

Tactical Motifs

Chess

The seven patterns behind almost every combination.

Almost every tactic in a club game is one of these, or two of them combined.

Motif	What it is
Fork	One piece attacks two at once
Pin	A piece cannot move without exposing a better one
Skewer	A pin reversed — the valuable piece is in front
Discovered attack	Moving one piece unveils another's attack
Double check	Both pieces give check; only the king can move
Deflection	Force a defender away from its job
Zwischenzug	An in-between move before the expected recapture

Knights fork best — they attack squares no other piece defends. Look for enemy pieces a knight's move apart.