Ten steps to learn

Chess

Tactics and Combinations

Short, violent games of chess, organised by theme

A resource from
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Introduction

A note for players

Here is a collection of very short games organised by tactical theme. The main aim is to give you a quick run-through the basic tactical ideas in genuine positions. One advantage of using short games is that you can set the positions up on a board very quickly and accurately. You can of course just use the diagrams as test positions.

I have selected as many of the games as possible from opening systems that are commonly recommended for improving players. This is the great main highway of chess, and the views to either side are wonderful.

I've marked where I think the losing side could have played better with the chessplayer's frown, "?", so you can go over each game once again, trying this time to improve the play.

A note for teachers and coaches

Anyone could have done this, and maybe you would have done it better, but you might find it useful that it has been done by someone else.

I find it as easy to play over a short game from the start position as it is to set up a position from scratch, so when working with players over a board I like to use this type of example.

Nearly all the games start 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3, which I hope means they will connect with, and reinforce, good opening principles for learner players, and show poor play punished. The exciting main lines of the Max Lange and Fried Liver Attacks feature throughout, and Damiano's Defence endures some terrible beatings. There is an opening index by ECO code so you can run through several tactical ideas associated with one opening or even one variation.
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How to read and write down chess games

Each square is described by a lower-case (small) letter (a-h) which names the *file*, and a number (1-8) which tells you the *rank*. So, the square marked with a ★ is a4.

Each piece is shown with a letter, as follows:

- ♔ K King
- ♕ Q Queen
- ♖ B Bishop
- ♗ N Knight
- ♘ R Rook

Each move tells you which piece has moved to which square.

So Rb5 means the White Rook moves to the square b5. Pawn moves are shown without a "P", just the square is named: so d6 means the White Pawn on d5 moves to the square d6.
When you take a piece a cross (x) is used: so \textbf{Rxb8} means the Rook takes the Bishop on b8. If you take with a Pawn, you write the file that the Pawn starts on, for example, \textit{gxf4}.

Check is shown with a plus (+), \textbf{Rh1+}. Checkmate is shown with two plus signs, \textbf{Qg7++}, or a hash, \textbf{Qg7#}.

Castling King's-side is shown as \textbf{O-O}; castling Queen's-side is shown as \textbf{O-O-O} (neither shown on the diagram).

Sometimes two of the same kind of piece can move to the same square. For example, both Knights could move to d6. We show which Knight we have moved by naming the starting square, so \textit{N(f5)d6}. Most players shorten this to either Nfd6 or N5d6.

Three dots before a move (\ldots\textit{Rb7}) mean it is a move by Black.

Also, sometimes you see a "!" or "?" sign after a move. It's a quick way of telling you how good the move is.

- \textbf{!} means a good move
- \textit{!?} means a risky move which might turn out well
- \textit{?!} means a dodgy move which might turn out badly
- \textbf{?} means a bad move

Game information is like this: \textit{Daniel – Gericke [C41] corr BDF, 1993}

White was Daniel and Black was Gericke. The opening was \textit{Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings} code C41, which is Philidor's Defence. The game was played by correspondence with the BDF (German Correspondence Chess Federation) during 1993.
1 The ABC of tactics

The building blocks of combinations are these ideas:

Loose pieces

Outnumbered pieces

Forks

Nets

Pins

Skewers

White to move

Black to move
Ties (undermining)  
Jumps (discoveries, unmasking)  
Decoys

Ties (overloading)  
Checkmates  
Clearances

Idea ...Ne2+!
The three most common reasons games are lost

The three most common reasons games are lost between learning players don't have anything to do with all the fancy ideas you'll see in the rest of the book. They are more like accidents than tactical tricks; oversights and carelessness are the cause, not your opponent's clever play.

The three most common accidents are:

1. You lose a piece for nothing.
2. You lose a piece for a less important piece (or a pawn).
3. Your piece is outnumbered: there are more attackers than defenders

2.1 Take a piece for nothing

A free gift
Daniel - Gericke [C41]
corr BDF, 1993
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nd7?!
4.Bc4 h6 5.Nc3 c6 6.dxe5 dxe5
7.0-0

The simplest idea of all.
7...Bd6? 8.Qxd6 Qf6 9.Rd1 1-0

A unique opportunity
Jackson,J - Kozlov,V [C40]
corr Atars mem, 1993
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nc3 fxe4

Black finds the only move on the board to lose a piece for nothing.
9.Nxb4 1-0
2.2 Take a more important piece

Bargain
Simler,K – Avguarde [C55]
Fremont, 1992


Not a free gift, but a good swap for Black.
9...Nxd2 0-1

Profit
Brown,D - Kirshner,M [C58]
Palo Alto, 1992


Black makes a profit on the following exchange: 12...Bxe1 13.Qxe1 Ng4 14.Qe4 Nf2+ 0-1

Confused
Slothouber,F – Huitt Jr,P [C41]
IECG, Cat-D (m/2947/02), 1995


White got the right moves in the wrong order.
4...dxc3 5.e5 cxb2 6.Bxb2 f6 7.exf6 Nxf6 8.Bc4 Qe7+ 9.Qe2 Nbd7 10.0-0 Qxe2 0-1
2.3 More attackers than defenders

**Easy as 123**

Sneiders,E - Grosshans,R [C57]
Corr, 1987

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 b5!? 6.dxc6 bxc4
7.Qe2 Qd5 8.0-0 Bd6 9.Qf3 Qd4
10.Ne4? ❄️

10...Qxe4 0-1

Queen takes Knight, Queen takes Queen

**Outnumbered**

Grewe,B - Kutzner,S [C55]
RL-chJ U15 Mendig, 1994

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
dxe4 7.Nxe5 Qg5 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 ❄️

White needs a safe square for the Knight.

9.Ng4? Bxg4 0-1 Not that one!

**A lonely knight**

Knorr – Schmidt [C57]
1990

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.Ng5 Nxe4?! ❄️

White uncovers a defence to the Knight on g5, but it's not enough.

5.d4? Nxe5 6.Qh5 Ne6 7.dxe5 d6
8.exd6 Bxd6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Bb3
Ned4 0-1
3 One-move ideas

3.1 Forks

The knight fork

Beginners love to play this trick

\[ \text{9.Nexc7+} \]

White wins a Rook, maybe for a Knight, maybe for nothing!

This was from a game with another fork idea:

Protection by a fork

Granatella Adam – Power Mike [C42]
CL-5.1, IECC (1), 1995


8.Nb5 and Black dare not take the Knight on e6.

8...Nxe4 9.Nexc7+ 1-0

A family fork

Walker,J – Havill,E [C55]
Torbay Juniors vs. Exeter Juniors, 1995


10.exd5 exd5 11.Nxd5 Qe6?  

Black attacks, but...

12.Nxc7+ 1-0
A right fork
John Head - Richard Bladek [C55]
Class N.019 IECG, 1996

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d4
exd4 5.Ng5?! Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Bxd2+
7.Nxd2 d6

f7 is useful not just for checkmates.
8.Nxf7 Bg4 9.f3 1-0

An ancient Queen fork
Greco,G – NN [C41]
Italy?, 1801

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.h3?! Nf6 4.c3
Nxe4? □

After the Knight, the piece that is best for forks is the Queen.
5.Qa4+ c6 6.Qxe4 1-0

Setting up a fork
Morgado,J - Szmetan,J [C42]
corr, 1968

Nxe4 5.c4 d5 6.cxd5 Bf5 7.Nc3
Bc5? □

White can prepare the same idea:
8.Nxe4 1-0
A reinforced fork
Wall, B - Bell, T [C57]
North Carolina, 1979
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nge7
White gangs up on c6, intending to fork King and Rook.
9.Bxc6+ 1-0

A checkless fork
Svendsen, T – Borrmann, F [C40]
corr Atars mem, 1986
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5?! 3.Nxe5 Qf6 4.d4 d6 5.Nc4 b5?! 6 Ne3 a6 7.exf5 Bxf5?
No noise, just a deadly quiet move.
8.Qf3 1-0

A freeing fork
Two Knights' Defence
Here is a very common idea. Black does not gain any material but gets a fine free game by this trick.
Do look for chances to play this idea. It wouldn't work if Black had already played ...Bc5, of course.
3.2 Pins

A terrible pin
Sturell - NN [C44]
Boras, 1956

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 d5
4.Qa4 dxe4 5.Nxe5 Qd5
6.Nxc6 Qxc6? 
Black hopes to swap Queen for Queen.

7.Bb5 1-0

Another terrible pin
Nudling,H – Gagsch,H [C40]
corr, 1986

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5?! 3.Nxe5 Qf6
4.d4 d6 5.Nc4 fxe4 6.Be2 Qg6?
Same idea, other side.

7.Bh5 1-0

A long pin
Davis,M - Calabria,J [C48]
E Lansing ch-MI opB (1), 1993

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nc6
4.Bb5 d5? 5.Nxe5 Qd6 6.0-0
Qxe5? 7.exd5 Ng4
White's next move pins across the whole board.

8.Re1 Qxe1+ 9.Qxe1+ 1-0
Stabbed in the heart
Djuric, A - Jelisavac, M [C45]
Jezero Open Belgrade YUG (3), 2003

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
4.Nxd4 Nxd4?! 5.Qxd4 b6 6.f3
Nf6 7.Nc3 Bb7 8.Bd3 Be7
9.Qe3 0-0 10.0-0? 

White's position looks safe, but
Black stabs through the lines.
10...Bc5 0-1

An unusual pin
Bandyopadhyay, S – Misner, R [C57]
IECG, Cat-D (m/1002/02), 1994/1002/(2)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
Qb4 7.b3 Nxe4? 8.Qh5+ Kd8
9.Nf7+ Ke7 

This is an unusual pin:
10.Ba3 1-0

A bad pin
Bell, R - Wall [C43]
Statesville, NC, 1979

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4
4.Nxe5 Qe7 5.Qd3 d5 6.Nc3?
Nxc3 7.Qxc3 

White's Knight cannot move, so
it cannot escape.
7...f6 0-1
Poking a pinned piece again
Tarrasch,S - Simonson [C47]
Berlin, 1887
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6
4.d4 Bb4 5.d5 Ne7 6.Nxe5
Nxe4 7.Qd4 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Nf6
9.Bg5 Ng6

The same idea; a pinned piece cannot escape its attackers.
10.Ng4 1-0

Pin and counter-pin
Ahrens,M - Dyckhoff,E [C56]
Germany, 1937
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.d4 exd4 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.Re1 d5

White is relying on a pin to hold up his Bishop, but the White Bishop is also pinned!
9...Ne7 10.bxc3 Nxd5 0-1

Two pins
Bobras,P - Hedke,F [C41]
9th Bavarian Open Bad Wiessee GER (8), 2005
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 exd4
Bg7 7.Qd2 0-0 8.0-0-0 Nc6
9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.e5

Neither the Knight nor the pawn dares move.
3.3 Skewers

A simple skewer
Morgado,J - Torres,J [C40]
corr, 1968
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nxe5 Qh4
4.exf5 d6 5.Nf3 Qe4+ 6.Be2
Bxf5 7.Nc3 Qg4 8.Nd5 Kd8
9.Ne3 Qe4

White reaches through the Queen to take the Bishop.
10.Bd3 1-0

A modest skewer
Richter - Bigott,M [C45]
Porz (5), 1991
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
Bb7 7.0-0 Qf6 8.Be3 Qc6

White's skewer is a small move to win a small piece, but it's enough to win the game.
9.Bd5 1-0

The last word
Robins,E - Anders,W [C40]
corr Betins mem, 1970
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Bc4 d5
Nxf2 7.Qh5+ g6 8.Bf7+ Ke7

Black has dodged well but cannot avoid the final skewer.
9.Qg5+ Kd6 10.Qxd8+ 1-0
3.4 Nets

No retreat
Koltanowski,G - Nolan,W [C40]
San Francisco (4), 1960
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6 3.Nc3 Bc5
4.Bc4 d6 5.d3 Ne7 6.h3 Ng6 [Diagram]
Black is trying to build up an attack, but...
7.Bg5 1-0

Caught out
Frazer - Taubenhaus [C45]
Paris, 1888
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
Qh5 7.Be2 Qg6 [Diagram]
Black's wandering Queen has wandered into a net.
8.Nh4 1-0

A lost Queen
Cochrane,R - Kennedy,C [C41]
Troon Open (1), 1992
1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 d6 3.Nf3 f5 4.d4
Nc6 5.Ng5 Nh6 6.Nxh7 Qh4
7.Ng5 Nxd4 8.c3 Nc6 9.g3 Qg4
[Diagram] Asking for a swap?
10.Be2 1-0
Caught at home
NN - Van Mil [C48]
Eindhoven, 1973
White's Queen did not move out too early – it didn't move out at all!

Net by a knight
Van Loo,G – Demoulin,J [C55]
14th Open Leuven BEL (1), 2002
10...Nc3 0-1

The Noah's Ark Trap
A net of a Bishop
This happens a lot: remember it!
Net of a rook
Braksa,H – Cordero Valdez,V [C44] (3), 1991
Black did not wait for 9.Bxg7, trapping the Rook in the corner

Hop skip and net
De la Paz,F - Wohl,A [C41]
XXXVI Capablanca Mem Premier II
Havana CUB (12), 2001
8.Bxf7+ 1-0
If 8...Kxf7 9.Ng5+ and 10.Ne6

A tricky net
Goldenov,B - Nekrasova,E [C17]
Minsk, 1953
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.dxc5 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Nc6 7.Qg4 Nxe5 8.Qxg7
Black hopes to save the Rook by Qf6, but White has a trick to take it after all.
8...Qf6 9.Bh6! 1-0
4 Two-move ideas and more

4.1 Jumps

**Jumping Knight**
Wall - Hamilton,H [C41]
North Wilkesboro,NC, 1976


White's Queen would like to jump over the white Knight to take the black Queen, so the white Knight jumps out of the way – with check!

10.Nf6+ 1-0

You also hear jump attacks called discoveries or unmasking.

Jumps are certainly the type of tactic that is most often overlooked, because the danger comes from the hidden piece behind the one that moves.

**An ancient jump**
NN - Greco,G [C40]
Italy?, 1801

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nxe5 Qe7
4.Qh5+ g6 5.Nxg6 Qxe4+ 6.Kd1 Nf6 7.Qh3 hxg6 8.Qxh8 Ng4 9.Qh4

9...Ne3+ 10.dxe3 Qxh4 0-1
**A modern jump**
Komarek,L - Korn,A [C44]
Oberwart op (4), 1992

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 d5 4.Qa4 Qd6 5.exd5 Qxd5 6.Bc4 Qe4+
7.Kd1 Bd7

8.Bxf7+ 1-0

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**A Scotch discovery**
Ruel,C - Le Henaff,J [C45]
Open Saint Lo FRA (9), 2003

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
4.Nxd4 Bc5 5.Be3 Nf6?

White's last move had a hidden point.

6.Nxc6 1-0  7.Bxc5 will follow, if Black does not allow 7.Nxd8

---

**Pinching a piece**
Petroff's Defence [C42]

Bd7 8.Qf3

White picks on the weak spot in Black's position. Can you spot the weak spot in White's?

8...Nxe5 9.Bxd7+ Nxd7 0-1

It was the undefended Bishop on b5!
Pinching a pawn
Hamblin, J - Pitt, G [C42]
corr CompuServe, 1994
8.Nbd2 Bf5 9.c4 
9...Nxf2 0-1
Just a pawn, but White thought he would start again.

Discovered checkmate
Wall – Reyes, J [C41]
San Antonio, TX, 1993
7.Ng5+ Kg6 8.Qxg4 Ne5 9.Qf5+ Kh6
10.Nf7# 1-0 That's a discovered check as well, making double check and mate!

From behind the front line
Schiffer – Janny [C44]
Budapest, 1898
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be2 Bc5
Neither member of Black's army delivering the final unmasking have yet moved.
9...h4+ 10.Kxg4 d6# 0-1
**Two untouchables**  
Miller - Chernev [C45]  
New York, 1935

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4  
4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Bg5 Be7 6.Nf5 d5  
7.exd5 Ne5 8.Nxe7 Qxe7 9.Bxf6

Black's next move is very neat.

9...Nf3# 0-1

Both checking pieces are *en prise*, but White can't take both at once, so it's checkmate.

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**Jumping pawn**  
Curdo,J - Kochman,K [C44]  
Massachusetts, 1974

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 Nf6 4.d5  

10.c7+ 1-0

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**Pick your spot**  
Wall - Ortiz,V [C42]  
Palo Alto, 1989

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nxe4  
4.Qe2 d5 5.d3 Ng5

White can move the Knight anywhere, but which square is best?

6.Nc6+ 1-0
An improved jump
Krejčík,J - Baumgartner [C40]
Troppau, 1914
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Bc5 3.Nxe5 Bxf2+
4.Kxf2 Qh4+ 5.g3 Qxe4 6.Qe2
Qxh1 7.Bg2 1-0
White waits with the discovered check until the Black queen comes into range on h2.

A silent discovery...
Maurer - Zaugg [C56]
Bern op, 1987
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d4
exd4 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.Re1 d5 7.Bxd5
Qxd5 8.Nc3 Qh5 9.Nxe4 Be7
10.Bg5 0-0 1-0
Black did not wait for 11.Ng3, hitting the Queen and unmasking an attack on the Be7.

Unmasking attack, unmasking defence
Ripley,R - El_Messiry,R [C56]
corr IECC CL5-1997, 1997
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4
Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.Re1 d5 7.Bd3
Be7
White moves the Bishop on d3, uncovering an attack on d4 by the Queen, but...
8.Bxe4 dxe4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 0-1
The Mill
Knoppel,B – Hogwall,D [A00]
Rilton Cup (6), 1995

Sorry about the daft opening...


White's sacrifice was to allow this monster attack:

17.Rxg7+ Kh8 18.Rxe7+ Kg8 19.Rg7+ Kh8 20.Rxd7+ 1-0

White will take one more Bishop before coming back for the Queen

A diagonal mill
Pinter,G - Nixon,T [C45]
13th S&WYM Millfield School ENG (9), 2003


Black can ignore the attack on his Queen, because he gets White's Queen and more.

10...Nxf2 0-1

[If 11.Nxh4 Nxd1+ 12.Kh1 Nf2+ 13.Kg1 Nxd3+]
4.2 Undermining

Removing the guard
[C65] Ruy Lopez

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 a6

White doesn't usually get to carry out this idea in the Ruy Lopez:
5.Bxc6 dxc6 6.Nxe5 1-0

Kicking away the ladder
Levy – Vaca [C44]
Skopje ol, 1982


Black's Queen is guarded, but:
10.Bxc6+ 1-0

The check means that Black can't take White's Queen first.

A little nudge
Colias,B - Ronco,J [C47]
Illinois, 1987


White undermines the Bishop.
10.Nd5 1-0
4.3 Overloading

**Overloaded**
Cebis, P – Nemec, V [C44]
ProMoPro Open Prague CZE (4), 2004


Black’s Bishop on d7 can block the attack on f7, but it is already doing the job of defending c6.

10. Qd5 1-0

**An overworked pawn**
Converset, J - Hobaica, J [C63]
Buenos Aires Najdorf (9), 1994


If 8... Ke7, then 9. Qe5#, but the pawn on g7 needs to stay put.

8... g6 9. Qxh8 1-0

**Overload**
[C40] Damiano defense


White has sacrificed to get an attack, but is it good enough? Well, Qf5 would be mate if not for the Bc8, so 9. Bxb7! wins (9... Bd6!? 10. Qa5!)
4.4 Interference

Poking a nose in
Campora - Eslon [C66]
Puebla Casalla, 1991


The name for this is interference; White gets in the way of the defence.

Too clever
Vlastimil Hort - V Zheliandinov [C69]
Havana, 1967


Black refuses to retreat, and instead counterattacks with the idea...Bxh2!? winning White's rook by a discovered attack. But White's interference move wins a piece.

Masterly interference
Maroczy,G – Vidmar,M [C55]
Ljubljana, 1922


If 17...Bxe7, 18.Qf7# is mate
4.5 Decoy

**An ancient decoy**
Greco,G - NN [C40]
Italy?, 1801

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6 3.Bc4 Qg6 4.0-0 Qxe4

White invents a fork using a *decoy* of the Black King.

5.Bxf7+ Kxf7 6.Ng5+ Ke8 7.Nxe4 1-0

**Pinching a pawn**
Metz,H - Schmeusser,M [C30]
Baden Baden op (2), 1990

1.e4 e5 2.f4 d6 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Bc4 Be7 5.fxe5 dxe5

This is a common trick, based on a jump and a *decoy*.

6.Bxf7+

**Possible after all**
Moreno,F - Padula,R [C40]
corr, 1980


White has a pin on b5, but surely it can't work yet? Ah, there is also a fork.

8.Bb5 1-0
Out of my way!

Johann Nepomuk Berger - Frohlich [C46]
Graz - Graz -, 1888

Bg4 5.Nd5 Nge7 6.c3 a6 7.Ba4 b5
8.Bb3 Na5 9.Nxe5 Bxd1

Any check is mate, so:
10.Nf6+! gxf6 11.Bxf7# 1-0

That's called a clearance sacrifice, opening up a line.

You're in my seat

Totsa,D – Mascero,N [C41]
Berlin, 1896

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 f5 4.Bc4 fxe4
5.Nxe5 d5 6.Qh5+ Ke7 7.Qf7+ Kd6
8.Qxd5+ Ke7

White really wants to play Qe5+.
9.Ng6+ hxg6 10.Qe5+ 1-0

[If 10...Be6 11.Qxe6# or 10...Kd711.Qe6#]

Sometimes we call that a vacating sacrifice, freeing a square.

A quiet clearance

Miskinis,G - Kuebler,A [C47]
corr EU/M/GT (64), 1984

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4
Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Bg5 d6

White would like to play Nd5 and Qd4, pinning, so the Knight vacates.
7.Nxc6 1-0
4.7 *Intermezi and Zwischenzuge*

**An in-between move**

[C24] Bishop's opening, 2000


Black expects simply to swap off White's dangerous Bishop, but:

7.Re1+ Be7 8.Qxg7 Rf8 9.Bh6

There is no easy English name for this idea: we use either the Italian *intermezzo* or the German *Zwischenzug*.

**Another in-betweener**

[C55] Two Knights’ Defence

In a very tactical variation...


Now Black hopes to save his other Knight by an in-between move:

9...Nf6!?

The idea is that 10.Nxd8 Nxd5 and Black will take the knight and be ahead. But White has an in-between move which saves the Queen and wins Black’s Queen.

A combination is a set of forcing moves leading to material advantage or mate. Usually they rely on more than one tactical idea. "Combinations", said Alekhin, "are the heart of chess".

**Jump and nudge**
Kulaots,K - Geller,J [C45]
Aeroflot Open Moscow RUS (5), 2002
Two ideas In sequence.
7.Nf3 Qh5 8.g4 1-0
A jump and an overload

**The coup de grace**
Wall - Tauber,A [C55]
Los Angeles, 1969
Overloading and then a skewer.
9.Bxf7+ Ke7 10.Bg5+ 1-0

**Caught in the middle**
[Ruy Lopez] [C67]
Undermining then a pin.
**Netted**
Sergeant, E - Senneck, F [C40]
Nottingham-B2, 1946

5.dxe5 Nxe4 6.Nxe4 fxe4 7.Ng5 Bf5
8.Qd5 Qd7
9.Qxb7 1-0

White nets the Rook; Black now sees that the planned defence by 9...Qc6 fails to the pin 10.Bb5

**Overload and undermine**
Petroff's Defence [C42]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nc6
4.Nxc6 dxc6 5.e5 Ne4 6.d3 Bc5
7.dxe4

Both ideas are used to win the Queen.

7...Bxf2+ 8.Ke2 Bg4+ 0-1

**Super-fork**
Reti – Dunkelblum [C46]
Vienna, 1874

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Bc5
4.Nxe5 Nxe5 5.d4 Bxd4 6.Qxd4 Qf6

Black hopes for a discovered check...

7.Nb5 Kd8 8.Qc5 1-0

White's Queen has a little threat on c7 and big one on f8. It's not a fork of pieces but a fork of threats.
**No place to rest**  
Bejaoui,A – Kujovic,M [C42]  
ch-SVK Nove Zamky SVK (7), 1999


Black's defence against White's pin can be undermined.

6.Qe2 Qe7 7.Nd5 1-0

**Any check is mate**  
Kmoch,H - NN [C60]  
Vienna, 1934


The mate threat Nd6 allows the Black Bishop to be overloaded and forked with the Rook.

**Why, for two pins, I'd...**  
Soderstrom - Tzannetakis [C42]  
corr WER, 1981


White steals a Bishop.

10.Qf5+ 1-0

*[If 10...Qf6 11.Bxe6+]  

---
A proper pickle
Muir, W - Johnson [C43]
Virginia, 1987
A net that includes a pin
9.Bg5 1-0 [If 9...f6 10.exf6]

Next in line
Abrahamsson, D - Printzlau, J [C40]
Politiken Cup Copenhagen DEN (2), 2005
A fork that works because of a pin, and because White has reinforcements
9.Nexd6+ 1-0

Too much pressure
Forman, A – MacDonald, J [C40]
corr Betins mem, 1971
Black's Queen is trying to hold onto f5 and c7, but it can't do everything.
8...Qe6+ 9.Nce3 1-0
No time to defend
Belova - Epstein [C41]
USSR, 1981

8.Ne1 c6 9.f4 exd4 10.Qxd4

Black unMASKS not a pin but the threat of a pin.

10...d5 0-1

One more or less
Repkova,E - Babar,F [C63]
Dortmund op (8), 1995.


Black's next move has the effect of removing a defence of the Bc5, because of a pin.

9...Nxe4 10.f3 1-0

Cut your losses
Andersen,T - Hansen,C [C45]
Romo, 1975

8.Nd5

Black wants to win a pawn by decoy and fork, instead White loses a Queen to a skewer.

8...Bxf2+ 9.Ke2 Bg+ 0-1
6 Counting and calculating

**Simple as that**
Lapinskaite, S – Kaula, I [C48]
Rimavska Sobota, 1992


White's Bishop on b5 is attacked once and defended once, so...

6...Bxc3 7.Bxc3 Nxb5 0-1

**A choice**
Wall – Russell, C [C41]
North Augusta, SC, 1970


White can take on d8 then on f7, or...

7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qxd8 1-0

**Step by step**
Wohlrabe, J (1945) – Fraenzel, M [C45]
ch-City Solingen GER (7), 2004


White has a discovered attack but it needs thinking through.


The capture with check means that Black cannot fight back with...Qxf2#
**Two way traffic**
Svensson, F - Adler, B [C40]
corr Tch-SWE, 1980

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5 3.exd5 e4 4.Qe2
Nf6 5.Nc3 Bd6 6.d3 0-0 7.dxe4 Re8
8.Bg5 Bb4 It's surprising how often this happens; Black misses a
defence that White can't do right now!

9.Bxf6 Bxc3+ 10.Bxc3 1-0

**An important threat**
Sholic, K – Chiktakhian, S [C41]
EuYouth U12 Girls, Tallinn EST (2), 1997

Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.h3 Nbd7 7.d3 c6
8.Bg5 Qc7 9.Qd2 Re8 10.d4 b5
11.Bb3 b4

White is in trouble, but the next move makes it worse! When Black
takes on c3, the White Queen will be threatened.

15.Ba4 Rd8 16.b4 Nb6 17.Bc6 cxb4
0-1

**Pinching a pawn goes wrong...**
Galic, A - Lesko, I [C41]
TCh-BIH w Jahorina BIH (1), 2003

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6 4.dxe5
Nxe4 5.Bd3 Nc5 6.Bc4 Bg4

White remembers the decoy idea.

7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Ng5+ Qxg5 9.Qd5+
Be6 10.Qf3+ Qf5 0-1
White's stranded knight is lost once Black interferes with its defence.

Oops
Nigel Short - Pentala Harikrishna [C42]
Montreal International CAN (2), 2007


Out of my way
Hedrick,R – Cannady,P [C57]
corr, 1980


Fork on fork
Petrov - Mordvinov [C40]
corr, 1982

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nxe5 Qf6 4.d4 d6 5.Nc4 fxe4 6.Be2 c6 7.d5 Ne7 8.Nc3 cxd5 9.Nxe4 Qe6 ♠ 10.Ncxd6+ 1-0 If 10...Kd8 11.Ng5! when White will land on f7 with one knight or the other
6.1 Defending

**Defence by a fork**

[C65] Ruy Lopez


White has carried out the 'threat' to win the e-pawn but Black has two Queen forks to win a pawn back:

5...Qg5 and 5...Qd4

Winning the central e-pawn is best.

**One way out**

Tromp,R - Gonzalez Davila,R [C40]
36th Olympiad Calvia ESP (1), 2004

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Bc4 fxe4 4.Nxe5 Qg5 5.d4 Qxg2 6.Qh5+ g6

White comes up with a neat checkmate idea on f7, but Black can clear a square then take the White Queen.

7.Bg5 Bb4+ 0-1

**The netter netted**

Kaula,I - Van Steenwinckel,I [C45]
WchJW-U12 Szeged (3), 1994


Black hopes to take the Rook on a1.

12...Qxb2? 13.Bc3 1-0
Defence with forcing moves
Ali, D - Norrish, I [C46]
Exeter Lions vs. Exeter School, 1997

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Bc5 4.Bc4
f6 5.d3 Nge7 6.a3 d6 7.b4 Bd4
11.b5 Na5 12.Qh5 g6 13.Qh6+ Ke8
14.Qg7 14...Rg8 15.Qf7#

But 14...Rf8 15.Bh6 Bxd2+ 16.Kxd2
[Or else Black plays 16...Bxh6 ]
16...Nxc4+ wins for Black

Giving up
Holze, G - Hohlfeld, W [C44]
BL2-N 8283, 1983

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4
Be7 5.c3 dxc3 6.Qd5 1-0
Black resigns, but there was a defence!
[If 6...Nh6 7.Bxh6 0-0 8.Bc1? Nb4!]

Defence by counterattack
[C68] Ruy Lopez.

bxc6 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 Qf6 7.e5
Qg6 8.0-0 Bb7

9.e6? fxe6 10.Ne5?
Black fights back to go two pawns up with a wicked discovered check.
10...Qxg2+ 11.Kxg2 c5+
### Great when it works

Christensen, J – Andersen, J [C57]
Denmark, 1966


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### Count to success

Somerset, B - Devon [C55]
U14 Chepstow (2.12), 2004


Black is ganging up on f2, and it's check, so White can't checkmate yet...

10...Bxf2+

---

### Attack and counterattack

[C40] Elephant Gambit

A complicated opening!


White's Bishop is doing a lot of work, and...

9...b5! pushes it over the edge

It's still a fight...
6.3 From bad to worse

Stop digging
Head, J – Bladek, R [C55]
Corr IECG Class N, 1996

7.Nxd2 d6 8.Nxf7

Black's Queen is attacked, so Black counterattacks White's Queen.
8..Bg4 9.f3 1-0 Now Black has three pieces en prise. If you're in a hole, stop digging!

Poke and counter-poke
Wall – Burton, C [C45]
Wichita Falls, 1971


Instead of moving the Knight, Black chases the Queen, but the Queen moves to pin the Knight.
8.Qf4 1-0

Another unwise poke
Tuvshintgs, B – Croise, I [C44]
WchJW-U12 Szeged (5), 1994


Black chases the Queen to a place she wants to go!
9...d5 10.Qh4 h6 11.exf6 gxf6 12.Bxh6 f5 13.Qg3+ 1-0
**Right and wrong**  
Mazuchowski, T - Good, G [C55]  
Detroit ch-MI op (6), 1974

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4  
Bc5 5.c3 Nf6 6.0-0 0-0 7.cxd4

Black now decides not to dodge but to counterattack.

7...Na5 8.Bd3 

Black makes the same decision, but this time it goes badly wrong.

8..d5?  
The idea is 9.dxc5 e4 and Black gets the piece back.

9.e5! 1-0

Black has two pieces threatened: out of the frying pan into the fire!

---

**The last word**  
Angermann, F - Morgado, J [C40]  
corr, 1969

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nxe5 Qf6 4.d4 d6  
5.Nf3 fxe4

White' could move the Knight but decides to counterattack. This leads to a long sequence of blows, but in the end, Black has a choice of pieces to take.

6.Bg5 Qf5 (double attack) 7.Qe2  
(pin) Be7 (block) 8.Qb5+ Qxb5  
9.Bxb5+ c6 10.Bxe7 Nxe7 0-1
6.4 Traps

A fork trap

Evans' Gambit [C51].


White makes a bold move in the centre, and Black makes a bolder reply!

6...Bxd4 7.Qxd4 Nxc2+ 0-1

One trap, two forks

[C65] Mortimer's Trap.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Ne7?! ( ) 5.Nxe5? (White falls for it)

5...c6

[Now if 6.Ba4, Qa5+ is a winning Queen fork]

6.Nc4! (threatening smothered mate!) 6...Ng6! 7.Ba4 b5!

The last trick is a winning pawn fork

Unclassified

A remarkable trap to catch Black's Rook; a fork or a jump?

Feuer - O'Kelly [C73]

Liege, 1934

8.Qd3 Ne7 9.Be3 Rxb2

10.dxe5 fxe5 11.Nxe5 dxe5
12.Qxd8+ Kxd8 13.0-0-0+ 1-0
7 What makes a combination work?

I just want to make clear what is going on in what you have seen so far.

Combinations often work because of forcing moves: checks or captures.

7.1 Checks

![Chessboard diagram](image)

**Preparation**
Boehm,T - Krueger,A [C43]
JBL NW95/96 (6.4), 1995


Black would like to take the Nc3 then the Qd5, but 7...Nc3 is met by 8.Qxd8+, so Black chivvies the White king onto a white square, so 7...Nxc3 will be check.

7...Bxf2+ 0-1

7.2 Captures

![Chessboard diagram](image)

**If only...**
Diaz Diaz,A (2122) - Reynes Gonzalez,M [C47]
III Open Bajada de la Virgen ESP (7), 2005


If only there were no Knight on f6, White could take it with the Queen. This way of thinking will often give you ideas!

10.Bxf6 1-0
Combinations also arise because of loose pieces (undefended or barely defended) or unsafe kings (exposed or stalemate).

### 7.3 Loose pieces

Loose pieces drop off

Kraiko – Kreie [C55]

Biel, 1979

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.0-0 d5 6.exd5 Na5

Black's Knight on a5 has no defenders. Because of the open position of the King, White has a fork.

7.Qe1+ Be7 8.Qxa5 1-0

"Once I played 100 games against Mike Cook at 10 minutes (for him) vs 5 minutes (for me). At that time, Mike was about 2300 strength. About half-way through the series (which I eventually won 88-12) he explained his disappointment: "I thought that I would see lots of advanced strategic concepts in these games, but actually all I've learnt is LDPO."

"LDPO?" "Loose Pieces Drop Off." (John Nunn)

### 7.4 Unsafe King

Combined operations

Gerschwieler - Salzmann [C47]

Switzerland, 1965


A net succeeds because of a checkmate threat, and the checkmate is there because the king is vulnerable. 10.Ne6 1-0
8 Checkmates

We've seen a few so far, but this is the most important idea of all.

8.1 Checkmating the uncastled King

Scholar's mate

1. e4 e5 2.Qh5 Nc6
   [If 2...g6? 3.Qxe5+ Qe7 4.Qxh8]
3.Bc4 Nf6? 
4. Qxf7#

This happened to me in my first game in a chess club – playing Black! Even if your opponents know it, don't forget it, because the pattern turns up all the time:

Dedier,R – Harrison,R [C57]
IECG, Cat-C (m/1923/02), 1995, 1923/(2)
9.Qf7# 1-0

Mate with a Bishop

Bensdorp,L - Van Huit,K [C44]
AKN Open Haarlem NED (3), 2000
8.Bf7# 1-0
Queen and Knight
O'Brien,G - Lauer Smith,J [C57]
Australia ch girls (5), 1995
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
White liked the look of Black's
Rook, but not Black's reply.
6...Qxf2# 0-1
This is like Scholar's Mate, but
the job of the Bishop is done by
the Black Knight.

Queen supported by a Rook
Nijsen,F - Van Diepen,P [C57]
Uitgeest, 1973
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
Nxe4+ 7.Kg1 Qh4 8.Qf3 Rf8
9.Bd3
This time the Rook helps.
9...Rxf7 10.Qxe4 Qf2# 0-1

A scholarly Black
Madronic,M - Boroshova,Z [C55]
U10 Girls, Tallinn EST (6), 1997
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
dxe4 7.Ng1 Bc5 8.h3 0-0 9.f3
White has weakened the King's
side.
9...Qh4+ 10.Ke2 Qf2# 0-1
Mate with a pawn
Kofoed,K - Pape,R [C40]
Denmark, 1986
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5 3.exd5 e4
4.Qe2 Nf6 5.c4 Bc5 6.Nc3 0-0
7.Ng1 Bg4 8.f3 exf3
White saves the Queen but loses the King.
9.Qd3 f2# 0-1

Greed doesn't pay...
Masseg - Freidl,A [C40]
Austria, 1987
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nxe5 dxe4
4.Bc4 Qg5 5.Nxf7 Qxg2 6.Rf1
Bg4 7.f3 exf3 8.Nxh8
Black's next quiet move creates an unstoppable threat.
8...Be7 0-1

Chivvying out the King
Pritchard - Hempel,J [C40]
Radio (2), 1967
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f6 3.Nxe5 fxe5
4.Qh5+ Ke7
Black doesn’t want to play 4...g6 because of 5.Qxe5+, winning the Rook on h8.
5.Qxe5+ Kf7 6.Bc4+ 1-0
Running away...
Schachtler, W - Grabowski [C44]
Badenweiler op (8), 1985

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
4.Bc4 Bb4+ 5.c3 dxc3 6.bxc3 Be7
7.Qd5 d6

Black’s King can dodge, perhaps?
8.Qxf7+ Kd7 9.Be6# 1-0

No escape
Reuter, P – Schlenker, R [C44]
1993

1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 e5 3.Nf3 exd4
4.Bc4 Bc5 5.c3 d3 6.Ng5 Ne5
7.Nxf7 Qf6 8.Qh5

White has some threats but it’s Black’s turn first!
8... Qxf2+ 9.Kd1 Qc2+ 10.Ke1 Qxc1+ 11.Qd1 Qe3+ 12.Kf1 Qf2# 0-1

Queen and Bishops
Clarisse, E - Van Dijke, P [C57]
op, Vlissingen NED (5), 1996

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Nxd5 6.d4 e4
7.Nxf7 Kxf7 8.Qh5+ g6

9.Bxd5+ Kg7 10.Bh6+ 1-0
It’s mate after 10...Kf6 11.Qg5#
Mate with a knight
Wall, B – Vargas [C55]
San Antonio, 1979
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.0-0 h6 6.Nh4 Nxe4 7.Qh5 g6
The main line is mate in three.
8.Bxf7+ Kxf7 9.Qxg6+ Ke7 10.Nf5# 1-0

Smothered mate
Hoffmann - Hellmann [C55]
Berlin, 1904
7.Nf5 g6
8.Qd5 Rf8 9.Ng7# 1-0
Gruesome...

Another smother
Kranzle – NN [C40]
Mannheim, 1939
That was the wrong pawn to touch!
10.Nd6# 1-0
A clever smother
NN – Elbrond Pedersen,M [C57]
1990
White did not want to lose the Queen but this is worse!
10...Nf3# 0-1

Defending the smother
Holloway,C - Senff,D [C57]
CES Northeim GER (3), 2005
1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Nd4 6.d6 Qxd6
White has f3 covered this time but must still lose a Queen.
10...Nxc2+ 0-1

Mate in a few moves
Goncharov - Frenkel [C44]
Moscow, 1901
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4 Bb4+ 5.c3 dxc3 6.0-0 cxb2
7.Bxb2 Nge7 8.Ng5 0-0 9.Qh5 h6
10.Bxf7+ 1-0
[If 10...Kh8 11.Qxh6#] or
10...Rxf7 11.Qxf7+ Kh8 12.Qxg7#
**Mate with a rook**
Greco,G – NN [C40]
Italy?, 1801

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6 3.Bc4 Qg6
4.0-0 Qxe4 5.Bxf7+ Ke7
Black refuses the Bishop – why?
6.Re1 Qf4
Black's Queen has been nothing but trouble.
7.Rxe5+ Kd8 8.Re8# 1-0

**Contact mate**
NN - NN [C40]
1500, 1801

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6 3.c3 Bc5 4.d4 Bb6 5.Be3 d6 6.dxe5 dxe5
Black picks the wrong way to dodge after White's next move.
7.Bg5 Qg6? 8.Qd8# 1-0

**A deadly diagonal**
Shirley,D - Ellena,B [C57]
Dayton,OH, 1981

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Nxd5 6.Nxf7 Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Kg8 8.Bxd5+ 1-0
Black can put the Bishop in the way, but mate cannot be stopped.
Black's deadly diagonal
De Groot,N - Bosma,B [C46]
ACCOM III (5), 1988
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Bc5
4.Nxe5 Bxf2+ 5.Kxf2 Nxe5 6.d4
Qf6+ 7.Kg1 Ne7 8.dxe5 Qb6+
0-1
Just the same: White can delay
but not escape the checkmate

Two mates
Wall - NN [C57]
Federal Way,WA, 1968
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.Ng5 Nxe4 5.Bxf7+ Ke7 6.Nxe4
Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Kg8 8.Ng5
Black avoids the 'Scholarly' mate
on f7...
8...Qxg5 9.Qd5# 1-0

Mate with minor pieces
NN - Zukertort,J [C42]
Posen (1), 1862
1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nxe4
4.Nxe5 d5 5.Bb3 Qg5 6.0-0 Qxe5
7.d3 Bd6 8.g3 Ng5 9.Re1
White must have been happy to
think about taking the Black
Queen, but Black doesn't need
the Queen!
9...Nf3+ 10.Kf1 Bh3# 0-1
Another minor mate
Hopkins - N.N. [C45]
London, 1932

9.Nf6+ Kf8 10.Bh6# 1-0

[It's still mate if Black castles:
8...0-0 9.Nf6+ Kh8 10.Ng4+ Nxd4 (10...f6 11.Bxf6+ Kg8 12.Nh6# or 11...Rx6f 12.Qxf6+ Kg8 13.Nh6#)
11.Bf6+ Kg8 12.Nh6#]

An awesome mate
De Legall - Saint Brie [C41]
Paris, 1750

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bc4 Bg4 4.Nc3 g6
1-0

Just fantastic. This idea is called Legall's mate to this day.

It works for Black too!
Eldin,V – Anderson,G [C42]
Eskilstuna, 1915

Not exactly the same arrangement but the same idea.
8.2 Checkmating the castled King

Queen and Knight
Lin - Hussain [C55]
USA, 1993


White is not paying attention to Black's ideas!

9...Qxh2# 0-1

Not just f7
Webber,T - Flynn,S [C46]
EJCC match (3), 2002


The f7 square is attacked, so Black defends it.

6...g6 7.Qxh7# 1-0

Queen and Bishop
Torre,M - Wall [C41]
Wichita Falls, 1970


That was a bad idea.

8...Qg4 9.g3 Qh3 0-1.

10...Qg2# cannot be stopped.
Queen and Bishop again
Stone,R - Boyer,M [C42]
E Lansing ch-MI opB (3), 1993
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Be2 d6 4.0-0
Qf6 8.c3 Qg6 9.d4 Bh3
White sees that moving the g-pawn
loses the Rook for a Bishop.
10.Re1 Qxg2# 0-1

Removing the guards
Parkes,S (2500) – Wilson,J [C65]
Exeter Juniors vs Torquay BGS (4), 1999
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6
4.Bxc6 bxc6 5.0-0 Bd6 6.d4 Qe7
7.Bg5 0-0 8.Re1 Ba6 9.Nh4 c5
10.Nf5 Qe6 11.d5 Qe8
12.Bxf6 g6 13.Nh6# 1-0
12...gxf6 13.Qg4+ Kh8 14.Qg7#

Castling into trouble
Nakamura,H – Romanov,E [C45]
WCh U12 Boys Oropesa del Mar (9), 1999
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4
Bxe3 7.fxe3 dxc6 8.Qd4 Qg6
9.Nc3 Bd7 10.0-0-0
10...0-0-0 11.Qxa7 1-0
8.3 **King hunt**

**A chase**
Kuhn, A - Schlenker, R [C41]
Flintbek, 1959

5.dxe5 dxe5 6.Bxf7+ Kxf7 7.Nxe5+
Kf6 8.Qd5 Bd6 9.Qf7+ Kxe5

White catches the King in the middle.

[If 10.Bf4+ Kd4

(10...Kxe4 11.Nc3+ Kd4 12.Qd5#)

11.Qd5#]

**A foolhardy King**
Beaver Michael - Adler Keith [C42]
Trio, 1996

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nxe4
4.Nxf7 Kxf7 5.Qh5+ Kf6 6.Qf3+

White wants to get back his knight.

6...Ke5 7.d4+ Kxd4

Black should have let the Knight go, because now White cuts off the retreat.

8.Qf5 Qg5 9.c3+ Nxc3 10.bxc3# 1-0
One more move
Schuettrich,H – Grobe,E [C40]
corr, 1976
Qd4+ 8.Kg3 f4+ 9.Kxf4 Ne7 10.Qe2
Rf8+ White chooses to lose
in 13 moves, not 12.
11.Bf7+ Rxf7+ 12.Kg3 Qe5+ 13.Kh4
Ng6# 0-1

A long way from home
Magerciak - Mathon [C57]
corr CSSR, 1988
Nxd2+ 13.Kb5 0-1
[If 13...Bd7+ 14.Bc6 Qc4+ 15.Ka4
Nxc6+ 16.Ka3 Qa6#]

Looking ahead
Potter - N.N.
London (Remove White's Queen), 1870
Na5 5.Nxe5 Nxe4 6.d3 Nc5
White now announced mate in eight
moves. White saw ahead more
moves than he played!
Kxe5 10.f4+ Kf5 11.Nd4+ Kg4
12.h3+ Kg3 13.Ne2+ Kxg2 14.Bd5+
Ne4 15.Bxe4# 1-0
Another deadly diagonal
Werner, G - Kutzner, S [C57]
RL-chJ U15 Bad Marienberg, 1993
7.Ke1

The diagonal to the near side is open this time.
7...Qh4+ 8.g3 Nxg3 9.Rf1 Nh1+
10.Ke2 [If 10.Rf2 Qxf2#] 10...Qe4#

Mating the King castled on the Queen's side
Schulder - Boden [C41]
London, 1860
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.c3 f5 4.Bc4 Nf6
5.d4 fxe4 6.dxe5 exf3 7.exf6 Qxf6
8.gxf3 Nc6 9.f4 Bd7 10.Be3 0-0-0
11.Nd2 Re8 12.Qf3 Bf5 13.0-0-0 d5
14.Bxd5 14...Qxc3+ 15.bxc3
Ba3# 0-1

This beautiful idea is still called Boden's Mate.

The best checkmate of all
Reti, R - Tartakower, S [B15]
Vienna, 1910
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4
Nf6 5.Qd3 e5 6.dxe5 Qa5+ 7.Bd2
Qxe5 8.0-0-0 Nxe4

That wasn't really a free gift.
9.Qd8+!! Kxd8 10.Bg5+ (discovered,
and double, check) Ke8 11.Rd8#
**Getting through the wall**  
Goulding - Brown [C49]  
England, 1960


White resigned, not waiting for 10.gxf3 Qh3 when White's Queen will have to be sacrificed to avoid mate.

**A Queen for a King**  
Dubois,S - Steinitz,W [C55]  
London, 1862

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bh4 g5 8.Bg3 h5


In 1900, Knorr lost to Chigorin in almost exactly the same game!

**No free lunch**  
Nixon,W - Walker,J [C68]  
Teignmouth Handicap 1997-8 (6), 06.01.1998

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 h5 7.hxg4? hxg4

Black has offered a Bishop to open the h-file against the White King.

8.Nxe5 Qh4 9.f3 g3 0-1
No escape
Privalov – Malaniuk Vladimir [C68]
Tallinn, 1974


White's Knight can't stand it any longer!

13...Qh4 14.f4 g3 15.Kf1 Nxf4 0-1

Black's Knight cuts off the escape

Nifty decoy
Medsen - Mitchel [C69]
London, 1978


White's King plans to escape after 11...Qh2+, but he is dragged back to be checkmated.

11...Rh1+ 0-1
Not a draw
Volosnikov - Romanov [C69]
Ishevsk, 1980

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 h5 7.c3 Qd3
8.hxg4 hxg4 9.Nxe5 Bd6

Black is content with a draw after 10.Nxd3 Bh2+ 11.Kh1 Bd6+. White
decides to go for a win, but...

10.Nxg4 0-0-0 11.Qf3?

Have a think about what you would play here.

11...Rh1+ 12.Kxh1 Qxf1#

The check forced the King away from the defence of the Rook. I don't
know what to call that idea: Undermining? Or overloading?

A Rook in reserve
Bouwmeester, J - Van Rijkom, E [C69]
corr, 1993

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 h5 7.d3 Qf6
11.Bb2 Nf4 12.hxg4 hxg4 13.Nh2 13...Rxh2! 0-1

[If 14.Kxh2 Qh4+ 15.Kg1 0-0-0! and White is helpless against 16...Rh8]

"The master places a Knight on f4; mate follows by itself," said
Tartakower.
Back rank mate
NN – Jack Stephenson [C55]
Wales Junior Inter-County Cardiff (2.12), 2008

Bb4 5.a3 Bxc3 6.dxc3 0-0 7.0-0
Qxd1 11.Rxd1 bxc6 12.Nxe5Bg4
13.Re1 Rfe8

Black encourages the Knight to move: 14.Nxc6?? Rxe1#

Probably the most common error I see, certainly one of the most painful!

Crowded
Bohm,H - Hernandez,R [C69]
Amsterdam IBM (3), 1979

dxc6 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 h5 7.d3 Qf6
8.Be3 Ne7 9.Nbd2 Ng6 10.hxg4
hxg4 11.Ng5 Nf4 12.Qxg4

White's King seems surrounded by friends, but that's the problem!

12...Qxg5 13.Qf3 Qxg2+ 14.Qxg2
Ne2#

That's a very neat overloading of the Queen to finish off.
Anything to get at the King!
Auger – McMillan [C69]
corr GB, 1985


Black has sacrificed huge amounts to get at White's King, but one more sacrifice is needed.

14...Rxg2+ 15.Kxg2 Rg8+ 16.Kf2 Qg3+ 17.Ke2 Re8# 0-1

A Greek gift
Smith Chuck - Chillakanti Pratap [C44]
Quad #31, IECC (1), 1995


This sacrifice is known as the Greek gift, after the way the Greeks tricked their way into the city of Troy with a gift of a wooden horse. White offers the gift of a Bishop to get into Black’s castle.
A Greek King hunt
Chiburdanidze M - Malaniuk Vladimir [C45] 09, Kusadasi op, 1990
Black could see ahead and realise everything loses. I had to work it out myself...

[If 17....Kxh7 18.Qh3+ Kg8 (18...Kg6 19.Ne7+ Kg5 20.f4+ Nxf4 21.Rxf4 Kxf4 22.Qf5+ Ke3 23.Qf3#) 19.Ne7#]

Unacceptable
Ross,E - Avery,B [C45] corr USA, 1980

[If 14...Kxh7 15.Qh5+ Kg8 16.Bxf6 Qf5 17.Qh8#]
15.Qh5 dxe5 16.Qh6+ 1-0
A busy pawn
Sundström - Holm [C42]
Stockholm, 1912

7.Bd3 0-0 8.h4 Re8 9.Be3 Nc6

Notice how White's h-pawn does lots of jobs here: supporting the Knight, threatening to open the h-file, and chasing the King!

10.Bxh7+ Kxh7 11.Ng5+ Kg6 12.h5+ Kf6

[If 12...Kh6 13.Nxf7+;
12...Kf5 13.Qf3+ Ke5 14.Qe4+ 15.Nh7#]
13.Qf3+ Bf5 14.g4 Qc8 15.Ne4+ Ke5

[If 15...Ke6 16.Qxf5#]
16.Qf4+ Kd5 17.0-0-0+ Kc4 18.Nxd6# 1-0

A longer battle
Fritsche - Luckert [C43]
corr DDR, 1989


White's classic sacrifice only just works.


[If 20...Kf7 21.Rxg7+ Qxg7 22.Qe8#]
9 Lots of ideas at once!

These examples were a bit too hard for Chapter 5, but I expect you're ready for them now.

Unlocking the secret
Prugel - Dyckhoff [C45]
Corr., 1899


A hard one. Black undermines the defence of f3, because then there is a fork of f2 and h1:
9...Bb4 1-0
If 10.Qxb4
[10.Qb3 Nxf3+ because of the pin]
10...Nxf3+ 11.Nxf3 Qxf3

Four in one
Archan,D - Leclair,M [C58]
WchJW-U12 Duisburg (2), 1992

13.b3 e4 0-1

If 14.Ne1 we see that the pawn vacated the e5 point for the Queen:
14...Qe5 forks a1 and h2
If 14.dxe4 Bxh2+ and either:
15.Kxh2 Qh5+ and 16...Rxd1 or
15.Kg1 Qxd1
Just a pawn
Georgiev, K - Trivizas, M [C42]
Ano Liosia op Athens GRE (2), 1997


Undermining, counting and unmasking all combine to make White's next move work. 10.Nxd6+ 1-0

Surprise, surprise
Meulders - Schuurmans [C45]
Mechelen, 1978


A startling net based on a pin (f2) and a fork (c2) which works because of a decoy; White must have fallen off their chair!

10...Be3 0-1

It all comes together
Becerra Rivero, J - Velez, N [C60]
Cuba, 1992


Not easy to see coming but you can see that it works: two pins and an overloading!

12...Nxd5 13.exd5 Rxd5? 14.Qxh8+
Some of my favourite combinations. They’re too tough, I think, for you to work out for yourself, but do enjoy them and be inspired! Then, a chance to test what you have learned...

Alekhin-Feldt, Tarnopol, 1916

1. Nf7! (unmasking an attack on e6) Kxf7
2. Qxe6+ Kxe6 3. Ng5#

The first move, we almost expect you to spot, overloading the g2 pawn: 1...Rxh3!

But the next one... 2. Rc5 Qg3!!

Fantastic! It’s easy enough to see how it works once it is played, but so magical to watch, that the spectators threw gold coins onto the board!

Levitsky-Marshall, Breslau, 1912

The neatest decoy combination played... and Alekhin played blindfold!
Just the neatest trap in chess history: can White take the outnumbered pawn?


This was how far White saw...

29...Qb2!!

White now **resigned**! Let’s see:

30.Qc4 Rd1+;
30.Rd3 Qc1+ 31.Qf1 Qxf1+ 32.Kxf1 Rxd3;
30.Rc2 Qb1+ 31.Qf1 Qxc2;
30.Qc2 Qa1+ 31.Qc1 Rd1+ 32.Qxd1 Qxd1 #

An easy one? **1.Qh8+!**

A wonderful decoy in a World Championship game.

A bang, then a neat quiet move... I’m a sucker for neat quiet moves

37.Rxg7! Rxf6 38.Ke5! 1-0
22...Rxc3! 23.gxh4
[23.Bxc3 Bxe4+ 24.Qxe4 Qxh2 #;
26.Kg1 (26.Kg2 Qh3+ 27.Kg1 Ne4+
28.Kh1 Ng3 #) 26...Ne4+ 27.Kf1
Qh5+) 29...Rd2+ -+]
23...Rd2 24.Qxd2
Bxf2+ 27.Kf1 Bf3 28.Rd1 Nxe2 #;
24.Bxb7 Rxe2 25.Bg2 Rh3-+]
24...Bxe4+ 25.Qg2 Rh3!! 0-1

White resigned, concluding Rubinstein's 'Immortal game'. It could have ended as follows:

25...Rh3!! 26.Rf3
(26.Rf2 Bxf2 27.Qxe4
Rxh2 #)
26...Bxf3 27.Qxf3
Rxh2 #

Coming up with ideas like this “is art... A minor sort of art, perhaps, but an art just the same.” (Tartakower).
Here’s a splendid little study composed in 1922 by Rinck.

See if you can tell what is going on here: it’s White to play and win.

1.Ra8! Qa2!
1...Qxa8 loses to the skewer 2.Bf3+;
1...Qe6 loses to the skewer 2.Ra6+;
1...Qd5 loses to the pin 2.Bf3;
1...Qc4 loses to the skewer 2.Rc8+

2.Rxa4! Qg8
2...Qxa4 loses to the skewer 3.Be8+

3.Ra8! Qh7
3...Qxa8 loses to the skewer 4.Bf3+

4.Bg6! Qxg6 5.Ra6+ 1-0

Beautiful! Four dainty puzzles in a row.

An Internet blitz game
Ilia Mutschnik – Levon Aronian [C45]
GER-ch Internet G5 playchess.com (15), 2004


23.e5 (clearance) Qxe5 24.f6 (clearance) Qxf6 25.Bd3+ Kh8 26.Rg6 (interference) 1-0
So, fancy a go yourself? They won't be as hard as those!
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Answers to test positions:

1. 1...a5! undermining
2. 1...Bxh6! overloading
3. 1.f6! overloading
4. 1...exf3! unmasking
5. 1...f2+! decoy/clearance
6. 1.Re7+! interference/skewer
7. 1.Ng5! unmasking
8. 1.Bxd5! pin/outnumber
9. 1...Bh6! pin/undermine
10. 1.Nh5! pin/mate
11. 1.Nxg6+ unmasking
12. 1.Nxd5! pin/net
This book is a short course in chess tactics, which is suitable for young and old chessplayers and for chess coaches. It is a collection of short games in the Double King Pawn Openings after 1.e4 e5 which all have a violent end. Each game illustrates a basic tactical theme and the reader is taken chapter by chapter through more complicated ideas until the finest achievements of chess combination are explored.

The advantage of using short games is that positions can be set up quickly and accurately; also there is a chance to review basic opening principles and sequences.

Dave Regis is a researcher in health education who plays chess for Exeter and Devon. He runs coaching for Exeter Chess Club and Exeter Junior Chess Club. Dave drew the cartoons on the front cover.