then its first four positions. The whole notebook has six chapters of ten positions, one idea each, that get harder as you go: the rating beside each diagram tells you how hard the position is.

2. "White to play" or "Black to play" tells you whose move it is. The board is always shown from that side: the side to play is at the bottom.

3. Find the best move and the reply you expect, then write them on the lines. Commit before you check: the solutions start on page 6, each with the idea explained.

4. Many solutions also show a trap: the tempting move that fails, with the reply that refutes it. In the mating positions, any move that mates just as fast is also correct.

Printing

The pages are A4. Print the whole notebook, or a chapter at a time. On US Letter paper, choose "Fit to page". Black and white is fine: the diagrams are drawn to print clearly.

Notation

Moves are written in algebraic notation: the letter of the piece (K king, Q queen, R rook, B bishop, N knight, nothing for a pawn), then the square it goes to. "x" means a capture, "+" a check and "#" mate; "=Q" is a promotion to a queen, "O-O" castling kingside and "O-O-O" castling queenside. "1... Qf2" is a move by Black.

Ratings

The ratings come from Lichess, where each of these positions has been tried at least 800 times: a position rated 1200 is solved about half the time by players rated 1200 there.

Positions from the Lichess puzzle database (lichess.org, public domain, CC0); every solution checked with Stockfish. Chess pieces © Colin M.L. Burnett, used under the 3-clause BSD licence.

01

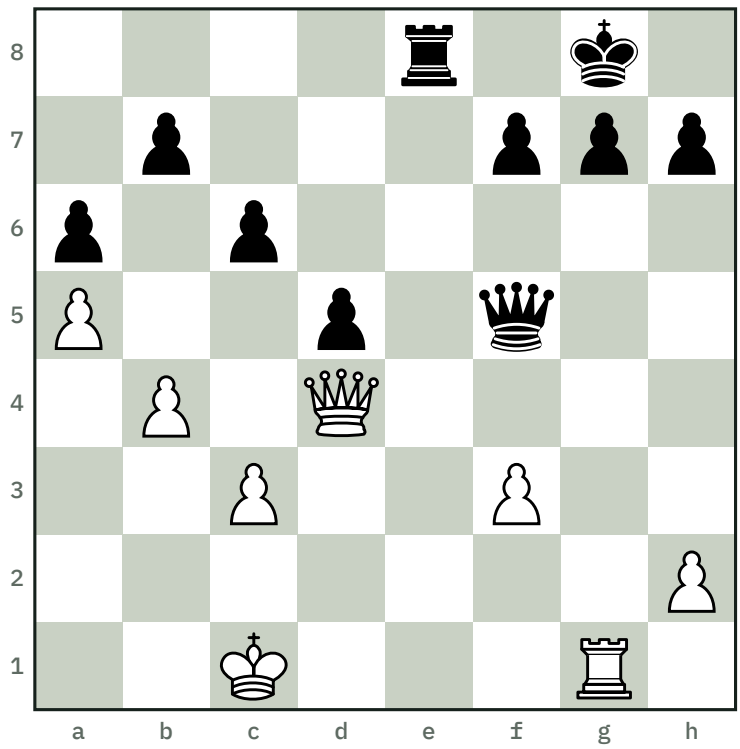
Mate in one

POSITIONS 1–4 · RATED 608 TO 736

A single move puts the king in check, and there is no way out. Every mate is a check the defender can neither block, capture nor step away from.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

1. The squares the king cannot use: blocked by its own pieces, or covered by yours.
2. Every check, including the ones right next to the king.
3. A piece that protects your checking piece, so the king cannot take it.

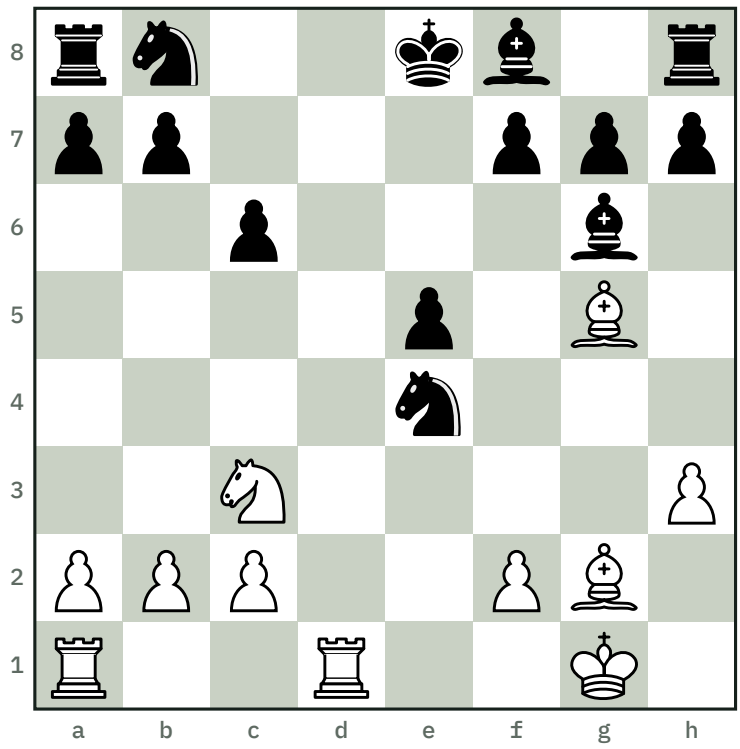


1

○ White to play

RATING 608

YOUR MOVE

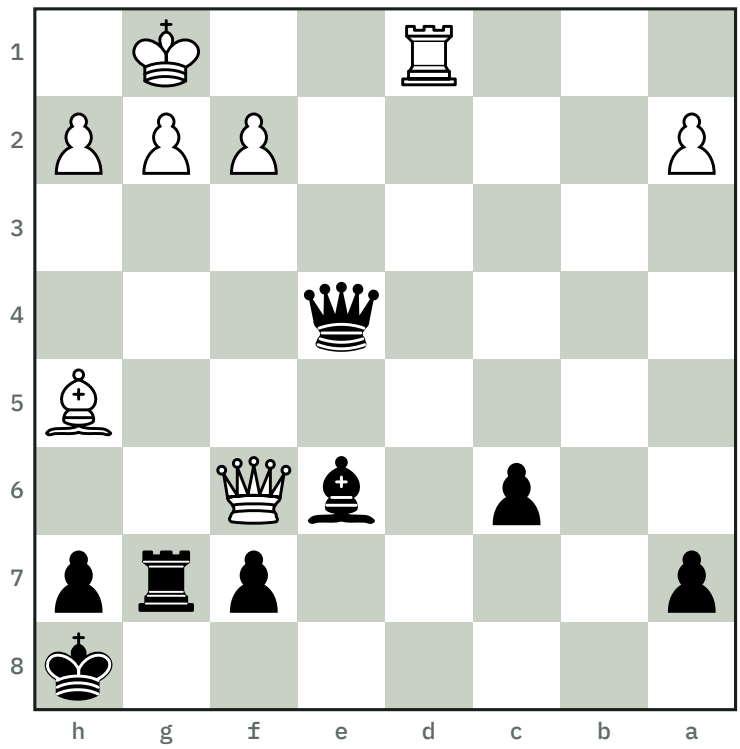


2

○ White to play

RATING 652

YOUR MOVE

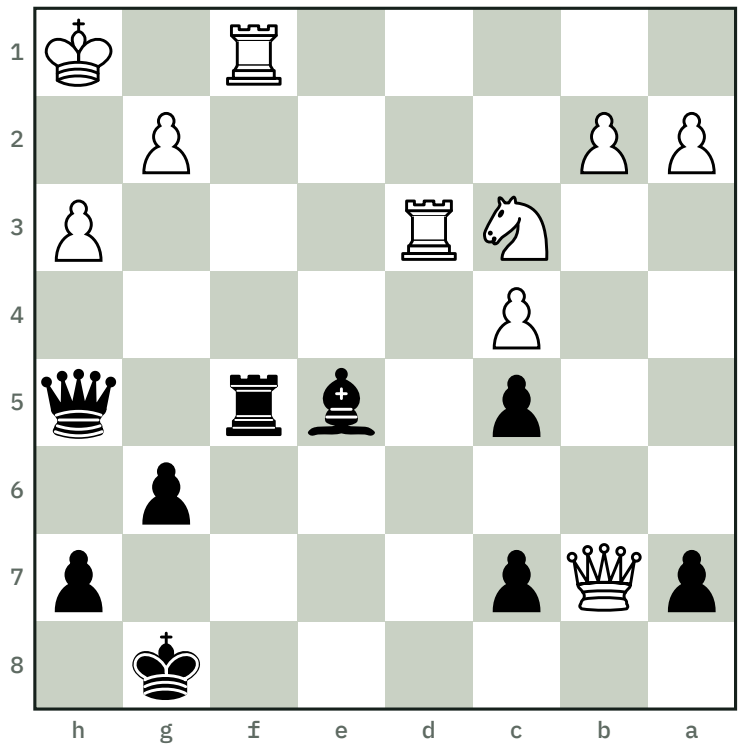


3

● **Black to play**

RATING 680

YOUR MOVE



4

● **Black to play**

RATING 736

YOUR MOVE

Solutions

Mate in one

1 **1. Qxg7#**

The queen checks from g7, protected by the rook on g1, so the king cannot take it; its own pawns on f7 and h7 block the way, and the other squares are covered.

TRAP 1. Rxg7+? Kf8! and your opponent is winning.

2 **1. Rd8#**

The rook checks from d8, protected by the bishop on g5, so the king cannot take it; its own pieces on f7 and f8 block the way, and the other squares are covered.

TRAP 1. Bxe4? Be7! and your opponent is winning.

3 **1... Qxg2#**

The queen checks from g2, protected by the rook on g7, so the king cannot take it; its own pawns on f2 and h2 block the way, and the other squares are covered.

TRAP 1... Qe1+? 2. Rxe1 and your opponent is winning.

4 **1... Rxf1#**

The rook checks from f1; the king's own pawn on g2 blocks the way, and the other squares are covered.

TRAP 1... Bxc3? 2. Qc8+! and your opponent is winning.

THE KNIGHT'S NOTEBOOK

Sixty positions like these, every month.

Notebook No. 1 has sixty positions in six chapters, one idea each, and every solution explained. A new notebook comes every month, as a PDF to print at home: buy just one, or subscribe.



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