

Step 2 Thinking Ahead



In the international versions of the workbooks, the amount of text is limited. The Thinking ahead workbooks need a little more explanation than the other workbooks (basic, extra, plus or mix).

First of all, on page 1 you will find a brief overview of the types of tasks in the workbook. That will be enough for a large part, but there is more. On page 3 ff. you will find the contents of the whole workbook with a brief explanation of the various pages. There is a reference to the page of the reminder (if any). There are 7 in total.

Also for the blind exercises on many pages, extra explanations (in addition to the example with the answer in the workbook) may come in handy.

Thinking ahead Step 2

This workbook is somewhat different from usual. There are not diagrams on every page, you will need to get used to that. What sort of exercises can you expect?

Blindfold chess

You will see only an empty board. The position is described with white and black pieces. These are called figurines and they look like this: ♔c3 ♚h8 _____. If the task is 'capture an unprotected piece', then you enter **Bxh8**. The tasks are all familiar to you: attack safely, route planning and many more. What you have to do stands next to the exercise. The first task is always an example. The correct answer is there for you already. If the exercise is repeated later, the first answer is no longer given.

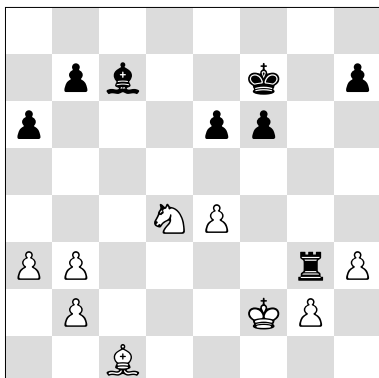
Blindfold exercises on the board

You must solve all these tasks without a board. You must rapidly be able to indicate the squares without any mistakes. Practise that, if you have to, on a real board first of all with the co-ordinates and then on a board without letters or numbers.

One example is: move the ♞a2 to e7 _____. Write down the number of moves the knight requires to get from a2 to e7. One option is **Na2-b4-c6-e7**: so 3 moves. There are a lot of different types of exercise.

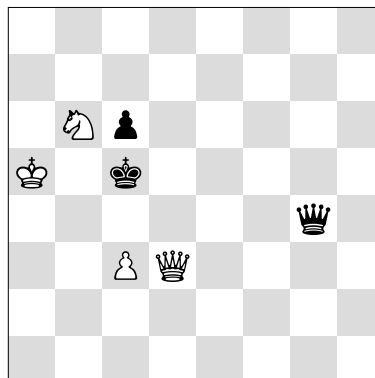
Exercises with a diagram

These pages are the most like those from other workbooks. The following examples show that there really are differences.



1. ... e5 2. _____

Black to move. But you have to think out a move for White. The move Black played is below the diagram. The pawn move attacks the knight, but do not let yourself be diverted by that. The move also closes the diagonal of the bishop. So the rook is no longer protected. White can take the rook and instead of being lost he is no longer any worse.
You write down the correct answer **2. Kxg3**.



1. c4 Qh3 2. _____

1. c4 Qd4 2. _____

1. c4 Qxc4 2. _____

Mate in 2 moves. The first one is given to you. You must think ahead and find the mating move. The threat after **1. c4** is **2. Na4#** (**1. ... Qh3** does not prevent it). After **1. ... Qd4** the d6-square is no longer in White's hands. The c-pawn is also out of the way, so that **2. Qa3#** can follow! **1. ... Qxc4** also prevents **2. Na4#**. The queen is no longer controlling d7. So **2. Nd7#**.

Workbook Step 2 Thinking Ahead content

The bold numbers in front of the title (**3; 9+10**) refer to the pages in the workbook.

3 The pin A

The forms on these pages are pin, attack on a pinned piece and a pinned piece is not a good defender. If necessary, see the reminders of Step 3.

4+5+6 Winning material A B C

Capturing an unprotected piece and the twofold are the forms on these pages. It seems simple, but take care! With which piece should you capture? Take the opponent's possibilities into account. Remember the X-ray protection and don't forget the intermediate move.

See the reminder on page 6.

The blind exercise on page 4 is a route planner: go to square ?

e1 c6  ____ – b7

The first named piece (e1) must safely move to the named square at the end (g4). Via g1 is the right way.

The blind exercise on page 5 is „Attack safely!“

e2 c5 f7  ____

The knight must safely attack a black piece. Only write down the correct square. You may use the empty board. It is clear that the knight must attack the rook on c5. Pb3 fails on Lxb3 and therefore Pe4 is correct.

The blind exercise on page 6 is „Choose the right capture“.

d5 a8 a2  ____

Only the rook on a8 is unprotected: Qxa8.

7+8 Eliminating the defence

1. d8 xb2 2. _____ !

2. _____ ? _____

After the moves under the board, material gain is possible by eliminating the defender. If necessary, see the reminders in Step 2 on page 18.

For the last three tasks on page 8, the following applies: At the move with the exclamation mark (!) comes the correct move. At the question mark (?) comes the move which also attacks the pawn but does not win any material. The refutation comes at the last line.

9+10 Mate: Visualising A+B

See the reminder on page 7.

The blind exercise on page 9 is mate in one. How many times can White mate? Write down the number and all the moves.

The blind exercise on page 10 is 'mate in one'. The assignment below the board is an example and has already been filled in.

11+12+13 Double attack A B C

See the reminder on page 9.

The blind exercise on page 13 is also the double attack. The assignment below the board is an example and has already been filled in.

14+15+16 Clever ways out of check A+B+C

See the reminder on page 10.

17 Blindfold chess: Short games A B

Play out the game in your head and find the best move.

1. g4 e5 2. f3 _____ Write this down Qh4#.

18+19 Tactics in de opening A B

Mixed exercises in the opening phase of a game with themes from Step 2.

20+21 Mate: visualising C D

See the reminder on page 7.

The blind exercise on page 20 is mate: yes (👉) or no (👎).

The blind exercise on page 21 is mate in one. The assignment below the board is an example and has already been filled in.

22+23 Discovered attack A B C

If necessary, see the reminder in Step 2 on page 42.

The blind exercise on page 23 is discovered chess.

24+25 Defending against mate A B

See the reminder on page 12.

The blind exercise on page 25 is Defending against mate. The assignment below the board is an example and has already been filled in.

26+27+28 Choose the right move A B C

26 Double attack D

See the reminder on page 7.

27+28 Double attack visualising A B

The same kind of exercise as *Mate: visualising* with the difference that now material must be won.

29+30 Pat A B

Force stalemate.

The blind exercise on page 30 is mate (#), stalemate (=) or play (→).

31+32 Winning material (👉 or 👎)

After the moves under the board, material gain is possible. It is either 'capture an unprotected piece' or "a twofold attack". Is the capture right or wrong? State why or why not.

33+34 Mate: visualising A+B

See the reminder on page 7.

The blind exercise on page 33 is 'creating mate'.

The blind exercise on page 34 is „How many times mate in one?“

35+36 Test: mix A B

Tasks with different themes. They are indicated with the answers.

37+38 Intermediate move A B

See the reminder on page 11.

In the blind exercise on page 37, indicate the square on which the queen attacks all three squares.

39 Avoiding stalemate A

The opponent is not stalemated yet, but the obvious move would lead to a stalemate. Avoid this move and play the move that wins!

40+41 Capturing: yes or no A B

In response to the move under the board, you can either capture a piece or recapture it. Is the capture right or wrong? Show why or why not. See also the reminders on page 5

42+43 Threaten mate A

The first white and black moves have already been given. On the second move white must threaten mate. The opponent cannot prevent mate. The second black move can be any move and does not have to be written down. The mating move on the third move, of course, must be written down.

44+45 Passed pawn A B

A passed pawn is usually worth more than a point. The passed pawn must win points and may be lost if necessary.

46+47 Defending against a passed pawn A B

We must stop the opponent's passed pawn, capture it and if that fails, win the new queen. Material may be lost in the process.

48+49 Mate in three A B

The exercise is mate in three but since the first move has been given, mate in two remains. But you have to think one move ahead.

The blind exercise on page 48 has the theme of trapping. The first task is an example and has already been completed.

The blind exercise on page 49 is 'Where is the king mated?' The first task is an example and has already been completed.

50+ 51 Route planner mate A B

Asked: the correct way to mate. The initial position and the final move are given. In many other route planners only White plays, but here there is also a black move. Black can make only one move and there are only two in total to be calculated. That helps in finding the solution. The mating move gives a lot of information. Logical thinking is required. Don't give up too quickly if you can't find the solution immediately.

52+53 Preventing material loss A B

The title of the assignment says exactly what you have to do: don't lose any material. The themes are very different. Save the trapped piece, don't lose the protecting piece. There are also other themes.

54+55+56 Test mix C D E

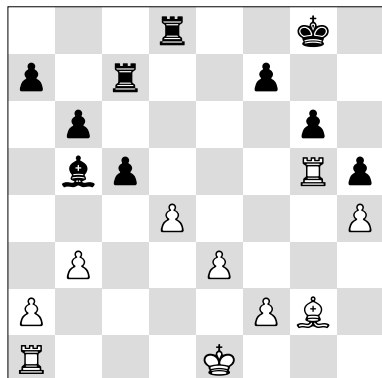
Tasks with different themes. They are indicated with the answers.

The blind exercise on page 55 is a route planner: Go to the right square. The first task is an example and has already been solved.

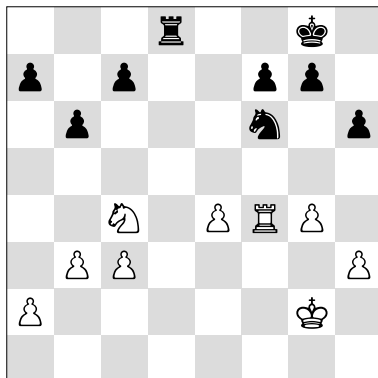
Winning material

There are various ways to win material. Taking an unprotected piece is probably the simplest one. Your opponent leaves a piece en prise, you take it and you have collected the booty.

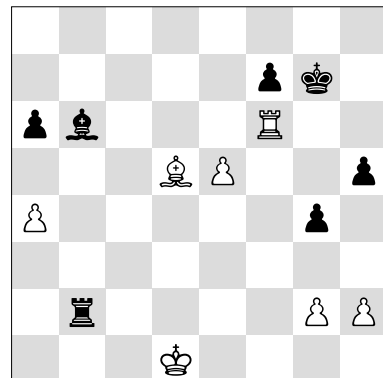
In this reminder, your opponent makes a mistake but does not simply put a piece en prise. With his move he is in fact following a plan, but one which costs him a piece.



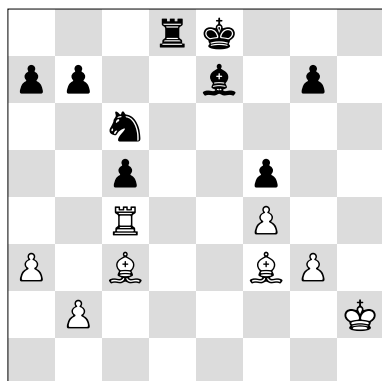
Black sees that the d4-pawn is insufficiently protected: attacked twice but protected only once. He plays **1. ... cxd4**, expecting White to recapture. Wrong! White of course takes the bishop: **2. Rxb5**. The c-pawn is pinned and it is rarely a good idea to move a pinned piece.



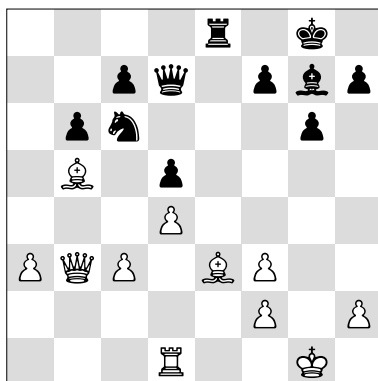
This is a great position for Black, above all thanks to his active rook. Black thinks he can win material by chasing away the defender of e4: **1. ... g5**. But suddenly the black knight is unprotected. Moving away the rook and taking the knight can be done in one move: **2. Rxf6**. White wins a piece.



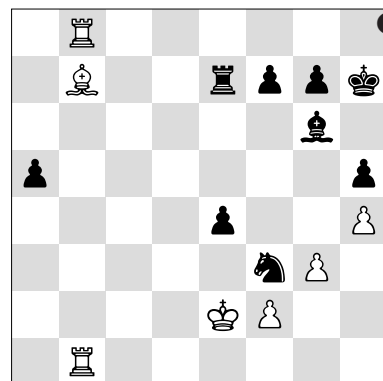
White threatens **1. Rxf7+**. Black sees only this threat and protects f7 with **1. ... Rf2** (X-ray protection). White's task is to choose the correct capture. The exchange **2. Rxf2 Bxf2** brings nothing, and **2. Bxf7 Rxf6 3. gxf6 Kxf7** even costs material. Correct is **2. Rxb6**. The defender has disappeared.



Black wants to punish White's last move (Bd2-c3) with **1. ... b5**. He sees the attack on the g-pawn and that the white rook can no longer move. He quickly thinks there is no need to keep on calculating after an attack. Wrong, with **2. Bxc6+** White first takes the knight, then the b-pawn.



The pin on the c6-knight is slightly unpleasant (two back pieces). It is often a good plan to get out of a pin (**1. ... Ra8** is a good idea). Getting out of it with **1. ... Na5** (followed by **2. ... c6**) is unfortunately not good. After **2. Bxd7 Nxb3** the rook on e8 is still hanging and White wins with **3. Bxe8**.



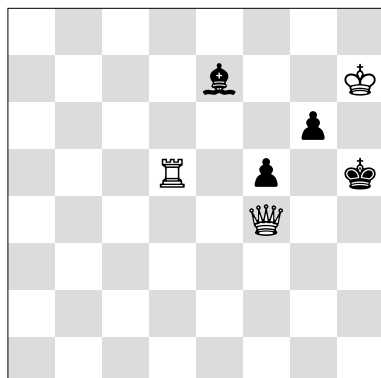
Black wants to exploit the battery and attacks the rook on b1 with **1. ... e3**. The disadvantage? The knight on f3 is now unprotected. **2. Kxf3** is however followed by **2. ... Bxb1**. The refutation of Black's move is **2. Bxf3**, when the b1-rook is protected: **2. ... Bxb1 3. Rxb1**, and White is a piece up.

Visualising mate in one

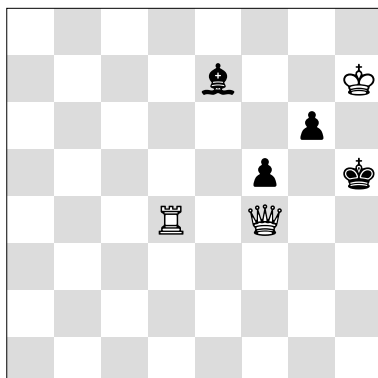
You see a great move, but you are not quite sure. You would love to try the move out on the board in order to check whether everything is OK. But unfortunately touching a piece means moving and taking a move back is not allowed. So you have to imagine the position in your head, the fancy word for that is ‘visualising’. You have to think about several things at the same time. Let’s go through them in order. You make your move and then:

1. You must see in your mind’s eye the correct new position, because there has been a change.
2. You must see that the options available to other pieces can also change.
3. You must know how things stand (who is better off?).

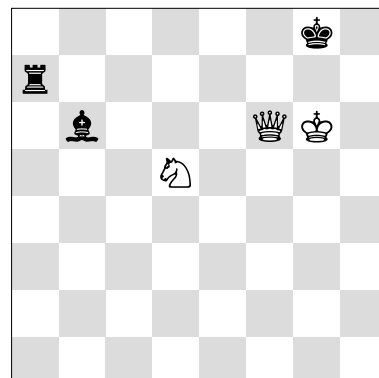
We shall practise the first two points. In this case we know the third point: it must be mate.



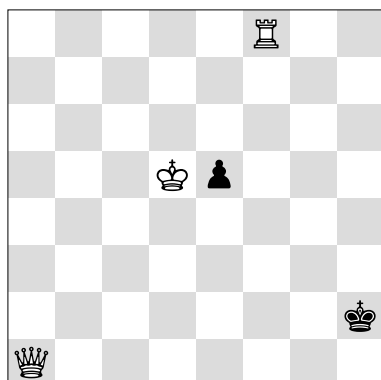
White plays **1. Rd4**. You must now ‘see’ that the rook now guards the 4th rank and that White is threatening mate on h6. Black can defend against this mate in various ways. Protect with **1. ... Bf8**, interpose with **1. ... Bg5** or **1. ... g5**



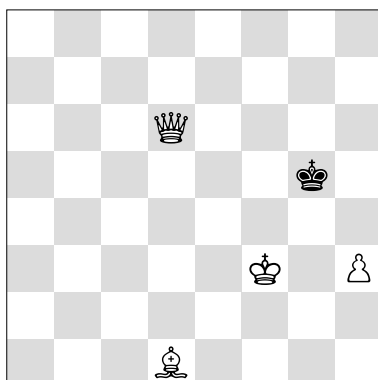
The moves suggested all have one disadvantage. After **1. ... Bf8** square h4 is no longer protected. A black piece on g5 is depriving the king of an escape square.
1. ... Bf8 2. Qh4#
1. ... Bg5 2. Qf3#
1. ... g5 2. Qh2#



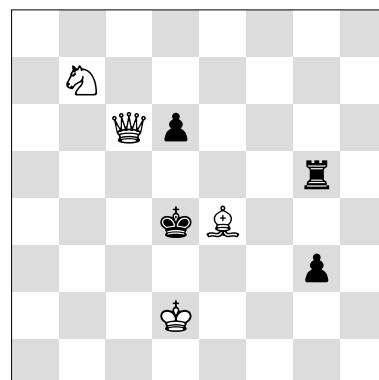
The black pieces are preventing mate on d8 and g7. After the move **1. Nc7** White is threatening mate on these two squares. Black will be mated. He can choose on which square:
1. ... Bxc7 2. Qg7#
1. ... Rxc7 2. Qd8#



White starts with **1. Rg8**. It is logical to shut the king off on the edge. What is different from the previous positions is that White is not threatening mate. But Black cannot pass and so is mated:
1. ... e4 2. Qh8# or **1. ... Kh3 2. Qh1#**.



The mating pattern in this position is much harder. The first move is **1. h4+** and then:
1. ... Kxh4 2. Qh6# (a simple mating pattern).
1. ... Kf5 2. Bc2# (the h-pawn guards g5).
1. ... Kh5 2. Kg3# (Discovered check and the king protects h4).

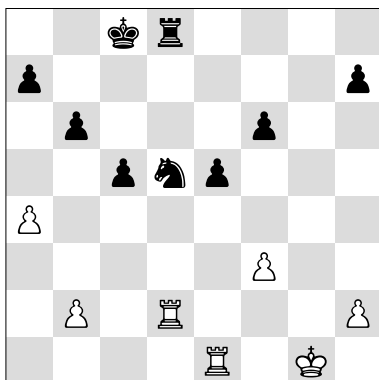


This is an example of a task. The first move **1. Bd3** threatens mate on e4. Black can either ignore the threat or prevent the queen move:
1. Bd3 g2 2. Qe4#
1. Bd3 d5 2. Qc3#
1. Bd3 Re5 2. Qc4#
1. Bd3 Rg4 2. Qxd6#

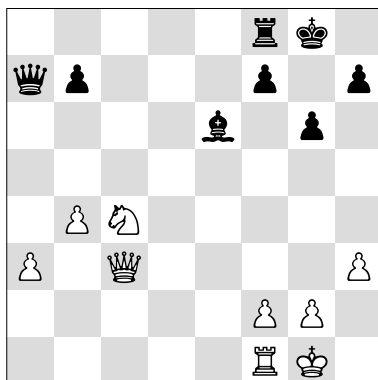
Defending against the pin

Defending against a pin is what you have learnt in Step 3. In addition to the four ways of defending from the first step (protecting, moving away, interposing and capturing), you also have learnt how to use the counterattack. A counterattack is aimed at:

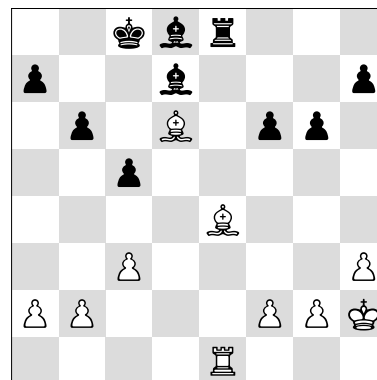
- the king
- material
- a mating square



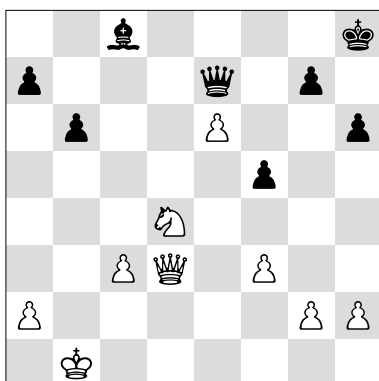
White can pin the knight with **1. Rd1**. Now Black must look for a target for the front piece (knight) or the back piece (rook). The white king is an important target. Black saves the back piece with **1. ... Rg8+**. White must get out of check after which Black can play his knight away.



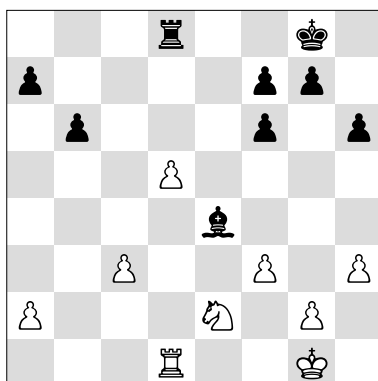
After **1. ... Rc8** the pin of the knight cannot be solved by a simple check. The counterattack should be on material now. The unprotected black queen offers a solution. After **2. Qe3** Black has no time to capture the knight and after **2. ... Qxe3 3. Nxex3** it is also safe for the white knight.



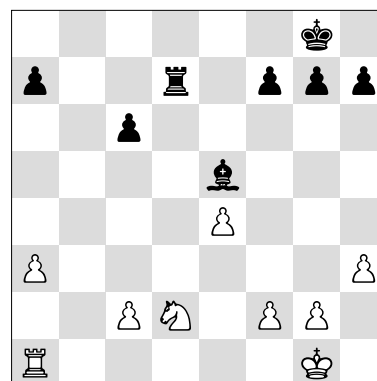
Black attacks the bishop with **1. ... f5**. The black king has few squares available and that makes him vulnerable. White plays the clever move **2. Bd3** and threatens mate with the front piece. Black has to defend himself against the mate on a6. After that White has time to exchange or move his rook away.



After **1. ... Bxe6** the black pieces are on the same file, ready to be pinned. White can pin the bishop with a safe queen move to the e-file. After **2. Qe3** the pin also works as a battery: **2. ... Bxa2 +!** That is why the correct move is **2. Qe2**. Black cannot win material with a discovered attack.



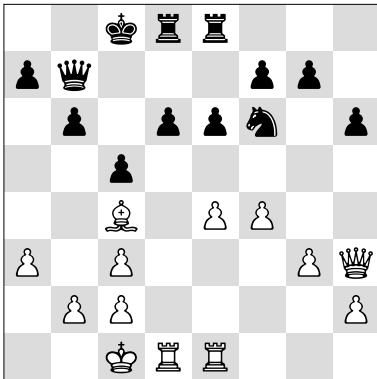
After **1. ... Bxd5** White has two possibilities to attack the pinned piece again. The unprotected knight on e2 turns out to be placed unfortunately because after **2. c4** follows **2. ... Re8!** and White wins no material. Attacking the pinned piece with **2. Nf4** does yield a piece.



Black attacks two pieces and White has to save himself allowing a pin: **1. Rd1**. Now Black has to watch out for a back rank mate. That's why only **1. ... Bf4** wins a piece. The wrong way to attack the pinned piece is **1. ... Bc3 2. Rb1!** The black bishop no longer protects b8.

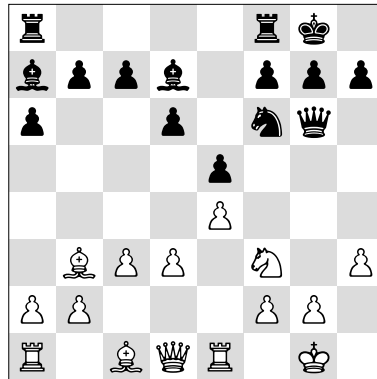
Double attack

The double attack: you find two targets and attack them. You can make a good use of pinned pieces. Of course, sometimes there's a defence and that's nice when you're on the wrong side of the board. Even as an attacker you have to watch out for possible defences: be strong – resist the temptation!



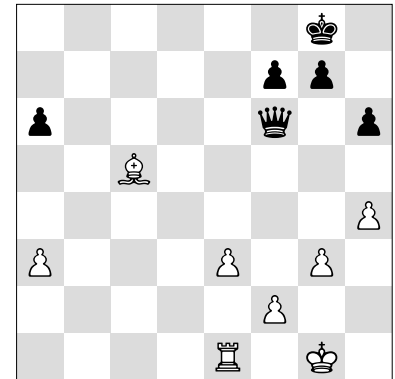
Double attack and pin

Black sees no danger in taking ♖e4. After 1. ... **Nxe4** the knight is a target but White does not have a second target. White looks better at the position and sees the pin of ♗e6. Thanks to this pin, there is a second target: 2. **Bd5** and Black loses the knight.



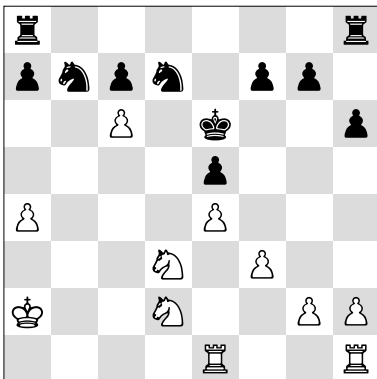
Wrong solution

Black threatens to take on h3 because the g-pawn is pinned. Playing the king to f1 is a good move. White does not think about defending and attacks with 1. **Nh4**. Does the black queen have to go to h5? No, thanks to the pin of the f-pawn Black wins material with the double attack 1. ... **Qg3**.



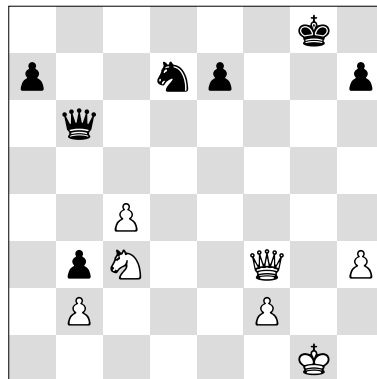
Defending

A double attack does not always lead to material gains. Here both White's pieces are unprotected. Black can easily attack the targets with 1. ... **Qc3**. Luckily for White, the bishop can still help. The X-ray protection with 2. **Bb4** saves both pieces. Defending by moving away + protecting.



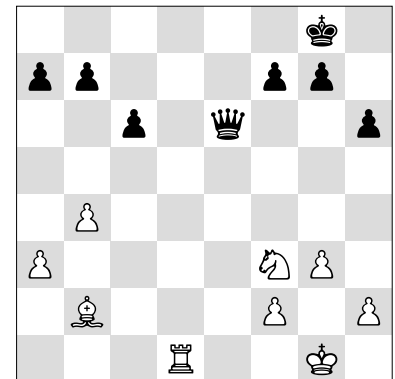
Counterattack

The pawn fork threatens both knights. Black is lucky that the knight on d3 is unprotected. A knight move to c5 prevents loss of material. Which knight should move? Sure, after 1. ... **Ndc5** 2. **cxb7** the rook on a8 is hanging. The other knight move is correct: 1. ... **Nbc5** 2. **cxd7 Nxd3** or 2. **Nxc5 Nxc5**.



Temptation

Black has a vulnerable king and an unprotected knight on d7. He is hoping for 1. **Qg4+** because he has seen 1. ... **Qg6**. The white queen is then pinned. Unfortunately for Black, White has a second way to deliver the double attack: 1. **Qd5+** does win a piece.

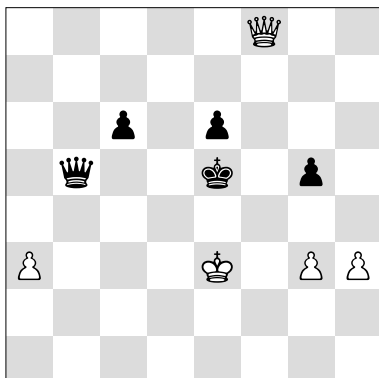


Temptation

Three white pieces are unprotected. Yet, Black doesn't win material easily. The move 1. ... **Qe2** attacks the three targets. White can still manage with 2. **Rd8+ Kh7** 3. **Nd2**. The correct double attack is 1. ... **Qb3**. White can save the rook with 2. **Rd8+** but after 2. ... **Kh7** he loses a piece anyway.

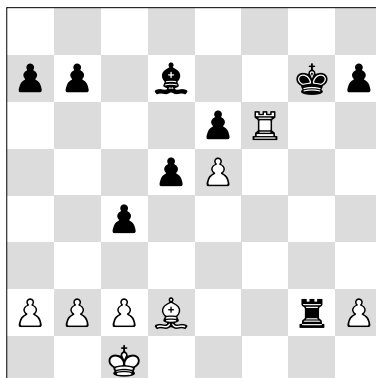
Clever ways getting out of check

You can get out of check in three ways: by moving away, interposing and capturing. In the tasks there are various possibilities you must look out for when getting out of check: 'watch out for mate', 'win material' or 'don't lose any material'.



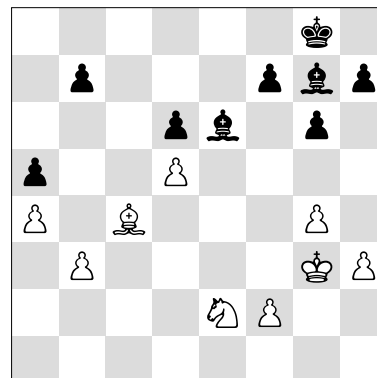
Preventing mate

White checks: **1. Qg7+**. The black king does not have much freedom of movement. So you must watch out for mate. After **1. ... Kf5** the king has no escape squares left. White just has to play **2. g4#**. After **1. ... Kd5** Black is also mated after **2. Qd4#**. So the correct move is **1. ... Kd6**, after which White cannot deliver mate.



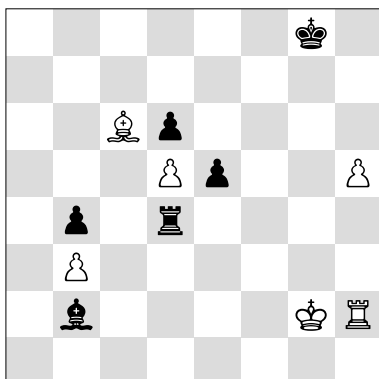
Preventing mate

Black appears to be mated after **1. Bh6+**. After **1. ... Kg8** **2. Rf8#** that would be the case. If we take a close look, we discover that Black can still save the game with **1. ... Kh8**. Black prepares to interpose with the rook. **2. Rf8+ Rg8** is not mate. Black is still in the game.



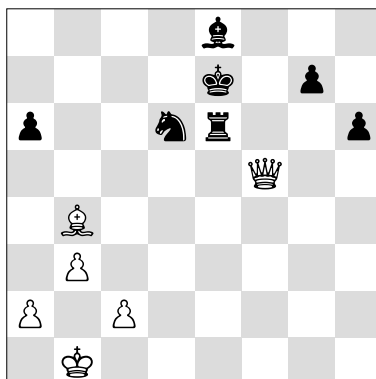
Winning material

Chess players imagine they are safe when giving a check. After all, the opponent has to get out of check. That is a little too simple... The bishop on e6 is under attack. If Black plays **1. ... Be5+**, White plays **2. f4** taking advantage of the attack on e6. A double attack, not with one pawn but with two different ones.



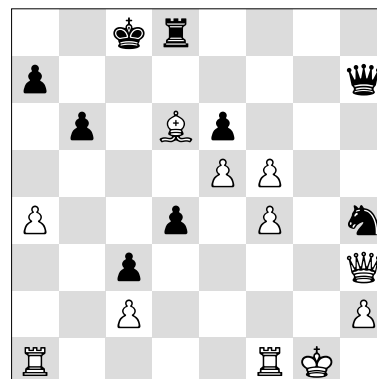
Winning material

White is not yet directly attacking anything. But **♗b2** is unprotected and exposed to a battery. If Black checks with **1. ... Rg4+** White can, with **2. Kh3**, attack both the bishop and the rook. He must calculate well, because **2. Kf3** is followed by **2. ... Rf4+**, and Black saves himself.



Not losing material

After **1. ... Re1+** White has two legal moves. A good chess player will study both moves. The temptation simply to take the rook is great. But winning the rook means losing the queen: **1. Bxe1 Nxf5**. As soon as you have seen that, you can confidently play **2. Kb2**.

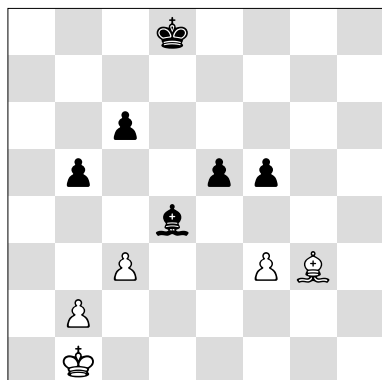


Not losing material

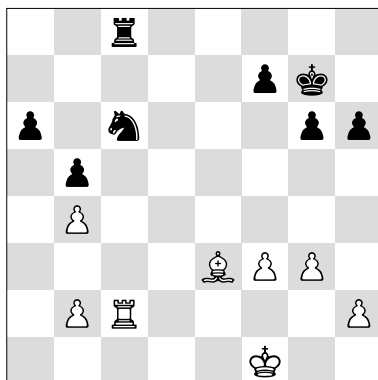
Black is a rook down, so a check cannot do any harm: **1. ... Rg8+**. In won positions people can become careless. The move **2. Kh1** (nice and 'safe' in the corner) is quickly made. After **2. ... Qb7+** the pieces can be put back in the box! The correct move is **2. Kf2**.

The intermediate move

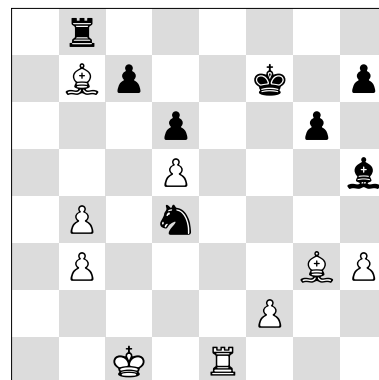
Chess is not a game for one person. Your own plans are important, but your opponent has some say in the matter too. So keep looking beyond the end of your nose!



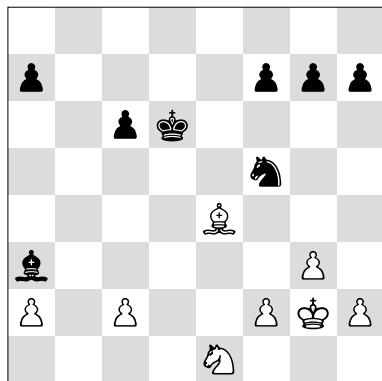
White chases away the bishop with c2-c3. Black does not want to lose his e-pawn and he attacks the white bishop with **1. ... f4**. It is often dangerous to leave a piece en prise. The opponent can slip in an intermediate move. Here it is the attack on the king. The check **2. Bh4+** wins a piece. On his next move White will take the bishop.



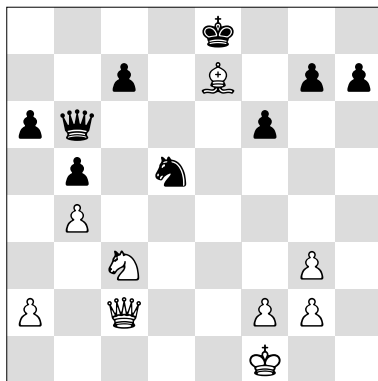
Black would like to be rid of the pin on the c-file. That would work with **1. ... Ne7**, but he thinks he is cleverer than that: **1. ... Re8** (since **2. Bd4+** does not work). White again has a clever intermediate move. He first takes the h-pawn with the bishop and only then the knight. After **2. Bxh6+ Kxh6** **3. Rxc6** White has won a pawn.



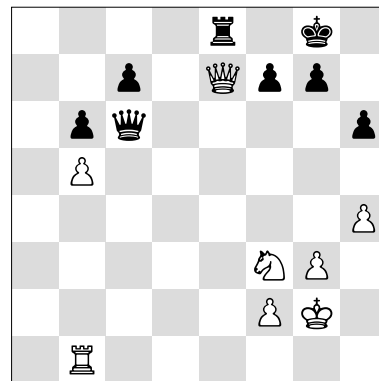
White does not want to move the bishop away from b7 at once. The b4-pawn would be lost. So **1. Re4**, to move the bishop only after **1. ... Nf5**. The knight should give check, But Black must be on his guard. After **1. ... Nxb3+?** the knight turns out to be vulnerable on b3: **2. Kb2!** The correct move is **1. ... Ne2+**, and Black wins an exchange.



White is attacking the unprotected knight on f5. Black wants to stay there and plays **1. ... Bb4**, also attacking an unprotected white knight. White can now exploit the unprotected position of the black bishop on b4. **2. Nd3** puts the knight in safety with tempo (attacking material). White wins a piece.



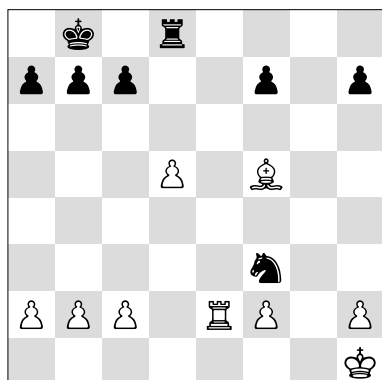
Black must recapture. **1. ... Nxe7** is good, even if it costs the h-pawn. But he thinks: “**1. ... Nxc3** **2. Qxc3** **Kxe7** is great. After **2. Bxf6** **Qxf6** my knight is protected.” Unfortunately that is not true. After **1. ... Nxc3** White has the intermediate move **2. Bc5** (attacking a piece of greater value).



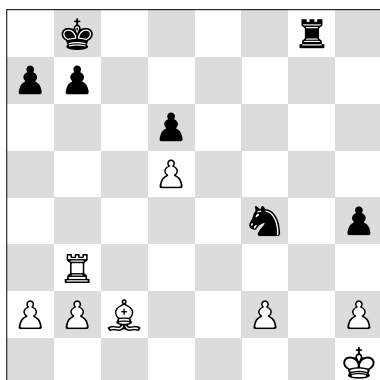
White has created a retreat for his queen with b4-b5. He was counting on having an extra piece. That is not true. Black has a neat trick: **1. ... Qxf3+**. Before the rook takes the white queen, the black queen gobbles up all it can get. After **2. Kxf3 Rxe7** Black is a pawn up.

Defend against mate

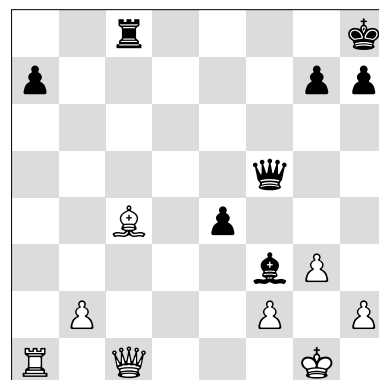
You know four ways to defend against an attack: protect, interpose, capture and move away. You can use the same ways against a threat of mate. The first thing to do is to think out whether you can defend against the threat of mate.



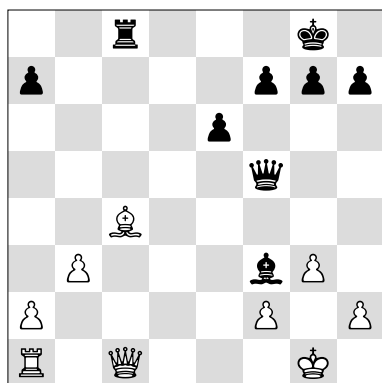
After **1. ... Rg8** Black is threatening a mate on g1. Protecting the mating square with **2. Re1** would cost a rook; creating an escape square with **2. h3** is just as little help. Is there another defence? Yes! White can exploit the weakness of Black's back rank, specifically by **2. Bg4** (interposing).



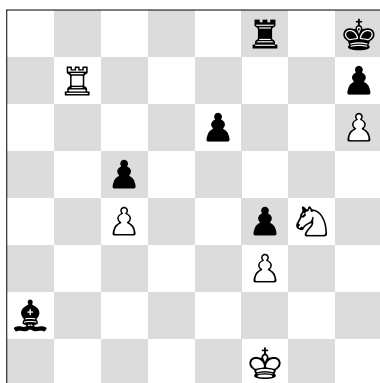
Black again threatens mate on g1, this time after **1. ... Ne2**. White again has no option to protect the mating square g1. Interposing would cost a piece. White has to prepare an escape square for the king and be able to move away to it. After **2. h3** the king can go to h2 to move away from a rook check on g1.



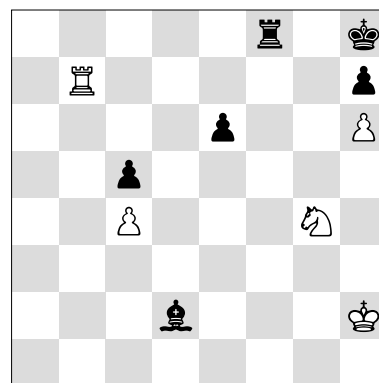
After **1. ... Qh3** White has two ways to protect the mating square g2. Since the bishop is pinned by the rook, **2. Bf1 Rxc1 3. Rxc1 Qd7** costs material. So all that is left is **2. Qf1**. This is a good defence, since after **2. ... Qxf1+** White can recapture on f1 with the bishop. Then with **Bg2** he swaps off Black's attacking bishop.



Almost the same position, but with one important difference. The correct choice after **1. ... Qh3** is **2. Bf1**, since it wins material. White sacrifices the queen, but it is soon payback time. After **1. ... Rxc1 2. Rxc1** threatens mate on c8 and the queen is en prise on h3. Black loses an exchange: **2. ... Qxf1+ 4. Kxf1**. There is no hope left!



Is there a defence to the mating threat of **1. Nf6**? Taking the knight with **1. ... Rxf6** fails to mate and **1. ... Bb1** simply costs a piece: **2. Rxb1**. The rook cannot leave the back rank. Black needs to bring in a defender with tempo (check): **1. ... Bxc4+ 2. Kf2 Bd3**, and the pawn on h7 is protected.



White again tries for mate via **1. Nf6**. The h7-square cannot be protected. Taking the knight is no solution on account of **2. Rb8+**. Without this check Black can of course take the helper. Black needs to bring in a defender with tempo. After **1. ... Bf4+ b8** is protected and **2. Kh3** can be followed by **2. ... Rxf6**.