



ENDGAMES

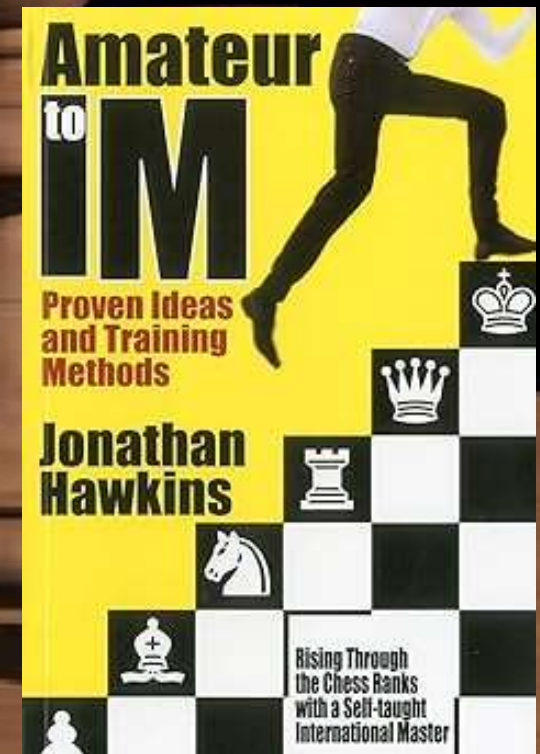


<https://devonjuniorchess.co.uk/wp/drdaveexeter/2026/02/22/endgame-resources/>

Stephan GERZADOWICZ



“Openings teach
you openings.
Endgames teach
you chess!”



A case of the 80:20 rule?



80

Practical endgames

20

Theoretical endgames

c. 1000 competitive games

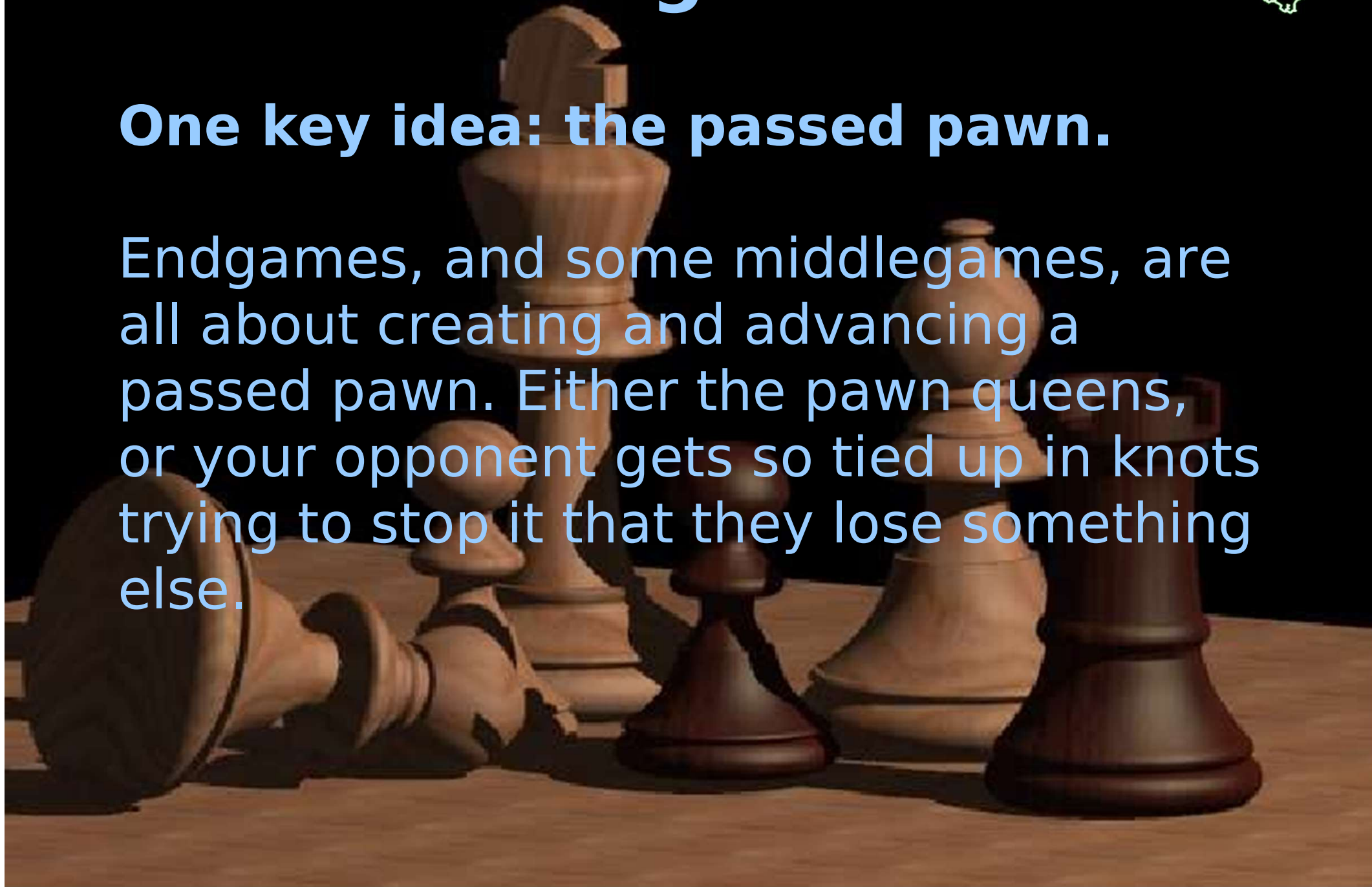
c. 4 RPvP endgames



Practical endgames

One key idea: the passed pawn.

Endgames, and some middlegames, are all about creating and advancing a passed pawn. Either the pawn queens, or your opponent gets so tied up in knots trying to stop it that they lose something else.





3 principles (Fine)

- 1. Without pawns, you must be at least a Rook ahead in order to force mate (exceptions: R+R wins against two minor pieces; four minor pieces win against a Queen)**
- 2. If you are two or more Pawns ahead the win should be routine by advancing the Pawns**
- 3. With only one Pawn advantage, you will win if you can use it to gain more material - it is not usually enough just to advance the Pawn. Often one Pawn advantage is thought to be a theoretical draw, although the practical difficulties may be very great. Winning by the advance of the Pawn may be won because it allows entry with the King, or causes distraction from one vulnerable side, or allows simplification into a known won ending.**

1. Passed pawns should be advanced as rapidly as possible. (FINE)
2. If you are one or two pawns ahead, exchange pieces but not pawns.
3. If you are one or two pawns behind, exchange pawns but not pieces.
4. If you have an advantage, leave pawns on both sides of the board.
5. If you are just one pawn ahead, in 99 cases out of 100 the game is drawn if there are pawns on only one side of the board.
6. The easiest endings to win are pure King & Pawn endings.
7. The easiest endings to draw are those with opposite-coloured bishops.
8. The King is a strong piece: use it!
9. Do not place pawns on the colour of your bishop.
10. Bishops are better than knights in all except blocked pawn positions
11. Two bishops vs. B&N or N&N are usually a real advantage.
12. Passed pawns should not be blockaded by the king: the only piece which is not much harmed by watching over an opponent's pawn is the knight.
13. A rook on the seventh rank is worth a pawn.
14. Rooks belong behind passed pawns, of your own or the opponent.



1. The king is a fighting piece and should be centralised and used actively. (MEDNIS)

2. Material advantage wins endgames: hold on to your material.

3. Be wary of sacrificing pawns for development: only in Rook+Pawn endings is an active piece worth material.

4. Try and gain tempi whenever possible, but without giving up material.

5. The fewer the pieces, the more important the pawns

6. Keep a flexible, sound pawn formation: avoid doubled, isolated and blockaded pawns.

7. Passed pawns must be pushed.

8. The outside passed pawn is an advantage: in King & Pawn endings it is decisive.

9. Rooks belong behind passed pawns.

10. In open positions the two bishops are murder: in most other positions they are a real advantage.

11. In open or semi-open positions, a bishop is usually superior to a knight.

12. The knight is superior to the bishop in blocked positions or when the bishop is hemmed in by pawns on the same colour squares as the bishop.





MEDNIS says 'good technique' means:

1. not allowing counterplay

2. holding on to material advantage

3. establishing a clear plan and following it

4. being careful

5. never being in a hurry

6. avoiding complications

*** (and ... winning the game!)**

Example games to illustrate all these principles:

<https://lichess.org/study/kkTv7Rvc>



The king is a fighting piece and should be centralised and used actively. (MEDNIS)

- **Tal-Lisitsyn 1956, Petrosian-Botvinnik 1963, Kramnik-Leko 2004 <https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1139306>**

Be wary of sacrificing pawns for development: only in Rook+Pawn endings is an active piece worth material.

Rooks belong behind passed pawns.

A rook on the seventh rank is worth a pawn.

- **All in Capablanca-Tartakower 1924 <https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1139306>**

Keep a flexible, sound pawn formation: avoid doubled, isolated and blockaded pawns.

- **Ben Finegold on 4 Capa endgames <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEG2mI4YEXg>**

Example games to illustrate these principles:



The outside passed pawn is an advantage: in King & Pawn endings it is decisive.

- Turnkey 4 - Hodgson

<https://exeterchessclub.org.uk/content/outside-passed-pawns>

In open positions the two bishops are murder: in most other positions they are a real advantage.

- <https://exeterchessclub.org.uk/content/double-bishop-endgames>

In open or semi-open positions, a bishop is usually superior to a knight.

- Capablanca - Corzo 1901

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1262431>

The knight is superior to the bishop in blocked positions or when the bishop is hemmed in by pawns on the same colour squares as the bishop.

- Smyslov-Tal 1969

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1126272>



NEXT STEPS: practical endgames

- **CHERNEV**
Capablanca's 60 best endgames
- **GIDDENS**
Greatest ever endgames

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chesscollection?cid=1024701>

- **Van PERLO's**
Endgame Tactics



Capablanca endgames



owner:DrDaveExeter capablanca



Relevant



Capablanca Endgames 3

♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 4 years ago

- Duras - Capablanca ^(A) PeNgXiAo_ZhU
- Capablanca - Teichmann ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Capablanca - Salwe and allies ^(A) Adelantor
- Nimzowitsch - Capablanca



Capablanca Endgames 4

♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 4 years ago

- Bosch - Capablanca ^(A) PeNgXiAo_ZhU
- Canal - Capablanca ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Havasi - Capablanca ^(A) Adelantor
- Capablanca - Thomas



Capablanca Endgames 2

♥ 2 • DrDaveExeter • 4 years ago

- Capablanca, Jose - Rubinstein, ^(A) PeNgXiAo_ZhU
- Merenyi, L. - Capablanca, Jose ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Steiner, Endre - Capablanca, Jc ^(A) Adelantor



Capablanca's Best Endgames

♥ 4 • DrDaveExeter • 4 years ago

- Capablanca, Jose - Corzo y Prii ^(A) PeNgXiAo_ZhU
- Capablanca, Jose - Corzo y Prii ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Marshall, Frank - Capablanca, ^(A) DtheMan
- Marshall, Frank - Capablanca, ^(A) Adelantor



"Chess Fundamentals, by J....

🔒 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago

- Game 1: Queen's Gambit Decl ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Game 2: Queen's Gambit Decl
- Game 3: Irregular Defense
- Game 4: French Defense

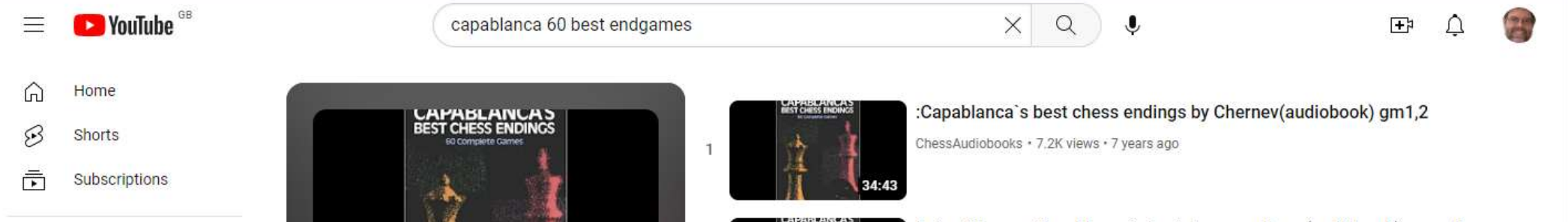


"Chess Fundamentals, by J....

🔒 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago

- Preface ^(A) DrDaveExeter
- Chapter 1 - First Principles: En
- Ex.1: Simple Mates: Rook vs Ki
- Ex.2: Simple Mates: Rook vs Ki

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-tIntisuY-dpgV59-Sf0S01WswYXca8U>





Vera Menchik

vs

Jose Capablanca

Hastings
Round 9

1930



Theoretical endgames

Minimum material without pawns:

- **Elementary:** KQvK, KRvK, KBBvK
- **Tricky:** KQvKR, KNBvK, KRBvKR













Minimum material with pawns:

- **KPvK, KQvKP, KRvKP, KRvKPP, KRPvKR, KBPvKB, KNPvKN, KQPvKQ**

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All studies
My studies
Studies I contribute to
My public studies
My private studies
My favourite studies
Topics

owner:DrDaveExeter Littlewood 🔍 +

 Littlewood's Endgame ABC: Q1 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN  PeNgXiao_ZhU  DrDaveExeter	 Littlewood's Endgame ABC: Q2 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN  PeNgXiao_ZhU  DrDaveExeter	 Littlewood's Endgame ABC: A1 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN  PeNgXiao_ZhU  DrDaveExeter	 Littlewood's Endgame ABC: A2 ♥ 1 • DrDaveExeter • 2 years ago ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN ○ NN - NN  PeNgXiao_ZhU  DrDaveExeter
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NEXT STEPS: theoretical endgames



“The best endgame book is the one you actually read...

“Many well-intentioned hobbyists have a collection of endgame-themed shelf ornaments. The thicker ones can find utility as doorstops, or if hollowed out can securely store valuables.”

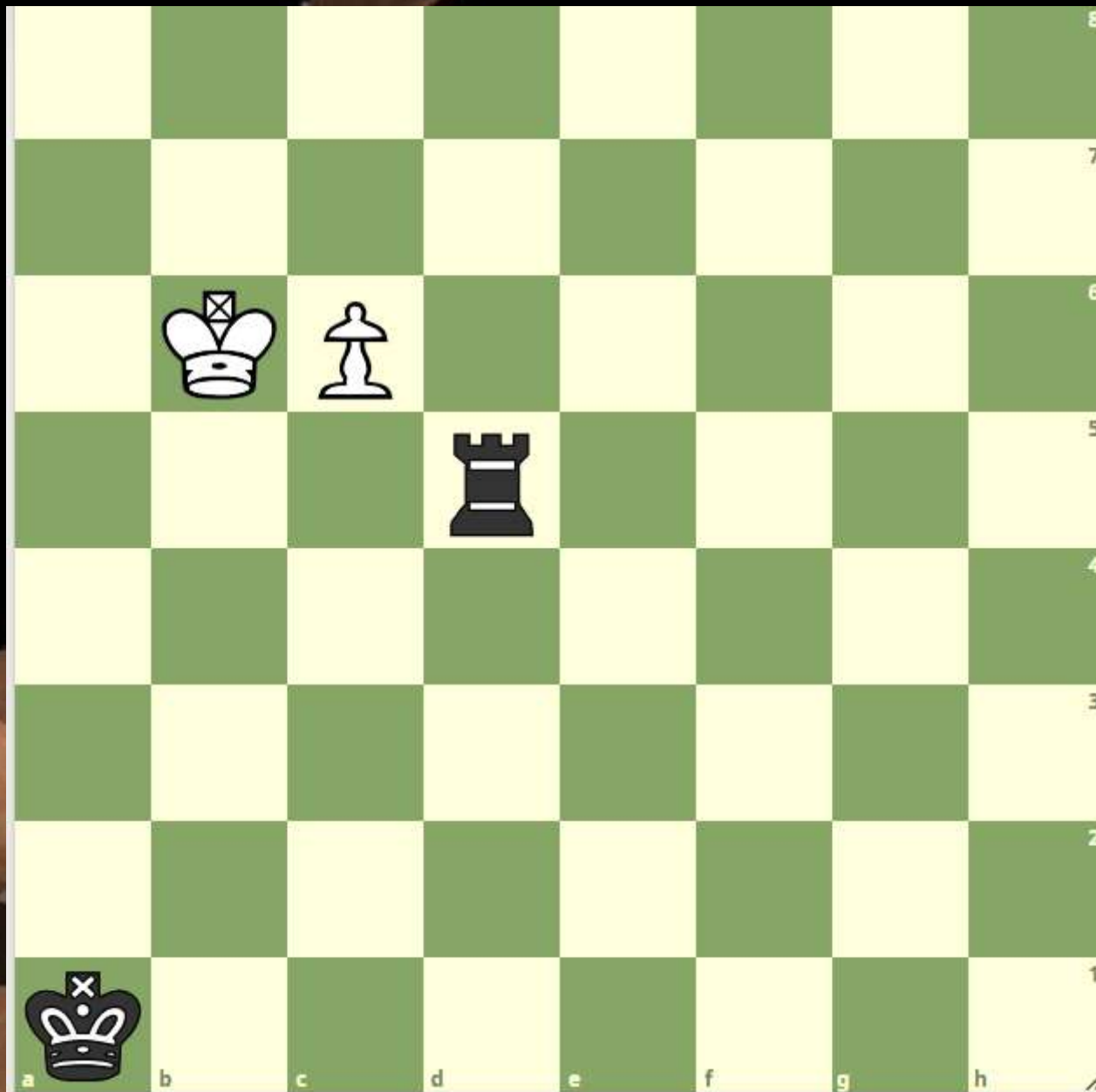
'Katar' at the ChessPub forum:

<https://www.chesspublishing.com>

Studies e.g. Saavedra



1.c7!





Benefits of studies

- Widening the range of moves you consider (resourcefulness)
- Improving thoroughness of your analysis
- Boosting your imagination
- Awareness of exact calculation/peculiarities of a position (e.g. domination)
- Enjoyment!