

## Lesson 10: Starting the Game

### The Perfect Start



At the start of a game of chess you have a full set of pieces ready to do battle. It's really important you use them all. Otherwise you'll be taking on your opponent with part of your army stuck at home in the barracks.

The position on the left is an ideal position for White to aim for. All her pieces are taking part in the game. Her pawns are controlling the important central squares, and her king is safe behind a wall of pawns.

In a real game, Black will try to stop White getting this position.

### Three Golden Rules

At the start of a game of chess you should try to:

1. Use your pawns to occupy the four central squares: d4, e4, d5, e5.
2. Use your knights and bishops to attack the central 4 squares.
3. Put your king into safety by castling.

If you follow these rules you'll be ready to do battle!

### Puzzle Corner

Which side has made the best start to these games, White or Black?



## Development



Here both players have followed our Golden Rules well. They haven't managed to achieve the ideal position we showed you earlier. If White had put her bishop on f4, Black would have captured it! But both players have moved pawns into the centre, their pieces towards the centre, and made their king safe by castling. They have **DEVELOPED** their pieces well.

The first part of a game of chess is called the **OPENING**. Top players spend many hours studying the opening, planning the best way to develop their pieces, and to stop opponents developing theirs!

### The centre

Your pieces attack more squares if they are in the centre than if they're on the edge of the board (why not try it?). From the centre your pieces can move quickly across the whole board. That's why it plays such an important role in the opening.

### Grandmaster Test



### Big numbers

White has 20 different first moves. Can you find them all? Black has 20 possible replies. After 40 moves each, there are  $10^{120}$  possible games of chess. That's 1 followed by 120 zeros. It's more than the number of atoms in the known universe!

The queen is your strongest piece but she can't do all the work on her own. If she does, she might get cut off from the rest of her army. Here, White has developed his pieces while Black has spent time capturing a pawn on b2 with his queen. Can you find a plan to first stop the queen escaping, and then to trap her on the next move?

### Fools' Mate



Chess can go wrong very quickly if you don't follow our Golden Rules in the opening. White has made two poor pawn moves to start the game. After just two moves each, it's checkmate!

### Grandmaster Test Lesson 9.

**Answer:** White was allowed to castle. You cannot castle out of check, through check, or into check, but there's nothing to stop you castling if your rook is attacked. Korchnoi castled, and his opponent resigned just one move later.