FREE WORKBOOK · ELITE · 1900 AND ABOVE

Blindfold Practice: Elite

Elite players calculate long forcing lines without moving a piece. Here you play through famous games in your head and find the winning blow, follow full opening main lines, and solve mates in three from the written position.

How to practise

- Read the question once, out loud if you like. Then look away from the page and picture the board.
- Do not use a board or an app while you solve. Write your answer first, then check it on a board.
- Answers are at the back. Cover them while you work.
- Little and often works best: 10 to 15 minutes a day beats one long session a week.

A. Famous finishes

Play the game in your head from the start, without a board. Then find the winning continuation and write the whole line.

1 **Légal vs Saint Brie, Paris 1750**
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bc4 Bg4 4.Nc3 g6
White to play. The black bishop pins the knight to the queen. Find the win.
Answer: _____

2 **Réti vs Tartakower, Vienna 1910**
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Qd3 e5 6.dxe5 Qa5+ 7.Bd2 Qxe5 8.O-O-O Nxe4
White to play and mate in three.
Answer: _____

3 **Morphy vs Duke Karl and Count Isouard, Paris 1858**
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Bg4 4.dxe5 Bxf3 5.Qxf3 dxe5 6.Bc4 Nf6 7.Qb3 Qe7 8.Nc3 c6 9.Bg5 b5 10.Nxb5 cxb5 11.Bxb5+ Nbd7 12.O-O-O Rd8 13.Rxd7 Rxd7 14.Rd1 Qe6 15.Bxd7+ Nxd7
White to play and mate in two.
Answer: _____

4 **Edward Lasker vs Thomas, London 1912**
1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.Bxf6 Bxf6 6.e4 fxe4 7.Nxe4 b6 8.Ne5 O-O 9.Bd3 Bb7 10.Qh5 Qe7
White to play. Find the sacrifice that starts a king hunt across the whole board, ending in mate in eight.
Answer: _____

B. Opening main lines

Play each line in your head, then answer the three questions.

Sicilian Najdorf, English Attack: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f3 Be7 9.Qd2 O-O 10.O-O-O Nbd7 11.g4 b5

5 What is on f2?
Answer: _____

6 What is on d6?
Answer: _____

7 If it were White to move, how many legal moves would the knight on c3 have?
Answer: _____

King's Indian, Classical: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2 e5 7.O-O Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Ne1 Nd7

8 What is on b8?
Answer: _____

9 What is on d5?
Answer: _____

10 If it were White to move, how many legal moves would the bishop on e2 have?
Answer: _____

Caro-Kann, Classical: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6

11 What is on h7?
Answer: _____

12 What is on g3?
Answer: _____

13 If it were White to move, how many legal moves would the knight on g3 have?
Answer: _____

French Defence, Winawer: 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Qg4 Qc7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 cxd4

14 What is on d2?
Answer: _____

15 What is on c7?
Answer: _____

16 If it were Black to move, how many legal moves would the queen on c7 have?
Answer: _____

C. Crowded mate in two

Many pieces, and only one first move works. Hold the whole position before you start calculating.

17 **White:** Ka1, Qb2, Bb3, Bg8, Nh8
Black: Ka8, Bc7, pawns g3 a6
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

18 **White:** Kf6, Qc1, Ne7
Black: Kh6, Qf2, Rg5, Bf5, Ng2, pawn h3
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

19 **White:** Ke7, Qe3, pawns d5 a7
Black: Ka8, Nb6, pawns c2 g3 g6 d7 f7
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

20 **White:** Ka7, Qg8, Re6, Bd5, pawn d3
Black: Kd7, Rb1, Re7, Bh4, Ng6, pawns b2 c3 h6
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

21 **White:** Kd5, Qa2, Rb6, Rh7, Bh3, Bf8, pawns g3 a7
Black: Kh5, Rc8, Ng6, pawns d2 h6
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

22 **White:** Kd5, Qf6, Bg7, Nd2, pawns a2 a3 a5 c7
Black: Ka7, Nc2, Nb7, pawns d4 f5
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

23 **White:** Kf3, Qe2, Ra6, Be5, Nb1, pawns a3 g3
Black: Ka8, Rh3, Nb8, pawns f2 g2 a7
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

24 **White:** Ke3, Qa1, Rc2, Bd1, Bc8, pawn a4
Black: Kd8, Na5, Na8, pawn d3
White to play and mate in 2.
Answer: _____

D. Blindfold mate in three

Find the forcing line: White's first move, the best defence, and mate on the third move. Write the main line.

25 **White:** Ke2, Rc1, Bc5, Bh8, Nh3, pawn e6
Black: Kh5, pawns c3 h6
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

26 **White:** Ke2, Qe1, Rc8, Bb2, pawn h2
Black: Ka4, Ne6, pawn h5
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

27 **White:** Kg6, Qb4, pawn c5
Black: Ke7, Bd2
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

28 **White:** Kf1, Qf2, Ng5
Black: Kh8, Re5, pawn f7
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

29 **White:** Kf1, Rb5, Bc6, pawn h6
Black: Ka3, pawn d4
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

30 **White:** Kg8, Qg2, Ba1, Bf6, Ne2, pawn a4
Black: Kc8, Rh3, pawn g4
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

31 **White:** Kh3, Qd2, Nd5, pawn f4
Black: Ka8, Bh1
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

32 **White:** Kc1, Rf5, Rg7, pawn a2
Black: Ka6, Rg2, pawn g3
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

33 **White:** Kc4, Rf7, pawns h2 a6
Black: Kh8, Rd7, pawns d3 d4
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

34 **White:** Ke5, Rc1, pawn h7
Black: Kb8, Qb7, Rd1, Bf2, pawn a7
White to play and mate in 3.
Answer: _____

Your practice log

Do one section a day. Write your score, then do the same section again a week later and see how much faster it feels.

Date	Section	Score	Time taken	What felt hard

Next: play full blindfold games against the computer on chessdepth.in/blindfold/, and replay your own tournament games in your head before you check them on a board.

Answers

Check each answer on a real board after you have written yours. If you got one wrong, set up the position and play it through slowly, then try it again blindfold the next day.

A. Famous finishes

1 5.Nxe5 Bxd1 6.Bxf7+ Ke7 7.Nd5#

2 9.Qd8+ Kxd8 10.Bg5+ Kc7 11.Bd8#

3 16.Qb8+ Nxb8 17.Rd8#

4 11.Qxh7+ Kxh7 12.Nxf6+ Kh6 13.Neg4+ Kg5 14.h4+ Kf4 15.g3+ Kf3 16.Be2+ Kg2 17.Rh2+ Kg1 18.Kd2#

B. Opening main lines

5 Empty

6 A black pawn

7 5 (a4, b1, b5, d5, e2)

8 Empty

9 A white pawn

10 4 (d3, f3, g4, h5)

11 Empty

12 A white knight

13 4 (e2, e4, f1, f5)

14 Empty

15 A black queen

16 10 (a5, b6, c3, c4, c5, c6, d6, d7, d8, e5)

C. Crowded mate in two

17 1.Bbd5+ Ka7 2.Qb7#

18 1.Qxg5+ Kh7 2.Qh5#

19 1.Qxb6 c1=Q 2.Qb8#

20 1.Bc6+ Kc7 2.Qb8#

21 1.Rxh6+ Kg5 2.Rbxg6#

22 1.Qb6+ Ka8 2.c8=Q#

23 1.Qe4+ Nc6 2.Qxc6#

24 1.Qf6+ Ke8 2.Bh5#

D. Blindfold mate in three

25 1.Rg1 c2 2.Nf4+ Kh4 3.Bf2#

26 1.Rb8 Nf4+ 2.Kf3 Ne6 3.Qa1#

27 1.Qxd2 Ke8 2.Kf6 Kf8 3.Qd8#

28 1.Qf6+ Kg8 2.Qxf7+ Kh8 3.Qf8#

29 1.h7 d3 2.h8=Q d2 3.Qa1#

30 1.Qc6+ Kb8 2.Bfe5+ Ka7 3.Bad4#

31 1.Qa5+ Kb7 2.Qb6+ Ka8 3.Nc7#

32 1.Rg6+ Kb7 2.Rf7+ Kc8 3.Rg8#

33 1.Rxd7 Kg8 2.a7 d2 3.a8=Q#

34 1.h8=Q+ Rd8 2.Qxd8+ Qc8 3.Qxc8#