THE EIGHT RANKS METHOD

RANK 6 OF 8

PURPLE BELT

STUDENT BOOK

THE EIGHT RANKS METHOD™

Twelve weeks. A plan tested, a club served. A sixth rank, earned.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

BOOK 6 OF 8 · COMPETITOR TIER

Written by Moheb Girgis, FIDE National Instructor

Chess that produces evidence.

eightranksmethod.com

THE EIGHT RANKS METHOD

Eight ranks. One board. Total mastery.

THE EIGHT RANKS METHOD™

Purple Belt

Student Book

Competitor · Rank 6 of 8 · Book 6 of 8



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Written by Moheb Girgis, FIDE National Instructor · FIDE ID 39935400

The Eight Ranks Method · New York

This book belongs to _____

Site _____

Cycle _____

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First edition, 2026 · Version 1.2
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Every chess position in this book has been checked by a chess engine (Stockfish) or is completely solved.

The Eight Ranks Method is designed to produce evidence aligned to the six attributes of the New York State Portrait of a Graduate.
Not issued, approved or endorsed by the New York State Education Department or any school district. Schools decide how to use its reports.

LOOK INSIDE

Contents

Preface 5
How to read a diagram 6
The four courtesies 7
The Eight Ranks Code 7
How to use this book 8
Everything for one cycle 9
Chapter 1. Openings and Development: preparation by structure 10
Chapter 2. Tactics and Calculation: the windmill, the Greek gift and deciding a sacrifice 12
Chapter 3. Strategy and Positional Play: the plan as a hypothesis 15
Chapter 4. Defensive Resilience: routine versus no routine 17
Chapter 5. Endgame Technique: plan versus tablebase 19
Chess Words, Purple belt 21
Lab hand-offs 21
Rank Day readiness 21
Model games 23
The five STEM labs 32
- STEM Lab P1.1: Two Lines, Three Sources 33
- STEM Lab P2.1: Decide a Sacrifice 35
- STEM Lab P3.1: Test the Model 37
- STEM Lab P4.1: Routine Versus No Routine 39
- STEM Lab P5.1: Plan Versus Tablebase 41

LOOK INSIDE

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How to read a diagram

Every diagram is drawn from White's side: White's pieces start at the bottom, Black's at the top. The letters a to h name the files (the columns) from left to right; the numbers 1 to 8 name the ranks (the rows) from bottom to top. A square is its file letter and its rank number, so the bottom-left corner is a1 and the top-right corner is h8. The small square beside the board shows whose move it is: a white square at the bottom right means White to move, a black square at the top right means Black to move.

Piece	Letter	Symbol
King	K	♔ ♚
Queen	Q	♕ ♛
Rook	R	♖ ♜
Bishop	B	♗ ♝
Knight	N	♘ ♞
Pawn	(no letter)	♙ ♟

A move is written as the piece letter and the square it goes to: Nf3 means a knight moves to f3; e4 means a pawn moves to e4. x means a capture (Bxe5), + means check, # means checkmate, O-O is castling on the king's side and O-O-O on the queen's side, e8=Q means a pawn promotes to a queen. Sometimes the starting square is written too, with a dash: d7-d5 means the pawn on d7 moves to d5, and a plan written b2-b4-b5 means the b-pawn goes from b2 to b4 and then to b5. This is standard algebraic notation, the notation of Appendix C of the FIDE Laws of Chess; the Laws print castling with the figure zero (0-0 and 0-0-0) and promotion without the equals sign (e8Q), and this book uses the letter O and the equals sign, as most English chess books do.

Chess piece drawings by Colin M. L. Burnett, used under the BSD license.

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How to use this book

Purple belt tests the Blue belt models on your own play. You prepare openings by structure rather than by move list, you decide a sacrifice with a probability estimate, you state a plan as a hypothesis and test it, you run an experiment on your own move routine, and you compare your endgame plans with a tablebase. Exercises end each chapter; their answers are at the back of the book. Your exhibit is the Club Service Record: an event you helped run, an arbiter's ruling you wrote up, four mentoring sessions and a position paper on engines.

This book covers one twelve-week cycle; Purple takes at least two, and in the second you work through it again with new positions. Take one chapter every two weeks. In the first week, read the chapter and do the exercises on a real board. In the second week, do the STEM lab for that chapter. Each lab has seven parts and ends with an exit ticket. Before you start a new chapter, do the Review box. It brings back ideas from earlier chapters and from Blue belt. Then do the progress check at the end of the chapter. If the chapter felt hard, use the Help box. If it felt easy, use the Stretch box. Use the Game Lab pages for your own games. Record four clocked games and compare each one with the engine. The family corner gives one question to answer at home. Your exhibit is the Club Service Record: draft in week 9, final in week 11. Rank Day comes after week 12; at the end of the first cycle it gives a report, not a new rank. Bring this book, your five labs and your Game Lab pages.

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Everything for one cycle

One book carries one twelve-week cycle. Here is what is inside it, counted.

Chapters	5, one for each pillar, each with its exercises, a Help box, a Stretch box and a progress check
Review boxes	4, one at the start of Chapters 2 to 5
STEM labs	5, one for each chapter, each with its seven parts and its standards footer
Diagrams	66, every one drawn from a verified position
Model games	3, real games played through move by move with questions
Textbook endings	7 named endings, each with its method and a line to play
Puzzle practice and endgame drills	35 positions: 29 completely solved, 6 engine-verified (Stockfish)
Game Lab pages	4 game records to fill in with your own games
Family corners	5, one question for each chapter (one every two weeks) for the adult at home
Glossary	60 chess words explained
Practice quiz	20 questions in the four Rank Day forms, with answers
Exhibit of Evidence	Club Service Record

The licensed site provides: the instructor, the boards and sets, the clocks, the Rank Day papers (the Knowledge Quiz and the Puzzle Set, seen only on Rank Day), the scoring, the Rank Progress Report within two weeks of Rank Day, and the certificate and rank at the ceremony. This book is yours to write in and keep.

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LAUNCH

CHAPTER 1 · PILLAR 1 · OPENINGS AND DEVELOPMENT

Preparation by structure

By the end of this chapter you will be able to

- Name the pawns of the Carlsbad structure and the plan for each side.
- Write the three moves of the minority attack and the weakness it creates.
- Compare two lines of your repertoire in one table and write three sentences on which line to keep.

Launch This chapter ends with STEM Lab P1.1: Two Lines, Three Sources.

I can: name the pawn structure my repertoire leads to; state the plans for both sides in it; compare two lines with a table and a written recommendation.

1.1 Structures, not move lists

Move lists run out; structures do not. The Carlsbad structure in Diagram 1.1 (White: pawns d4 and e3, no c-pawn; Black: pawns c6 and d5, no e-pawn) arises from the Queen's Gambit Declined exchange variation (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5) and from several other openings. White's plan is the minority attack: b2-b4-b5 to create a weakness on c6. Black's plan is play on the kingside and in the center with ...Ne4 and ...f5, or the counter ...a6 and ...b5 to stop the attack. Knowing the plans means you never need to remember move 14.

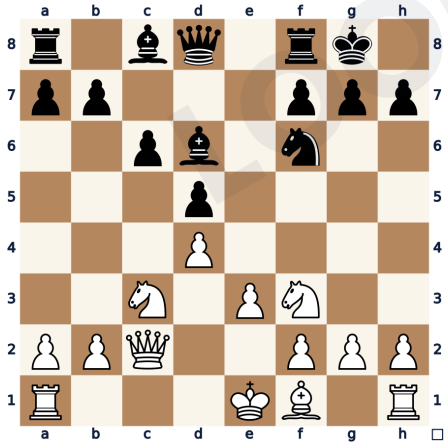


Diagram 1.1. White to move: the Carlsbad structure. Name both plans before reading on.

1.2 The comparison table

For the lab (P1.1) you compare two lines of your repertoire in one table: the structure each leads to, the plan for each side, your results in it, and the explorer's percentages; then you write a recommendation in three sentences. The table is the exhibit of this chapter's thinking.

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1.3 Exercises (answers at the back of the book)

1. In Diagram 1.1, write the three moves of the minority attack and the weakness it creates.
2. Name two openings that can lead to the Carlsbad structure.
3. Your repertoire: name the structure your main Black line leads to and one plan for each side.

HELP · IF THIS FELT HARD

Reread 1.1 and set up Diagram 1.1 on a real board. Then move White's b-pawn from b2 to b4 to b5 and watch what happens to the pawn on c6. That one small drill is the whole idea, and the rest of the chapter builds on it.

STRETCH · IF THIS FELT EASY

Take your main line as Black and find the structure it leads to by move 10. Write the plan for each side in two sentences. Then test the plan in one Game Lab game and note at move 12 whether the position matched your card.

PROGRESS CHECK · CHAPTER 1

1. Which pawns make the Carlsbad structure in Diagram 1.1?
2. What is White's plan in the Carlsbad structure, and what does it create?
3. What four things go in the comparison table for Lab P1.1?
4. Explain in your own words why the chapter says to learn structures, not move lists.
5. In Diagram 1.1, which two pawn moves can Black use to stop the minority attack?

Answers are in the back of the book.

LOOK INSIDE

FAMILY CORNER · WHAT TO ASK YOUR LEARNER THIS WEEK

What is a pawn structure, and why does your book say to learn structures instead of long lists of moves?

A good answer sounds like: Your learner names a shape of pawns, such as the Carlsbad structure, says what each side plans to do in it, and explains that a plan still works after the memorized moves run out.

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CHAPTER 2 · PILLAR 2 · TACTICS AND CALCULATION

The windmill, the Greek gift and deciding a sacrifice

By the end of this chapter you will be able to

- Describe the windmill and say why the king has no choice during it.
- State the three conditions of the Greek gift before you play Bxh7+.
- Decide a sacrifice with a percent estimate, not a hope.

Strike This chapter ends with STEM Lab P2.1: Decide a Sacrifice.

STRIKE

REVIEW · THREE QUESTIONS FROM EARLIER

1. Chapter 1 of this book Which pawns make the Carlsbad structure?
2. Chapter 1 of this book What is the minority attack, and what weakness does it create?
3. Blue Belt, Chapter 2 At Blue you kept a ledger of what a sacrifice gives and what it gets back. What does Purple add to that count?

Answers are in the back of the book.

LOOK INSIDE

I can: recognize the windmill and the Greek gift as patterns with conditions; decide a speculative sacrifice using a probability estimate and explain the risk.

2.1 Two named patterns

The windmill is a series of discovered checks in which a rook (or bishop) captures something each time the discovering piece returns; the opponent's king has no choice at any point. In Diagram 2.1 (Torre against Lasker, 1925) the rook takes on g7 with check, and then every rook move along the seventh rank is a discovered check from the bishop on f6: 26.Rxg7+ Kh8 27.Rxf7+ Kg8 28.Rg7+ Kh8 29.Rxb7+.

The Greek gift is the bishop sacrifice on h7 (Bxh7+) followed by Ng5+ and Qh5, against a castled king. It needs three conditions: a knight that can reach g5 with check; a queen that can reach h5 (or the h-file); and no black knight on f6 and no black bishop on e7 to block or cover h7. The conditions matter more than the moves. In Diagram 2.2 all three conditions hold: 1.Bxh7+ Kxh7 2.Ng5+, and every king move loses (2...Kg8 3.Qh5 and mate follows on h7); declining with 1...Kh8 2.Ng5 is no better (engine-verified).

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