

HOW TO START A CHESS CLUB

BASICS

Chess clubs can be very rewarding for organizers and participants if they are done well. Chess clubs need the following 7 things:

ORGANISERS

Without good organizers, coaches, parents, or volunteers, chess clubs would not succeed. They need dedicated and patient leaders who provide structure and motivation.

PARTICIPANTS

Almost anyone can learn chess! Even 2 year-olds can learn how to setup the board and move pieces around. Try and invite as many eligible participants as possible. Make sure you advertise your club as best you can. Clearly outline the purposes of the club and all of the information. Don't be afraid to ask for some donations of time and equipment from participants and their parents (if applicable). Also make sure that you clearly outline the many intellectual and social benefits of participating in chess club.

FACILITIES

Make sure that you have proper facilities for chess club. You might have a great school, local community centre, university or Library. You will need a well-lighted area with enough tables and chairs for all participants. Tables should be long square- not round!

SCHEDULE

Schedule activities of the club as far in advance as possible.

Equipment

Make sure you get enough chess equipment for all participants. The best idea is to use standard tournament chess sets and pieces. You don't need chess clocks but it is more fun if you have them!

INSTRUCTION

Chess club should be fun and educational. Club program need to be balanced. Too much play without progress can wear thin. And too much instruction without play can be dull. Combine lessons and then some play. You might also want to mix in some activities like mini-tournaments, chess mini-games, Chess960 and transfer chess.

MOTIVATION

Set goals for yourself and for your students. Maybe your goal might be to attend an [Interschool Chess](#) competition. Or set your own tournament day or chess party day. That way everybody is looking forward to something and working on their chess for a reason. For chess in schools we recommend [chess coaching](#).

HOW TO RUN A CHESS TOURNAMENTS

TOURNAMENT BASICS

Chess tournaments can be great fun. The information presented here is for schools, teachers, parents, and coaches who want to organize a fun and enjoyable tournament where all students learn and have a good time.

WHY TOURNAMENTS?

Chess is a competitive game. There is usually only one winner! Players naturally want to compete to see who is better, but it is very important to emphasize that no matter who wins the tournament or each game, **you can never lose when you are learning!** The only losers are those who are too afraid to participate!

THE BASICS OF A CHESS TOURNAMENT

Don't use elimination tournaments as they can be discouraging and boring for those who lose early. We recommend that you use the **round robin style tournament**. Chess tournaments require that each game be scored. A win is worth 1 point, a loss is worth 0 points, and a draw is worth 1/2 a point. If you are not using clocks in your tournament you need to encourage players to move quickly. If a player feels that another player is stalling, have them raise their hand to draw your attention. If the game is not finished in the specified timeframe of the game then we recommend that you call the game for the player who has a point advantage of 5 or more points (King = not counted, Queen = 9, Rook = 5, Bishop = 3, Knight = 3, Pawn = 1). Or, if there is less than 3 points difference than call the game a draw. It is recommended that "touch-move" and "take" move rule be enforced. A player must move the first piece he/she touches unless it is an illegal move. Also, if you find that players have made illegal moves, try to go back and reconstruct the position. Try and make sure that both players are happy with the result of any dispute.

ROUND ROBIN TOURNAMENTS

You can play a round robin tournament with almost any number of chess players, but it is usually best with a small number of players (For a big crowd we recommend a Swiss Tournament). If you have many players try separating them further into smaller groups. You can have the winners of each round robin group play against each other in an exciting playoff!

ENDING THE TOURNAMENT

Again, make sure that each player feels like they are a winner for participating. You might consider giving "Good Sportsmanship" special awards to students who did not do so well in their games. Encourage all players to practice in their own time and develop their concentration span. At the end of term or year you can give away prizes, certificates and trophies.

PLAY CHESS EXERCISE YOUR MENTAL MUSCLES

Chess in Adelaide - South Australia – Chess School SA www.chessschoolsau.com.au