

Sacrifices

Chess

The two kinds of sacrifice, and how confident you need to be.

Sham sacrifice

- Material comes back by force
- Calculable to the end
- No judgement required
- Most puzzle solutions are these

Real sacrifice

- Material may never return
- Compensation is positional
- Requires judgement, not just calculation
- Attack, initiative, structure or king safety

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Only play a real sacrifice when you can name the compensation: open lines, exposed king, a permanent bind, or several tempi.

If you cannot say what you are getting for the material, it is not a sacrifice — it is a blunder with an explanation attached.