

Frere's Chess Hand-Book

By Thomas Frere (1858)

Also in Hoyle's Games (1872)

LAWS OF THE GAME,

Adopted by the London Chess Club upon its establishment in 1807; recently revised by the committee of that Institution. Sanctioned, also, and adopted by the New York and the Brooklyn Chess Clubs.

1. The chess-board must be so placed that each player has a white corner square nearest his right hand. If the board have been improperly placed, it must be adjusted, provided four moves on each side have not been played, but not afterwards. '
2. If a piece or pawn be misplaced at the beginning of the game, either player may insist upon the mistake being rectified, if he discover it before playing his fourth move, but not afterwards.
3. Should a player, at the commencement of the game, omit to place all his men on the board, he may correct the omission before playing his fourth move, but not afterwards.
4. If a player, undertaking to give the odds of a piece or pawn, neglect to remove it from the board his adversary, after four moves have been played on each side, has the choice of proceeding with, or recommencing the game.
5. When no odds are given, the players must take the first move of each game alternately, drawing lots to determine who shall begin the first game. If a game be drawn, the player who began it has the first move of the following one.
6. The player who gives odds has the right of moving first in each game, unless otherwise agreed. Whenever a pawn is given, it is understood to be always the king's Bishop's pawn.
7. A piece or pawn touched must be played, unless at the moment of touching it, the player say "J'adoube," or words to that effect; but if a piece or pawn be displaced or overturned by accident, it may be restored to its place.

Note to No. 7, by George Walker.

Nothing can be easier than to acquire the habit of saying "Jadoube," when necessary, and a little reflection will, convince you of the propriety of following, to the strictest letter of the law, a rule which prevents persons of careless habits from touching half-a-dozen pieces by turns, or all at once, before making their move. Indeed, were it not for this law, I believe some people, while calculating their move, would take off a rook or two to play with.

D is to move, and lifts a bishop, with the evident intention of setting it on a certain square; then replaces it, saying, "J'adoube," and proceeds to play elsewhere. He certainly should play elsewhere, for he should not play with me. The bishop must of course be moved. The expression "J'adoube" is not allowed to exonerate you when you touch a piece, with the bona fide intention of moving it.

8. While a player holds the piece or pawn he has touched, he may play it to any other than the square he took it from; but having quitted it, he cannot recall the move.
9. Should a player touch one of his adversary's pieces or pawns, without saying J'adoube," or words to that effect, his adversary may compel him to take it; but if it cannot be legally taken, he may oblige him to move the king: should his king, however, be so posted that he cannot be legally moved, no penalty can be inflicted.
10. Should a player move one of his adversary's men, his antagonist has the option of compelling him, 1st, to replace the piece or pawn and move his king; 2nd, to replace the piece or pawn and take it; 3rd, to let the piece or pawn remain on the square to which it had been played, as if the move were correct.
11. If a player takes one of his adversary's men with one of his own that cannot take it without making a false move, his antagonist has the option of compelling him to take it with n piece or pawn that can legally take it, or to move his own piece or pawn which he touched.

12. Should a player take one of his own men with another, his adversary has the option of obliging him to move either.
13. If a player make a false move, i. e., play a piece or pawn to any square to which it cannot legally be moved, his adversary has the choice of three penalties, viz.: 1st, of compelling him to let the piece or pawn remain on the square to which he played it; 2nd, to move it correctly to another square; 3rd, to replace the piece or pawn and move his king.
14. Should a player move out of his turn, his adversary may choose whether both moves shall remain, or the second be retracted.
15. When a pawn is first moved in a game, it may be played one or two squares; but in the latter case the opponent has the privilege of taking it *en passant* with any pawn which could have taken it had it been played one square only. A pawn cannot be taken *en passant* by a piece.
16. A player cannot castle in the following cases: 1st. If the king or rook have been moved. 2nd. the king be in check. 3rd. If there be any piece between the king and rook. 4th. If the king pass over any space attacked by one of the adversary's pieces or pawns.  
Should a player castle in any of the above cases, his adversary has the choice of three penalties, viz.: 1st, of insisting that the move remain; 2nd, of compelling him to move the king; 3rd, of compelling him to move the rook.
17. If a player touch a piece or pawn that cannot be moved without leaving the king in check, he must replace the piece or pawn and move his king; but if the king cannot be moved, no penalty can be inflicted.
18. If a player attack the adverse king without saying "check," his adversary is not obliged to attend to it; but, if the former, in playing his next move, were to say "check," each player must retract his last move, and he that is under check must obviate it.
19. If the king has been in check for several moves, and it cannot be ascertained how it occurred, the player whose king is in check must retract his last move, and free his king from the check; but if the moves made subsequent to the check be known, they must be retracted.
20. Should a player say "check" without giving it, and his adversary in consequence move his king, or touch a piece or pawn to interpose, he may retract such move, provided his adversary have not completed his next move.
21. Every pawn which has reached the eighth or last square of the chess-board, must be immediately exchanged for a queen or any other piece the player may think fit even though all the pieces remain on the board. It follows, therefore, that he may have two or more queens, three or more rooks, bishops, or knights.
22. If a player remain at the end of the game, with a rook and bishop against a rook; with both bishops only; with knight and bishop only, etc., he must checkmate his adversary in fifty moves on each side at most, or the game will be considered as drawn; the fifty moves commence from the time the adversary gives notice that he will count them. This law holds good for all other checkmates of pieces only, such as queen or rook only, queen against a rook, etc., etc.
23. If a player agree to checkmate with a particular piece or pawn, or on a particular square, or engage to force his adversary to stalemate or checkmate him, he is not restricted to any number of moves.
24. A stalemate is a drawn game.
25. If a player make a false move, castle improperly, etc., etc., the adversary must take notice of such irregularity before he touches a piece or pawn, or he will not be allowed to inflict any penalty.
26. Should any question arise respecting which there is no law, or in case of a dispute respecting any law, the players must refer the point to the most skilful and disinterested bystanders, and their decision must be considered as conclusive.

