

Learn Chess the Right Way

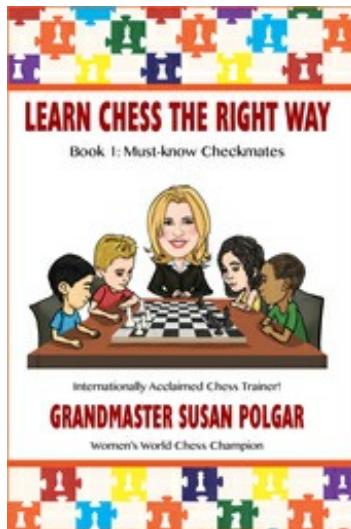
Book One: Must-know Checkmates

by Susan Polgar

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The Polgar Way to Better Chess!

Learn Chess the Right Way is a five-volume chess puzzle book series aimed at the novice, beginner and intermediate level player, using the unique methods of the award-winning coach and former world champion Susan Polgar. It introduces the most important checkmate and material-winning tactics, as well as defensive techniques to the new chess player. Each of the five volumes will consist of 500 puzzles.

In **Book 1**, the focus is on one-move checkmate exercises. In each of the first five chapters, a specific piece delivers checkmate (in Chapter 1 – the queen, Chapter 2 – the rook, and so on). In Chapters 6-8, checkmates which involve special tactics (such as pins, discovered attacks, etc.) are introduced. Chapter 9 has a mixed collection of puzzles, without any hint about which piece is to deliver checkmate. Chapter 10 builds on the previous 9 chapters, and introduces basic patterns of checkmate in two moves.

With over 40 years of experience as a world-class player and coach, international grandmaster Susan Polgar has developed the most effective way to help young players and beginners – *Learn Chess the Right Way*. Let her show you the way to understanding the most common and critical patterns and let her show you the way to becoming a better player.

Learn Chess the Right Way

Book 1

Must-know Checkmates

**by
Susan Polgar
with Paul Truong**



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Learn Chess the Right Way
Book 1: Must-know Checkmates

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Table of Contents

Introduction		4
Chapter 1	Checkmate in 1 with a Queen	5
Chapter 2	Checkmate in 1 with a Rook	24
Chapter 3	Checkmate in 1 with a Bishop	42
Chapter 4	Checkmate in 1 with a Knight	59
Chapter 5	Checkmate in 1 with a Pawn	75
Chapter 6	Checkmate in 1 with a Pin	87
Chapter 7	Checkmate in 1 with a Discovered Check or Double Check	94
Chapter 8	Tricky Checkmates in 1 Move	102
Chapter 9	Various Checkmates in 1 Move	107
Chapter 10	Simple Checkmates in 2 Moves	133
Questions and Answers		150
Solutions		152

Introduction

Ever since I was four years old, I remember the joy of solving chess puzzles. I wrote my first puzzle book when I was just 15, and have published a number of other best-sellers since, such as *A World Champion's Guide to Chess*, *Chess Tactics for Champions*, and *Breaking Through*, etc.

With over 40 years of experience as a world-class player and trainer, I have developed the most effective way to help young players and beginners – *Learn Chess the Right Way*. By understanding the most common and critical patterns, it will help you improve much quicker.

In this series of ***Learn Chess the Right Way***, I will show you the most effective way to learn and improve through pattern recognition.

In volume 1, you will be introduced to 500 must-know checkmate ideas. In the first half of the book, there are 60 puzzles in each chapter sorted by the piece giving mate: queen, rook, bishop, knight and finally pawn (40 puzzles). Each chapter will start with a few introductory examples and explanations about what to look for in the puzzles which follow.

Those are followed by more complex checkmate patterns. Two of the most common and powerful tactical tools in chess are pins (chapter 6) and discoveries (chapter 7). There are times when you need those special tools to enable the checkmate and win a game.

In chapter 8, you will find a dozen examples of special “tricky” mates, which include, pawn promotion, castling, and *en passant* to achieve the goal of checkmating the enemy king.

In chapter 9, you will find one hundred checkmates in one move, with no hints, and without knowing which piece is giving the mate or if a pin or discovery is involved.

Finally, in the last chapter, you will find 60 examples of simple checkmates in two moves, building upon the knowledge acquired in the previous chapters.

In some examples it will be White to move (to checkmate), while in others you will have to try to find the winning move for Black. Also please note that under each diagram you will be able to record the amount of time it took you to solve each puzzle. As you go through and solve the puzzles again, your speed recognizing the checkmate patterns should improve.

In chess, pattern recognition is a very important part of playing better chess. Therefore, my suggestion is to try to solve the puzzles multiple times, or until you feel that you can recognize the correct solutions within a minute per page (4 puzzles). Initially you may want to set up the pieces on the chess board as shown in the diagrams (make sure every piece is exactly as shown!), but by the second time around I would surely recommend to try to solve the puzzles just from the diagram.

Wishing you enjoyment on embarking on the road “Learning Chess the Right Way!”

Susan Polgar
March 2016

Chapter 1

Checkmate in 1 with a Queen

The queen is the most powerful piece on the chess board because it can make long-range moves in all directions, up or down, to the right or to the left, by moving either in a straight line or diagonally. In other words, it has the power of a rook and a bishop combined.

In this chapter, we shall learn about the different checkmate patterns with a queen.

In order to checkmate the opponent's king, you *always* have to directly attack the king, *and*

- (1) in a way that your queen cannot be captured;
- (2) the enemy king cannot have a safe square to move to; and
- (3) the attack on the king cannot be interposed or blocked.

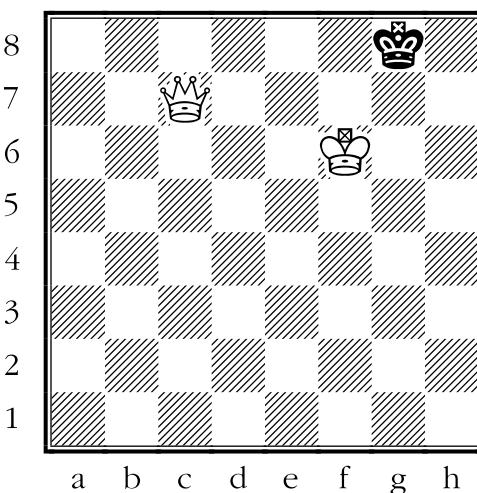
All these conditions have to be present for any position to be checkmate. In some cases you may need to capture an enemy piece to checkmate.

The following are different ways to checkmate your opponent's king with your queen:

- (a) one of your own pieces help by protecting your queen so it cannot be captured by the enemy king.
- (b) one (or more) of your own pieces help the Queen by taking away potential escape squares from the enemy King.
- (c) your opponent's own pieces block the possible escape squares from their King.
- (d) combining two or more of the above elements.
- (e) using a special tactic such as a pin or double check. (see in chapter 6 and 7)

Let's take a look at a few examples for each of the different types of scenarios.

Scenario (a):

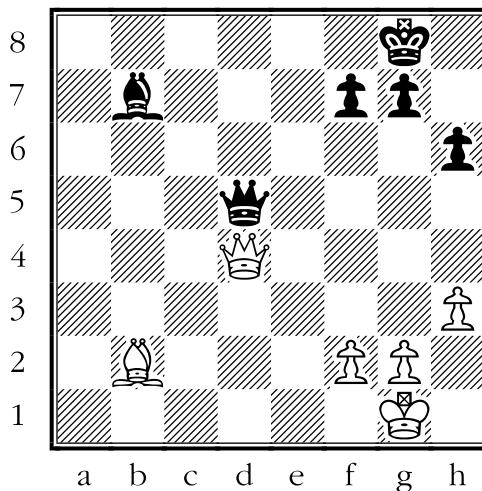


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It is White to move. White could attack Black's king many ways: from b8, c8, d8, f7, g7, h7, c4 and g3. That is eight different ways! However, only one of them accomplishes the task of checkmating the black king in one move. Attacking (checking) the king from h7, would be an outright blunder, as Black's king would simply capture the queen on h7. If the attack (check) comes from f7, the king can escape to h8. If White checks from b8, c8 or d8, the king will escape to h7. After checks on c4 or g3, the black king would have three different escape squares: f8, h8 or h7.

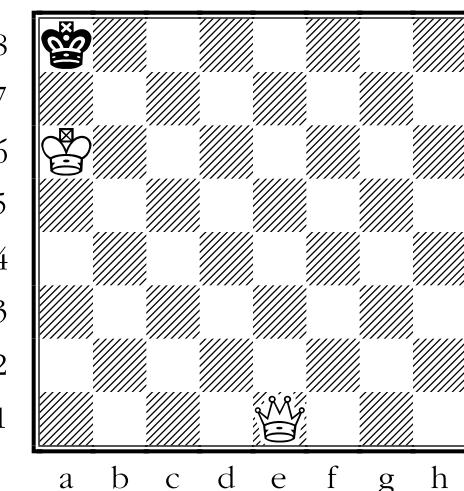
Therefore, the only correct solution is 1.Qg7 checkmate. This works because the white king is assisting by protecting the queen, and therefore the queen cannot be captured. In some positions, the checkmating move may also be a capture of an enemy piece at the same time.

Let's take a look at the next example:



In this position, whichever side is to move wins! If it is White to move, the answer is Qxg7 checkmate as the bishop from b2 protects the queen. Similarly, if it is Black's turn, the solution is Qxg2 and Black wins the game.

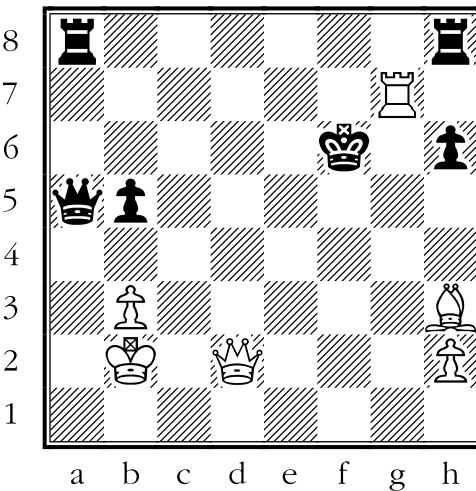
Now, let's take a look see examples of scenario (b).



Checkmate in 1 with a Queen

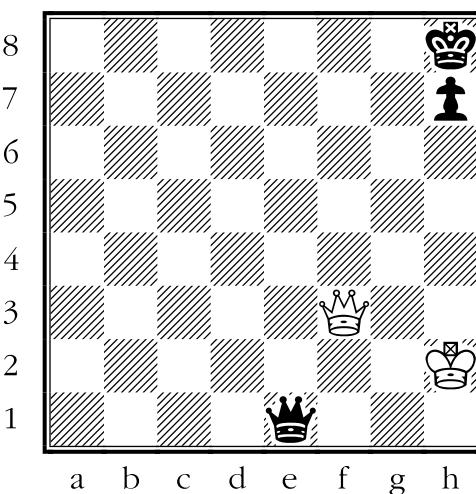
Here the solution is Qe8, which directly attacks the black king while the white king's role is to stop the black king from escaping to a7 or b7.

The following example is more complex, as two different pieces assist the queen to checkmate.



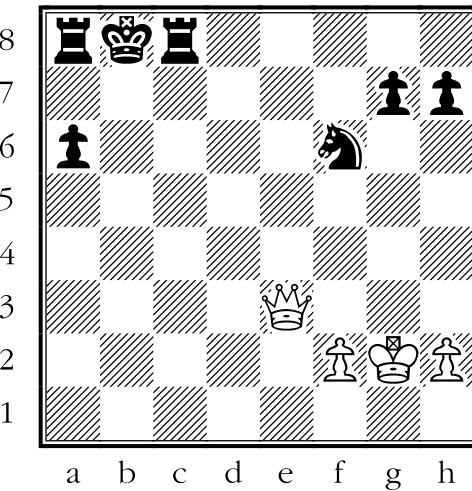
In this position, the white queen has many ways to attack the black king. Again only one is the correct solution. The check on g5 fails as the pawn from h6 would capture. Checks from either d6, f4 or f2 all are wrong for the same reason: the black king would capture the rook on g7 and escape. If the white queen checks from c3, it would be captured by black's queen. The only right answer is 1.Qd4 checkmate. With this attack on the black king, the queen also protects the rook on g7. The white bishop on h3 assists in covering the e6 and f5 squares, while the rook on g7 is responsible for controlling the e7, f7, g6 and g5 potential escape squares.

Now let us examine a few examples of scenario (c).



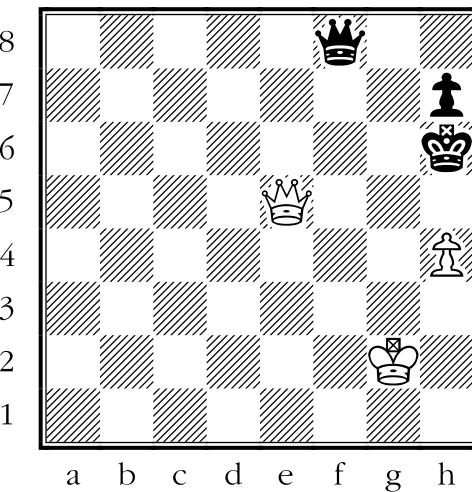
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Here the correct answer to checkmate in one move is: 1.Qf8. The black king cannot escape as his own pawn on h7 covers the escape square. Were Black's pawn not on h7, White could not checkmate or win the game.



In this example, the two black rooks on either side of the king block its own mobility. White can checkmate with 1.Qb6.

Finally, let's look at an example where the combination of several elements, scenario (d), contributes to the final result.



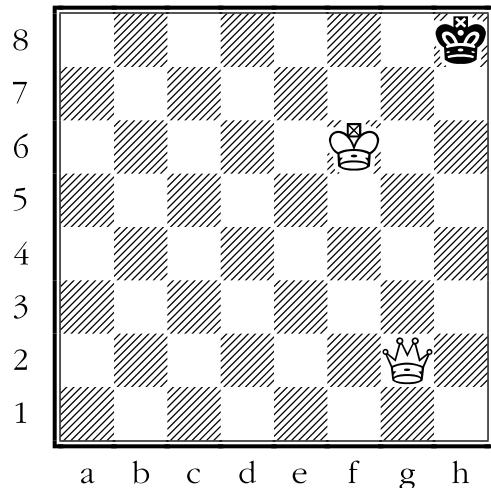
In this position, the white queen needs not only the help of its own pawn on h4 (by guarding the g5-square), but also that of Black's pawn on h7 to prevent the king from escaping after 1.Qg5 (checkmate).

And now it is your turn to solve the following 60 puzzles. In each and every one of them, the queen will deliver the checkmate. Have fun!

Checkmate in 1 with a Queen

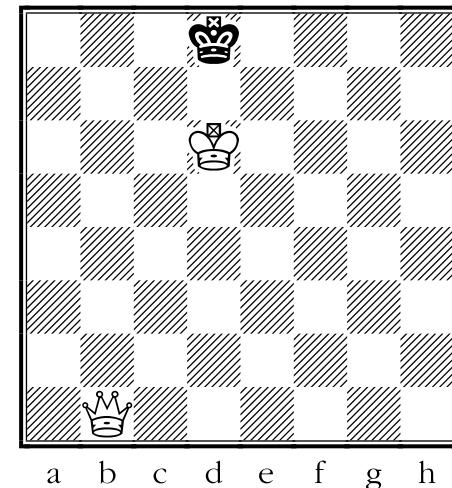
White to move

(1)



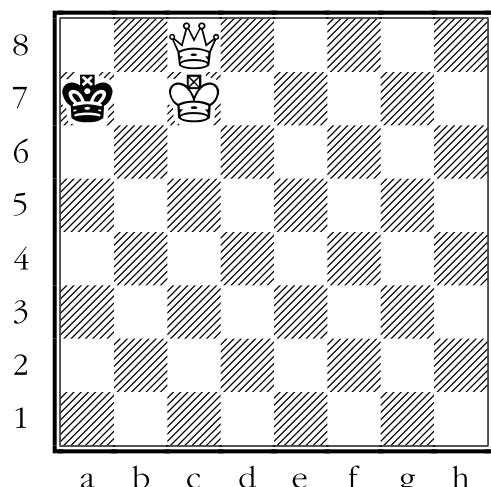
1. _____ Time: 1 _____ 2 _____
3 _____ 4 _____

(2)



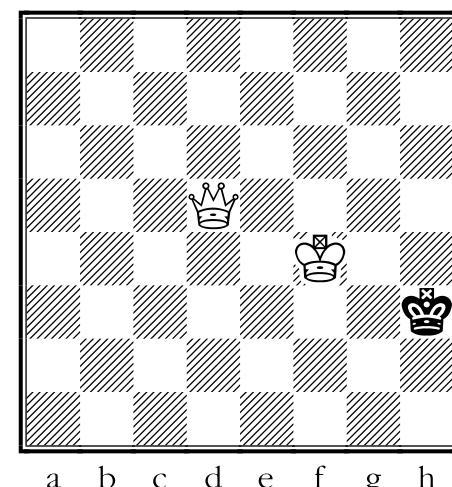
1. _____ Time: 1 _____ 2 _____
3 _____ 4 _____

(3)



1. _____ Time: 1 _____ 2 _____
3 _____ 4 _____

(4)



1. _____ Time: 1 _____ 2 _____
3 _____ 4 _____

Solutions

Chapter 1: Checkmate in 1 with a Queen

- | | | | | | |
|------|--------|------|-----------|------|---------------------------------------|
| (1) | 1.Qg7# | (21) | 1.Qg7# | (43) | 1...Qg1# |
| (2) | 1.Qb8# | (22) | 1.Qh8# | (44) | 1...Qd4# |
| (3) | 1.Qb7# | (23) | 1.Qg7# | (45) | 1...Qd2# |
| (4) | 1.Qh1# | (24) | 1.Qg7# | (46) | 1...Qb7# |
| (5) | 1.Qb3# | (25) | 1.Qh8# | (47) | 1...Qh1# |
| (6) | 1.Qa8# | (26) | 1.Qh7# | (48) | 1...Qh3# |
| (7) | 1.Qg5# | (27) | 1.Qd7# | (49) | 1...Qh3# |
| (8) | 1.Qg7# | (28) | 1.Qa7# | (50) | 1...Qa3# |
| (9) | 1.Qf7# | (29) | 1.Qh7# | (51) | 1...Qe2# |
| (10) | 1.Qg6# | (30) | 1.Qd8# | (52) | 1...Qg1# |
| (11) | 1.Qe6# | (31) | 1.Qe7# | (53) | 1...Qd2# |
| (12) | 1.Qg4# | (32) | 1.Qc8# | (54) | 1...Qf2# |
| (13) | 1.Qe5# | (33) | 1...Qh2# | (55) | 1...Qh1# |
| (14) | 1.Qc8# | (34) | 1...Qh4# | (56) | 1...Qb1# |
| (15) | 1.Qe6# | (35) | 1...Qxh2# | (57) | 1...Qc2# |
| (16) | 1.Qa8# | (36) | 1...Qxh2# | (58) | 1...Qh1# |
| (17) | 1.Qe7# | (37) | 1...Qe1# | (59) | 1...Qg2# |
| (18) | 1.Qf8# | (38) | 1...Qd4# | (60) | 1...Qh2# |
| (19) | 1.Qe4# | (39) | 1...Qg2# | | Chapter 2: |
| (20) | 1.Qa6# | (40) | 1...Qf2# | | Checkmate in 1
with a Rook |
| | | (41) | 1...Qd1# | (61) | 1.Rh2# |
| | | (42) | 1...Qg1# | (62) | 1.Rc8# |