

3. Bishops

Objectives:

1. State and apply rules of movement for bishops
2. Use movement rules to count moves and captures
3. Solve problems using bishops

The main objective of this lesson is to teach the rules of movement for the bishops.

The students will play the bishop game in order to practice the rules of movement for this piece. Just like the pawn game, the winner is the first to get a pawn to the last rank, or to capture all the opponent's pawns, or to achieve a position in which it is the opponent's move, but the opponent has no legal move and the player does.

Players do not win by capturing the bishops or by getting bishops to the eighth rank. Only by capturing the opponent's pawns or by getting a pawn to the eighth rank does a player win.

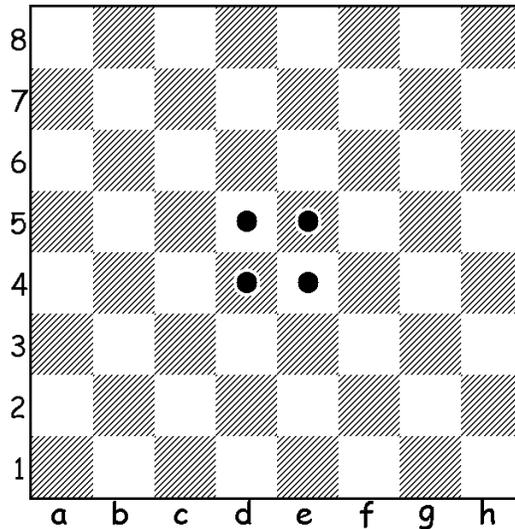
Outline of lesson:

1. Review of the pawn - check homework
2. The center
3. Moving the bishop
4. Competition with pawns and bishops
5. Some ideas with bishops and pawns

**PART 1:
REVIEW OF
PAWNS**

Very quickly review the pawn rules. Solicit and demonstrate solutions for pawn problems from the assignment. Be sure to review the *en passant capture* thoroughly.

**PART 2:
REVIEW OF
THE CENTER**



Ask which squares are the center of the board.

The center of the board are the four squares adjacent to the midpoint of the board. The names of the four squares are d4, d5, e4 and e5.

**PART 3:
MOVING THE
BISHOP**

Ask how the bishop moves. The bishop moves diagonally, moving as far as it wants along a diagonal line until it meets a man or the edge of the board. That is, it may move as far as it wants until it bumps into something.

**Two colors
Light-squared
and dark-squared**

Note that each player has two bishops, one that starts of the c-file and one that begins on the f-file. Each of the bishops is on a different color square, so white has a light-squared and a dark-squared bishop, and so does black.

**Bishops are more
powerful in the
center**

Ask where the bishops are most powerful. The pieces generally are most powerful where they control the most squares. How many squares does the bishop control from its starting position (or anywhere else along an edge of the board?) If it is not blocked, it controls seven squares.

If the bishop is in the center of the board, how many squares does it control? If it is not blocked, it controls 13 squares, almost twice as many as it controls from an edge.

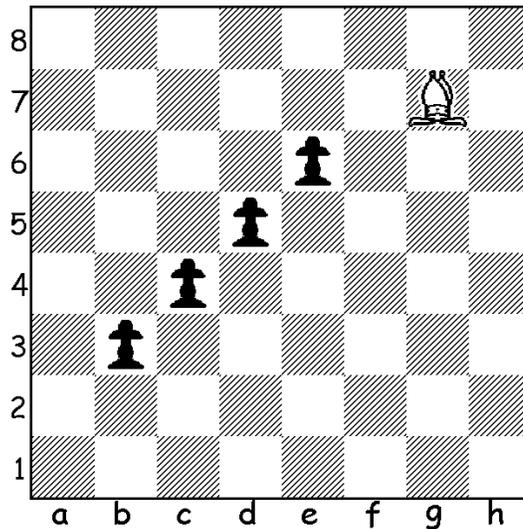
Therefore, bishops are generally more powerful as they approach the center of the board.

Bishop captures

In chess, any man may capture any other man (except the king is never captured, as we will see later.) A man is captured by having another piece land on the square it occupies. Once a piece captures an opponent's man, it stays on the square the opponent's piece occupied and the turn is over.

Bishops control entire diagonals

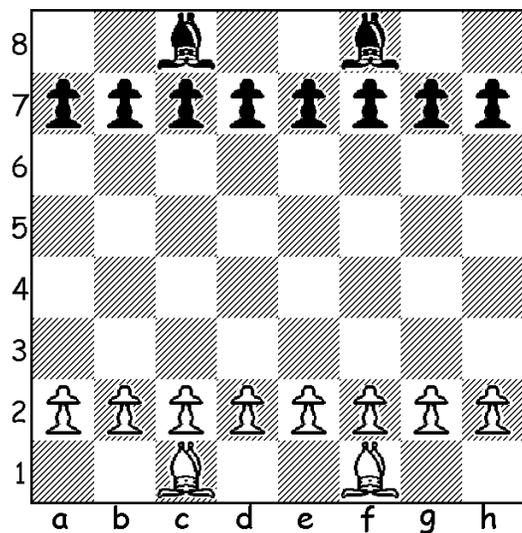
A bishop may go as far as it wants in a straight diagonal line. It may not change direction in the middle of a turn. It may control as many as seven squares along one diagonal.



Set up the position diagrammed on the left. Note how a bishop controls the entire diagonal from a to h8. If white and black take turns moving, so long as the bishop remains on that diagonal it will capture all of black's pawns. Each pawn that moves is captured on the turn after it moves.

**PART 4:
Competition with
bishops and
pawns**

The Pawn Game with Bishops has the same goal as The Pawn Game. A player wins by capturing all of the other player's pawns (bishops don't matter,) by getting a pawn to the eighth rank or by establishing a position in which the opponent has no legal moves but the player still has a legal move.



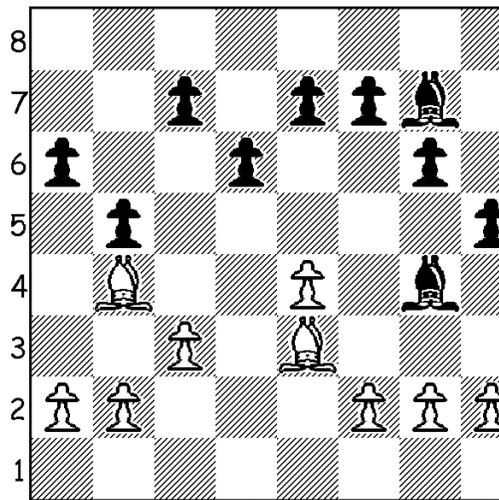
The starting position is shown on the right.

Rules of Etiquette

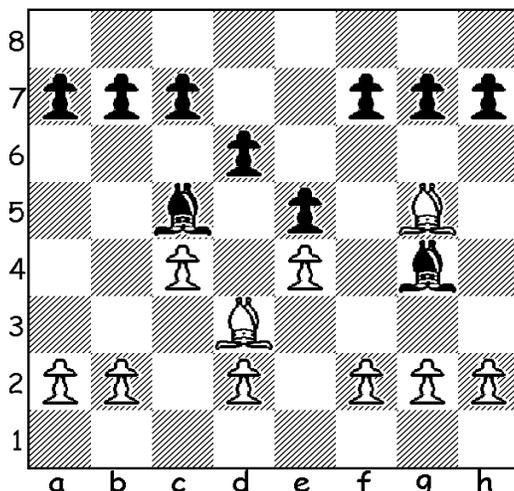
Make sure that while playing, all of the Rules of Etiquette (Appendix 1) are followed.

Bishops remain one color

Bishops always remain on their starting color. Because they move along the diagonals, they remain on their color. If one player has two bishops on the same color square, both players have made a mistake. One player has moved improperly. The other player allowed the first to make that mistake. It is the responsibility of both players to make sure that all of the rules are followed.



Bishops may not jump



In the position on the left, white has made an illegal move by moving the dark-squared bishop. Because neither the b-pawn nor the d-pawn has moved, there is no legal way for the bishop now on g5 to have gotten to that square.

Restart games that reach illegal positions

To encourage players to pay attention and follow all of the rules, the teacher may decide to have players who reach an impossible position start again from the beginning.

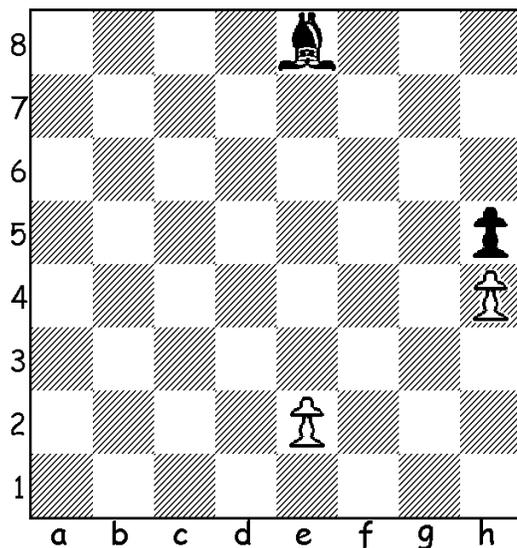
Forfeit children who act unethically

If a player uses that policy to avoid losing and makes illegal moves intentionally, that player may be forfeited for the game.

**PART 5:
STRATEGY
Bishops are more
powerful than
pawns**

Problem

Chess pieces do not all have the same value. While pawns are necessary to win in The Pawn Game, and because of that they are important, they control at most two squares. Bishops control more squares so they can attack from long range. Bishops also may move backwards.



In the position on the left, it is easy for white to win the game. The h-pawns are blocked and can never move, but White's bishop can maneuver itself to win Black's pawn.

Have a student win this game as Black. White moves first. The student playing the Black pieces needs to control the e6 square. When the White pawn reaches e6, as it must eventually, the bishop captures it. Because the h pawn cannot move, the game ends with Black the victor.

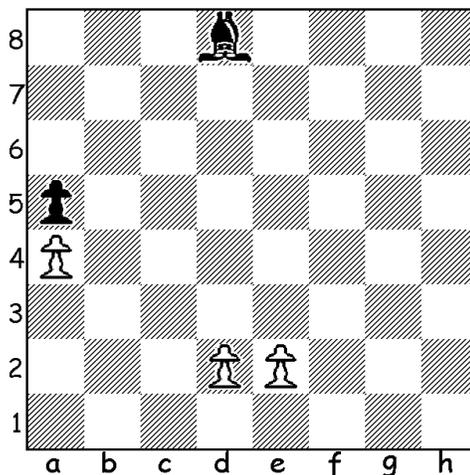
(Black also can win by blocking White's e pawn.)

Harder problem

It is more difficult to win with a bishop against two connected pawns.

Connected pawns

Pawns are said to be "connected" when they are on adjacent files. Connected pawns may protect each other. The pawns will try to advance together, advancing onto the color square on which the bishop is situated.



Be aggressive to win

Students will learn important strategy by learning to be aggressive to win. If White, in the above position, moves its pawns forward, first by moving the pawn to a dark square, then by moving the other pawn next to it and following that pattern, Black will be able to win only by attacking the square the lead

pawn is on and waiting for it to move to a light square. Once it moves to a light square, the bishop must then control the square in front of it along the diagonal that prevents the other pawn from moving next to it.

This requires practice for the students to master the concept. The important principles to take away from this exercise are:

- 1) A bishop is more powerful than a pawn and more powerful than two pawns unless the two connected pawns are on the fifth rank or beyond, and
- 2) A player needs to make threats and maintain pressure on the other side to win.

Tactics

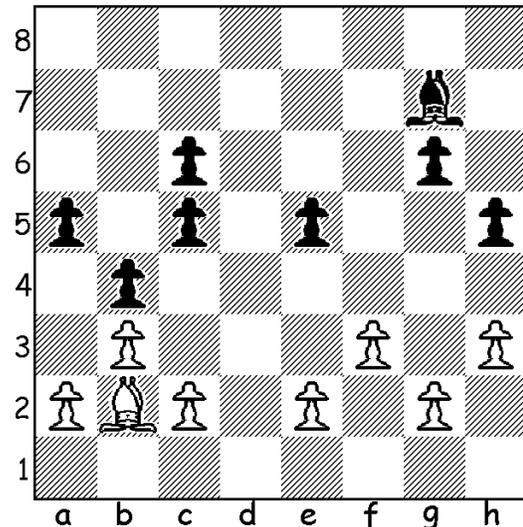
Tactics are methods to capture extra men.

A Pin

A pin is a useful tactic in chess. A pin holds something in place.

A pin is used to prevent a man from moving on the chessboard.

In the position shown to the right, which pawn is pinned? Black's pawn on e5 is pinned by White's bishop to Black's bishop. If the pawn moves, white will capture Black's bishop. Black's e-pawn is allowed to move, but it would be poor strategy to have it move.



Putting pressure on a pinned piece or pawn

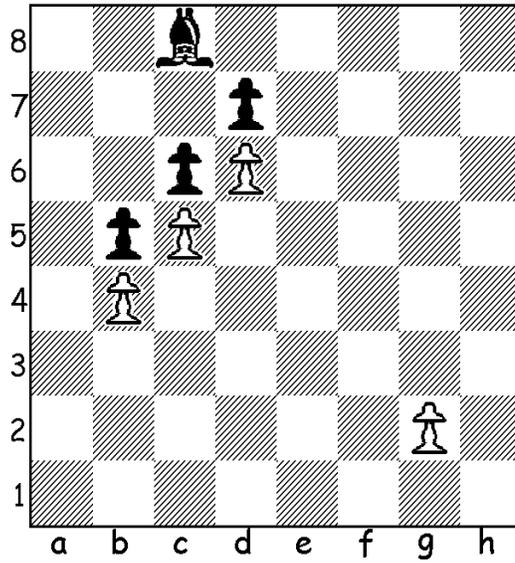
It would be good strategy for White to attack the pawn with the f pawn. After f3-f4, if Black captures the pawn e5 x f4 then White obtains a big advantage by capturing the bishop on g7. If Black does not capture the pawn, then White has two men attacking it with Black having only one defender.

Develop the bishops early

Nearly always, it is best to move the bishops towards the center early in the game. Moving bishops off of their starting squares is known as developing them and good players develop their pieces early in the game, putting more pressure on their opponents.

Don't block your own men

The more options you have, the better your position, in general. In the extreme example below, which side is winning the game? Black has a



bishop for a pawn advantage, but because the bishop is trapped behind its own pawns, White will win the game by making the only moves it has, advancing the g pawn.