

**INTERNATIONAL CHESS INSTITUTE
SCHOOL OF CHESS**

**COURSE SYLLABUS
SPRING, 2010**

I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE

ICI101: BEGINNER COURSE

II. PROFESSOR

TBA

Office: International Chess Institute

Office Hours: Saturday: 9:00 to 7:00

Sunday: 8:00 to 5:00

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III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts of chess strategy, and tactics. It includes lectures and discussions of the three phases of chess: opening, middlegame, and endgame. Additionally, topics of chess history and practical decision-making will be addressed. Each class will emphasize understanding rather than rote memorization of chess concepts.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course each student will feel confident in their mastery of the basic principles of chess and will reach proficient level to compete in tournaments. In addition, it is the goal of the course to inspire students to think proactively about decision made on and off the chessboard. Enjoying chess as a lifelong game.

V. REQUIRED MATERIALS

TEXT: Leung, Kent: Student edition (2010)

Principles of Chess: Easy Guide to Learning chess

Smartpawn LLC., 2010

VI. PEDAGOGY

The course material will be taught through in-class lectures and discussions. The lectures should be supplemented with the assigned textbook chapters and homework assignments.

Students will also play each through practice games to reinforce chess lessons during the lecture portion of the class.

Office hours

This is a free service where students have the opportunity to ask additional questions after the end of each class.

VII. COURSE ACTIVITIES TO MEET OBJECTIVES

Through the in-class lecture, discussions and homework assignments the student should receive adequate exposure to the field of chess. Since this class relies heavily on in-class activities, attendance and participation in all classes is critical.

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 covers the basic basics

- 1.1 How to set up board and pieces
- 1.2 How pieces move, including capture, promotion and en passant
- 1.3 Castling
- 1.4 Check
- 1.5 Ending a game: Winning/losing, resignation. Drawing: Stalemate, by agreement, 3-fold repetition, perpetual check, 50-move rule, insufficient mating material
- 1.6 Touch-move rule

Week 2

- 2.1 Value of pieces
- 2.2 Tactical ideas: forks, pins, skewers, discovered and double check
- 2.3 Finishing off:

King & Queen v King.

- i Put Queen a knight move from enemy king;
- ii Force enemy king to edge;
- iii Avoid stalemate trap when both king and queen are a knight move away from the enemy king;
- iv Move your own king in for kill.

King & Rook v king.

- i Put the enemy king in the box
- ii Make the box smaller
- iii bring your own king up
- iv remember the 'do nothing' move to force mate

2.4

- 1 Tips for practical play. Before you make a move ask yourself:
 - a Did my opponent's last move threaten anything? eg direct attack, fork
 - b If I go there can he take me? If yes is it gain, exchange or loss

c If I go there do I leave anything unprotected that can be taken? If yes, will I lose material points.

d If I am attacked I can try: take, move, block, defend

e If I am in check I can try: take, move, block.

2 Look for unprotected pieces - your own as well as your opponents.

3 Centralize your pieces - where is the centre?

4 Do not bring out the queen too early - you may lose her

5 Try to use all your pieces.

Week 3

Week 3 focuses on how to write down your moves.

3.1 Simple terms: Rank, file, diagonal

3.2 Standard algebraic notation: 1 e4 Nf6; 2 d4 Nxe4; Rad5 Nce4 N5f3 capture sign x; check +; castling 0-0 or 0-0-0; en passant capture (exf6); pawn promotion (e8Q)

3.3 Piece values - practice assessing positions with captures, recaptures and multiple exchanges.

3.4 First principles of openings:

i one or two pawns in opening, not more.

ii Knights before bishops

iii Do not move same piece twice in opening (unless it wins material or prevents loss of a piece).

iv castle as soon as possible, preferably on king side.

v play to get control of centre.

3.5 First principles of endings

i Use your king - in the endgame it is an attacking piece

ii When ahead exchange pieces, but not pawns

iii When behind exchange pawns, but not pieces

iv Put your rook behind, not in front of, passed pawns (your own or your opponent's).

v Passed pawns should usually be advanced as quickly as possible.

3.6 Simple technique - King & pawn v King

i How to avoid stalemate.

ii Advance king before pawn.

iii When king controls queening square then advance pawn

iv Play simple king and pawn endings for practice

3.7 Practice simple tactics

Forks, pins, skewers, discovered check, pawn promotion.

Tips for practical play from level two. En passant from level one.

Week 4

4.1 simple terms: Major pieces, Minor pieces the exchange.

4.2 More principles in openings:

Scholar's mate - watch for direct attacks against KB2 square Fool's mate - avoid king-side pawn moves that expose king.

4.3 General principles. Never assume your opponent's last move was a mistake. It may not be safe to capture. Watch everything. The best move is not always the obvious one. When you have seen a good move then look for a better one.

4.4 Endings

King and two rooks v King

King and two bishops v King

4.5 World champions since 1970

Week 5

5.1 Endings

i King & pawn v King. Practise and study endings with pieces in various positions and multiple pawn endings. You should be able to assess any position and know how to play so as to maintain the 'opposition'.

King and pawn endings with pawns on both sides of board. Triangulate your king so as not to give away the opposition.

When you are a bishop and pawn up avoid ending with a rook's pawn and bishop on the wrong color square.

ii Queen & king v Rook & king. Force opponent's king and rook to side of board, avoiding stalemate traps.

iii King & Queen v King & pawn on seventh rank. Force defending king in front of pawn so you can move up your own king. repeat. Ending is drawn if pawn is on bishop's or rook's file (unless your king is close enough to enemy king).

5.2 Openings: Simple terms - fianchetto, greek gift. Names of basic king's pawn openings.

5.3 Watch your back rank. Although a castle king is usually safer it is still vulnerable to attack. Watch your back rank and ensure your king is adequately defended. Look for weak points on your opponent's back rank

Advance portion of the chess course.

Week 6

6.1 Attacks on the e1-h4 (e8-h5) Diagonal.

6.2 The main openings after 1. e2-e4 e7-e5.

6.3 Queen Forks.

6.4 Back Rank Mates.

6.5 Discovered Checks and Attacks.

6.6 The King and Rook Checkmate.

- 6.7 Opening principles and theory
- i The Italian Game (Giuoco Piano).
 - ii The Two Knights' Defense.
 - iii Sacrifices on f7/f2.
 - iv Decoy/Destroy combinations.
 - v Basic King and Pawn endings.

Week 7

- 7.1 The Ruy Lopez.
- 7.2 The Petroff Defense.
- 7.3 Attacking the castled King.
- 7.4 Pawn structures and formations.
- 7.5 Checkmate combinations.
- 7.6 More about King and Pawn endings.

Week 8

- 8.1 Gambits.
- 8.2 The Sicilian and French Defenses.
- 8.3 Combinations to win material.
- 8.4 Thinking ahead.
- 8.5 Strategy - making the most of your pieces.
- 8.6 Queen endings.
- 8.7 Rook endings.

Week 9

- 9.1 The Queen's Gambit.
- 9.2 Brief introduction to other openings.
- 9.3 Minor Piece endings.
- 9.4 Chess History - learn about the World Champions and guess their moves.
- 9.5 Endgame Studies.

Week 10

- 10.1 Review of all chess lessons
- 10.2 Chess tournament
- 10.3 Concluding ceremony

This syllabus is approved by the International Chess Institute (ICI) to meet all criteria of standard techniques and practices.

Standard practices must be within the parameter of the following:

1. A presentation by the chess coach on a chess theme, which includes:
 - Lessons in strategic play and positional understanding
 - Tactics – tricks and traps (pins, forks, skewers, discovered check, decoys, overloading)
 - How to become a better chess player – considering the consequences of your moves, calculation, psychological preparation, confidence building
 - Chess stories and history
2. Practical exercises for the students, which include:
 - Puzzle sheets
 - Quiz/ question & answer session
 - Students are given exercises to do on their chess boards, such as checkmating with different combinations of pieces, memory exercises and other fun activities based on the theme covered in that day's lesson
3. Playing games against other students in a tournament format. Trophies are awarded at the end of each term

The lesson material is presented from a structured chess syllabus, and is tailored to the standard of the class and the desired outcomes of the session.