

Algebraic notation (how to read and write chess moves)

Algebraic notation is used worldwide to record tournament games; it's like an international chess language! This is extremely useful for players, as they can play through their games afterwards to see where they can make improvements, as well as being able to send games in to magazines, newspapers & websites for publication. Descriptive notation is another method of writing games down, but algebraic is the preferred method nowadays. Whether you're looking at books and playing through games that occurred 200 years ago *exactly as they happened*, or looking at games being played live on the internet, the ability to read and write notation will help you immensely with your chess. Also, when using the activity cards, you'll need notation to write your answers correctly.

Symbols

N = Knight	# = Checkmate
B = Bishop	0-0 = Castling kingside
R = Rook	0-0-0 = Castling Queenside
Q = Queen	! = Good Move
K = King	!! = Brilliant Move
x = Captures	? = Bad Move
+ = Check	?? = Blunder

Pawn moves

All you need to do is write the name of the square the pawn moves to; you don't need to write 'P' before it. Eg, pawn to e4 can be written simply as **e4**.

Pawn captures and pawn promotion

Just write the square or file the pawn came from, and the square on which it takes. Eg, **cxd4**.

To notate the promotion of a pawn, just write the name of the square the pawn has reached and the symbol for the piece you have chosen to promote to. Eg, **b8 = Q**.

A real game example



This position is from a famous game between Rotlevi and Rubinstein in 1907. Rubinstein (black) decided to play the brilliant move, rook takes knight on c3. This would be notated simply as **Rxc3!!** If he had played the inferior move, queen to h3; this would have been written **Qh3?**.

What to do

Each square on the board has a name. For example, the square on white's right hand corner is called 'h1' (always use lower case letters for the names of squares, and put the letter before the number). All you need to do is write the symbol for the piece and the square that it goes to. Eg, **Bc6** would mean that the bishop moves to c6.



Ambiguous moves

If both of your rooks can go to the same square, indicate the square from which the chosen rook came. Eg, **Ra8-d8**, or even just **Rad8**.

Practice for reading notation

GOLD COAST CHESS CLUB INC.
Horror Hill Open on 5/6/876
 Dr. Jackle vs Mr. Zombie

White	Black	Time	White	Black	Time
1	e4	06	11		
2	d4	05	12		
3	Nc3	04	13		
4	Nxe4	03	14		
5	Bf4	02	15		
6	Bc4	01	16		
7	Nf3	00	17		
8	0-0	00	18		
9	Qe2	00	19		
10	Ngf6	00	20		
11	Qd1	00	21		
12	h5??	00	22		
13	Nd6#	00	23		

Check out this gruesome battle between Dr Jackle and Mr Zombie. Grab a board and play through the game. If you have followed the notation correctly then you will arrive at the position pictured.

1. e4 c6, 2. d4 d5, 3. Nc3 dxe4, 4. Nxe4 b6?, 5. Bf4 Nd7, 6. Bc4 a5?, 7. Nf3 Ra7?, 8. 0-0 Ngf6, 9. Qe2! h5??, 10. Nd6#