

Pawn Endgames

Chess

Opposition, the square rule, and the two ideas that decide king-and-pawn races.

The square rule: if the defending king can enter the square of the passed pawn, it stops the pawn.

Draw a square with the pawn's path as one side. King inside → caught. Outside → it queens.

Pawn on e5, black king on h6 Inside the square — caught

The square is e5–e8–h8–h5.

Pawn on e5, black king on h4 Outside — the pawn queens

Count it, do not eyeball it.

A pawn still on its start square Include the double-step

Its square is measured from the third rank.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ Pushing the pawn first in a king-and-pawn ending

✓ Bring the king in front of it first

The king must lead. A pawn pushed ahead of its king is stopped by the opposition and never promotes.

Opposition: kings facing on the same file with one square between. Whoever must move gives ground.