

# Key chess ideas - 1

## Play SLOWLY

Do NOT try to play a thousand moves in a minute – take a bit of care and see if you can win quickly with only a few moves – a short game with only 4 - 20 moves is far more *elegant* than a game with hundreds of moves. Try to spot what your opponent is doing!

**Look at all the CHECKS** – they may be checkmate!

Try to look at every check - see if you can check your opponent's king either this move or next – maybe you can PREPARE to check - just move a piece this move and then check the next move; also look to see if your opponent is going to check you. If you can see a check, try to imagine what your opponent is going to do about it – can the piece checking be taken or blocked or can the king move away – escape?

If you can, do a 'double check' – try to check your opponent's king with 2 pieces at the one time – it is the most powerful weapon you have as it forces the king to move, since you cannot capture or block two checks at the one time.

**Look at all the CAPTURES** – are there any pieces unguarded?

Remember the value of the pieces – they have been worked out over hundreds of years

 = 100000+    = 9    = 5    = 3    = 3    = 1

Generally, the more points you have, the better your chance of winning. If you can capture something, will you gain or lose points? If your opponent captures one of your pieces, will you lose points? - if so, can you take the attacking piece or move out of danger?

## Be a GOOD winner and loser

Everyone loses games of chess – even world champions. If you do lose, don't be rude or upset and if you are playing a serious game, shake hands with your opponent; just think of it as a lesson – your opponent has helped go over one of your games! But do try to work out what went wrong – did you fall for an opening trap or miss a tactic like a FORK or a SKEWER or overlooked a BACK-RANK checkmate. If you win, don't gloat or boast, generally poor behaviour comes back to haunt you! If you are nice about your wins and losses, you will find you can concentrate much more on looking for beautiful chess moves and not have to worry about any personal conflicts or poor sportsmanship.

## Try to play a MEMORABLE game

If you play something clever, try to write down the game or position and show it to everyone – share the fun. Go through the game with someone stronger than you and try to spot where you and/or your opponent went wrong. Look up the opening in a chess book and see which famous player also used the same moves. **Explore and enjoy!**