

Basic opening principles for new players

The 'opening' in chess usually includes the first six or more moves by each player. (but can be much longer)

The most important principle in chess is that **your pieces are as active as possible**. So in the opening you should try to **develop your pieces**. At the same time though, you must **keep your king safe**.

What to do to apply these principles:

1. Play one or two pawns to occupy and control the centre (usually the king pawn and or queen pawn and sometimes the queen's bishop pawn may be involved.)
2. Develop the minor pieces (Knights and Bishops)
 - a. Generally the knights first and usually towards the centre of the board not out to the edges.
 - b. Bishops generally after the knights and they can be further from the centre as they are better at long range attack than knights.
3. Castle early in the game.
4. Move the queen just enough (to a safe square) so that the rooks (castles) are connected.

What not to do:

Generally do not bring your queen out early. Remember your first goal is to make sure your pieces are developed – Moving out the queen in the opening, can expose your queen to attack and you have to waste moves making it safe again which puts you behind in development.

1. Try not to move pieces more than once during the opening (unless they are really under threat) Once again so that you don't get behind in development.
2. Do not move the king's bishop pawn early without a great deal of awareness that this can be very dangerous.
3. Do not attack the opponent's king during the opening unless you are far ahead in development.

Simplified opening rules for young players

1. Play one or two pawns first.
2. Develop the minor pieces first knights before bishops
3. Castle early in the game.
4. Move the queen just enough (to a safe square) so that the rooks (castles) are connected.

What not to do:

1. Do not bring your queen out early.
2. Don't move pieces twice in the opening unless they can be taken for free.
3. Do not move the king's bishop pawn in the opening.
4. Do not attack the opponent's king during the opening unless you are far ahead in development.