

Chess: A Game of Kings and Queens

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“Checkmate,” says the winning player when her opponent’s king can’t make another move. She has won the chess game.

Many board games have been played for a long time. Chess is one of these games. Although no one knows who first played the game, historians believe it was invented in India in the 6th or 7th century AD. It found its way to Persia (present-day Iran) some

time later. There it seems to have gotten the name chess. Historians think the word chess is from the word shah, which means “king” in the Persian language.

A chess board looks like a checkerboard, with two different colors of alternating squares. Each player starts with 16 pieces: one king, one queen, two bishops, two knights, two rooks, and eight pawns. Each piece moves in different ways. Some can move several squares in one turn.

Chess is a strategy game, almost like a small battleground. Players carefully plan every move. They

try to position their pieces so that their opponent can’t capture them. If that’s not possible, they try to let their opponent capture a less-important piece. The goal of the game is to trap the opponent’s king. This is checkmate, which ends the game.

World chess competitions are organized in many different countries. The first international chess tournament took place in London in 1851. Today, people can also play against computers. It is especially hard to win against a computer because computers are programmed to analyze the results of every possible move. That means they almost always make the right move.

People of all ages play chess. The World Chess Federation, the organization responsible for organizing chess competitions, even organizes chess programs in schools around the world.

They also train teachers how to teach chess to students. They say that chess teaches patience and thinking skills. It’s also fun.



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