

Short
algebraic

Notation



Chess Club

Mini-
Lesson

Level: Novice

Short algebraic notation is the most common form used in chess books today.

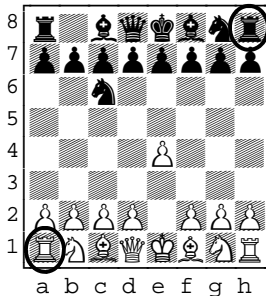
Notation uses the these symbols:

K - King
Q - Queen
R - Rook
B - Bishop
N - Knight
(blank) - Pawn

The **board squares** are identified by their rank (column) and file (row) names.

For instance, the lower left square is **a1**.

The upper right square is **h8**.



In **Short Algebraic Notation**, the format for recording moves is: **(piece symbol) (target square)**

For pawn moves, the symbol is left off. Instead of "Pg3", you would write just "g3".

Using the example on the left, the pawn and knight moves would be:

1. e4 Nc6

- ◆ **Capture** indicated with an "x".
Example: Nxd4
- ◆ **Promotions** use an "=".
Example: f7=Q
- ◆ **Castling, king-side:** 0-0
- ◆ **Castling, queen-side:** 0-0-0

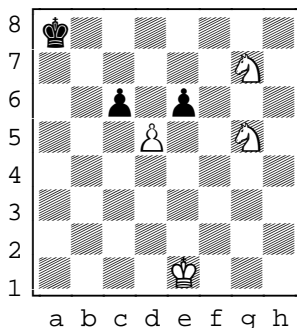
Annotations are added to provide additional insight into the move.

+ - Check
++ - Checkmate

! - Good move
!! - Excellent move
? - Bad move
?? - Very bad move
!? - Interesting move
?! - Questionable move

Sometimes more information is needed for **ambiguous references**. Study the example below.

If the knight took the pawn, writing "Nxe4" would not be adequate to indicate which white knight is used. How could we tell the difference? We include the *rank* and write: **N7xe4**



We have a similar situation with the black pawns taking the white. We need to include the file of the attacking pawn and write: **cxd5**.

Notation Exercise!

Recreate on your chess board this game from the 1600's involving a queen sacrifice.

1. e4 b6
2. d4 Bb7
3. Bd3 f5
4. xf5 Bxg2
5. Qh5+ g6
6. xg6 Nf6
7. h7+ Nxh5
8. Bg6++