Grown-up vs Child

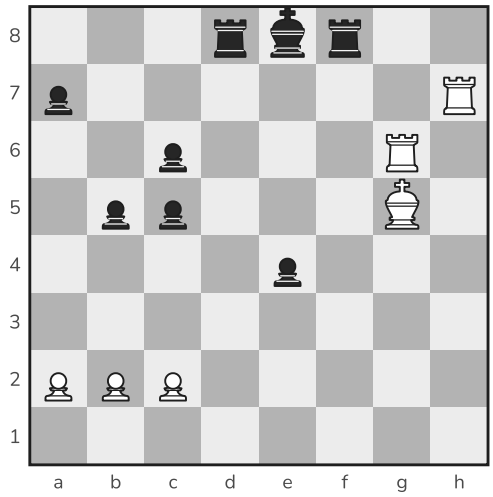
Five chess puzzles from RankUp Chess, from level 1 up to level 3. Race to find each checkmate, then tick who found it first.

Grown-up _____

Child _____

1 White to play — Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow · Level 1



Who found it first?

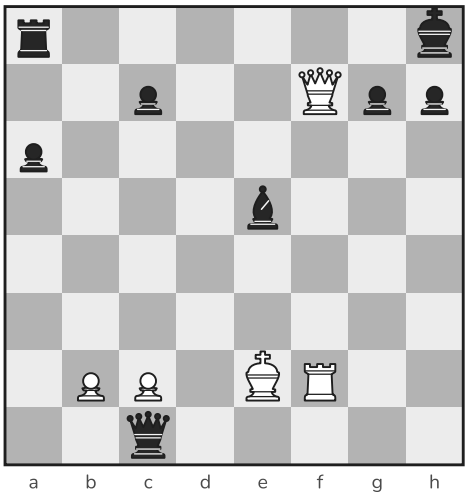
☐ Grown-up

☐ Child

First move: _____

2 White to play — Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay · Level 1



Who found it first?

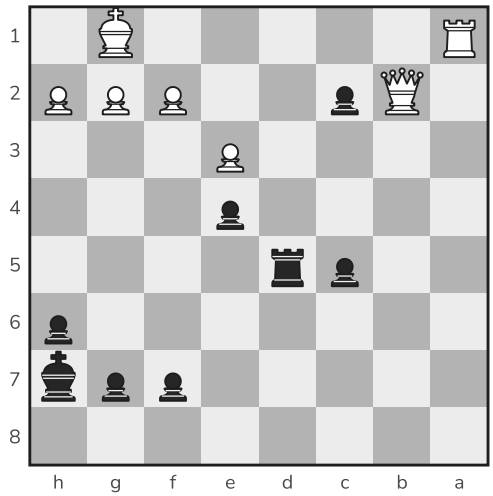
☐ Grown-up

☐ Child

First move: _____

3 Black to play — Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay · Level 2



Who found it first?

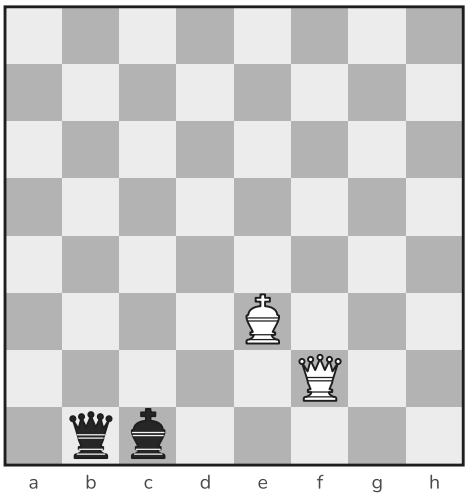
☐ Grown-up

☐ Child

First move: _____

4 White to play — Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow · Level 2



Who found it first?

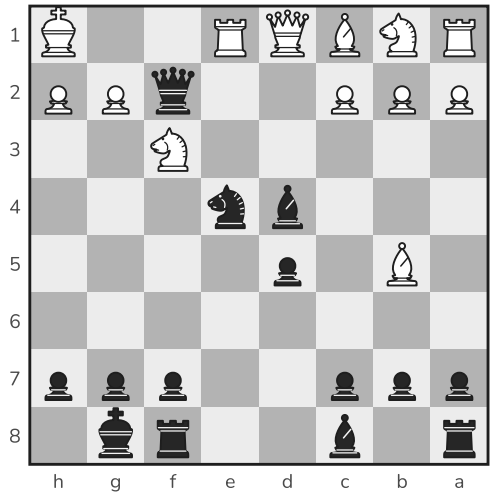
☐ Grown-up

☐ Child

First move: _____

5 Black to play — Checkmate in 2

Mate-in-2 Mountain · Level 3



Who found it first?

☐ Grown-up

☐ Child

First move: _____

Final score

Grown-up _____ / 5

Child _____ / 5

Stuck? Look at every check, not just the first one. Only one of them works.

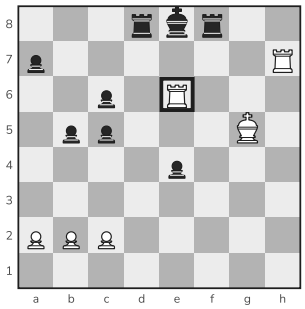
The answers, and why each one works, are on page 2.

More puzzles like these in RankUp Chess, an offline chess app for children. Free to play. **stillwareltd.com/rankupchess**

Puzzles from the Lichess open puzzle database (CC0).

Answers

Read these once you've both had a go. Each of these five puzzles offers more than one check, and only one of them works. The moves in chess notation are under each board.



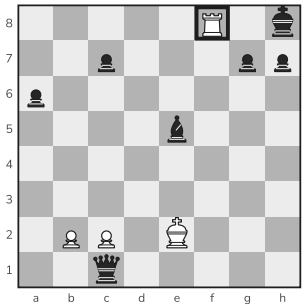
After Re6#

1 Rook to e6. Checkmate.

The check that fails. Rook to e7 is check too, but nothing protects that rook, so the king simply takes it.

Why it works. The rook gives check from a distance, where the king can't reach it. The rook on the seventh row covers the three squares in front of the king, and Black's own rooks block the two beside it.

> **A check right next to the king needs a bodyguard. From a distance, it doesn't.**



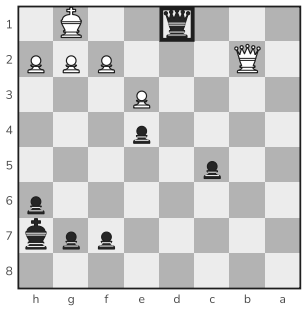
After Qf8+ Rxf8 Rxf8#

2 Queen to f8, check. Black's rook has to take it: there's no other legal move. Then your rook takes back on f8. Checkmate.

The checks that fail. Queen to e8: the rook takes it. Queen to g8: the king or the rook takes it. Queen takes g7: the king or the bishop takes it.

Why it works. Giving the queen away pulls Black's rook off the back row. The king is walled in by its own pawns on g7 and h7. That's called a back-rank mate.

> **Look at the squares around the enemy king first. If it has nowhere to go, one check can be enough.**



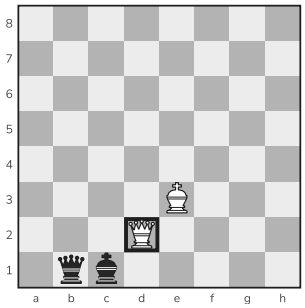
After Rd1+ Rxd1 cxd1=Q#

3 Rook to d1, check. White's only move is rook takes d1. Then your pawn takes d1 and becomes a queen. Checkmate.

The check that fails. Making a new queen on c1 straight away is check, but White's rook on a1 and queen on b2 both guard c1, so the new queen is taken at once.

Why it works. Your rook pulls White's rook out of its corner and onto d1, where your pawn can take it. It's the same back-rank mate as puzzle 2, from the other side.

> **Before you make a new queen, look at who guards the square.**



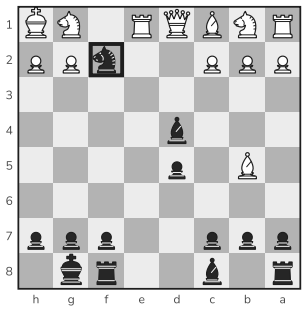
After Qd2#

4 Queen to d2. Checkmate.

The checks that fail. Queen to c2 or b2: Black simply takes it. Queen to e1, f1 or g1: the king slips out to b2 or c2.

Why it works. The queen stands right next to the black king, but it can't be taken, because your king on e3 guards it. From d2 the queen covers every square the king could run to.

> **The king isn't only something to protect. In the endgame, it fights.**



After Qg1+ Nxg1 Nf2#

5 Queen to g1, check. White must take it with the knight or the rook. Then knight to f2. Checkmate.

The checks that fail. Queen takes g2: the king takes your queen. Knight to g3: the pawn on h2 takes the knight.

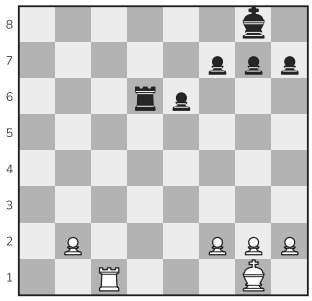
Why it works. The king can't take on g1, because your bishop on d4 guards it. Once White takes, g1 is blocked too, and White's king is boxed in by its own pieces. Only a knight can jump past them: a smothered mate.

> **Count the king's escape squares. When its own pieces fill them all, one knight check ends the game.**

Puzzles from the Lichess open puzzle database (CC0).

Ten more

From levels 1 and 2 of the same packs, easiest first. Answers upside down at the bottom.



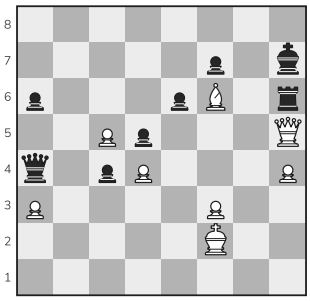
6

White to play

Checkmate in 2

Mate-in-2 Mountain
Level 1

First move:



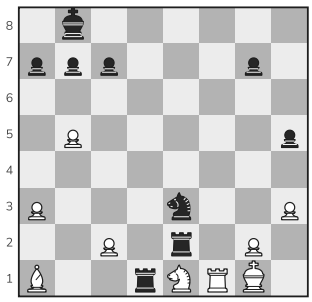
7

White to play

Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow
Level 1

First move:



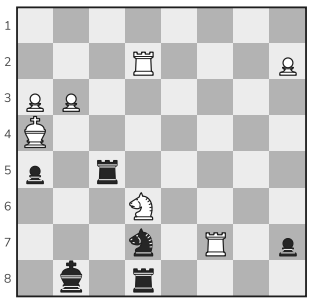
8

White to play

Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay
Level 1

First move:



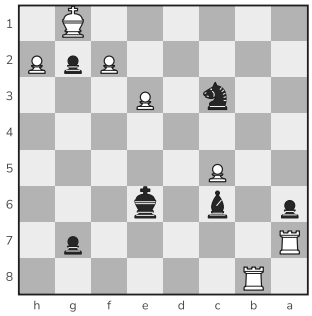
9

Black to play

Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow
Level 1

First move:



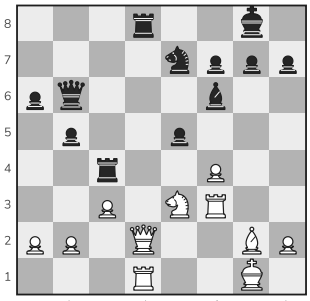
10

Black to play

Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow
Level 1

First move:



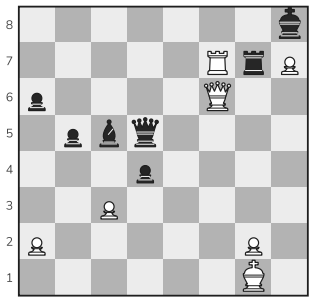
11

White to play

Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay
Level 1

First move:



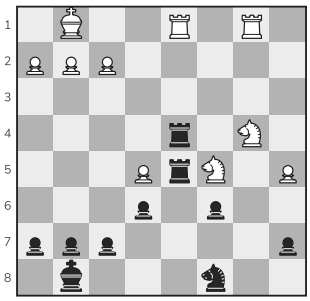
12

White to play

Checkmate in 1

Mate-in-1 Meadow
Level 1

First move:



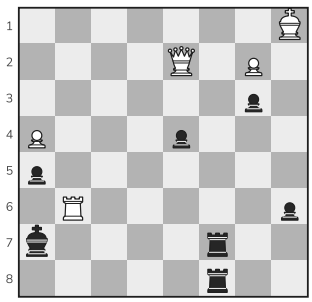
13

Black to play

Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay
Level 1

First move:



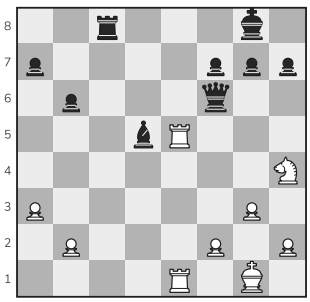
14

Black to play

Checkmate in 2

Mate-in-2 Mountain
Level 1

First move:



15

White to play

Checkmate in 2

Back-Rank Bay
Level 2

First move:

Answers

6 Rook to c8, check. The rook can only block on d8. Rook takes d8, checkmate. Rc8+ Rd8 Rxd8#

7 Queen takes f7, checkmate. Qxf7#

8 Rook to f8, check. The rook on d1 can only block on d8. Rook takes d8, checkmate. Rf8+ Rd8 Rxd8#

9 Knight to g6, checkmate. Ng6#

10 Knight to e2, checkmate. Ne2#

11 Queen takes d8, check. The queen must take back. Rook takes d8, checkmate. Qxd8+ Qxd8 Rxd8#

12 Queen takes g7, checkmate. Qxg7#

13 Rook takes d1, check. The rook must take back. The other rook takes d1, checkmate. Rxd1+ Rxd1 Rxd1#

14 Rook to c1, check. The queen must take it. The other rook takes c1, checkmate. Rc1+ Qxc1 Rxc1#

15 Rook to e8, check. The rook must take it. The other rook takes e8, checkmate. Re8+ Rxe8 Rxe8#