

Knight Endgames

Chess

How knights behave in endings, and why they resemble pawn endings.

Endgames with knights and pawns behave much like pure pawn endgames, because a knight cannot gain a tempo and struggles against pawns on both wings.

TEMPO LOSS
impossible

WEAK AGAINST
split pawns

GOOD AT
blockading

- A knight cannot lose a single tempo — its move always changes square colour.
- It is a poor blockader of a far-advanced pawn on the rim.
- It is an excellent blockader of a central passed pawn.
- Knights are weakest against pawns on opposite wings.
- A knight on the rim is at its worst in the endgame.
- A lone knight cannot force mate.

LOOK FOR IT

A knight cannot stop a rook pawn on the seventh from a distance — it needs several moves to get in range.

'Knight endings are pawn endings' — the same opposition and tempo logic applies, because the knight cannot waste a move.