

# Rules of Chess

## FUNDAMENTAL RULES

### Item 1: Objectives of the game

- 1.1 Chess is the game played between two people (opponents) who move their pieces alternately on a square board called a 'chess board'. The player with the white pieces makes the first move in the game.
- 1.2 The objective of each player is to place the opponent's king 'under attack' in such a way that the opponent has no legal move for his King. The player who achieves this goal is said to have 'checkmated' the opponent's king and to have won the game. Making a move that results in one's own King being in direct line of attack is not allowed. A King is never actually captured – it must be in a situation that it cannot get out of without a subsequent capture, which position results in defeat.
- 1.3 If the position is such that neither player can possibly checkmate, the game is drawn.

### Item 2: The initial position of the pieces on the chessboard

- 2.1 The chessboard is composed of an 8 x 8 grid of 64 equal squares alternately light (the 'white' squares) and dark (the 'black' squares, whether or not the actual color is black). The chessboard is placed between the players in such a way that the nearest right hand corner square (to the right of the player) is white.
- 2.2 At the beginning of the game one player has 16 light-coloured pieces (the 'white' pieces); the other has 16 dark-coloured pieces (the 'black' pieces).

These pieces are as follows:

A white king, usually indicated by the symbol



A white queen, usually indicated by the symbol



Two white rooks (or castles), usually indicated by the symbol



Two white bishops, usually indicated by the symbol



Two white knights, usually indicated by the symbol



Eight white pawns, usually indicated by the symbol



A black king, usually indicated by the symbol



A black queen, usually indicated by the symbol



Two black rooks, usually indicated by the symbol



Two black bishops, usually indicated by the symbol



Two black knights, usually indicated by the symbol



Eight black pawns, usually indicated by the symbol



- 2.3 The initial position of the pieces on the chessboard is as follows:



2.4 The eight vertical columns of squares are called 'files'. The eight horizontal rows of squares are called 'ranks'. There are diagonals too consisting of the same color squares.

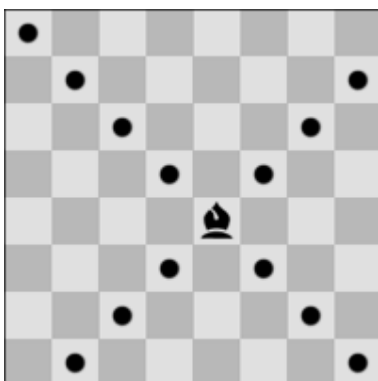
Item 3: The moves of the pieces

3.1 It is illegal to move a piece to a square occupied by a piece of the same colour. If a piece moves to a square occupied by an opponent's piece the opposing piece is captured and removed from the chessboard in that move. A piece is said to attack an opponent's piece if the piece 'could' make a capture on that square.

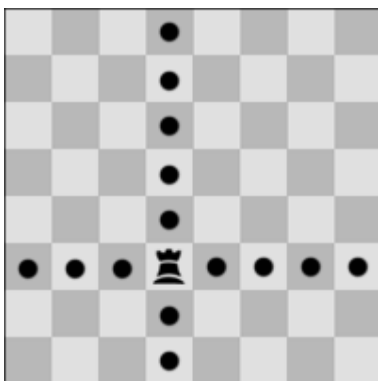
A piece cannot move if it would result in the mover's King being in direct attack.

A piece cannot move over another piece of either color unless the piece being moved is a knight, or if the move results in a capture on the destination square.

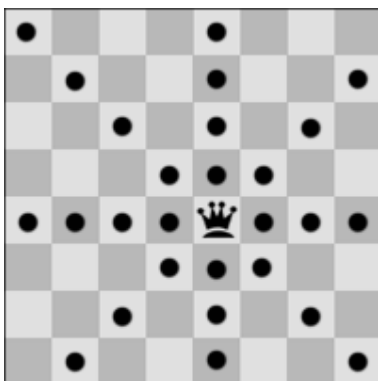
3.2 The bishop is allowed to move to any square along a diagonal on which it stands.



3.3 The rook is allowed to move to any square along the file or the rank on which it stands.

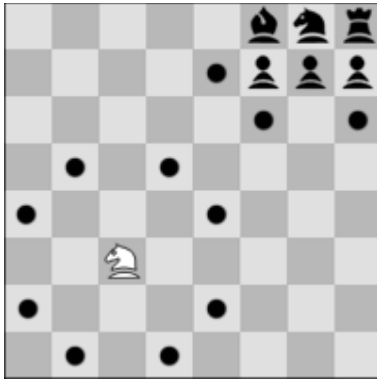


3.4 The queen is allowed to move to any square along the file, the rank or a diagonal on which it stands.

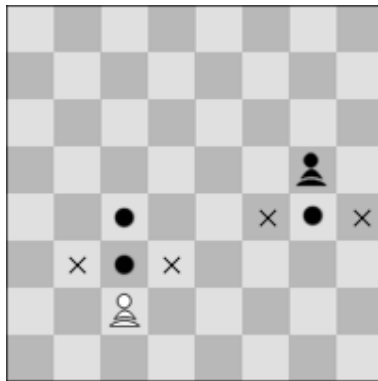


3.5 When making these moves the bishop, rook or queen may not move over any intervening pieces of either color.

3.6 The knight may move to one of the squares nearest to that on which it stands but not on the same rank, file or diagonal. The knight is the only piece that can move over other pieces, i.e. pieces that are in its path.

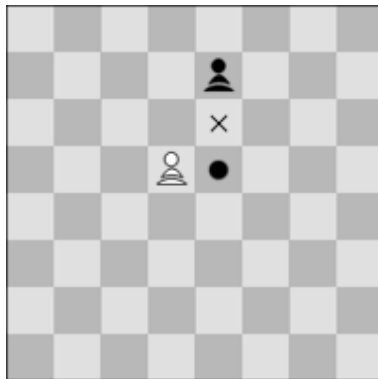


- 3.7
- The pawn is allowed to move forward to the unoccupied square immediately in front of it on the same file, or
  - on its first move the pawn may move as in 3.7.a or alternatively it may advance two squares along the same file provided both squares are unoccupied, or
  - the pawn may move to a square occupied by an opponent's piece, which is diagonally in front of it on an adjacent file, capturing that piece. This is the only way a pawn can capture a piece.



d.

- A pawn attacking a square crossed by an opponent's pawn which has advanced two squares in one move from its original square may capture this opponent's pawn – acting as though the latter had been moved only one square. This capture is only legal on the move following this advance and is called an 'en passant' capture (from the French "in passing").

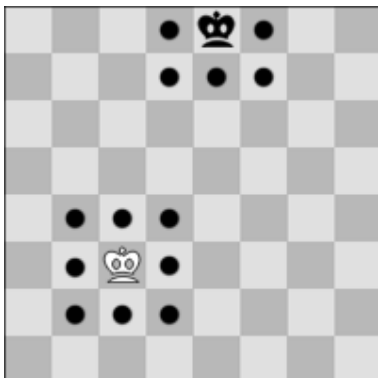


f.

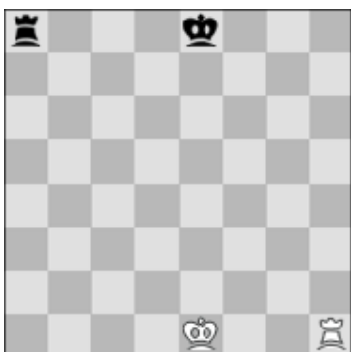
- When a pawn reaches the rank furthest from its starting position (i.e. to the other end of the board) it must be exchanged as part of the same move on the same square for a new queen, rook, bishop or knight of the same colour. The player's choice is not restricted to pieces that have been captured previously. This exchange of a pawn for another piece is called 'promotion' and the effect of the new piece is immediate on that move.

3.8

- a. There are two different ways of moving the king:  
by moving to an adjoining square not attacked by an opponent piece

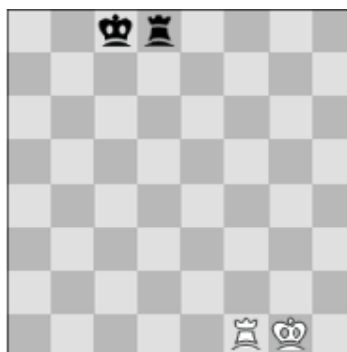


or by 'castling'. This is a move of the king and either rook of the same colour along the player's first rank, counting as a single move of the king and executed: the king is moved from its original square two squares towards the rook's original square, then that rook is transferred to the square the king has just crossed. The King can castle on either side as long as the path is clear – not checked, and where neither piece has been moved previously in the game. Castling can only occur for the two pieces first move in the game.



*Before white kingside castling*

*Before black queenside castling*



*After white kingside castling*

*After black queenside castling*



*Before white queenside castling*

*Before black kingside castling*



*After white queenside castling*

*After black kingside castling*

- b. (1) The right to castle has been lost:
- a. if the king has already moved, or
  - b. with a rook that has already moved.
- (2) Castling is temporarily prevented:
- c. if the square on which the king stands, or the square which it must cross, or the square which it is to occupy, is attacked by one or more of the opponent's pieces, or
  - d. if there is any piece between the king and the rook with which castling is to be effected. The

path must be clear.

- 3.9 The king is said to be 'in check' if it is attacked by one or more of the opponent's pieces, even if such pieces are constrained from moving to that square because they would then leave or place their own king in check. No piece can be moved that will either expose the king of the movers colour to be in check, or leave that king in check (the check must always be dealt with).

#### Item 4: The act of moving the pieces (for professional games)

- 4.1 Each move must be made with only one hand.
- 4.2 Provided that he first expresses his intention (for example by saying „j'adoube“ or “I adjust”), the player having the move may adjust one or more pieces on their squares.
- 4.3 Except as provided in Item 4.2, if the player about to move deliberately touches on the chessboard:
- one or more of his own pieces, he shall move the first piece touched which can be moved
  - one or more of his opponent's pieces, he must capture the first piece touched which is able to be captured
  - one piece of each colour, he must capture the opponent's piece with his piece or, if this is illegal, move or capture the first piece touched which can be moved or captured. If it is unclear, whether the player's own piece or his opponent's was touched first, the player's own piece shall be considered to have been touched before his opponent's.
- 4.4 If a player having the move:
- deliberately touches his king and rook he must castle on that side if it is legal to do so
  - deliberately touches a rook and then his king he is not allowed to castle on that side on that move and the situation shall be governed by Item 4.3.a
  - intending to castle, touches the king or king and rook at the same time, but castling on that side is illegal, the player shall perform another legal move with his king (which may include castling on the other side). If the king has no legal move, the player is then able to make any other legal move
  - promotes a pawn, the choice of the piece is finalised, when the piece has touched the square of promotion.
- 4.5 If none of the pieces touched can be moved or captured, the player may make any legal move.
- 4.6 When, as a legal move or part of a legal move, a piece has been released on a square, it cannot be moved to another square on this move.
- 4.7 A player forfeits his right to a claim against his opponent's violation of Item 4 once he deliberately touches a piece.

#### Item 5: The completion of the game

- 5.1
- The winner is the player that has checkmated his opponent's king by allowing no move to bring relief to the King. This immediately ends the game.
  - The game is also won when the opponent declares a resignation.
- 5.2
- The game is drawn when the player to move has no legal move and his king is not in check. The game is said to end in 'stalemate'. This ends this game.
  - The game is drawn when a position has arisen in which neither player can checkmate the opponent's king with any series of legal moves. The game is said to end in a 'dead position' and is a draw.
  - An offer to 'draw' can be made at any point in a players move. The game is drawn upon agreement of a draw between the two players during the game.
  - The game may be drawn if any identical position appears on the chessboard at least three times.
  - The game may be drawn if each player has made at least the last 50 consecutive moves without the movement of any pawn and without any piece capture.

#### COMPETITION RULES

##### Item 6: The chess clock

- 6.1 The term 'Chess clock' means a clock with two time displays, connected to each other in such a way that only one of them can run at one time.  
Each of the time displays has a 'flag'.  
'Flag fall' means the end of the allowed time for either player.
- 6.2
- When using a chess clock, each player must make a minimum number of moves or all moves in an allotted period of time and/or may be allocated an additional amount of time with each move. Any time period must agreed and specified in advance.

- b. The time saved by a player during one period is added to his time available for the next period, except in the 'time delay' mode.  
In the time delay mode both players receive an allotted 'main thinking time'. Each player also receives a 'fixed extra time' with every move. The countdown of the main time commences after the fixed time has elapsed. Provided the player stops his clock before the expiration of the fixed time, the main thinking time does not change, regardless of the amount of the fixed time used.
- 6.3 Immediately after a flag falls, the requirements of item 6.2 a. must be checked.
- 6.4 At the start of the game the arbiter decides where the chess clock is physically placed within the playing environment.
- 6.5 At the time determined for the start of the game the clock of the player who has the white pieces is started.
- 6.6 a. Any player who arrives at the chessboard after the start of the session shall lose the game. Thus the default time is 0 minutes. The rules of specific competitions may specify otherwise.
- b. If the rules of a competition specify a different default time, the following applies. If neither player is present initially, the player who has the white pieces shall lose all the time that elapses until he arrives, unless the rules of the competition specify or the arbiter decides otherwise.
- 6.7 a. During the game each player, having made his move on the chessboard, shall stop his own clock and start his opponent's clock. His move is not considered to have been completed until he has done so, unless the move that was made ends the game. The time between making the move on the chessboard and stopping his own clock and starting his opponent's clock is regarded as part of the time allotted to the player.
- b. A player should stop his clock with the same hand as that with which he made his move.
- c. The players must handle the chess clock reasonably. It is forbidden to punch it forcibly, to pick it up or to knock it over. Improper clock handling shall be penalised in accordance with Item 13.4.
- d. If a player is unable to use the clock, an assistant, who must be acceptable to the arbiter, may be provided by the player to perform this operation. His clock shall be adjusted by the arbiter in an acceptable way.
- 6.8 A flag is considered to have fallen when the arbiter observes the fact or when either player has made a valid claim to that effect.
- 6.9 If a player does not complete the prescribed number of moves in the allotted time, the game is lost by the player. However, the game is drawn, if the position is such that the opponent cannot checkmate the player's king by any possible series of legal moves.
- 6.10 a. Every indication given by the clocks is considered to be conclusive in the absence of any evident defect. A chess clock with an evident defect shall be replaced. The arbiter shall replace the clock and use his best judgment when determining the times to be shown on the replacement chess clocks.
- b. If during a game it is found that the setting of either or both clocks was incorrect, either player or the arbiter shall stop the clocks immediately. The arbiter shall install the correct setting and adjust the times and move counter. He shall use his best judgement when determining the correct settings.
- 6.11 If both flags have fallen and it is impossible to establish which flag fell first then:
  - a. the game continues if it happens in any period of the game except the last period
  - b. the game is drawn if it happens in the period of a game, in which all remaining moves must be completed.
- 6.12 a. If the game needs to be interrupted, the arbiter shall stop the clocks.
- b. A player may stop the clocks only in order to seek the arbiter's assistance.
- c. The arbiter shall decide when the game is to be restarted in any case.
- d. If a player stops the clocks in order to seek the arbiter's assistance, the arbiter shall determine if the player had any valid reason for doing so. If it is obvious that the player had no valid reason for stopping the clocks, the player shall be penalised according to Item 13.4.
- 6.13 If an irregularity occurs and/or the pieces have to be restored to a previous position, the arbiter shall use his best judgement to determine the times to be shown on the clocks. He shall also, if necessary, adjust the clock.
- 6.14 Screens, monitors, or demonstration boards showing the current position on the chessboard, the moves and the number of moves made, and clocks which also show the number of moves, are allowed in the playing hall. However, the player may not make a claim relying solely on information shown in this manner.

#### Item 7: Irregularities

- 7.1 a. If during a game it is found that the initial position of the pieces was incorrect, the game shall be cancelled and a new game played.
- b. If during a game it is found that the chessboard has been placed contrary to Item 2.1, the game continues but the position reached must be transferred to a correctly placed chessboard.
- 7.2 If a game has begun with colours reversed then it shall continue, unless the arbiter rules otherwise.

- 7.3 If a player displaces one or more pieces, he shall re-establish the correct position on his own time. If necessary, either the player or his opponent shall stop the clocks and ask for the arbiter's assistance. The arbiter may penalise the player who displaced the pieces.
- 7.4 a. If during a game it is found that an illegal move, including failing to meet the requirements of the promotion of a pawn or capturing the opponent's king, has been completed, the position immediately before the irregularity shall be reinstated. If the position immediately before the irregularity cannot be determined the game shall continue from the last identifiable position prior to the irregularity.
- b. After the action taken under Item 7.4.a, for the first two illegal moves by a player the arbiter shall give two minutes extra time to the opposing player in each instance; for a third illegal move by the same player, the arbiter shall declare the game lost by this player. However, the game is drawn if the position is such that the opponent cannot checkmate the king by any possible series of moves.
- 7.5 If during a game it is found that pieces have been displaced from their squares, the position before the irregularity shall be re-instated. If the position immediately before the irregularity cannot be determined, the game shall continue from the last identifiable position prior to the irregularity. The clocks shall be adjusted according to Item 6.13. The game shall then continue.

#### Item 8: The recording of the moves

- 8.1 In the course of play each player is required to record his own moves and those of his opponent in the correct manner, move after move, as clearly and legibly as possible, in the algebraic notation (See Appendix C), on the score sheet prescribed for the competition.
- It is forbidden to write the moves in advance.
- A player may reply to his opponent's move before recording it, if he so wishes. He must record his previous move before making another.
- Both players must record the offer of a draw on the score sheet. (See Appendix C.13)
- If a player is unable to keep score, an assistant, who must be acceptable to the arbiter, may be provided by the player to write the moves. His clock shall be adjusted by the arbiter in a fair way.
- 8.2 The score sheet should be visible to the arbiter throughout the game.
- 8.3 The score sheets are the property of the organisers of the event.
- 8.4 If a player has less than five minutes left on his clock at some stage in a period and does not have additional time of 30 seconds or more added with each move, then for the remainder of the period he is not obliged to record his moves. Immediately after one flag has fallen the player must update his score sheet completely before moving a piece on the chessboard.
- 8.5 a. If neither player is required to keep score under Item 8.4, the arbiter or an assistant should try to be present and keep score. In this case, immediately after one flag has fallen, the arbiter shall stop the clocks. Then both players shall update their score sheets, using the arbiter's or the opponent's score sheet.
- b. If only one player is not required to keep score under Item 8.4, he must, as soon as either flag has fallen, update his score sheet completely before moving a piece on the chessboard. Provided it is the player's move, he may use his opponent's score sheet, but must return it before making a move.
- c. If no complete score sheet is available, the players must reconstruct the game on a second chessboard under the control of the arbiter or an assistant. He shall first record the actual game position, clock times and the number of moves made, if this information is available, before reconstruction takes place.
- 8.6 If the score sheets cannot be brought up to date showing that a player has overstepped the allotted time, the next move made shall be considered as the first of the following time period, unless there is evidence that more moves have been made.
- 8.7 At the conclusion of the game both players shall sign both score sheets, indicating the result of the game. Even if incorrect, this result shall stand, unless the arbiter decides otherwise.

#### Item 9: The drawn game

- 9.1 a. The rules of a competition may specify that players cannot agree to a draw, whether in less than a specified number of moves or at all, without the consent of the arbiter.
- b. If the rules of a competition allow a draw agreement the following apply:
1. A player wishing to offer a draw shall do so after having made a move on the chessboard and before stopping his clock and starting the opponent's clock. An offer at any other time during play is still valid but Item 12.6 must be considered. No conditions can be attached to the offer. In both cases the offer cannot be withdrawn and remains valid until the opponent accepts it, rejects it orally, rejects it by touching a piece with the intention of moving or capturing it, or the game is concluded in some other way.
  2. The offer of a draw shall be noted by each player on his score sheet with a symbol. (See Appendix C.13)

3. A claim of a draw under Item 9.2, 9.3 or 10.2 shall be considered to be an offer of a draw.

9.2 The game is drawn upon a correct claim by the player having the move, when the same position, for at least the third time (not necessarily by a repetition of moves):

- a. is about to appear, if he first writes his move on his score sheet and declares to the arbiter his intention to make this move, or
- b. has just appeared, and the player claiming the draw has the move.

Positions as in (a) and (b) are to be considered the same, if the same player has the move, pieces of the same kind and colour occupy the same squares, and the possible moves of all the pieces of both players are the same.

Positions are not the same if a pawn that could have been captured en passant can no longer be captured in this manner. When a king or a rook is forced to move, it will lose its castling rights, if any, only after it is moved.

9.3 The game is drawn, upon a correct claim by the player having the move, if:

- a. he writes his move on his score sheet and declares to the arbiter his intention to make this move, which shall result in the last 50 moves having been made by each player without the movement of any pawn and without any capture, or
- b. the last 50 consecutive moves have been made by each player without the movement of any pawn and without any capture.

9.4 If the player touches a piece as in Item 4.3 without having claimed the draw he loses the right to claim, as in Item 9.2 or 9.3, on that move.

9.5 If a player claims a draw as in Item 9.2 or 9.3 he may stop both clocks. (See Item 6.12.b) He is not allowed to withdraw his claim.

- a. If the claim is found to be correct, the game is immediately drawn and concluded.
- b. If the claim is found to be incorrect, the arbiter shall add three minutes to the opponent's remaining thinking time. Then the game shall continue. If the claim was based on an intended move, this move must be made as according to Item 4.

9.6 The game is drawn when a position is reached from which a checkmate cannot occur by any possible series of legal moves. This ends the game, provided that the move producing this position was legal.

#### Item 10: Quickplay Finish

10.1 A 'quickplay finish' is the phase of a game when all the (remaining) moves must be made in a limited time.

10.2 If the player, having the move, has less than two minutes left on his clock, he may claim a draw before his flag falls. He shall summon the arbiter and may stop the clocks. (See Item 6.12.b)

- a. If the arbiter agrees the opponent is making no effort to win the game by normal means, or that it is not possible to win by normal means, then he shall declare the game drawn. Otherwise he shall postpone his decision or reject the claim.
- b. If the arbiter postpones his decision, the opponent may be awarded two extra minutes and the game shall continue, if possible in the presence of an arbiter. The arbiter shall declare the final result later in the game or as soon as possible after a flag has fallen. He shall declare the game drawn if he agrees that the final position cannot be won by normal means, or that the opponent was not making reasonable attempts to win.
- c. If the arbiter has rejected the claim, the opponent shall be awarded two extra minutes time.
- d. The decision of the arbiter shall be final relating to (a), (b) and (c).

#### Item 11: Points

11.1 Unless announced otherwise in advance, a player who wins his game, or wins by forfeit, scores one point (1), a player who loses his game, or forfeits scores no points (0) and a player who draws his game scores a half point (½).

#### Item 12: The conduct of the players

12.1 The players shall take no action that will bring the game of chess into disrepute.

12.2 Players are not allowed to leave the 'playing venue' without permission from the arbiter. The playing venue is defined as the playing area, rest rooms, refreshment area, area set aside for smoking and other places as designated by the arbiter.

The player having the move is not allowed to leave the playing area without permission of the arbiter.

- 12.3 a. During play the players are forbidden to make use of any notes, sources of information or advice, or analyse on another chessboard
- b. Without the permission of the arbiter a player is forbidden to have a cell phone or other electronic

means of communication in the playing venue, unless they are completely switched off. If any such device produces a sound, the player shall lose the game. The opponent wins. However, if the opponent cannot win the game by any series of legal moves, his score shall be a draw.

- c. Smoking is permitted only in the section of the venue designated by the arbiter
- 12.4 The score sheet shall be used only for recording the moves, the times of the clocks, the offers of a draw, and matters relating to a claim and other relevant data.
  - 12.5 Players who have finished their games are considered to be spectators.
  - 12.6 It is forbidden to distract or annoy the opponent in any manner whatsoever. This includes unreasonable claims, unreasonable offers of a draw or the introduction of a source of noise into the playing area.
  - 12.7 Infraction of any part of Items 12.1 to 12.6 shall lead to penalties in accordance with Item 13.4.
  - 12.8 Persistent refusal by a player to comply with the Laws of Chess shall be penalised by loss of the game. The arbiter shall decide the score of the winning opponent.
  - 12.9 If both players are found guilty according to Item 12.8, the game shall be declared lost by both players.
  - 12.10 In the case of Item 10.2.d or Appendix D a player may not appeal against the decision of the arbiter. Otherwise a player may appeal against any decision of the arbiter. Various tournaments may decide otherwise and agreed in advance.

#### Item 13: The role of the Arbiter (See Preface)

- 13.1 The arbiter shall see that the Laws of Chess are strictly observed.
- 13.2 The arbiter shall act in the best interest of the competition and competition rules. He should ensure that a good playing environment is maintained and that the players are not disturbed. He shall supervise the progress of the competition.
- 13.3 The arbiter shall observe the games, especially when the players are short of time, enforce decisions he has made and impose penalties on players where appropriate.
- 13.4 The arbiter may apply one or more of the following penalties:
  - a. warning
  - b. increasing the remaining time of the opponent
  - c. reducing the remaining time of the offending player as a penalty
  - d. declaring the game to be lost
  - e. reducing the points scored in the game by the offending party
  - f. increasing the points by the opponent to the maximum available for that game
  - g. expulsion from the event.
- 13.5 The arbiter may award either or both players additional time in the event of external disturbance of the game.
- 13.6 The arbiter must not intervene in a game except in cases described by the Laws of Chess. He shall not indicate the number of moves made, except in applying Item 8.5, when at least one flag has fallen. The arbiter shall refrain from informing a player that his opponent has completed a move or that the player has not pressed his clock.
- 13.7
  - a. Spectators and players in other games are not to speak about or otherwise interfere in a game. If necessary, the arbiter may expel offenders from the playing venue. If someone observes an irregularity, he may inform the arbiter.
  - b. Unless authorised by the arbiter, it is forbidden for anybody to use any kind of communication device in the playing venue and any contiguous area designated by the arbiter.

#### Item 14: FIDE

- 14.1 Member federations may ask FIDE to give an official decision about problems relating to the Laws of Chess.