

Finding Tactics

Chess

A scanning routine for spotting tactics in your own games.

Run this whenever the position feels sharp.

1

List every loose piece

Theirs and yours. Undefended pieces are the raw material.

2

Note the king's escape squares

Few squares means mating patterns are available.

3

Find all checks

Every single one, including the ones that look bad.

4

Find all captures

Including sacrifices onto defended squares.

5

Look for alignments

Two pieces on a line, or a knight's move apart.

THE ALIGNMENTS

Same rank, file or diagonal → pin, skewer, discovery

A knight's move apart → fork

Both loose → double attack

Tactics require a precondition: a loose piece, an exposed king, or an overloaded defender. No precondition, no tactic.