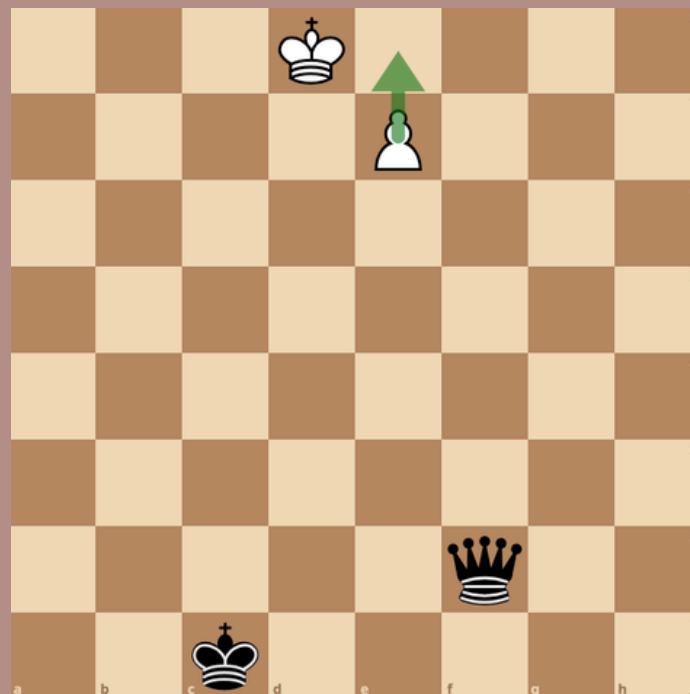


Queen + King vs King + Nearly Promoted Pawn

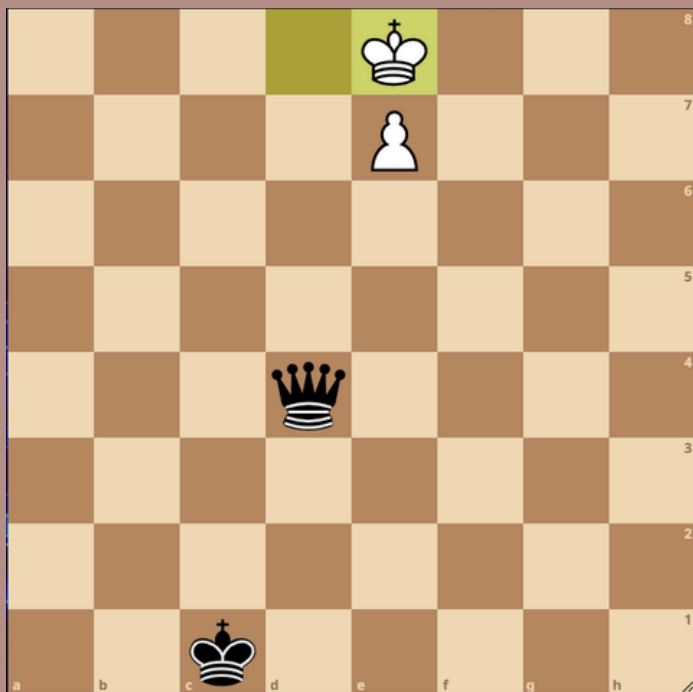
Authored by
Temporary_Coffee

Sometimes, a singular pawn can be all that's between you and checkmate. Knowing how to convert winning positions in endgames is crucial. This lesson will cover the King + Queen vs King + Nearly Promoted Pawn endgame.



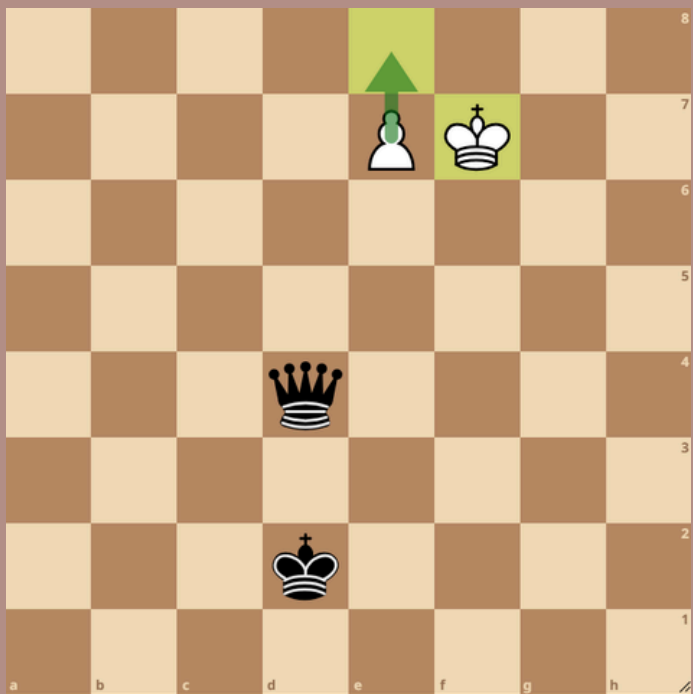
Black to move. White's pawn has nearly promoted. In order to stop the pawn, black needs to have both the king and queen close enough to the pawn to capture it safely. But how can black accomplish that?

1. Qd4+ Ke8



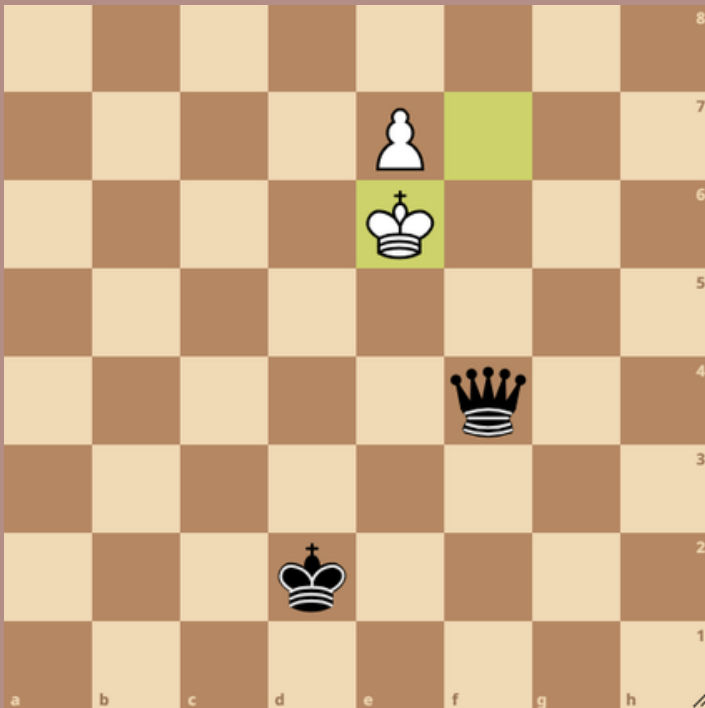
This is the key. White cannot promote the pawn the next turn because the king is in the way. Thus, white must spend an extra turn moving the king. Black will use that extra turn to move the king one space up.

2. Kd2 Kf7



Notice how this position is quite similar to the starting position. White is still threatening to promote the pawn. The only difference is that black's king is one square closer to the pawn.

3. Qf4+ Ke6



White doesn't want to block the promotion of his pawn, so he plays a different move. Black must now try a zig-zag trick to force white's king in front of the pawn again.

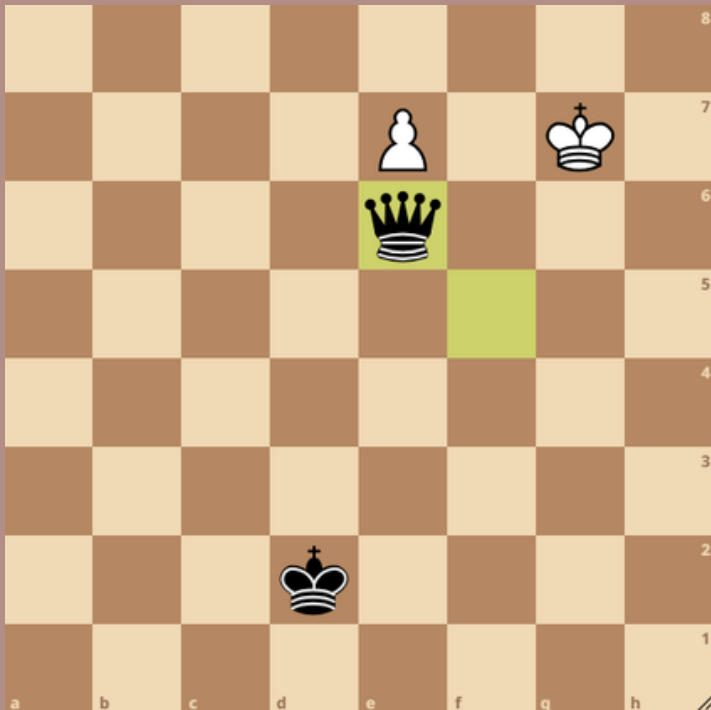
4. Qe4+ Kf7

5. Qf5+ Kg7



White doesn't want to block the promotion of his pawn, so he plays a different move. Black must now try a zig-zag trick to force white's king in front of the pawn again.

6. Qe6 ...



This is a crucial move from black. It does not put white in check, but it forces white's king to f8 if white wants to defend the pawn.

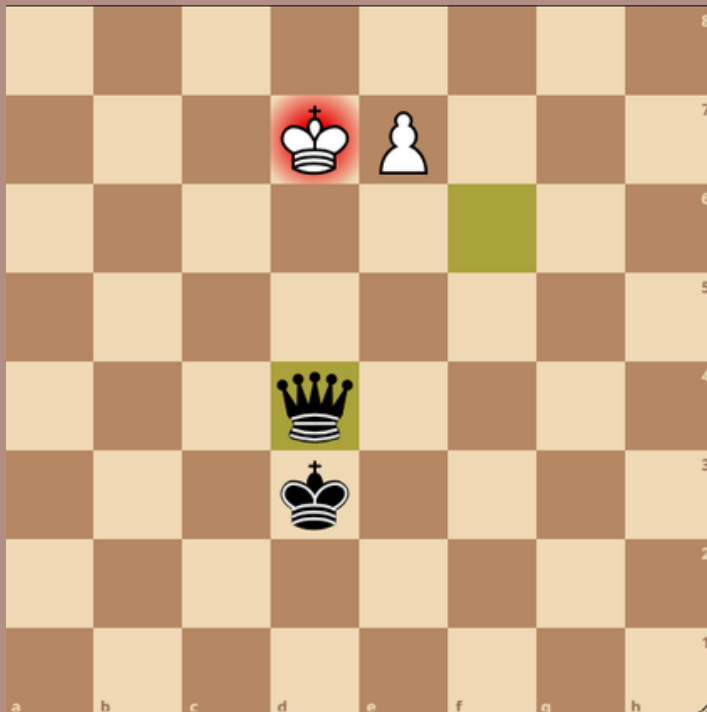
6. ... Kf8

7. Qf6+ ...

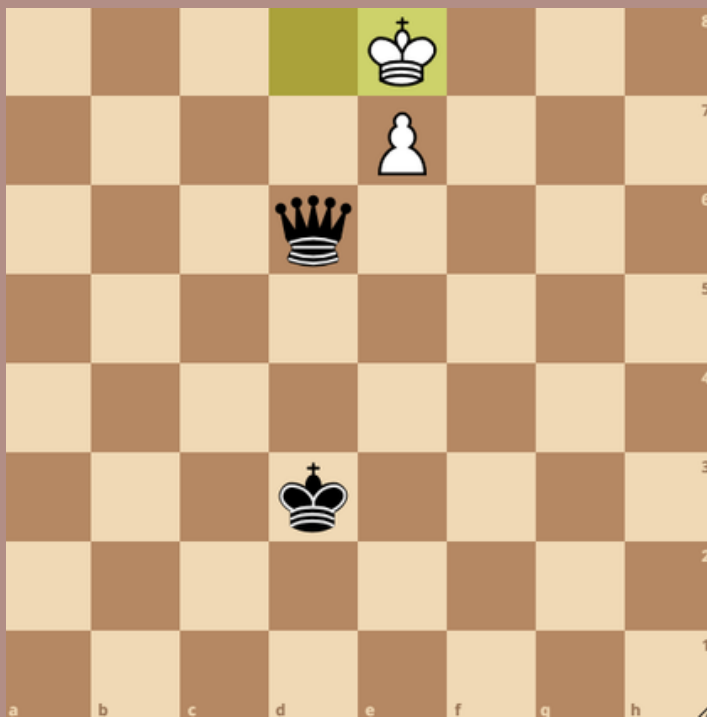


This is another crucial move. White must go Ke8 or lose the pawn.

7. ... Ke8
8. Kd3 Kd7
9. Qd4+ ...



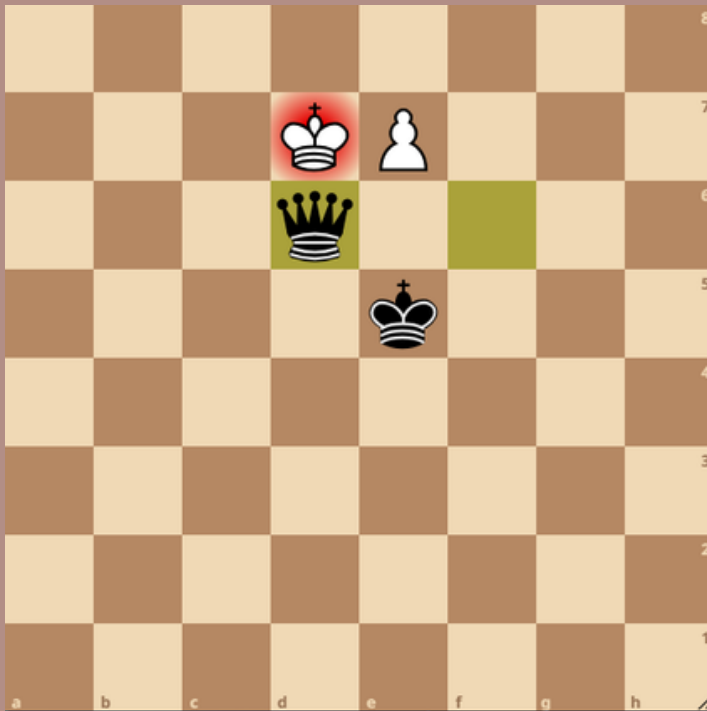
A pattern begins to emerge. Black's king is one square closer. White cannot prevent black's king walk.



9. ... Kc7
10. Qe5+ Kd7
11. Qd5+ Kc7
12. Qe6 Kd8
13. Qd6+ Ke8

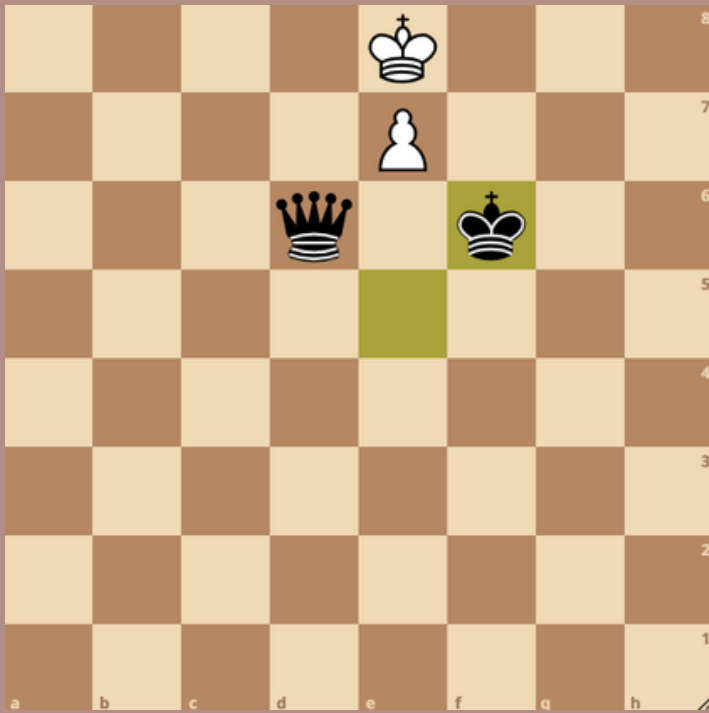
After another zig-zag maneuver, white's king is in front of the pawn again.

14. Ke4 Kf7
15. Qf4+ Kg6
16. Qe5 Kf7
17. Qf5+ Kg7
18. Qe6 Kf8
19. Qf6+ Ke8
20. Ke5 Kd7
21. Qd6+ ...



Now that black's king is close to the pawn, black's queen can safely play a move previously unplayable.

21. ... Ke8
22. Kf6 ...



White is finished. Mate in 2.

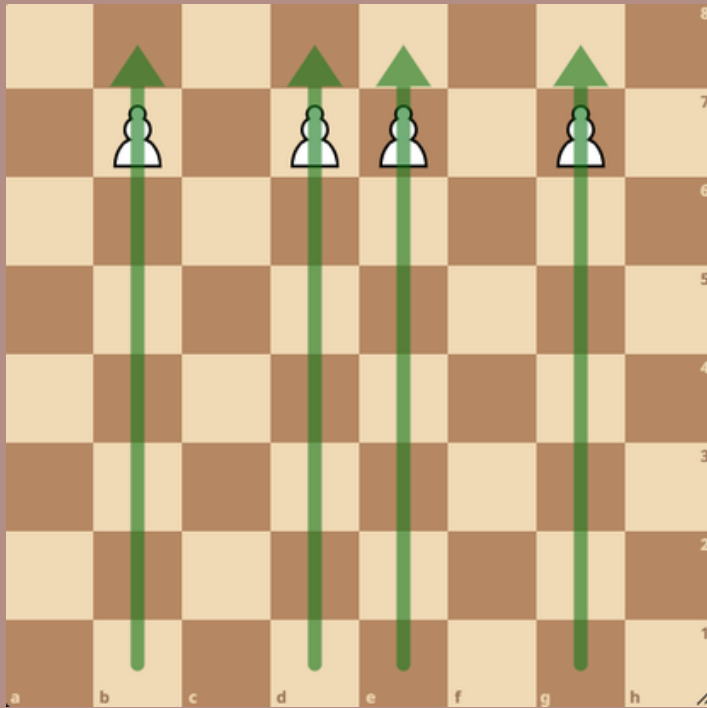
23. ... Kf8

24. Qxe7+ Kg8

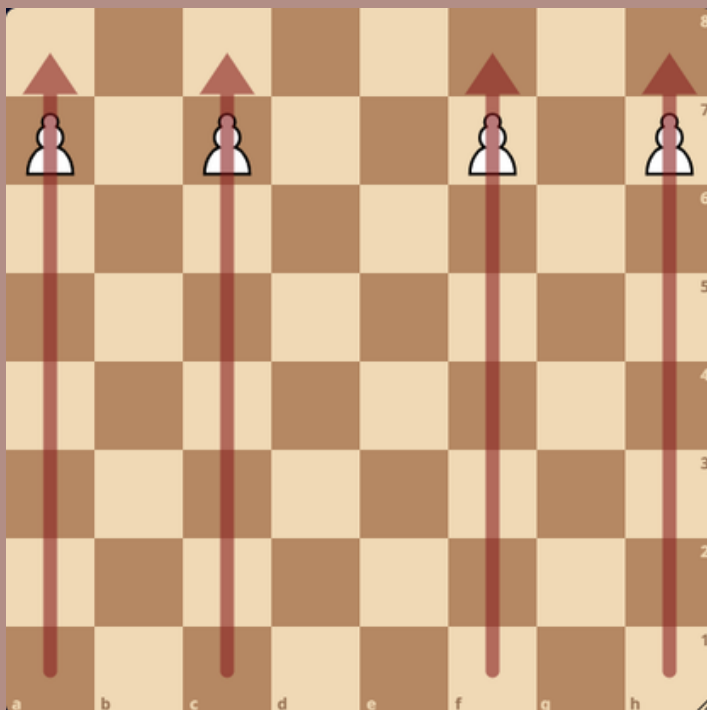
25. Qg7#



Don't memorize this exact sequence of moves. Memorize the idea: force the enemy king in front of their pawn to and slowly advance your king.

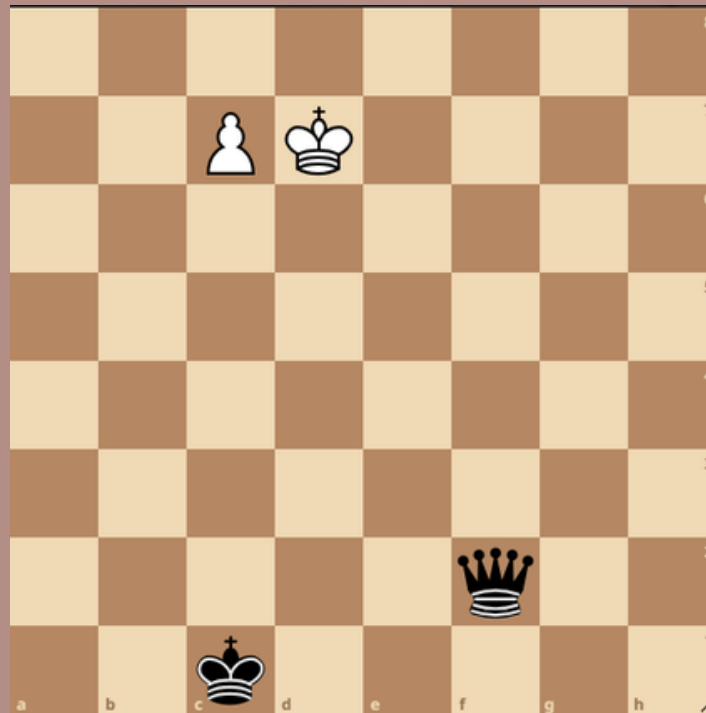


This trick only works when the opponent's pawn is on the b, d, e, or g files.

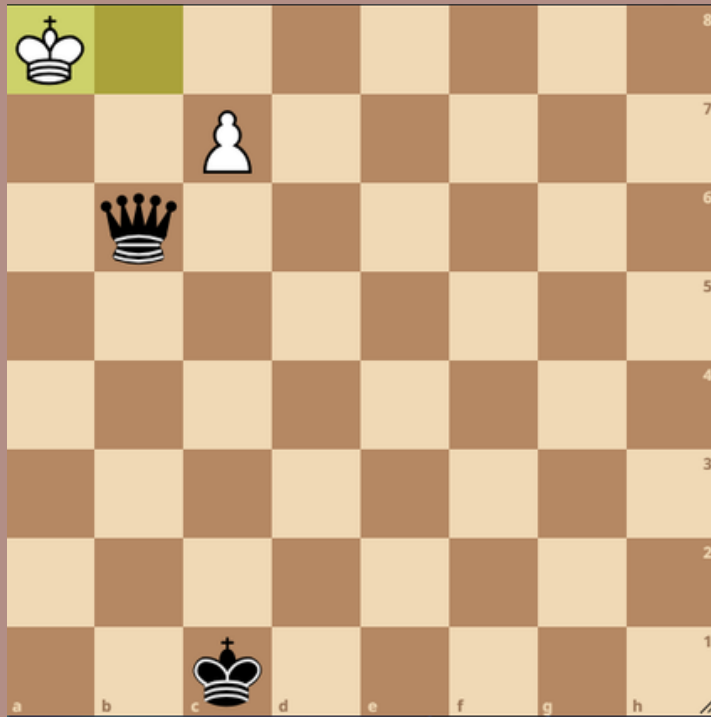


It fails when the opponent's pawn is on the a, c, f, or h files, and the game is a draw.

These pawn configurations are also something that should be memorized. The following examples demonstrate why this trick fails when the pawn is on the a, c, f, or h files.

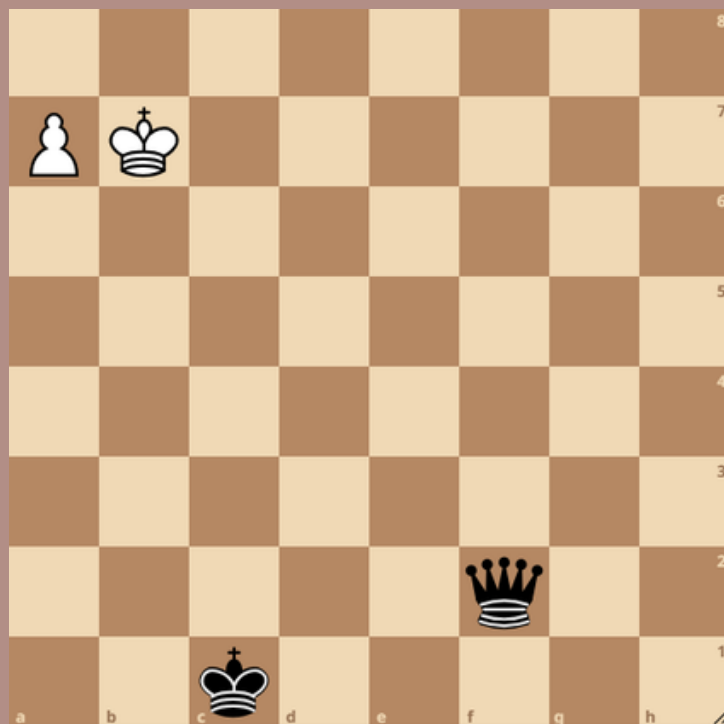


1. Qd4+ Kc8
2. Qc5 Kb8
3. Qb6+ Ka8

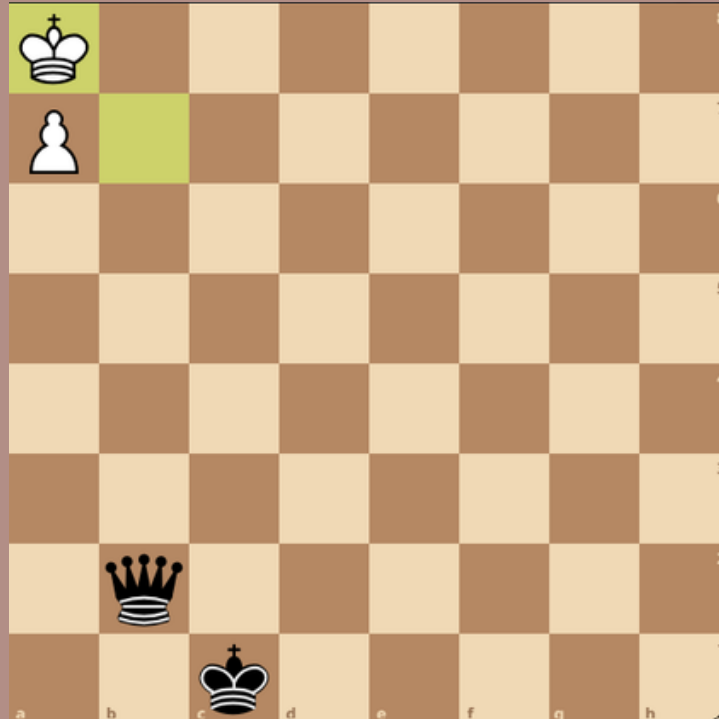


If black takes the pawn, white's king will be stalemated. This game is a draw. This idea is why the c and f pawns are draws.

Here is why this trick fails for the a and h pawns too.

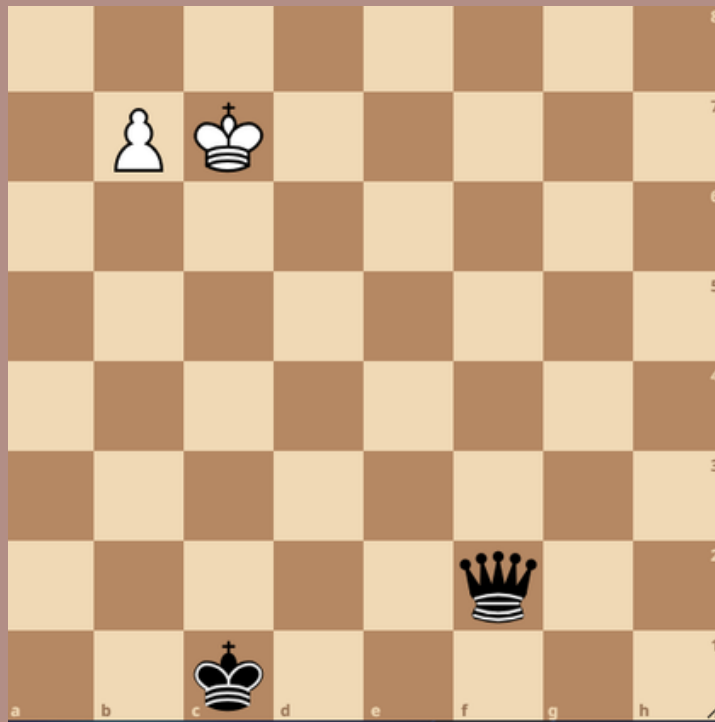


1. Qb2+ Ka8



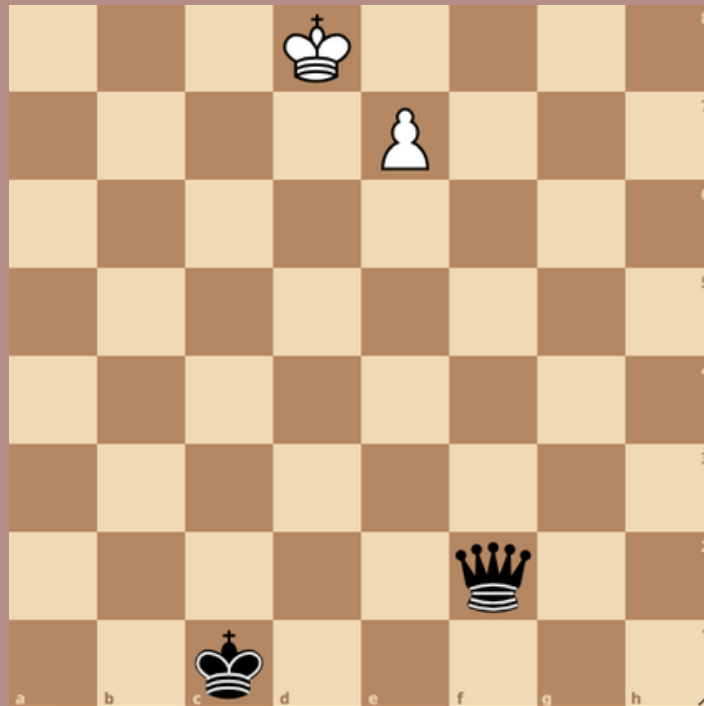
Even though white's king is in front of the the pawn, black can't advance their king due to stalemate. This game is a draw.

All files have been explored (since the d-file is a mirror of the e-file) except for the b and g files. The trick works on these files because it mirrors the geometry of the d and e files. White cannot force stalemate on the b or g files. Below is an example.



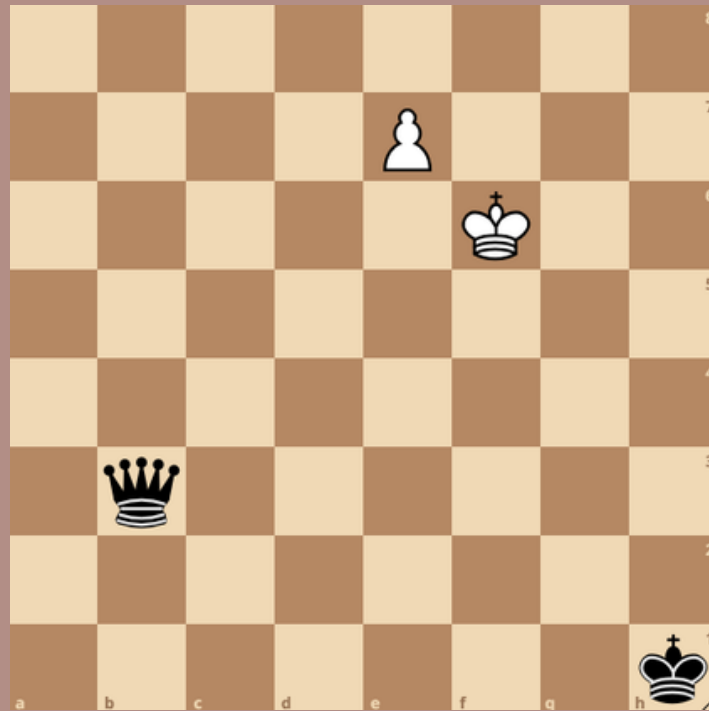
1. Qc5+ Kb8
2. Kb2 Ka8
3. Qa5+ Kb8
4. Kb3 Kc8
5. Qc5+ Kd7
6. Qb6 Kc8
7. Qc6+ Kb8
8. Kb4 Ka7
9. Qa4+ Kb6
10. Qb5+ Ka7
11. Qa5+ Kb8
12. Kb5 Kc8
13. Qa6 Kc7
14. Qc6+ Kb8
15. Ka6 Ka8
16. Qxb7#

Now that we've covered all the material,
let's practice!



This position is winning, but how can black
convert it? Remember to force white's king
in front of the pawn.

Here's another position.

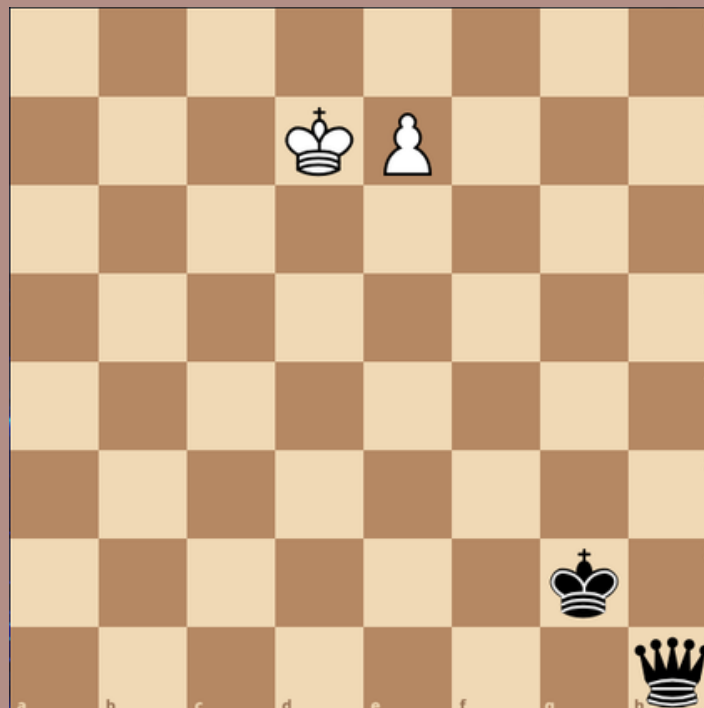


**There are two solutions to this problem!
One is the idea covered in this lesson. Try to
find the other one! The solution is on the
next page.**

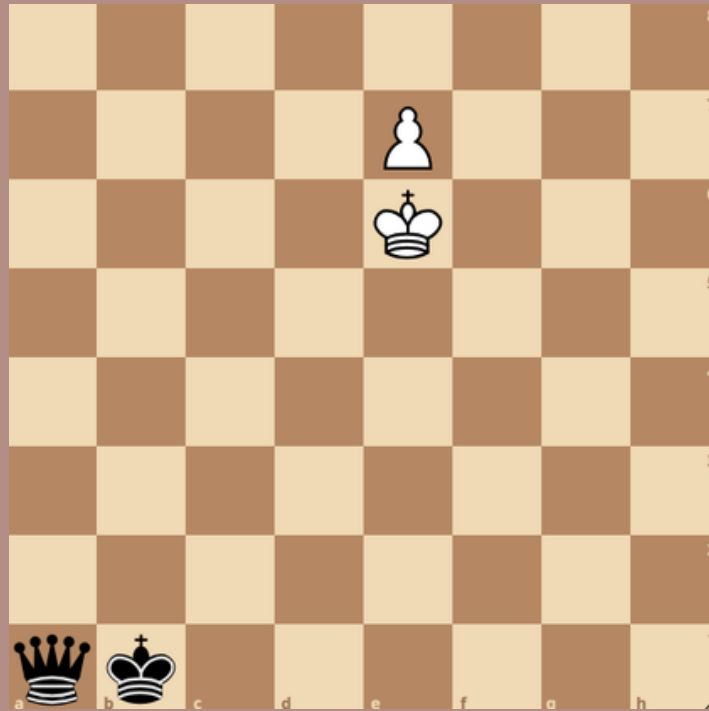
Qg8! The white king must move back to e5 or f5, after which black plays Qe8. The black king then only has to move towards the pawn and capture it with the help of the queen.

- 1. Qg8 Ke5**
- 2. Qe8 Kf6**
- 3. Kg2 Ke6**
- 4. Kf3 Kf6**
- 5. Kf4 Ke6**
- 6. Kg5 Kd6**
- 7. Kf6 Kd5**

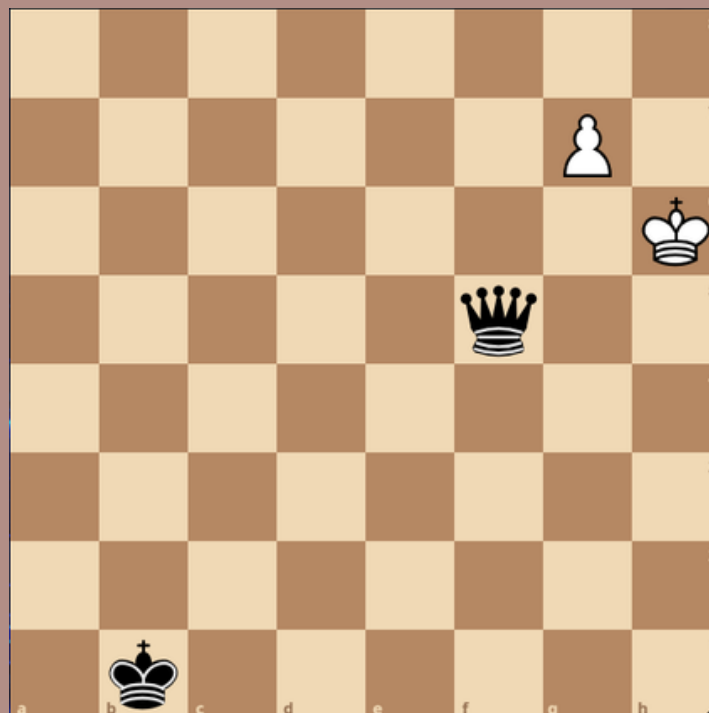
Here's another position. How can black convert?



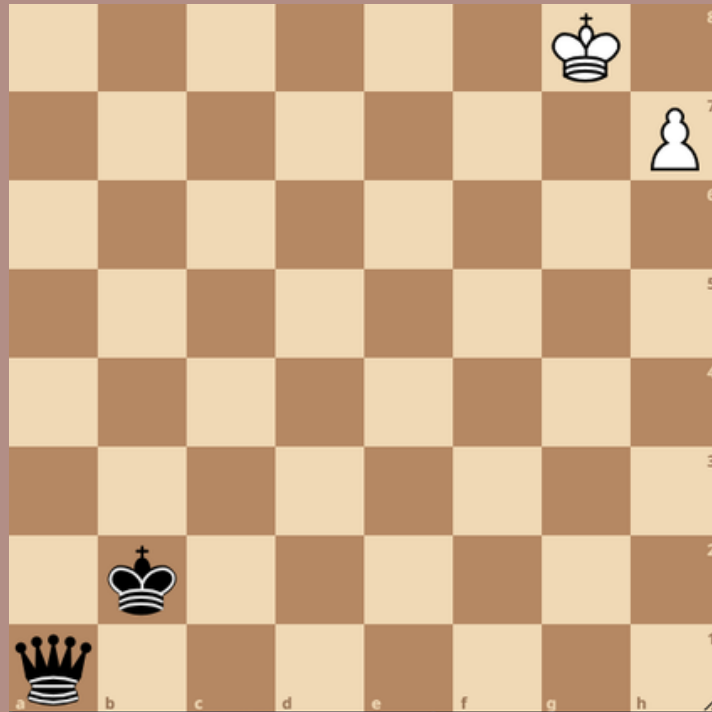
Here's a different exercise. This position may or may not be winning for black. Can you tell without significant calculation? Answers can be found after the last problem.



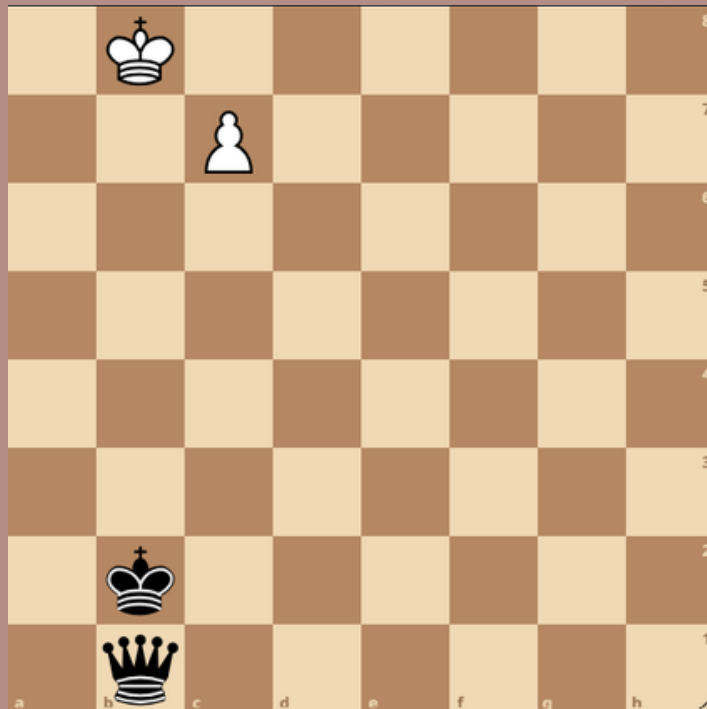
Here's another one. Can black win?



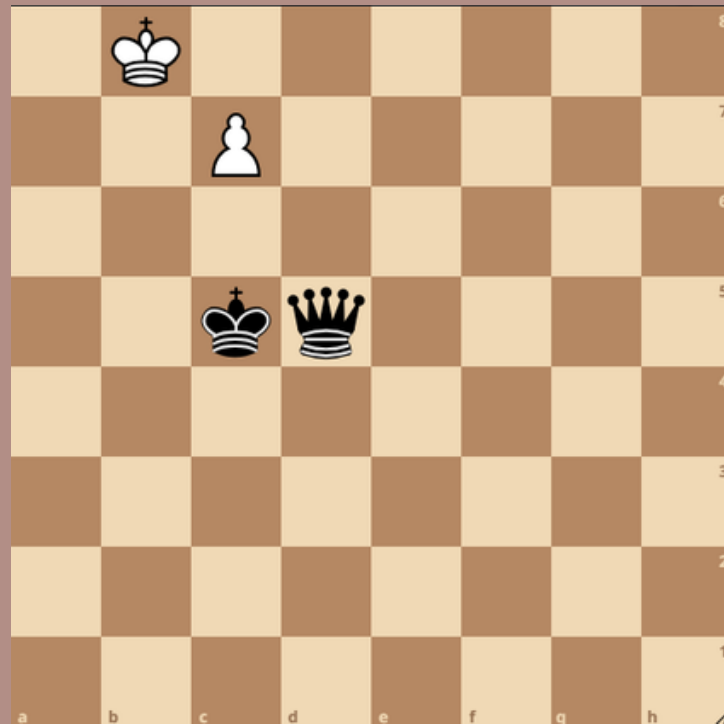
Here's another one. Can black win?



Here's another one. Can black win?



Here's another one. Can black win?



Answers:

1. **Yes**
2. **Yes**
3. **No**
4. **No**
5. **Yes, even though the pawn is on the c-file, the black king is close enough to the pawn where it doesn't matter. Always remember there are exceptions to nearly every rule in chess. The exact solution is given below:**

1. Qd6 Ka8
2. Qc6+ Kb8
3. Kb6 c8=Q
4. Qd6+ Ka8
5. Qa3+ Qa6+
6. Qxa6+ Kb8
7. Qb7# ...

This trick is rare in standard games but necessary for higher-level chess. I hope this lesson was both helpful and informative!