

CINCINNATI SCHOLASTIC CHESS

Series Handbook for 2021-22

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CSC SERIES FIFTEENTH SEASON



This reference document is intended for players and parents participating in the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series of chess tournaments. It provides detailed information about the Series specifically, about selected rules and procedures of tournament chess generally, and about the US Chess Federation. While Series participants will find here the information that they most need or want to know, this Handbook is not a comprehensive rule book. For complete and authoritative information about US Chess Federation rules, participants are referred to the *U.S. Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess*, 7th Edition (2019), found online at www.uschess.org.

If you have any questions or need to contact a tournament director for any reason, please call/text Alan Hodge at 513-600-9915 or send an email to info@chesscincinnati.com.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series?.....	3
Tournament Dates and Locations	3
Tournament Entry	4
Tournament Format.....	5
Byes	6
Tournament Check-In	7
What to Do When the Game is Over	8
Withdrawing from a Tournament	8
Forfeits.....	9
Points.....	9
Prizes	9
Ratings	10
US Chess Federation Membership	13
Chess Clocks	13
Touch-Move.....	14
Player Claims	15
Illegal Moves	16
Announcing Check	17
Taking Notation (Recording the moves of a game).....	17
Electronic Scoresheets	18
Ways to Draw	20
Pairings.....	22
The Wall Chart.....	24
The Standings Chart.....	25
Side Games	26
Breaking Ties	26
Provision of Equipment.....	27
Watching Games in Progress	27
Sportsmanship	27
Sandbagging	28
Food and Drinks at Tournaments	29
Inclement Weather Policy.....	29
Appendix: Chess Notation	30

What is the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series?

In 2007 Cincinnati Scholastic Chess (CSC) launched the CSC Series of four-round, Swiss tournaments for players in grades K through 12. The six tournaments in the Series are rated tournaments sanctioned by the US Chess Federation; for that reason it is CSC's responsibility to conduct them in compliance with US Chess Federation rules. There is no requirement that players play in every tournament — they are free to choose how many and which tournaments to play in. Some prizes are awarded at each tournament; others are awarded based on cumulative performance in the entire Series, taking each player's best five scores out of the six tournaments into account.

The Series not only offers opportunities for experienced players to compete frequently in rated tournaments, but also serves as a “point of entry” for those new to the game who want to experience tournament play — or simply try it out as an activity of possible interest. Players of all skill levels are welcome. In addition to knowing how to play the game, players are required only to be familiar with the basic rules of tournament chess, including how to record the moves of their games (chess notation). These are explained in the *CSC Essential Information* document, available on our website, www.chesscincinnati.com. We urge players and parents who are relatively new to tournament chess to read and understand this document (ten pages including instructions for notation).

Tournament Dates and Locations

Ordinarily the Series is played on the first or second Saturday of each month from October through March. In the 2019-20 season, CSC hosted the 2019 Ohio Grade Level Championships, which took the place of our usual November tournament. In the 2021-22 season we will once again be hosting the Grade Level, and once again we are incorporating it into the Series for scoring purposes. Because the Grade Level has five rounds, and our Series tournaments have only four, Series participants who also play in the Grade Level will have the opportunity to score up to one additional point towards a Series trophy. Dates and locations for the 2021-22 season are as follows:

October 9, 2021	Fairfield High School 8800 Holden Boulevard, Fairfield, OH 45014
November 6, 2021	Ohio Grade Level Championships Embassy Suites Hotel, 4554 Lake Forest Drive, Blue Ash, OH 45242
December 4, 2021	Lakota West High School 8940 Union Centre Boulevard, West Chester, OH 45069
January 8, 2022	Walnut Hills High School 3250 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207
February 5, 2022	Lakota East High School 6840 Lakota Ln, Liberty Township, OH 45044
March 5, 2022	Princeton High School 100 Viking Way, Cincinnati, OH 45246

Please note that as of this date (June 10, 2021) the above schedule is tentative, based on a preliminary agreement with our host schools, and depends on circumstances relating to the covid pandemic. We will not be able to confirm our schedule until after the 2021-22 school year has begun.

Driving directions to these sites, maps and other venue-related information and updates are provided on our website, [Series Venue Information](#).

Tournament Entry

For the five regular Series tournaments (October, December, January, February and March), players may enter only in advance, and may enter any number of tournaments at one time using a single entry form. They may also submit multiple entry forms over the course of the season. Most participants enter online, but there is also a means to enter by mail. In addition to the tournament entry fees, there will be additional charges if the player wishes to purchase or renew a US Chess Federation membership in conjunction with entering a tournament. US Chess Federation membership is required for participation in any Series tournament *except for* the K-6 Non-Rated section of any regular Series tournament. (For more information, see *US Chess Federation Membership*.)

To enter online at <https://www.chesscincinnati.com/csc-series/>, complete the online entry form and pay the entry fee and US Chess Federation charges (as applicable) through PayPal using a PayPal account or a credit card. Online entries must be submitted no later than **12:00 noon** on the day before the first tournament in which the player wishes to play. When entering online, it is necessary to complete the entry form and pay the amount due individually in separate transactions for each player entered.

To enter by mail, complete and mail an entry form (one per player) to Cincinnati Scholastic Chess, 9180 Pinewood Drive, Loveland, OH 45140-8234. An mail-in entry form may be downloaded at <https://www.chesscincinnati.com/csc-series/>. Pay the entry fee and any US Chess Federation charges by a check payable to *Cincinnati Scholastic Chess*. The amounts payable for multiple players can be paid with a single check. Mail entries early enough that they are *received* by Cincinnati Scholastic Chess no later than on the day before the first tournament in which a player wishes to play.

The entry fee for each regular Series tournament separately is \$15.

The Ohio Grade Level Championships (taking the place of the usual November Series tournament) will have its own entry process separate from the other Series tournaments. For information, see the Grade Level webpage at <https://www.chesscincinnati.com/grade-level/>.

Entry Fee Refund Policy

Entry fees are refundable only when CSC receives notice of a player's withdrawal before the start of the tournament for which the entry fee refund is requested. A player may withdraw from multiple tournaments with a single withdrawal notice, and may submit multiple withdrawal notices over the course of the season. To give notice of a withdrawal, send an email to info@chesscincinnati.com or text/phone Alan at 513-600-9915. CSC will deduct \$1.00 from each refund transacted to cover administrative costs.

Confirming Entries

Entries received will be acknowledged by email (if an email address is provided on the entry form), usually within 24 hours. Lists of entries received by section will be posted at each tournament for participants to check upon their arrival. Any player who does not find his or her name listed among the entries should check in with a tournament director. (See *Tournament Check-In* for more details.)

Changing Tournaments

Players are asked to indicate on the entry form which tournaments they are entering. We recognize that sometimes players may want or need to transfer an entry to a different tournament. To change an entry, notify Alan Hodge by phone/text to 513-600-9915 or by email to info@chesscincinnati.com.

Tournament Format

Each tournament will be a four-round Swiss tournament. A Swiss tournament is one in which the players are divided into groups, called sections, according to ratings. Each player plays only other players who are in the same own section. Unless a player has a bye or withdraws, he or she will play all four rounds regardless of his or her game results — these are not elimination tournaments. The time control in all sections is G/30 d5, meaning that each player has 30 minutes for the entire game and at each move there will be a five-second delay before a player's clock begins to run. Therefore, a game in which both players use nearly all their time will last approximately one hour. Each round lasts as long as necessary for the last game in the section to finish. (See *Byes*, *Ratings*, *Withdrawing from a Tournament*, and *Chess Clocks* for related information).

Tournament Sections

Sections are defined by rating to increase parity among players. Players may play in any section described below for which they are eligible. Players in rated sections may move into another rated section provided that they satisfy the rating requirement of the section they wish to move into. Players who play in the K-6 Non-Rated section may move into a rated section upon joining the US Chess Federation; however, once a player has earned a US Chess Federation rating, he or she may not move back into the K-6 Non-Rated section. (See *Ratings* for more information.)

- **Championship (Rated):** All players in grades K through 12, rated or unrated, may play in this section. Scholastic players whose rating is 1000 or more must play here. Every player must be a current US Chess Federation member. All players are required to take notation. This is the section in which the strongest players play; except in very extraordinary circumstances, it is *not* the section for players who are playing in their first tournament.
- **U1000 (Rated):** Only players in grades K through 12 who are rated less than 1000 or unrated may play in this section. Every player must be a current US Chess Federation member. All players are required to take notation. We recommend that only players who have tournament experience and a rating of 600 or more play in this section.
- **U700 (Rated):** Only players in grades K through 12 who are rated less than 700 or unrated may play in this section. Every player must be a current US Chess Federation member. All players are required to take notation. We recommend that only players who have tournament experience and a rating of 300 or more play in this section; however, older players who are relatively new to chess might choose to play in this section even if they are rated under 300 or unrated.
- **U400 (Rated):** Only players in grades K through 12 who are rated less than 400 or unrated may play in this section. Every player must be a current US Chess Federation member. Players are not required to take notation in this section but are encouraged to do so if they know how. We generally recommend that players who are new to rated chess play in this section. Players who have tournament experience and are rated under 400 also play in this section.
- **K–6 Non-Rated:** Only unrated players who are in grades K through 6 may play in this section. An unrated player is one who has not earned a rating by playing four or more rated games. Players will not earn a rating as a result of playing in this section. Membership in the US Chess Federation is not required for this section. Players are not required to take notation but are encouraged to do so if they know how. A player who becomes officially rated (as a consequence of playing in a rated section of any tournament) will no longer be eligible to play in this section. Unrated players in grades 7 through 12 must play in a rated section (with a USCF membership) and will earn a rating as a result.

Round Times

For all sections round 1 begins at 9:00 am. The next round in each section will begin as soon as possible (usually about ten minutes) after the previous round ends with the conclusion of the last game in progress. The tournament directors will announce when pairings have been posted for the next round. Players are expected to be at their boards within a few minutes after new pairings are announced; players who are tardy in getting to their boards may find that the round has started and that their clock is already running. Play in the Championship section typically ends no later than approximately 1:30 pm. Other sections routinely finish earlier. Players who need to leave before the tournament ends may take a bye for a later round or withdraw. (See **Byes** and **Withdrawing from a Tournament** for more details.)

Playing in Different Sections

Players have the option of playing in different sections in different tournaments provided always that they are eligible for the section they want to play in. Players may choose to play in their “natural” section (the section designated for their rating) or to “play up” (meaning to play in any section with a higher rating ceiling than their natural section). On their entry form players must indicate one section to play in but may decide at any later time to play in a different section in a future tournament. Players who want to change sections must notify Alan Hodge *before the tournament date* by email to info@chesscincinnati.com, or by phone/text to 513-600-9915. Players may also change sections onsite by notifying the tournament director by 8:45 am of which section they want to move into. Once pairings are posted for round 1, players may not change sections during that tournament. All the points that a player scores in any rated section will count toward Series trophies regardless of which section they are scored in.

A player may also move from the K-6 Non-Rated section to a rated section, provided that he or she meets the USCF membership requirement for the rated section. However, once a player becomes officially rated, he or she may not move back to the K-6 Non-Rated section. Players who move from the K-6 Non-Rated section to a rated section may, under certain circumstances, apply their scores from not more than two non-rated tournaments toward Series class trophies, but not to the Cincinnati Scholastic Series Championship trophy. (See **Points** and **Prizes** for further information.)

Byes

In tournament chess a bye indicates that a player will not (or did not) play the particular round for which the bye was taken. A player may score a full point, one-half point or zero for a bye as explained below.

Full-point bye: When a player is paired out of a round, he or she is given a full-point bye for that round, which for purposes of tournament scoring is equivalent to having played a game and won it. “Paired out” means that because the number of players to be paired in a section is odd, one player is necessarily left without an opponent. This is not an optional bye for the player because the player has no choice about getting paired out. Accordingly he or she receives one point for the tournament score without actually play a game. Being paired out has no impact on the calculation of the player’s rating. No player may be paired out more than once in any tournament. (See **Points** for further details.)

Half-point bye: A player may choose not to play a particular round by electing to take a half-point bye for that round. For example, a player can request a bye for round 1 if he or she will not arrive at the tournament by 8:45 am, or for round 4 if leaving the tournament before it is over, or even for round 2 or 3 to miss one of the middle rounds for some reason. Moreover, a player who arrives late for a tournament and is consequently not paired for round 1 will be given a half-point bye for round 1 even if he or she did

not request it in advance. A player taking a half-point bye scores one-half point for the bye round. (See *Late Arrivals* under **Tournament Check-In**.)

A player may take one half-point bye in each tournament, subject to the following:

- A player must request a bye before pairings are posted for the pertinent round. A player can request (or change) a bye:
 - (1) on the entry form,
 - (2) by notifying CSC prior to the tournament (by email to info@chesscincinnati.com or by phone/text to Alan Hodge at 513-600-9915),
 - (3) by notifying a tournament director onsite before or during the tournament, provided that the bye is requested before pairings are posted for the pertinent round.
- A player who has requested a half-point bye will not be paired out in that tournament unless there is no better alternative pairing.
- A player who was paired out in any round may not then elect to take a half-point bye for a later round.

Zero-point bye: If a player has already taken a full-point or half-point bye, and elects to take an additional bye, each additional bye taken will be a zero-point bye. In the case of a zero-point bye, the player scores no point (zero) for the bye round. (See **Points** for further details.)

Tournament Check-In

On the day of the tournament, lists of the players who are entered will be posted near where participants enter the venue. Players are listed alphabetically in the section indicated on their entry form unless we received instructions otherwise from a player after receiving the entry form or needed to move a player because his or her rating increased so as to exceed the rating ceiling of the his or her original section. When arriving at a tournament, players should check off their names to indicate that they are present. Any player who is not listed, or is listed in a section other than the one he or she wants to play in, should see the tournament director immediately. (See **Tournament Format** for more information.)

Any player who wants to change sections, request a bye, or correct any information must see the tournament director before 8:45 am.

Late Arrivals

Players are expected to check off their names on the entry lists no later than 8:45 am. These lists will be taken down at 8:45, and round 1 pairings will be prepared based on who is checked in. Players who neglect to check off their name upon arrival, or who arrive after 8:45 am, should not expect to be paired in round 1; however, they should make the tournament director aware that they are present as soon as they arrive because they *may* be paired in round 1 if possible and at the tournament director's discretion. Additional details of this policy are as follows:

- The tournament director will preferentially pair *unrated players* so that they play four games in the tournament, because a player must play four rated games to earn a rating. (See **Ratings** for more information.)
- The tournament director will preferentially pair a late-arriving player into a section where another player has been paired out. When there are two or more late-arriving players for such a section, the tournament director may, at his sole discretion, choose which late-arriving player(s) to pair. The late-arriving player(s) in this situation might suffer a time penalty if round 1 has already started.

- With respect to any late-arriving player who is not paired against a paired-out player, the tournament director may, at his sole discretion, either pair him or her against another late-arriving player in the same section, if one is available (possibly reducing the time control for their game), or not pair him or her at all until round 2, in which case the player will receive a half-point bye for round 1. (See **Byes** and **Points** for related information.)
- A player who did not request a bye in advance and arrives after 9:30 am will be given a zero-point bye for round 1.
- Late-arriving players will be paired in all remaining rounds of the tournament unless they are paired out of a round, take an optional bye, or withdraw.
- There will be no refund of entry fees, partial or otherwise, for any rounds missed due to late arrival.

What to Do When the Game is Over

When two players finish their game, they should pause the clock and raise their hands. This will signal the tournament director to come and verify the game result. The players should leave the final position as it is—that is, don't re-set the board or otherwise move any of the pieces—until the tournament director has verified the result. This is especially important when a player intends to claim a win on time. (See **Player Claims** for more information.)

After the tournament director verifies the result of the game:

- Players are asked to set the pieces up in their correct starting position so that the board is ready for a new game. After round 4 they do this to make sure that all the pieces are there, and then put the pieces into a bag that the tournament director provides.
- When the players have re-set the board or bagged the pieces, they must leave the tournament room promptly and *record the result of their game on the pair chart*. To record a game's outcome, enter a "1" to the left of the name of the winner and a "0" to the left of name of the loser. If the game is a draw, enter "1/2" beside each name. Both players are responsible for making sure that the result of their game is correctly recorded on the pair chart. (See **Pairings** and **Forfeits** for more information.)
- Except in the Championship section, players are required to stay out of the tournament rooms until pairings for the next round are announced. Players in the Championship section may watch other games in progress in their section, even after they have concluded their own games, provided that they conduct themselves properly. (See **Watching Games in Progress** and **Sportsmanship** for related information.)

Withdrawing from a Tournament

To withdraw from a tournament means to choose not to play any remaining rounds. A player may withdraw from the tournament at any time but **must notify a tournament director that he or she is withdrawing before pairings are done for the next round**. A player who fails to so notify a tournament director will be paired in the next round as though he or she were still in the tournament. This causes pairing problems, is unfair to the person paired against that player (who will end up without an opponent and lose the opportunity to play a game in that round), and makes the player guilty of a forfeit. ***Withdrawing without notice is bad for everyone — please don't do it!***

Forfeits

A player who has been paired for a game and fails to show up to play it will be forfeited. In Series tournaments, a game is not officially a forfeit until the player's time expires or, if no clock is being used, until 30 minutes have elapsed since the tournament director started the round.

A player who abandons a game in progress is likewise forfeited. A player abandons a game if he or she makes at least one move, then leaves the board and does not return for the duration of the round, and did not resign or accept a draw offer before leaving the board.

When a forfeit occurs, the score should be marked on the pair chart as "F" for the player who forfeited and as "X" for that player's opponent. For the player who forfeited ("F"), a forfeit counts as zero for scoring purposes. For the opponent ("X"), a forfeit win counts as 1 point for the game, but will not be included in the calculation of the player's new rating. (See **Points** for more information.)

The tournament directors will withdraw any player who forfeits a game, meaning that he or she will not be paired in any remaining rounds of that tournament. Moreover, the tournament directors, at their sole discretion, may prohibit the player who has forfeited from participating in future CSC tournaments. Entry fees will not be refunded for any player who is withdrawn due to forfeiting.

Points

Series class trophies and the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series Champion trophy (described further under **Prizes** below) are awarded based on the number of points a player scores during the Series. A player's score indicates his or her actual game results. It is the sum of all wins, draws and byes that the player had in the tournament. Each win (including any forfeit win) and full-point bye (from being paired out) counts as 1; each draw and half-point bye counts as ½; and each loss, zero-point bye, and forfeit counts as zero. (See **Pairings** for an explanation of getting paired out; see also **Byes** for additional information.)

Prizes

The following prizes are awarded for CSC Series tournaments:

- *Individual Tournament Medals*: At every regular Series tournament and in every section, place medals are awarded to those who finish in first through fifth place. (There are different prizes for the Grade Level Championships in November.) Any player scoring 3.0 but not finishing among the top five places wins an honorable mention medal. Calculated tiebreaks will be used to determine medal winners among players with the same score. (See **Breaking Ties** for more information.)
- *Series class trophies* are awarded in rated sections only, based on a player's best five scores during the Series. A maximum of 21 points will count for purposes of Series class trophies.¹ A Series class trophy will be awarded to each player (other than the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series Champion) who scores a designated number of points as indicated below:
 - Gold-class trophy: 15.0 points or more
 - Silver-class trophy: 12.5 to 14.5 points
 - Bronze-class trophy: 10 to 12.0 points
 - Honorable mention trophy: 7.0 to 9.5 points

¹ Because the Grade Level has five rounds, a player who wins all five games at the Grade Level and wins all four games in at least four of the five regular tournaments will score 21 points.

Class trophies are not awarded in the K-6 Non-Rated section, although players who move from the K-6 Non-Rated section to a rated section will be eligible for class trophies. Some of the points scored by such players in the K-6 Non-Rated section might count for trophy purposes as explained below.

- The *Ron Giffin Trophy* will be awarded to the player scoring the most points exclusively in the Championship section in the five regular Series tournaments. This player will be recognized as the Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Series Champion. Points scored in the Grade Level will not count toward this trophy, and no score from the five regular Series tournaments will be omitted; therefore the maximum possible score for the Ron Giffin Trophy is 20 points. In the event that two or more players tie with the highest number of points scored, the champion will be determined by application of the following tiebreak methods in the order listed:
 - *Head-to-head*: All the games in which any of the tied players played each other will be identified, and the total score of each player in these games will be tabulated (head-to-head scores). The player with the highest total head-to-head score will be the champion.
 - *Strength of opposition calculations*: In every Series tournament, tiebreak scores are calculated using the four tiebreak methods recommended by the US Chess Federation (Rule 34E), which involve an assessment of the strength of the players' opponents. (See **Breaking Ties** for more information.) For players tied for the Series championship after head-to-head results are considered, the champion will be the player with the highest cumulative tiebreak score from all tournaments played during the season in the Championship section, applying the methods in the order listed below until the tie is resolved:
 - Modified Median
 - Solkoff
 - Cumulative
 - Cumulative of Opposition

Applicability toward Class Trophies of Points Scored in the K-6 Non-Rated Section

A player who begins the Series playing in the K-6 Non-Rated section and later moves to a rated section may count, for purposes of class trophies, the scores from no more than two tournaments played in the K-6 Non-Rated section. However, a score earned in the K-6 Non-Rated section may never be substituted for a score earned in a rated section, even if the score earned in a rated section is lower. (In other words, when a player is counting scores from both rated and non-rated sections, and a score must be omitted, the score that is omitted must be from the non-rated section.)

Trophy Standings

Tournament results and cumulative point totals will be posted throughout the year both at the Series tournaments and on our website at <https://www.chesscincinnati.com/csc-series/>. Players need not play in every tournament to be eligible for a trophy, but players improve their chances of winning a trophy if they play in more tournaments.

Ratings

A rating is a numerical measure of a player's skill at playing chess, or, in chess terms, the player's "strength." A player earns a rating by playing in a section of a tournament for which the game results are reported to the US Chess Federation. Based on the results reported, the US Chess Federation calculates one or more of several different ratings depending on the form of play (over-the-board, correspondence, online) and time control (e.g., blitz, quick, regular). It is not necessary that a player already have a rating in

order to play in rated tournaments — indeed, it is necessary to play in at least one tournament as an unrated player because that is the only way to get a rating to begin with.

Unrated players will acquire an official but “provisional” rating as soon as they have played four rated games, the results of which have been reported to the US Chess Federation. A rating is indicated as provisional in various ways, including *1150 (P15)*, *1150P15* and *1150/15*, where *P*, if it occurs, stands for *provisional*, and the number after the *P* or */* indicates the number of games on which the rating is based.

A player’s rating is provisional until he or she has played more than 25 rated games. When the rating is no longer provisional, the number of games is not shown. For example, *1150/15* indicates a provisional rating of 1150 based on 15 rated games, whereas *1150* by itself indicates an established (not provisional) rating that is based on more than 25 games. A provisional rating can fluctuate greatly as results are processed. Established ratings also fluctuate but usually with smaller incremental changes than for provisional ratings.

The US Chess Federation has defined class designations based on rating, and players are often referred to by these designations according to what their rating is; for example, as a “Class C” player or an “Expert” player, and so forth. These designations mean something quite specific for the chess community. A “Master” player is someone who has objectively achieved and maintains a rating of 2200 or more, not anyone who is merely perceived subjectively to play the game really well. A player rated 2150 plays the game really, really well but is “only” an Expert, not a Master; and it is inaccurate to refer to such a player as a “master.” The US Chess Federation rating classes are shown in the following table:

<i>Rating</i>	<i>Class</i>		<i>Rating</i>	<i>Class</i>
2400 and above	Senior Master		1000–1199	Class E
2200–2399	Master		800–999	Class F
2000–2199	Expert		600–799	Class G
1800–1999	Class A		400–599	Class H
1600–1799	Class B		200–399	Class I
1400–1599	Class C		100*–199	Class J
1200–1399	Class D		<i>*A rating cannot be lower than 100.</i>	

Rating Requirements for Series Tournaments

Players do not need to have a rating to play in a Series tournament. Both rated and unrated players may play in a rated section, while only players who are officially unrated (i.e., those who have played fewer than four rated games) may play in the K-6 Non-Rated section. Everyone who plays in a rated section must be a current member of the US Chess Federation. Players in the K-6 Non-Rated section are not required to be US Chess Federation members, but those who are may play in the K-6 Non-Rated section as long as they are officially unrated (and in grade K-6). Players will not earn a rating as a result of playing in the K-6 Non-Rated section. See ***US Chess Federation Membership*** for more information about membership.

Beginning Rating for Purposes of a Tournament

A player’s rating determines both what section(s) he or she is eligible to play in and, in combination with other factors, how he or she will be paired within that section. Because a player’s rating will change virtually every time he or she plays a rated game, it is helpful to understand what rating is used as a player’s beginning rating for a tournament. There are two ratings of record published by the US Chess Federation: a player’s *official rating* and the player’s *most recent rating*.

- Every month the US Chess Federation publishes a new “rating supplement” and “rating database” that lists the *official ratings* for players. Because of the time needed to prepare and publish each new

supplement or database, the data cut-off for calculating the new ratings is the third Wednesday of each month in order for the supplement and database to be effective as of the first day of the following month. For example, for the supplement and database effective as of July 1, 2021, no results submitted after June 16, 2021 were included in the rating calculations.

- Tournament results are typically submitted within a day or two of a tournament’s conclusion, and the US Chess Federation calculates new ratings usually on the same day that it receives the results. As soon as they are calculated, these new ratings are published in the wall chart for the tournament and are players’ *most recent rating*. Any time a player has new results reported after the data cut-off for the most recent supplement/database, his or her *most recent rating* will likely differ from his or her *official rating*.²

To see a player’s ratings, go to www.uschess.org and use the Player Lookup function to find the player’s record. When the player’s record opens, the ratings displayed on the front page are his or her several current *official* ratings. The screen shot below shows an example:

The screenshot shows the US Chess Federation website's Player Search Results page. The header includes the US Chess Federation logo and the text "The United States Chess Federation". Below the header is a search bar and a navigation menu with links like "US Chess Home", "Shop US Chess Sales", "New to Chess?", "Chess Life Magazine", "Chess Life Online", and "Players & Ratings". The main content area is titled "Player Search Results" and shows "Players found: 1". A table lists the player's details:

USCF ID	Rating	Q Rtg	BL Rtg	OL R	OL Q	OL BL	State Exp	Date	Name
12620838	1249	1221/18	Unrated	Unrated	Unrated	Unrated	OH	Life	HODGE, ALAN

Below the table is a "Search Again" link.

To find the most recent rating, click on the player’s name, and then look on the Tournament History (“Tnmt. Hst”) tab. All the tournaments that the player has played in are listed in order from the most recent (listed first) to oldest, along with the player’s most recent (and last previous) Regular, Quick and Blitz ratings. Clicking on any tournament will open its US Chess Federation wall chart. Here is another screen shot to illustrate:

The screenshot shows the US Chess Federation website's Tournament History page for Alan Hodge (USCF ID 12620838). The page has tabs for "General", "More", "Rtg. Supp.", "Tnmt. Dir.", and "Tnmt. Hst". The "Tnmt. Hst" tab is selected. The page displays "Events for this player since late 1991: 75" and includes explanatory text about rating sequence order and tiebreak order. Below the text is a "Show Events:" link with "1-50" and "51-75" options. A table titled "Events 1 thru 50:" shows the following data:

End Date Event ID	Event Name Section ID and Name	Reg Rtg Before / After	Quick Rtg Before / After	Blitz Rtg Before / After
2018-07-15 201807154352	2018 COLUMBUS OPEN (OH) 4: U1300	1291 => 1249		
2017-12-26 201712268392	2017 STATE OF OHIO G45 CHAMPIONSHIP (OH) 3: U1600	1323 => 1291	1266 (P14) => 1221 (P18)	

² It is possible but unlikely that a player’s rating will not change when new results are reported. Unless a player’s rating is his or her “floor,” it will be simply a coincidence if a player has had results reported since the last data cut-off date and yet his or her *official* and *most recent* ratings are the same. A player’s “floor” is a rating below which the player’s *official* rating will not fall despite any results reported. It recognizes the player’s achievement of a rating exceeding 1400. A player’s floor is calculated by taking his or her highest lifetime rating, rounding this down to the nearest hundred, and then subtracting 200. For example, a player whose lifetime highest rating is 1569 has a floor of 1300.

For every Series tournament the beginning rating used for each player will be the player's current *official rating* except in the case of a player in a rated section who is officially unrated, in which case the player's most recent rating (if there is one) will be used. Because of rating changes, it is sometimes necessary to move a player into a higher section and sometimes possible for a player to move into a lower section. (See *Tournament Format* and *Pairings* for related information.)

US Chess Federation Membership

The US Chess Federation is the national organization governing chess in the United States and is the US member of the *Fédération Internationale des Échecs* (FIDE, the International Chess Federation), the organization that governs chess globally. In addition to determining and publishing the rules of tournament chess in the US, the US Chess Federation assigns every member a unique identification number and calculates a rating for the member based on his or her performance in rated tournaments and matches. Because the Series tournaments are rated tournaments, membership in the US Chess Federation is required for participation in any rated section of a Series tournament. (Players who are not US Chess Federation members may participate *only* in the K-6 Non-Rated section of any regular Series tournament, and only if they also satisfy the other eligibility criteria for playing in this section.)

In addition to offering individual and family membership options for scholastic players, the US Chess Federation offers optional subscriptions to receive by mail printed copies of the magazines *Chess Life* or *Chess Life for Kids*. US Chess Federation memberships and magazine subscriptions may be purchased or renewed directly online at www.uschess.org/Join or through CSC as part of entering any Series tournament.

Chess Clocks

A chess clock is used to enforce the time control for a game. A time control is the amount of time that each player has to play the either the entire game or a specified number of moves. A chess clock is actually two clocks in one device, one clock for each player. While it is one player's move, his or her clock runs while his or her opponent's clock does not run. A player whose clock is running is said to be "on the move" whether or not he or she has already moved a piece on the board. After moving a piece on the board, a player completes the move by pushing the clock button or lever so as to stop his or her clock and start the opponent's clock. This action with the clock is called "pressing the clock." Now the opponent is on the move and will remain on the move until he or she presses the clock to complete a move. If time expires for one player before the game is otherwise decided, and if the other player still has time remaining, the player with time remaining may claim a win (or draw³) on time. When time expires for a player, it is said that his or her "flag fell"; the expiration of a player's time is called "flagfall."

There are different types and styles of chess clocks. Flagfall is indicated variously by the physical drop of an indicator (the "flag") or by the time display changing to "0:00" with or without an accompanying light signal, flashing signal, or similar electronic indicator. Some clocks also have an optional audible signal, such as a beep, but if such a clock is used in tournament chess, this option should be set to "silent" mode so that no audible signal is given at flagfall. Every clock has a way to stop both clocks temporarily (by pushing a "pause" button or switch), which is permissible only when a player wants to ask a tournament director a question or make a claim relating to the game. It is important that every player understand how to pause the clock in a Series tournament. Anyone who is not familiar with the clocks we use should ask another player or a tournament director before beginning the game. (See *Player Claims* for more information.)

³ In order to claim a win on time, a player must have "mating material" remaining on the board, meaning that with the pieces the player has left in play, he could checkmate the opponent if the opponent has only a king and if the game continued. For further details, see *Ways to Draw* or Rule 14E, Insufficient material to win on time in *U.S. Chess Federation Official Rules of Chess, 7th Edition, 2019*.

For Series tournaments, the time control in all sections for all rounds is game in 30 minutes with a five-second delay (written in chess “code” as G/30 d5), meaning that each player has 30 minutes for the entire game and at each move there is a delay of five seconds before a clock resumes running. When a player makes a move and presses the clock within five seconds, he or she uses no clock time.

Players in all rated sections must use a clock; players in the K-6 Non-Rated section must use clocks, beginning with the top board, to the extent that clocks are available. Players do not have the option, either individually or jointly with their opponent, to choose not to use a clock when a clock is available for them to use. In Series tournaments, CSC provides clocks for all players.

If a player is paired out in round 1, the tournament director will set him or her up at a board with a clock and direct him or her to start the opponent’s clock when the tournament director starts the round. If an opponent is found for the player from among late-arriving players, the late arriving player will be paired with the paired-out player and will play the game with whatever time remains on the clock, incurring the penalty of whatever time elapsed since the start of the round.

Clock-Related Rules

Some rules that apply specifically to the use of clocks are stated below. References are to the rule numbers in the *U.S. Chess Federation Official Rules of Chess, 7th Edition, 2019*.

- The player who has the black pieces has the choice of which side of the board the clock is placed on (16L, 39A1).
- After moving a piece, a player must press the clock with the same hand that he or she used to move the piece (16C1). This does not mean that a player must always use the same hand to move throughout the game; only that on each move, he or she must use the same hand to make a move and to press the clock.
- After pressing the clock to complete a move, a player must remove his or her hand entirely from the clock until pressing it again to complete the next move. That is, a player may not keep a hand on or in contact with the clock in between moves (16C).
- Only the two players involved in the game may call flagfall. For anyone else to bring attention to the fact that a player’s flag has fallen is both a violation of US Chess Federation rules and unsportsmanlike interference in the game. Anyone who does this is subject to expulsion from the tournament and forfeiture of games, or to a lesser penalty, at the sole discretion of the tournament director (13C1).
- If time expires for both players before either player calls flagfall, then the game is a draw, regardless of the position on the board, unless the last move played is checkmate. (14G, 14G1, 14G2, 16T).
- The flag is considered fallen when either player points this out (16E). A checkmate or stalemate played on the board *before flagfall is called* determines the result of the game (as a win or draw respectively), even if the flag of the player who effected the checkmate or stalemate had actually fallen (but not been called) before the move was made (13A1, 13A2, 13A3, 14A1, 14A2, 14A3).

Touch-Move

“Touch-move” refers to US Chess Federation Rule 10, which is a rule applicable to chess when played in rated tournaments. The touch-move rule is in effect for all Series games. In simple terms, this rule states:

- If you deliberately touch one of your own pieces, you must move that piece if you legally can.
- If you deliberately touch one of your opponent’s pieces, you must capture that piece if you legally can.

- If you legally move one of your pieces to a square and release it (that is, let go of it so that physical contact between your hand and the piece is broken), it must remain on that square whether or not that is the square to which you intended to move it.
- If you move a piece that you cannot legally move, you must put that piece back on the square where it was before you moved it and make a legal move.

The touch-move rule does not apply to any piece touched accidentally or to any piece not on the board.

Touch-Move and Castling

When castling, a player must move the king first and then the rook. When a player touches the rook first, castling is not allowed, and the player is obligated to move the rook if it is legal to do so. If there is no legal move with the rook, the player is free to make any legal move.

Touch-Move and Pawn Promotion

When promoting a pawn, a player selects a piece (queen, rook, knight or bishop) to replace the pawn. A player may pick up an off-the-board piece, decide otherwise, and select a different piece. This does not violate the touch-move rule, and a player can change his or her selection until the replacement piece touches the promotion square on the board. At that point, the choice of a replacement piece is determined (even if he has not yet released the piece) and the selected piece takes the place of the pawn.

When choosing a piece to replace the pawn, a player is not limited to pieces that have been captured. For example, a player who wants to promote a pawn to a rook can do so even when he or she already has two (or more) rooks on the board. The tournament director will provide the desired piece if it is not immediately available to the player among nearby off-the-board pieces.

Touch-Move and Adjusting a Piece

To adjust a piece means to reposition it slightly so as to make it clear which square it occupies. The touch-move rule also does not apply to adjusting a piece as long as a player adjusts the piece properly. Adjusting a piece is proper if: (1) the piece was placed in contact with two or more squares, (2) a player adjusts it when his or her own clock is running, and (3) the player announces his or her intention to adjust a piece before doing so by saying “adjust” audibly to the opponent. If a player adjusts any piece without first saying “adjust,” the touch-move rule applies.⁴

It is not proper to adjust a piece for any reason other than to clarify its location. For example, it is inappropriate to adjust a piece simply to change its orientation, such as which way a knight is “facing,” when there is no question as to which square it occupies. It is best to adjust only one’s own pieces. If a player moves a piece in such a way that it is unclear which square it occupies and then presses the clock, the opponent has the right to restart the player’s clock and ask him or her to adjust the piece.

Player Claims

In certain situations a player can make a claim to the tournament director for the imposition of a penalty or the determination of the game’s result. Examples of such situations are listed below.

- Claiming a win on time when the opponent’s time has expired

⁴ It is not uncommon to hear players use the French term “j’adoube” instead of “adjust.”

- Claiming that the opponent made a move in violation of the touch-move rule
- Claiming that the opponent made an illegal move, such as failing to get out of check or castling illegally
- Claiming a draw on the basis of repetition of position or the 50-move rule (See *Ways to Draw* for details.)
- Claiming any activity that is contrary to the rules, such as leaving one’s hand on the clock in between moves, engaging in any distracting or unsportsmanlike behavior, or using an electronic scoresheet in an unpermitted manner

The correct way to make a claim is to pause the clock, raise one’s hand to get the tournament director’s attention, and explain the situation to the tournament director when he arrives at your board. The tournament director will then decide whether to uphold or deny the claim. **If a player is uncertain whether there are grounds for a claim, or simply has a question, it is important to bring the matter to a tournament director’s attention immediately when the situation arises!** We tournament directors too often hear about a possible rule violation or similar situation only after the game is over — when it is too late to investigate or to take any corrective action. *If you are not sure about a situation, pause the clock, raise a hand, and ask the tournament director right away!*

Claims can be made only by one of the two players engaged in a particular game. No other person, except a tournament director in certain circumstances, may make any claim on behalf of a player or any comment that such a claim is possible. Any person who brings attention to the possibility of a claim in any game in which he or she is not a player is subject to penalties at the discretion of the tournament director, which may include forfeiture of games and ejection from the tournament. (See *Watching Games in Progress* and *Sportsmanship* for related information.)

The usual penalty when a player violates a rule (such as making an illegal move) is to increase the opponent’s remaining time by two minutes; however, the tournament director in many cases has the authority to impose a different penalty, or no penalty, at his discretion.

Illegal Moves

When an illegal move is played, such as when a player makes a move that does not get him or her out of check, the opponent has the right to claim an illegal move, and may choose to make a claim or not. An opponent who chooses to make a claim must call a tournament director as explained under *Player Claims* above. An opponent who chooses not to make a claim should, without making a move, immediately restart the player’s clock and bring the illegal move to the player’s attention. Whether or not the opponent makes a claim, the player must “take back” the illegal move and make a legal move.

When both players fail to recognize the illegal move and continue to play as usual, any moves played stand until one player or the other recognizes the illegal move, in which case the player should pause the clock and raise a hand to get a tournament director’s attention. One of the following resolutions will be applied:

- If fewer than ten moves have been played since the illegal move occurred, and if the position can be restored to the point immediately before the illegal move was played, the position will be so restored and the game will be re-played from that point, applying the touch-move rule. (Note that a complete move is one move by each player; thus “ten moves” means that White moved ten times and Black moved ten times. Each player moving five times does not equate to ten moves.) The restoration of the position can be based on the game records of one or both players, or by agreement between the players in the absence of a suitable game record. No time will be restored to either player’s clock in this situation.

- If (a) fewer than ten moves have been played since the illegal move occurred but the position cannot be restored to the point immediately before the illegal move was played, or (b) it is not known how many moves have been played since the illegal move occurred, or (c) it is known that ten or more moves have been played since the illegal move occurred, the illegal move will stand and the game will continue from its current position subject to the following:
 - If the player who is on the move is in check, the game will continue from its current position with the player on the move getting out of check immediately.
 - If the player who is on the move is giving check, then the opponent will take back his or her last move played, and the game will continue from that position with the opponent now on the move. The touch-move rule applies.

Announcing Check

A player is not required to say “check” when giving check, although it is a common practice to do so, especially among younger players. Every player is responsible for recognizing when a check exists.

Taking Notation (Recording the moves of a game)

US Chess Federation Rule 15A stipulates that “each player is required to record the game (both the player’s and the opponent’s moves), move after move, as clearly and legibly as possible ...” Recording the moves of a game is also called *taking notation* or *notating*. The record of a game’s moves is called a *scoresheet* or a *game score*. The normal practice when a player is on the move is to make a move, press the clock, and record the move played; and when the opponent is on the move, to record the opponent’s move immediately after he or she makes it. However, it is permissible to reply to the opponent’s move before recording it; that is to say, your opponent moves, then you make your move, then you record both your opponent’s move and your own move at the same time.

In Series tournaments, players in the Championship, U1000 and U700 sections *are required* to take notation, but players in the U400 and K-6 Non-Rated sections *are not required* to take notation. Anyone just beginning to play in tournaments encounters several features that are likely to be new and unfamiliar, including the pair chart, the clock, touch move (not being able to take moves back), and adhering to numerous other rules that pertain to a tournament. We concluded that those features are enough for novice players to be concerned about, and therefore our policy is to excuse players in the U400 and K-6 Non-Rated sections from the requirement to take notation. Those who know, or are just learning, how to take notation are encouraged to do so because it is good practice for when they will be required to do it; but if keeping score impairs their effort to play the game to the best of their ability, for example, by taking so much time that it puts them into time trouble, or is such a distraction that they lose focus on what is happening on the board, then they should not notate.

Several rules apply to taking notation, including these:

- *US Chess Federation Rule 15A*: A player using an electronic scoresheet is required to make a move on the board before recording it. (See ***Electronic Scoresheets*** for more information.)
- *US Chess Federation Rule 15A*: A player’s scoresheet must be visible to the tournament director and to the player’s opponent at all times during a game.
- *US Chess Federation Rule 15B*: If *either* player has five minutes or less of time remaining, *both* players are excused from the requirement to take notation. Either player may choose to continue to take notation.

- *US Chess Federation Rule 15D*: Sometimes a player will want to use the opponent's scoresheet to correct his or her own scoresheet. US Chess Federation rules allow this, provided that both players have at least five minutes of time remaining, and it is unsportsmanlike to refuse to make one's scoresheet available for this purpose. However, a player is permitted to make corrections to his or her scoresheet only when his or her clock is running (i.e., to correct a scoresheet, a player must be on the move and is not permitted to pause the clock). If any issue arises in connection with correcting a scoresheet, including an opponent's refusal to make a scoresheet available, a player should request the assistance of a tournament director; in this case it is permitted to pause the clock until the issue has been resolved.
- *US Chess Federation Rule 20C*: Players are prohibited from writing anything on their scoresheets except the moves, draw offers, clock times, and the header information normally found on a scoresheet.

A player in any section where notation is required who is unable to take notation must make the tournament director aware of this. Depending on the particular circumstances of the situation, the tournament director can take different actions at his discretion, including finding another person to take notation for the player or deducting a number of minutes from the player's time. A player who is required to take notation and refuses to do so will be reminded of the requirement and is also subject to a penalty, which could be the deduction of time from his or her clock, forfeit of the game, or withdrawal from the tournament. A player may make a claim if his or her opponent is not taking notation, but a tournament director can intervene even if no claim is made.

For those who have the option, not taking notation has certain disadvantages. A player who does not notate, or stops notating, forfeits the right to make certain claims that depend on a "reasonably complete" scoresheet (even if his opponent has a scoresheet). Examples of such a claim include a draw by repetition of position (unless a forced perpetual check can be demonstrated) or by the 50-move rule, and a claim of an illegal move when several moves have been played after the alleged illegal move. A scoresheet may lack up to three move pairs and still qualify as reasonably complete for the purpose of demonstrating a claim provided that the moves necessary to establish the claim are all present or obvious. This is a question for a tournament director to decide. (See *Ways to Draw* and *Illegal Moves* for more information.)

Players must be aware that if they move from the U400 or K-6 Non-Rated section into the Championship, U1000 or U700 section, they will be required to notate their games in their new section. And those in the U400 section should remember also that if their rating goes to 400 or higher, moving into a higher section is required, not optional. Therefore, we recommend that players who are improving quickly, as indicated by a rising rating, anticipate their move into a higher section by learning and practicing notation (even in non-tournament games) so that taking notation is not a problem for them when they do move up.

The notation system currently used universally is *algebraic notation*. It is actually quite logical and easily learned. Algebraic notation is explained in the Appendix, and an illustrative game is provided.

CSC provides scoresheets at all Series tournaments for players to use, but players are free to use their own scoresheets or scorebooks if they wish.

Electronic Scoresheets

An electronic scoresheet is a device that automatically records the moves of a game and can be used to print out or electronically save the game record after the game has been concluded. Some players find the use of an electronic scoresheet to be more convenient and accurate than recording moves on a paper scoresheet. Such devices typically have a display screen that shows the board position, and a player records a move by replicating on the device's display screen the move made physically on the board.

Because the device shows the new game position immediately when a move is entered, it is possible that a player, before moving on the actual game board, could “try out” a possible move, see the resulting position, “take the move back” if he or she doesn’t like the position, and “try out” another move. To use an electronic scoresheet in this manner is unsportsmanlike and specifically a violation of US Chess Federation Rule 15A, requiring that players make each move on the board before recording it on their scoresheets, and US Chess Federation Rule 20D, prohibiting the use of assistance during a game. Players using an electronic scoresheet to record their games are therefore reminded that such devices are to be used exclusively for recording moves *after* they are played on the board and not for calculation, analysis or any other purpose that could be construed as assistance.

All users of an electronic scoresheet are required to comply with the *US Chess Federation National Scholastic Chess Tournament Regulations, Effective February 1, 2018, Appendix F: Approved Electronic Notation Devices*, which is reproduced below:

Introduction: Approved electronic notation devices are in common use at US Chess National Scholastic Tournaments. US Chess no longer requires players to “register” their device with the Tournament Director (TD) before game play. Players who own these devices are responsible for setting and operating them according to the instructions below. Players who do not own an approved electronic notation device should expect they may be paired against players who do.

Device Owners should:

1. Set the device in the appropriate mode for recording moves.
2. Turn off or disable any setting(s) that could alert the player of illegal moves.
3. Make the move on the board before recording the move on the device.
4. Keep the device on the table (or immediately above the table) in plain view of the opponent at all times during the game.
5. Touch the device only when recording moves.
6. Never input “variations” in the device at any time during a game.
7. If asked by the opponent to see the player’s device to enter missing moves on [the opponent’s] scoresheet, the player will set the device mode to algebraic (or the appropriate mode that allows the opponent to see all previous moves) and turn the device around so the opponent can view the display screen. The device will remain on the table (or immediately above the table) at all times.
8. Never take their device with them if they leave the board while the game is still in progress.
9. Be ready to take written notation if their device malfunctions (if notation is required during game play in this section). If this happens, the player should begin notation with the next move and fill in missing moves when the player is on move by borrowing the opponent’s scoresheet or device.
10. Summon a TD when questions arise.

Opponents:

1. May ask the player who owns the device to show them the device, explain its use, and ensure it is correctly set for game play for this tournament.
2. May not ask the device owner to take written notation instead of using the device.
3. May ask the device owner to see the player’s device for the purpose of entering missing moves on his/her own scoresheet. When this occurs, the device will remain on the table.
4. Should summon a TD when questions arise.

Coaches/Parents:

1. Are strongly encouraged to assist their players in understanding proper tournament etiquette regarding these devices before tournament play begins.
2. Should summon a TD when questions arise before the start of a game.

Tournament Directors:

1. Should check a player's device to verify that it is correctly set when requested to do so by a player.
2. Circulate among the players during competition ensuring proper usage of the device.
3. Are not responsible for knowing how to operate each type of device.

At this time the US Chess Federation has approved only the following electronic scoresheets for tournament use by players:

- MonRoi Personal Chess Manager
- Plycount LLC, Plycounter®
- ChessNoteЯ by Black Mirror Studio, LLC,
- ChessNoteR-Nexus9 Tablet by Black Mirror Studio, LLC

CSC tournament directors will monitor the use of electronic scoresheets. Failure to comply with the above regulations will result in a warning upon the first instance, and in forfeiture of the game and withdrawal from the tournament upon the second instance.

Ways to Draw

There are several ways for a game to end in a draw. Some of these are inherent in the rules of chess; others are tournament rules that have been conventionally agreed upon. In sanctioned tournament chess, these tournament rules have the same force and effect as the rules of the game itself.

- *Stalemate*: A player is stalemated when he or she (1) is on the move, (2) is not in check, and (3) has no legal move. Note that this does not mean that the player's *king* has no legal move; it means that the player has no legal move with *any piece* still on the board.
- *Mutual Agreement*: The two players could agree to end the game as a draw, in which case one player offers a draw and the other accepts. The rules relating to draw offers are as follows:
 - A player may offer a draw only when it is his or her turn to move. If a player offers a draw when it is the opponent's turn to move, the opponent may choose to accept, reject, or ignore the offer; and because the draw offer was improperly made, the opponent could also make a claim to the tournament director of the rule violation
 - If a player offers a draw before moving, his or her opponent has the right to require that the player move before accepting or refusing the draw offer.
 - A draw offer must be accepted or refused during the same move on which it is made. When a player offers a draw and the opponent moves without verbally accepting or refusing the offer, the opponent's act of moving constitutes a refusal of the offer.
 - Once refused, a draw offer is null. For the game to end thereafter as a draw by mutual agreement, one player or the other must make a new draw offer.

- Offering a draw so repeatedly as to be annoying is unsportsmanlike and a violation of US Chess Federation Rule 20G.
- *Insufficient Mating Material*: Material refers to the pieces (including pawns) that a player still has on the board. A player has insufficient mating material if it is impossible for him or her, with the pieces still on the board, to checkmate an opponent who has only a king. US Chess Federation Rules 14D and 14E specify the situations that qualify as insufficient mating material, but in summary a player has insufficient mating material if he or she has only:
 - A king
 - A king, one bishop or one knight, and no forced mate
 - A king, two knights, and no forced mate

As soon as a position occurs in which both players have insufficient mating material, the game is a draw — no draw offer is necessary. Also, the game is a draw if time expires for one player and the player with time remaining has insufficient mating material. In other words, a player who lacks the material to win the game by checkmate, were the game to continue, cannot claim a win on time either.

Note that a player still has mating material even if he has only one pawn on the board, because it is possible that the pawn will be promoted to a piece with which the player can achieve checkmate.

- *Repetition of Position*: If the identical position occurs for the third time in a game, a player may claim a draw. Two positions are identical only if all the *same pieces* occupy precisely the *same squares* and possess the *same rights* with the *same player* to move. “Rights” refers to the ability to castle or capture *en passant*. The occurrences of the same position do not need to be consecutive or even close together. It doesn’t matter how many moves are played in between occurrences.

The game is not automatically drawn when the third occurrence of the position is played; one player or the other must make a claim of a draw on this basis. Moreover, the claim must be made in a particular manner:

- A player cannot make such a claim unless it is that player’s move.
- The player making the claim must either:
 - pause the clock before moving, call a tournament director, and notify the tournament director that he or she intends to play the move that will bring about the repetition; or
 - make the move that brings about the repetition, pause the clock, call a tournament director, and notify the tournament director of the move just played.
- If a player completes the move that brought about the repetition by pressing the clock without or before making a draw claim, then that player cannot claim a draw based on repetition of position unless and until the position repeats again.

The player claiming the draw must be able to prove the repetition of position by (1) demonstrating a “perpetual check,” which is a situation where one player can force the repetition of the same moves consecutively to keep the opponent in check, or (2) identifying the occurrences of the position from his or her own scoresheet. If the player’s scoresheet is incomplete or inaccurate so that the repetition of position cannot be verified, the draw claim will not be upheld. The player making the claim may not use the opponent’s scoresheet to help prove the claim.

- *50-Move Rule*: If both players make 50 consecutive moves (1) without moving any pawn and (2) without making any capture, then either player may claim that the game is a draw unless the last move played resulted in checkmate. The series of 50 moves can begin at any time, but if any capture or pawn move occurs, the 50-move count must begin all over again. To claim a draw on the basis of the 50-move rule, a player must either have a reasonably complete scoresheet or engage a third party who is acceptable to both players (such as a tournament director), to count moves while the game is played.

Pairings

How Players are Paired

There are different types of tournaments, and players are paired differently in each type. Series tournaments are Swiss tournaments and individual (as opposed to team) competitions. The method of pairing described below is standard for a Swiss tournament.

Players play only other players in their own section and ordinarily never play the same player twice in the same tournament.⁵ Because there are usually more players in each section than there are rounds in the tournament, each player plays only some (not all) of the other players in his or her section. Players are paired against each other as follows within each section separately.

- *Beginning rating*: Players' eligibility to play in any particular section is determined by his or her rating going into the tournament — this is the player's *beginning rating*. A player's beginning rating will be used throughout the tournament; i.e., a player's rating will not change from round to round during the tournament. (See *Beginning Rating for Purposes of a Tournament* under **Ratings** for more information.)
- *Round 1*: All players are listed in descending order by rating. Unrated players are listed, in no particular order, at the bottom of the pairing list. The list of players is then divided into two halves. The first player in the upper half is paired against the first player in the lower half (on the top board), the second player in the upper half is paired against the second player in the lower half (on the second board), and so forth until all players are paired. Colors are assigned randomly on the top board, and then alternate on each following board. For example, if the higher-rated player on the top board gets white, then the higher-rated player on second board gets black, and so on.

If the number of players in a section is odd, the lower half has one more player than the upper half. In this case the player with the lowest rating gets “paired out” — meaning he or she has no opponent for that round. *Unrated* players may not be paired out unless there is no possible way to arrange the pairings otherwise. (See also **Byes** and **Side Games**.)

- *Subsequent rounds*: For rounds 2 through 4 players are first sorted by score group. A score group is a group of players with the same game score. The first group paired is the group with the highest score, and pairing proceeds systematically in order of score to the group with the lowest score. Within each score group players are paired as explained above for round 1, taking into account the other factors relating to pairing mentioned below. If the number of players within a score group is odd, one player in that score group is paired with a player from the next lower score group. If the number of players to be paired in the entire section is odd, the lowest-rated player in the lowest score group who has not already been paired out is paired out.

⁵ If the number of players in a section does not exceed the number of rounds in the tournament, it will be necessary in the Swiss system to pair players against the same opponent more than once. The Swiss system was designed to handle sections with a large number of players, not a small number. For this reason organizers of Swiss tournaments often combine small sections to create a single larger section where Swiss pairings can work as intended.

Other Factors Relating to Pairing

Pairings are influenced by several other factors, including alternation of color, equalization of color (the number of times a player has had each color), whether unrated players are in the section, whether a player has been paired out previously in that tournament (no player may be paired out more than once in a tournament), and whether any players have elected to take optional byes for the current or a future round. Moreover, players who have already played each other in a tournament ordinarily may not be paired against each other again in that tournament. Because all these factors must be taken into account, it can be a complex and time-consuming process to determine pairings. This is why tournament directors commonly use pairing software.

Accelerated pairings may be used in situations where the number of players in the section approaches or exceeds a specified number, determined by the number of rounds. When accelerated pairings are used, the effect is to divide (by rating) a section or score group into quarters rather than halves, then to pair the first quarter against the second quarter, and the third quarter against the fourth quarter. In other respects the pairing process is as described above. Accelerated pairings are typically used only in the first two rounds of a tournament.

Pairing the K-6 Non-Rated Section

Because pairings are dependent on ratings and players in the K-6 Non-Rated section do not have official ratings, CSC assigns each player an arbitrary, initial “rating” equal to his or her grade times 100. For example, a third-grader would be assigned a rating of 300. A kindergartner is assigned a rating of 90. Within each group of players with the same rating, players will be listed in no particular order. Pairings are then determined in the manner described above for rated sections.

In the Series, players who play in the K-6 Non-Rated section multiple times will be assigned a rating as described above for their first tournament, but for their second and each subsequent tournament their final rating calculated by the pairing software for the last tournament they played in will be used as their beginning rating in their next tournament.

The Pair Chart

At the beginning of every round, a pair chart for each section is posted in a designated location. The pair chart is used to let every player know (1) who his or her opponent is, (2) what color to play, and (3) what board to play on. The board numbers on the pair chart correspond to numbered boards in the playing room where the players will play their games. The player listed in the left player column is always the person playing white; the person playing black is always listed in the right player column.

A pair chart sometimes shows other information as well, such as the players’ ratings, US Chess Federation identification numbers, and game scores. The ratings are as of the start of the tournament and remain the same throughout the tournament. “Unr” stands for “unrated” and indicates a player for whom the US Chess Federation has not yet calculated an official rating — normally this is a player who is playing in a rated tournament for the first time.

The pair chart includes result columns where the players record the result of their games. To record a game’s outcome, a player enters a “1” to the left of the name of the winner and a “0” to the left of name of the loser. If the game is a draw, a player enters “1/2” beside each name. In the case of a forfeit, enter “F” for the player who forfeited and “X” for the player who did not. *Both* players are responsible for making sure that the result is recorded correctly. On the next page is an example of a pair chart with results filled in.

[Tournament Name] — [Section Name] Pairings for Round 1						
Bd	Res	White		Res	Black	
1	0	Michael Monster	925	1	John Champion	1025
2	1/2	Ross Knight	1000	1/2	Benjamin Bishop	900
3	1	Wannabe Queen	875	0	Carlyle Castle	975
4	F	Rudy Rude	950	X	Penny Pawner	Unr

The results recorded show that on board 1 Champion defeated Monster, on board 2 Knight and Bishop drew, on board 3 Queen defeated Castle, and on board 4 Rude forfeited (and Pawner got a forfeit win).

The Wall Chart

The wall chart shows the results of all the games in each section of a tournament round by round. By consulting the wall chart you can find out who has played whom in what round and with what color and result, who is in the lead, who is in each score group, who has taken a bye for any round, and who has withdrawn from the tournament. Players are listed normally in order of their beginning rating; the “pair number” indicates the player’s place in a list of all players in the tournament (or section), ranked by rating, with number 1 being the highest-rated player. For each player the wall chart shows name, US Chess Federation identification number, and rating. Additional information may also be shown, such as a player’s school grade (“Cl/Gr”). For each round played (or paired) so far the wall chart shows:

- Color played (W or B)
- Opponent (identified by pair number)
- Cumulative game score
- If the player has a bye (“bye”)
- If the player has withdrawn (“---”)

Below is an example of a wall chart for a four-round tournament, in which round 3 is in progress. Two rounds have been completed; colors, opponents and results are shown for these rounds. Round 3 has been paired but not completed, so colors and opponents (by pairing number) but no results are shown for it. Nothing is shown for round 4. The first column shows the players’ pair numbers.

[Tournament Name] – [Section] Wall Chart							
Pair #	Name/Rating/ID	Cl/Gr	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Total
1	John Champion 2295 10000001		W 4	B 3	W 2		2.0
		12	1.0	2.0			
2	Ross Knight 2000 10000002		bye	W 6	B 1		1.0
		10	0.0	1.0			
3	Benjamin Bishop 1937 10000003		bye	W 1	B 5		0.0
		11	0.0	0.0			
4	Michael Monster 1855 10000004		B 1	W 7	B 6		1.0
		9	1.0	1.0			
5	Wannabe Queen 1735 10000005		B 7	bye	W 3		1.0
		9	0.0	1.0			
6	Irwin Eliminator 969 10000006		bye	B 2	W 4		1.5
		7	1.0	1.5			
7	Carlyle Castle Unr 10000007		W 5	B 4	bye		0.0
		6	0.0	0.0			

Because the wall chart shows cumulative scores, it takes a bit of calculation to determine the result of any particular game after round 1. To know whether a player won his round 2 game, subtract the round 1 score from the round 2 score. For example, John Champion’s round 1 score was 1 and his round 2 score was 2. This means that he scored 1 point in round 2 — indicating that he won his round 2 game. Michael Monster’s score, however, did not change from round 1 to round 2, meaning that he scored 0 in round 2 — indicating that he lost his round 2 game. In other words, a player’s result from any individual game, or round, is reflected by the *change* in that player’s score from the preceding round. In a similar fashion, by comparing the score for the bye round with the score for the preceding round, you can determine whether a bye was a full-point, half-point, or zero-point bye.

The Standings Chart

The standings chart lists players in descending order by score so it is easier to see immediately what players are in each score group. Within each score group players are listed in order by rating. Differences between the standings chart and the wall chart are as follows:

- The order in which players are listed will change on the standings chart as their scores change, whereas players are normally listed consistently in the same order on the wall chart.
- The standings chart does not show the color played by the players; the wall chart does.
- The standings chart shows the results of each round as a win (“W”), loss (“L”) or draw (“D”) rather than as a cumulative numerical score as on the wall chart; however, the standings chart includes a total score column at the right where each player’s current cumulative score is shown. “B---” indicates a bye.

An example standings chart is shown below.

[Tournament Name] – [Section] Standings										
#	Name	ID	Rtng	Post	Grd	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Tot
1	Penny Pawner	12345678	1482	1476	8	W8	W9	D2	W3	3.5
2	Ross Knight	22345678	1249	1266	10	W4	W8	D1	W7	3.5
3	Brook Rook	32345678	1007	1062	8	W6	W5	W9	L1	3.0
4	Michael Monster	42345678	654	663	9	L2	D7	B---	W6	2.5
5	Wannabe Queen	52345678	1306	1240	9	W7	L3	L6	W9	2.0
6	Irwin Eliminator	62345678	642	665	7	L3	B---	W5	L4	2.0
7	Carlyle Castle	72345678	715	773	6	L5	D4	W8	L2	1.5
8	John Champion	82345678	735	708	12	L1	L2	L7	B---	1.0
9	Benjamin Bishop	92345678	555	551	11	B---	L1	L3	L5	1.0

In addition to the players’ place numbers (first column), names, results and opponents by round, and total score, the standings chart may show additional information. In this example, the player’s US Chess Federation ID number, beginning rating (“Rtng”), post-tournament rating (“Post”) and school grade (“Grd”) are also shown. The post-tournament rating is an *estimated* new rating for the player calculated by the pairing software. While these estimated ratings are often quite accurate, they are not official; only the US Chess Federation can calculate and publish a player’s official rating.

From this standings chart we can see, for example, that Michael Monster (player 4), a 9th grader, lost in round 1 to player 2 (Ross Knight), drew player 7 (Carlyle Castle) in round 2, got paired out in round 3, and beat player 6 (Irwin Eliminator) in round 4, for a total game score of 2.5. (Note that we can’t tell from the standings chart what color he played in any of his games.) He entered the tournament with a rating of 654, and gained an estimated 9 rating points, for an estimated final rating of 663.

Side Games

When players are paired out in more than one section, it is possible to pair two players from different sections against each other in a side game. The purpose of a side game is simply to give the players the opportunity to play another game rather than be idle during the round in progress. Side games do not have any bearing on a player's score either for the individual tournament or for the Series, but they may be counted as a rated game if both players agree to have it rated. The time control for all side games will be the same as for tournament games: G/30; d5. Colors will be assigned by any commonly accepted random method (selecting from hidden pawns, coin flip, etc.).

When two or more players are paired out, the tournament director will determine whether they are interested in playing a side game. The tournament director will suggest the most reasonable pairings, if there are options, and the players may then decide whether or not to play the side game, and, if yes, whether or not to have the game submitted for rating. In order for a side game to be submitted for rating, both players must agree, before play begins, that it will be a rated game. Players who choose to play a side game for rating must play with a clock, if a clock is available, and have the result verified by a tournament director just as with a tournament game. Players who choose to play a side game but not have it rated may play with or without a clock, as they choose, and need not have the result verified by a tournament director.

Breaking Ties

In all cases of tied scores, medal winners and the Series champion will be determined according to US Chess Federation standard tiebreaks in accordance with US Chess Federation Rule 34E. The tiebreak methods, in order of application, are listed below and explained with excerpts of the pertinent US Chess Federation rules.

1. Modified Median
2. Solkoff
3. Cumulative Score
4. Cumulative Score of Opposition
5. Result between tied players ("head-to-head")

Modified Median (Rule 34E1)

"The Median system ... evaluates the strength of a player's opposition by summing the final scores of his or her opponents and then discarding the highest and lowest of those scores.

"In the Modified Median system, players who tie with even scores (an even score is equal to exactly one half of the maximum possible score), have the highest- and lowest-scoring opponents' scores excluded. The system is modified for players with non-even scores to disregard only the least significant opponents' scores: the lowest-scoring opponent's score is discarded for tied players with plus scores and the highest-scoring for players tied with minus scores. ..."

Solkoff (Rule 34E2)

"The Solkoff system is the same as the Median (explained above, Rule 34E1) except that no opponents' scores are discarded."

Cumulative Score (Rule 34E3)

“To determine cumulative tiebreak score, simply add up the cumulative (running) score for each round. For example, if a player’s results were win, loss, win, draw, loss, the wall chart would show a cumulative score round by round as 1, 1, 2, 2.5, 2.5. The cumulative tiebreak total is 9 ($1 + 1 + 2 + 2.5 + 2.5 = 9$). . . . One point is subtracted from the sum for each unplayed win or full-point bye (22B); likewise, one-half point is subtracted from the sum for each unplayed draw or half-point bye.”

The practical effect of the Cumulative Score method is that wins in early rounds have more weight than wins in later rounds because they are counted more times. (A point for a win in round 1 is counted in that round and in every subsequent round, whereas a point for a win in the last round is counted only in that round.) The rationale for this system is that players who win their games are paired against stronger opponents in their next round than are players who lose — so that overall players who win early in the tournament play a tougher schedule than do players who lose early.

Cumulative Score of Opposition (Rule 34E9)

“The cumulative tiebreak points of each opponent are calculated as in 34E3, and these are added together.”

Result between tied players (“head-to-head”) (Rule 34E5)

“Self-explanatory if two tie, but useful only when they were paired and did not draw. If more than two tie, all results among tied players should be considered, with rank according to plus or minus, not percentage. For example, 3–1 (+2) beats 1–0 (+1).”

Provision of Equipment

CSC provides boards, pieces, clocks, scoresheets and writing implements for all its tournaments. Players may use their own scoresheets (including approved electronic scoresheets) or scorebooks if they wish.

Watching Games in Progress

Except for the tournament directors, we ask that all adults, including parents and coaches, stay out of the tournament playing room while any game is in progress. Adults may watch the proceedings from outside the playing room if the venue makes this possible, but they are cautioned that any tournament director may disallow this if conversation or other noise resulting from their presence becomes a distraction to the players. In the Championship section only, players may watch other games in progress in their section when they have completed their own games, provided that they observe proper conduct for spectators. However, any player may object to the actions or presence of a spectator and has the right to have the spectator removed. Players in all other sections are required to stay out of the tournament rooms after they have completed their own games until pairings for the next round are posted. (See *Sportsmanship* for more information.)

Sportsmanship

All players are expected to show good sportsmanship throughout the tournaments. Good sportsmanship includes but is not limited to the following practices:

- Be courteous to your fellow players, the tournament directors and everyone else at the tournament.

- Shake hands with your opponent before and after your game. However, when health concerns and common sense dictate, players are encouraged to dispense with handshakes or to replace them with fist bumps or the like.
- Avoid behavior that annoys or distracts your opponent or other players.
- Be a gracious winner when you win; don't make a big show about winning a chess game, and don't gloat. When you lose, lose with dignity. It's OK to be disappointed, even upset, but keep it in perspective because everyone is trying to win. Learning from losses creates more opportunities to win.

A chess game is a contest between only the two people playing it. It is unsporting and against the rules to interfere in any way with someone else's game. This applies to players, parents, coaches, and any other spectators, participants or bystanders in any capacity. Interference includes both commenting on the game and doing anything that distracts players. Following are examples of prohibited interference:

- Kibitzing! To kibitz means basically to butt in. It is unsporting and against the rules for anyone to meddle in any way with someone else's game. Meddling includes commenting on the game and doing anything that distracts the players.
- Making comments to either player or to anyone else about a game while it is in progress — explicitly including, for example, any comment relating to illegal moves, flagfall, or the position on the board.
- Making gestures or facial expressions that could be construed as comments, whether directed to anyone in particular or not.
- Behavior that might disturb or distract any player, whether related to a game being played or not — this includes:
 - Unnecessary conversation with any player or anyone else in the playing room.
 - Crowding into a player's personal space when looking at a game.
 - Loud talk and noisy activity anywhere near games that are still in progress.

Sandbagging

Manipulating one's rating by intentionally losing games is called sandbagging. A player's purpose in sandbagging is to achieve a lower rating in order to become eligible to play in a section with a lower rating ceiling, with the idea that the player is likelier to win more games against weaker — and therefore have improved chances of winning a prize. Sandbagging violates the rules and ethics of chess, is disrespectful and unfair to the player's opponents, and is dishonest. In a word, sandbagging is cheating. The pertinent rules are identified below (quoted from *U.S. Chess Federation Official Rules of Chess*, 7th Edition, 2019).

20A. Conduct of players. Players shall participate in the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship, and must observe the US Chess Code of Ethics.

US Chess Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct. 6. ... The following is a list of examples of actions or behavior that are considered unethical ...

6(c): Deliberately losing a game for payment, or to lower one's rating, or for any other reason; or attempting to induce another player to do so. Deliberately failing to play at one's best in a game, in any manner inconsistent with the principles of good sportsmanship, honesty, or fair play.

20L. Manipulating results. Collusion to fix or throw games, whether before or during the game, in order to manipulate prize money, title norms, ratings, or for any other purpose is illegal ...

With the objective of protecting our events from sandbaggers, we have implemented the following policy:

When CSC finds evidence of sandbagging by any player who has entered a CSC event, that player will be subject to disciplinary actions, which may include any or all of the following: forfeiture of games and loss of points scored, a requirement to play in a higher section, ineligibility for any prize, expulsion from the tournament, and exclusion from future CSC events.

Food and Drinks at Tournaments

Vending machines might be available in some venues, but they might not be accessible or stocked. CSC will publish on its website ([Series Venue Information](#)) information about the availability of food at a tournament or conveniently nearby; however, as a general rule, absent any specific information to the contrary, participants should not expect food to be available for purchase onsite. Participants are welcome to bring whatever lunch, snacks and drinks they might want for consumption (in the skittles area) during the tournament. We ask all players and their families and friends to be conscientious about cleaning up after themselves so that we do not jeopardize the privilege of using our venues in the future. We ask that players not have food or drinks other than water in the playing rooms. Thank you for your cooperation.

Inclement Weather Policy

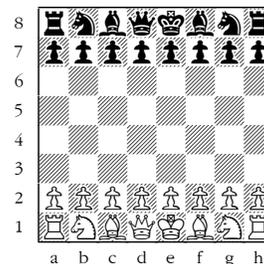
It is possible that inclement weather or some other serious circumstance will make it prudent to cancel or delay a tournament. When circumstances permit in such a situation, the tournament directors will post advance notice on our “Bulletin Board” at www.chesscincinnati.com no later than 6:00 pm on the evening prior to the tournament. In the absence of such notice, parents are asked to check our website on the morning of the tournament before leaving home for any new or updated notice, and to be guided by weather or other advisories issued by the government, exercising their own best judgment with respect to the situation. CSC emphatically does not want to put any players or their families at risk by conducting a tournament under hazardous conditions, and sensible caution should govern everyone’s actions.

Appendix: Chess Notation

Chess notation is a system for recording the moves of a game. The official system now in use, *algebraic notation*, is described here. We strongly encourage players new to notation to become familiar with notation by recording a few games as they play before playing in their first tournament. However, such players should not be unduly concerned: while notation is required, *perfect* notation is not. Everyone makes mistakes and even very experienced players can forget to write down some moves. If you forget to write down one or more moves, just skip a line on your scoresheet and carry on from where you are in the game. The more you notate, the easier it gets! Moreover, recording your games so that you can replay and analyze them is one the best ways to improve as a player.

1. Squares are identified using the files and ranks as coordinates.
 - a. The files are the rows of squares that run from one player to the other (or, in a diagram, “up and down” the board); they are labeled “a” through “h.” The ranks are the rows of squares that run across the board from left to right; they are numbered 1 through 8. Each square is identified by its file and rank: a6, d4, etc., with the file letter always preceding the rank number. *Important: Files are always identified by small (lower case) letters. Thus “b” designates only the b file.*

- b. The white pieces are set up on the side of the board where the files run from a on the left to h on the right, and the ranks run from 1 (closest) to 8 (farthest away).
- c. From the point of view of the person playing black (i.e., looking down from the top of the diagram), the black pieces are set up on the side of the board where the files run from h on the left to a on the right, and the ranks run from 8 (closest) to 1 (farthest away).



2. Pieces are identified by letters: K = king, Q = queen, R = rook, B = bishop, N = knight. (Be careful not to use “K” for a knight.) No letter is used for pawns. *Important: Pieces are always identified by capital (upper case) letters. Thus “B” designates only a bishop.*
3. Moves that do not involve capturing a piece are recorded as follows:
 - a. For pieces other than pawns, moves are recorded by identifying the piece being moved and its destination square. For example, Nf3 means that a knight moved to square f3.
 - b. For pawns, only the destination square is recorded. For example, e4 means that a pawn moved to square e4.
4. Moves that involve capturing a piece are recorded with an “x” inserted before the destination square. The “x” signifies a capture.
 - a. For pieces other than pawns, captures are recorded by identifying the piece being moved followed by an “x” and its destination square. For example, Nxf3 means that a knight moved to square f3, capturing a piece that was located there.
 - b. For pawns, captures are recorded by identifying the file that the pawn moved from followed by an “x” and its destination square. For example, exf6 means that a pawn moved from the e file to square f6, capturing a piece that was located there.
5. If two pieces of the same type can move to the same square, either the rank or the file that the piece moved from is indicated in order to make it clear which piece was moved. For example, when a rook is on a1 and another rook is on f1, and they can both move to e1, the move is recorded as Rae1 if the a1 rook was moved, and as Rfe1

if the f1 rook was moved. Similarly if a knight is on f3 and another knight is on f5, either knight can capture a piece on d4, so the capture is recorded as either N3xd4 or N5xd4.

6. Special moves are noted as follows:

- a. Check is indicated by “+” written at the end of the move, double check by “++”, and checkmate by a “#”; for example, Qa4+, Nh3++, Rd8#.
- b. Castling is written as 0-0 when it is done on the kingside (the kingside of the board is files e through h) and as 0-0-0 when it is done on the queenside (the queenside is files a through d). A convenient way to remember these codes is that the number of zeroes corresponds to the number of squares that the rook moves when castling: two squares on the kingside and three on the queenside.
- c. *En passant* capture is recorded just as any other pawn capture is; for example, when a pawn on the e file moves to f6 and in the process captures a pawn that was on f5, the move is written “exf6.” The move record indicates the capturing pawn’s destination square, not the square occupied by the pawn that got captured.
- d. Pawn promotion is written as any normal pawn move followed by “=” and the letter for the piece that replaces the pawn. For example, b8=Q indicates that a pawn was moved from b7 to b8 and promoted to a queen, while exf8=N indicates that a pawn on the e file captured a piece on f8 and was promoted to a knight. When the promotion results in check, double check, or checkmate, then +, ++, or # is added at the end of the move as applicable.

7. A complete move record comprises a move by White, always written in the left column, and a move by Black, always written in the right column. Conventionally these move pairs are numbered, but the numbers are for convenience of reference and are not required for the game record. (On printed scoresheets, the move numbers are pre-printed, so players do not need to write them.) This example illustrates:

	White (left)	Black (right)
1.	e4	e5
2.	Nf3	Nc6
3.	Bb5	a3

and so on.

8. Additional points about taking notation:

- a. While a game is being played, the players record only the moves played (by White and Black), and optionally any or all of the following: the move numbers if these are not preprinted on the scoresheet, notations of time elapsed or remaining, and draw offers (designated by “=” written after the move when the offer is made). No other comments or notations of any kind are permitted on the scoresheet.
- b. When *either player* has five minutes or less of time remaining, *both players* are excused from the requirement to record further moves.
- c. To distinguish moves played by Black from moves played by White when the moves are not presented in columns (as in a scoresheet), it is conventional to use an *ellipsis* (“...”) to designate moves played by Black. Therefore, when an ellipsis precedes a move, it signifies that that the move was played by Black and not by White. For example: “Bb4” can mean only that White moved a bishop to b4, while “... Bb4” can mean only that Black moved a bishop to b4.

Illustrative Game

This illustrative game between Mr. White and Ms. Black illustrates algebraic notation and includes some comments, expressed with either symbols or words, as an example of analysis that would have been added for the published game record after the game was played. (This game was contrived only for the purposes of illustrating all the elements of algebraic notation and is decidedly *not* an example of a well played game.)

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>		<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>
1.	e4	e5	31.	Rd1	a5
2.	Nf3	b6	32.	bx a5	Rxa5
3.	Bc4	Bb7	33.	Kg2	Rd5
4.	0-0	Nc6	34.	Nb2	Rxd1
5.	d4	exd4	35.	Nxd1	c5
6.	e5	f5	36.	Nc3	Kc7
7.	exf6	Nxf6	37.	Kf3	Kc6
8.	Bg5	h6	38.	Ke4	b5
9.	Bxf6	Qxf6	39.	Nb1	b4
10.	Nbd2	Be7	40.	Kd3	Kb5
11.	Nb3	0-0-0	41.	f4	c4+
12.	Nfxd4	Rhf8	42.	Kc2	b3+
13.	Kh1	Qh4	43.	Kb2	Kb4
14.	g3 ?	Nxd4+ !	44.	Nc3	Kc5
			45.	h4	d5
			46.	g4	d4
			47.	h5	dx c3+
			48.	Kc1	b2+
			49.	Kc2	Kb4
			50.	Kd1	b1=Q+
			51.	Ke2	Qe4+
			52.	Kf2	Qxf4+
			53.	Ke1	c2
			54.	Ke2	c1=Q

Black's move results in *discovered* check (by the bishop). There is no notation to distinguish a *discovered* check from any other check.

Even though both of his rooks have the black knight *en prise*, White is unable to capture it because doing so would not rescue his king from the simultaneous check by the bishop. White has no choice but to move his king.

15.	Kg1	Qh5 ??
16.	Qxh5 !?	Nf3+
17.	Kg2	Ne1++ !!
18.	Kg1	
18.	...	Bb4
19.	c3	Nf3+
20.	Qxf3 ??	Bxf3
21.	cx b4	Rde8
22.	Nd4	Re4
23.	Nxf3 ?!	Rxc4
24.	Ne5	Re4
25.	Ng6	Rfe8
26.	Rad1	Re2
27.	Nf4	Rxb2
28.	Nd3	Rxa2
29.	Rfe1	Rxe1
30.	Rxe1	Ra3

Since Black already has a queen on the board, what can be used for this second queen? It is common now for tournament sets to include two queens of each color. Alternatively, players use a queen borrowed from another set, or (in the US) a rook turned upside down or even two pawns placed on the same square.

55. g5

And now, for the *coup de grâce* — Black can checkmate with any one of four moves, and each of these moves can be written in either of two ways.

55.	...	Qcd2# or Q1d2#
	...	Qfe3# or Q4e3#
	...	Qcf1# or Q1f1#
	...	Qff1# or Q4f1#