

Rulebook Tips

(by Tim Just editor of the 5th Edition of the Official Rules of Chess)

There are a number of things you can do as a player that increase your chances of essaying an enjoyable game by simply being aware of some basic rulebook strategies.

- 1.** Stop the clock and get a tournament director (TD). Whatever your concern is about a rules violation it is best, in most cases, to first stop your clock. This way your clock is not running towards a flag fall while you get help from the TD. Make sure to let your opponent know why you are stopping the clock.
- 2.** Make it a habit, even if you lose, to make sure your score is marked up properly. Why? Well, if the TDs can't find out the results of your game they may or may not end up crediting you with the correct results for pairing and prize purposes.
- 3.** Make sure you know how the clock is set, even if it is not your clock. For example, assuming the delay is set properly on a delay clock can lead to some unpleasant situations later in the game.
- 4.** After you arrive at your board, check to make sure your opponent is the same one you saw listed on the pairing sheet. Playing the incorrect opponent (not uncommon) leads to some challenges for the TD that may not always be dealt with in your favor. Playing the wrong opponent can affect your pairings in future rounds.
- 5.** If you are waiting for an opponent that has not arrived and the player next to you, or near you is doing the same thing, check it out. The two of you just might be playing each other and one of you accidentally is seated at the wrong board.
- 6.** Make sure you are playing the right color. Double check it. The TD can't always fix this kind of situation to your satisfaction.
- 7.** TDs are not cops. Rarely do they interject themselves into your game, even when they observe a rules violation. You have to make the claim that the rule was violated.
- 8.** Ask a TD what your rights are if they rule against you.
- 9.** Perpetual check is not a rule. Having the same position three times (it does not even have to be three times in a row!) is the rule. To make this claim properly it is one of the few times you get to write your move down first. Write the move first then make the claim and stop the clock.
- 10.** Get a TD if your opponent disputes one of your claims (remember to stop that clock).
- 11.** If either player makes a claim of a draw of any kind it is the same as offering a draw to the opponent.
- 12.** Keep an accurate scoresheet so that you can offer it as evidence of any claim you are making. An incomplete scoresheet (check marks don't count towards an accurate scoresheet) is usually worthless in a disputed claim.
- 13.** Start your clock at the beginning of the round, even if your opponent is not there! If your opponent does come late, failing to start their clock until they arrive may delay the start of the next round for everyone else.
- 14.** The standard penalty, unless stated otherwise, is to add two minutes to the time of the player that makes a valid rules violation claim.