

Basic Chess Strategy

1. Always play to dominate the middle of the board. Occupy, attack, or watch the center; the sides and corners are lifeless.
2. Develop all your pieces fast, not just one or two. The opening is a race for rapid and continuous development. The aim of development is to connect the Rooks so they can occupy central posts for the middlegame and seize open files.
3. Castle early. This brings the King to safety and a Rook into play. Conversely, try to prevent your opponent from castling—if possible, without sacrificing material.
4. Don't sacrifice material unless you see a way to get it back or to force checkmate.
5. Don't lose time by moving the same piece twice.
6. Make few pawn moves, only enough to free your pieces.
7. Develop Knights before Bishops.
8. Avoid early Queen adventures. Develop minor pieces (Knights and Bishops) before major pieces (Queen and Rooks).
9. Avoid giving useless checks.
10. Assume your opponent will find the right moves, and don't play for crude traps except in desperation.

According to Bobby Fisher, four ingredients are essential to success in chess:

- 1. Concentrate**
- 2. Think ahead**
- 3. Learn from your losses**
- 4. Study**