

Chess Notation

Chess Notation is required in Open sections above 3rd grade in most tournaments. We teach the kids how to keep notation and provide them with free scorebooks and pencils. Notation is critical as a way to review and analyze games with a coach for future improvement, as well as to solve disputes during tournament games. Please encourage your children to practice notation with every game they play at home! It is not difficult to learn how to write the symbols, but it is difficult for many children to focus on their game and keep notation. It takes practice, and soon it will become "muscle memory" and something they can do without thinking. Here's how it works:

Each square on tournament boards has a number and letter designation from a1 to h8. The numbers are listed on the sides of the board. White sits on the side that goes from a to h and 1 to 8. Black sits on the side that goes from h to a and 8 to 1.

K = King

Q = Queen

B = Bishop

N = Knight

R = Rook

square number only = pawn

x = "takes"

+ = check

++ = checkmate OR ++ = double check and # = checkmate

Examples:

A Knight moves to square h8 and takes whatever is there = Nxh8 (Read "Knight takes h8")

A Bishop moves to a square but doesn't take anything = Bc7 (Read "Bishop to c7")

A pawn moves to square e4 = e4 (Read "pawn to e4")

A pawn starting on the d square moves to square e4 and takes whatever is there = dxe4 (Read "d pawn takes e4")

If there are two possible knights that could move to a single square, indicate which one by telling which letter square it came from = bNc5 (Read "b Knight to c5") (same concept for Rooks)

King Side Castle = o-o

Queen Side Castle = o-o-o

A Rook moves to square e6 and checks the King = Re6+ (Read "Rook to e6 check")

A Queen moves to square b7 and checkmates = Qb7++ (Read "Queen to b7 checkmate") (also could be Qb7# when using ++ notation for a double check, which can only occur in a discovered attack)