

FIDE EBOARD CHESS REGULATIONS

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Introduction

The FIDE eBoard Chess Regulations are intended to cover all competitions where players play on an eBoard and transmit moves via the internet.

Wherever possible, these Regulations are intended to be identical to the FIDE Laws of Chess and related FIDE competition regulations, as well as to the FIDE Online Chess Regulations. They are intended for use by players and arbiters in official FIDE online and hybrid competitions, and as a technical specification for online chess platforms hosting these competitions.

The purpose of using an eBoard is to have a completely screen-free playing experience - to enable a user to play chess with a real chess board and real pieces but *without* looking at a computer screen or using a computer keyboard. This enables an eBoard player to conduct their games in a completely intuitive and user-friendly way. When we refer to “user-friendly” in this context we do not mean friendly for a computer-user, we mean friendly for a chess player. The same applies to “intuitive” – the process should be intuitive for a chess player who might not be an experienced computer user. So regular chess players will find the whole of the playing process intuitive - they should not have to consult a computer screen during a game, or to use a computer keyboard.

These Regulations cannot cover all possible situations that may arise during a competition, but it should be possible for an arbiter with the necessary competence, sound judgment, and objectivity, to arrive at the correct decision based on his/her understanding of these Regulations.

For an introductory period the application of these regulations in FIDE events will be limited to those events in which the eBoard players are below 2200 Elo. This will give FIDE the opportunity to gain experience with the use of eBoards and in particular to receive feedback from arbiters. After a suitable period these regulations may be revised, based on the feedback received by FIDE, and they can then be additionally applied to FIDE events with eBoard players rated 2200 and above.

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Part I: Basic Rules of Play

Article 1: Application of the FIDE Laws of Chess

- 1.1 Articles 4 and 5 of the Basic rules of play from the FIDE Laws of Chess are superseded by Articles 3 and 5 of these Regulations respectively.

Part II: eBoard Chess Rules

Article 2: Playing Zone

- 2.1 These regulations apply to players who are using an “eBoard”. The event regulations must state that either (a) both players in a game must use an eBoard; or (b) neither player in a game may use an eBoard. This ensures that both players in a game are competing under equal conditions.
- 2.2 The eBoard shall be hosted by an online playing zone, usually an application or a website.
- 2.3 The arbiter shall have access to a screen displaying the moves of the game and the clock times of the players, as well as information indicating draw agreements, mandatory draws, resignation, and indications when a player calls for arbiter assistance.
- 2.4 A player using an eBoard must have access to a screen or other device (such as a chess clock connected to the eBoard) displaying the clock times of the players.
- 2.5 Each player’s playing zone must allow an arbiter to adjust the clock times in accordance with Article 4.4.
- 2.6 Each player is responsible for familiarising themselves with the playing zone’s features and functionality, and those of the eBoard.

Article 3: Moving the pieces on the eBoard

- 3.1 Moves are made on the eBoard in the same way as on a traditional chess board.
- 3.2 The playing zone shall only accept legal moves.
- 3.3 All moves and the clock times after each move are automatically recorded by the playing zone. The clock times are visible for a player using an eBoard, and for the arbiter. The moves of the game are visible for the arbiter.
- 3.4 If a player is unable to move the pieces, an assistant, who shall be acceptable to the arbiter, may be provided by the player to perform this operation.
- 3.5 The eBoard or the playing zone must offer a feature which can be used to verify which piece, if any, the eBoard believes is on each square.
- 3.6 The eBoard technology is responsible for determining when a player has completed a move by releasing a piece, and for stopping that player’s clock time and starting their opponent’s clock time.

Article 4: Virtual Chess Clock

- 4.1 ‘Virtual chess clock’ means the individual time displays of both players displayed by the playing zone.
- 4.2 Each player must complete a minimum number of moves or all moves in an allotted period of time, including any additional amount of time with each move. The competition regulations will specify these in advance.
- 4.3 If a player does not complete the prescribed number of moves in the allotted time, the game is lost by that player. However, the game is automatically drawn if the position is

such that the opponent cannot checkmate the player's king by any possible series of legal moves.

- 4.4 An arbiter may adjust the clock time of one or both players in a game as stipulated in Articles 10.5, 10.9.2, 10.9.3, 18.4.2, 18.4.3 and 18.9(b). This must be achievable within each player's playing zone.

Article 5: Completing the Game

- 5.1 The game is won by the player who has checkmated his/her opponent's king.
- 5.2 The game is won by the player whose opponent declares he/she resigns by pressing button "resign" or by another method available on the playing zone.
- 5.3 The player can offer a draw in accordance with any method provided by the playing zone.
The offer cannot be withdrawn and remains valid until the opponent accepts it, rejects it by playing a move or the game is concluded in some other way.
- 5.4 The game is automatically drawn when:
- 5.4.1 the same position appeared for the third time (as described in Article 9.2.2 of the FIDE Laws of Chess);
 - 5.4.2 the player to move has no legal move and his/her king is not in check. The game is said to end in 'stalemate';
 - 5.4.3 a position has arisen in which neither player can checkmate the opponent's king with any series of legal moves;
 - 5.4.4 the last 50 moves by each player have been completed without the movement of any pawn and without any capture.

Part III: Regulations for Online and Hybrid Competitions

Article 6: Competition Types

- 6.1 Online competitions may be played under the following formats:
- 6.1.1 An "Online chess competition" event without specific player supervision, possibly automated by a playing zone without the supervision of an arbiter. "Online chess" is the most generic term for Internet chess games. The regulations of this kind of events are specified by the playing zones.
 - 6.1.2 "Online Chess with supervision" competition is an event where players are remotely supervised by an arbiter. (see Part III a).
 - 6.1.3 "Hybrid chess" competition is an event where all players are physically supervised by an arbiter, while they play online (see Part III b)
- 6.2 The competition regulations shall specify the kind of competition listed in Article 6.1.

Article 7: Scoring System

- 7.1 Unless the regulations of an event specify otherwise, a player who wins his game, or wins by forfeit, scores one point (1), a player who loses his/her game, or forfeits, scores no points (0), and a player who draws his game scores a half point ($\frac{1}{2}$).
- 7.2 The total score of any game can never exceed the maximum score normally given for that game. Scores given to an individual player must be those normally associated with the game, for example a score of $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ is not allowed.

Part III a: Regulations for Online Competitions with Supervision

Article 8: General Provisions

- 8.1 The 'playing venue' is defined as the 'playing area', and toilets or restrooms. The playing area is defined as the room where the player plays his/her moves. The regulations of a competition may require the playing area should be monitored by cameras.
- 8.2 No one except the player are allowed to be in the playing area without the permission of the Arbiter.
- 8.3 The time control and method of implementation shall be specified in competition regulations.
- 8.4 If the playing zone allows players to move pieces in contradiction with Article 3.3 (illegal moves), the competition regulations must specify how to deal with such irregularities.
- 8.5 The competition regulations shall specify a default time in advance. If the default time is not specified, then it is zero. If the competition regulations specify that the default time is not zero and if neither player is present initially, White shall lose all the time that elapses until he/she arrives, unless the competition regulations specify or the arbiter decides otherwise.
- 8.6 On a screen available to an arbiter or a player the playing zone must record, when a draw is offered, that offer next to the offering player's move. If an eBoard player is not using such a screen the playing zone or the eBoard must indicate to that player, in some other way, when a draw offer is made by the opponent. These requirements also apply when a player asks for the intervention of an arbiter.

Article 9: Player's Conduct

- 9.1 The players shall take no action that will bring the game of chess into disrepute including the way that a player behaves in front of the cameras.
- 9.2 Each player shall connect to the playing zone with an authorized device, to access their games.
- 9.3 Players must wear appropriate clothing when visible on camera and follow the dress code of the competition, if any.
- 9.4 A player may not conceal their true identity in any way, for example pretending to be a different player.
- 9.5 During a game a player may leave the playing area or the playing venue only with the permission of the arbiter.
- 9.6 During play the players are forbidden from using any electronic device, notes, sources of information or advice, or to analyse any game on another chessboard.
- 9.7 Players are not allowed to have headphones in or over their ears during play.
- 9.8
 - 9.8.1 During a game, a player is forbidden from having in the playing venue any electronic device which is not specifically approved by the arbiter. However, the regulations of an event may allow such devices to be stored very near to the playing area only as a help to provide backup internet.
 - 9.8.2 If it becomes evident that a player has a forbidden device in the playing venue, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win. The competition regulations may specify a different, less severe, penalty. The Chief Arbiter can also decide to exclude the player from the competition.
 - 9.8.3 The arbiter may require the player to show his/her clothes, bags, contents of drawers/cupboards, or other items. A player's body, including ears, may also be inspected. These inspections will be by camera. Where the player's body is searched, other than just the ears, then it must be done

- in private by a person of the same gender. This search must not be recorded.
- 9.9 Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted when visible on camera.
 - 9.10 It is forbidden to distract or annoy the opponent in any manner whatsoever. This includes unreasonable claims, unreasonable offers of a draw, sending inappropriate messages or the introduction of a source of noise into the playing area.
 - 9.11 Infraction of any part of Articles 9.1 – 9.10 shall lead to penalties in accordance with Article 10.9.
 - 9.12 Players who have finished their games shall be considered to be spectators and must comply with the instructions of the Arbiter and the competition regulations. For example: mute their microphones, switch off their cameras and/or stop screen sharing.
 - 9.13 A player shall have the right to request from the arbiter an explanation of particular points in the FIDE Online Chess Regulations.
 - 9.14 Unless the competition regulations specify otherwise, a player may appeal against the decision of the arbiter. This includes appeals against the result of a game, even if the result was set by the playing zone and approved by the arbiter.
 - 9.15 Players may observe other games from their current competition by any means permitted by the playing zone, provided they respect instructions on allowed behaviour during a game. Players are forbidden from accessing any kind of game analysis during play.

Article 10: The Arbiter's Role

- 10.1 The arbiter shall see that the FIDE Online Chess Regulations and these eBoard Regulations are observed. In the event of a conflict arising between these two sets of regulations the arbiter shall make whatever ruling he/she believes is appropriate.
- 10.2 The arbiter shall:
 - 10.2.1 ensure fair play,
 - 10.2.2 act in the best interest of the competition,
 - 10.2.3 ensure that a good playing environment is maintained,
 - 10.2.4 ensure that the players are not disturbed,
 - 10.2.5 supervise the progress of the competition,
 - 10.2.6 take special measures in the interests of disabled players and those who need medical attention,
 - 10.2.7 follow the Anti-Cheating Rules or Guidelines for FIDE Online Chess Competitions
- 10.3 The arbiters shall observe the games, especially when the players are short of time, enforce decisions they have made, and impose penalties on players where appropriate.
 - 10.3.1 The arbiter may appoint assistants to observe games and players.
- 10.4 The arbiter shall arrange the setup and inspect the playing area as appropriate before the start of a game. The arbiter shall arrive not less than 90 minutes before the scheduled start time, and in any case in sufficient time to make the necessary preparations, including those specified in Articles 18.5 and 18.6. The arbiter should instruct the players to arrive in the playing area 20 minutes before the start of a game in order to verify the preparations, or at such other time as the arbiter shall decide.
- 10.5 The arbiter may award either or both players additional time in the event of external disturbance of the game.
- 10.6 The arbiter must not intervene in a game except in cases described by the FIDE Online Chess Regulations and/or these regulations.
- 10.7 Players in other games must not speak about or otherwise interfere in a game. Spectators are not allowed to interfere in a game. The arbiter may expel offenders from the playing venue.
- 10.8 Unless authorised by the arbiter, it is forbidden for anybody to use a mobile phone or any kind of communication device in the playing venue or any contiguous area designated by the arbiter.

- 10.9 Options available to the arbiter concerning penalties:
- 10.9.1 warning,
 - 10.9.2 increasing the remaining time of the opponent,
 - 10.9.3 reducing the remaining time of the offending player,
 - 10.9.4 increasing the points scored in the game by the opponent to the maximum available for that game,
 - 10.9.5 reducing the points scored in the game by the offending person,
 - 10.9.6 declaring the game to be lost by the offending player (the arbiter shall also decide the opponent's score),
 - 10.9.7 a fine announced in advance,
 - 10.9.8 exclusion from one or more rounds,
 - 10.9.9 expulsion from the competition.

Article 11: Disconnections

- 11.1 It is the player's responsibility to be connected to the playing zone. This includes providing a stable internet connection and a working playing device.
- 11.1.1 The player may maintain his/her connection via a mobile device, only with the prior permission of the Arbiter.
- 11.2 The player shall follow the instructions given by the arbiter concerning his/her presence in the playing zone.
- 11.3 The competition regulations shall state the consequences and potential sanctions in the case of a disconnection from the playing zone during a playing session.
- 11.4 During a game, if a player disconnects from the playing zone, the clock shall continue running.
- 11.4.1 If the player can reconnect to the game before his/her remaining thinking time elapsed, he/she shall continue playing with the thinking time remaining on his/her clock. The arbiter shall decide whether further sanctions are appropriate.
 - 11.4.2 If the player cannot reconnect to the game before his/her remaining thinking time is over, then that player shall lose the game unless the competition regulations specify otherwise (including the amount of time that a disconnected player must reconnect within). However, the game is drawn in the situation described in Article 4.5.
- 11.5 During a disconnection both players must not leave their places without the permission of the Arbiter

Article 12: Playing Device

- 12.1 During a game the player shall play with an eBoard which is connected to a single screen, and share them with the Arbiter, unless specified otherwise in the competition regulations.
- 12.2 During a playing session, the arbiter shall have access upon request to the open applications shown on the player's screen.
- 12.3 No application, other than the one used to play and a Video Conferencing System, must be open on the player's device during the session, unless allowed by the arbiter.
- 12.4 The eBoard or the playing zone must allow a player to offer a draw, resign or call for arbiter assistance, preferably with the press of a single button or by a similarly simple method.

Article 13: Video Conferencing System

- 13.1 When played under video supervision, a competition shall provide a Video Conferencing System (VCS) for use by the players and arbiters. The system shall have the following features:
- 13.1.1 A full view of the player displaying at least their face, and if required, their playing area;
 - 13.1.2 Audio of the player and surrounding area (via a microphone);
 - 13.1.3 Support for screen sharing by the player (under the control of the player and Arbiter).

- 13.2 Each player is required to connect to the VCS at a time specified by the arbiter and remain connected during the entire session.
- 13.3 If a player disconnects from the VCS, but is still connected to the playing zone, then the player is forbidden from moving a piece on the chess board, until he/she reconnects to the VCS.
- 13.4 The competition regulations may specify that a system of yellow (warning) and red (loss) cards is implemented to support the handling of sanctions due to disconnections from the VCS.

Article 14: Cameras and Microphones

- 14.1 When playing under video supervision, the player shall use a webcam that shows his/her complete face during the game. The picture displayed shall not hide the surroundings of the player i.e. no virtual background shall be allowed.
- 14.2 The room lighting must be sufficient to allow broadcasting and movement of a player's eyes to be monitored by the Arbiter.
- 14.3 A player's microphone must always transmit any sounds audible near the player to the Arbiter.
- 14.4 The regulations of the competition may specify that extra monitoring devices (e.g. cameras) are required.

Article 15: Irregularities

- 15.1 Each player is entitled to ask for an arbiter's assistance. If a player calls the Arbiter in order to seek the arbiter's assistance, the arbiter shall determine whether the player has a valid reason for doing so. If the player has no valid reason for doing so, he/she may be penalised in accordance with Article 10.9.
- 15.2 If a game has started with colours reversed then, if less than 10 moves have been made by both players, it shall be discontinued and a new game played with the correct colours. After 10 moves or more, the game shall continue.
- 15.3 If a game is not drawn automatically when one of the situations described in Article 5.4 (automatically drawn situations) has occurred, the arbiter will declare the game drawn.
- 15.4 If a playing zone automatically declares a draw in contradiction with Article 4.5 (mate possibilities still exist), the arbiter is entitled to modify the automatic result.
- 15.5 If during a game it is found that the setting of either or both clocks is incorrect, the arbiter shall adjust the chess clock immediately. The arbiter shall install the correct setting and adjust the times, if necessary. He/she shall use his/her best judgement when determining the clock settings.
- 15.6 If the game needs to be interrupted for any reason, the arbiter shall pause the chess clock if possible. If it is not possible, the arbiter may add additional time to either or both players.

Part III b: Regulations for Hybrid Chess Competitions

Article 16: General Provisions

- 16.1 The Chief Organiser designates the playing venues for the competition. Each playing venue is under the control of a Local Organiser.
- 16.2 Each Local Organiser is required to provide a playing venue suitable to host a hybrid chess competition. The 'playing venue' is defined as the 'playing area', rest rooms, toilets, refreshment area, area set aside for smoking and other places as designated by the arbiter. The playing area is defined as the place where the games of a competition are played. Only players and arbiter are allowed access to the playing area.
- 16.3 Each playing venue must be monitored by cameras.
- 16.4 In each playing venue, the fair play measures should be applied in accordance with the FIDE Anti-Cheating Regulations and FIDE Anti-Cheating Protection Measures. Unless authorised by the arbiter, it is forbidden for anybody to use a mobile phone or any kind of communication device in the playing venue or any contiguous area designated by the arbiter.
- 16.5 Each Local Organiser is responsible for providing an eBoard for each player using one, and an Internet connection, in the playing venue. Players are not responsible for their connections to HIP and to a communication system (if required by the competition regulations), unless the competition regulations say otherwise.
- 16.6 In each venue eBoards used for conducting online games (playing devices) are provided by the Local Organiser, unless the competition regulations say otherwise.
- 16.7 During the game, each player's eBoard shall have access to any software required for the purpose of connecting to the Internet. No other website, application or software can be accessible to the player on the playing device. The only exception may be a (video-) communication system, if required by competition regulations.
- 16.8 At least two arbiters will be appointed for each playing venue: a Local Chief Arbiter (LCA) and a Local Technical Assistant (LTA).
- 16.9 The total number of arbiters required in each playing venue will vary depending on the kind of event, on the system of the games, on the number of participants and on the importance of the event.
- 16.10 If the eBoard allows players to move pieces in contradiction with Article 3.3 (illegal moves), and then to communicate such moves to the opponent's playing zone, the competition regulations must specify how to deal with such irregularities.
- 16.11 The competition regulations shall specify a default time in advance. If the default time is not specified, then it is zero. If the competition regulations specify that the default time is not zero and if neither player is present initially, White shall lose all the time that elapses until he/she arrives, unless the competition regulations specify or the arbiter decides otherwise.
 - 16.11.1.1 The playing zone must record the offer of a draw next to the player's move when draw is offered.
- 16.12 On a screen available to an arbiter or a player the playing zone must record, when the draw is offered, that offer next to the offering player's move. If an eBoard player is not using such a screen the playing zone or the eBoard must indicate to that player, in some other way, when a draw offer is made by the opponent. These requirements also apply when a player asks for the intervention of an arbiter.
- 16.13 The specific competition regulations may impose the mandatory use of score sheets by a player who is using an eBoard.

Article 17: Players' Conduct

- 17.1 The players shall take no action that will bring the game of chess into disrepute.
- 17.2 The players are not allowed to use their own playing devices in the playing venue, unless the competition regulations say otherwise.
- 17.3 During the game, the players are forbidden to have any electronic device not specifically approved by the arbiter. The arbiter may require the player to allow his/her clothes, bags, other items or body to be inspected, in private. The arbiter or person authorised by the arbiter shall inspect the player, and shall be of the same gender as the player. If it becomes evident that a player has a forbidden device in the playing venue, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win. The competition regulations may specify a different, less severe, penalty. The Chief Arbiter can also decide to exclude the player from the competition.
- 17.4 The competition regulations may allow personal electronic devices to be stored in a player's bag, provided the device is completely switched off. This bag must be placed as agreed with LCA.
- 17.5 During the game, the players are forbidden to use any notes, sources of information or receive advice.
- 17.6 It is forbidden to distract or annoy the opponent in any manner whatsoever. This includes unreasonable claims, unreasonable offers of a draw, sending inappropriate messages or the introduction of a source of noise into the playing area.
- 17.7 During a game a player may leave the playing area or the playing venue only with the permission of the arbiter.
- 17.8 The players shall follow the dress code of the competition, if any.
- 17.9 Infraction of any part of Articles 17.1 – 17.8 shall lead to penalties in accordance with Article 18.4.
- 17.10 A player shall have the right to request from the arbiter an explanation of particular points in the FIDE Online Chess Regulations.
- 17.11 Unless the competition regulations specify otherwise, a player may appeal against the decision of the arbiter. This includes appeals against the result of a game, even if the result was set by the playing zone and approved by the arbiter.

Article 18: The Arbiter's Role

- 18.1 The arbiters shall see that these Regulations are observed.
- 18.2 The arbiter shall:
 - 18.2.1 ensure fair play,
 - 18.2.2 act in the best interest of the competition,
 - 18.2.3 ensure that a good playing environment is maintained,
 - 18.2.4 ensure that the players are not disturbed,
 - 18.2.5 supervise the progress of the competition,
 - 18.2.6 take special measures in the interests of disabled players and those who need medical attention,
 - 18.2.7 follow the FIDE Anti-Cheating Regulations and FIDE Anti-Cheating Protection Measures (see Article 16.4).
- 18.3 The arbiters shall observe the games, especially when the players are short of time, enforce decisions they have made, and impose penalties on players where appropriate.
- 18.4 Options available to the arbiter concerning penalties:
 - 18.4.1 warning,
 - 18.4.2 increasing the remaining time of the opponent,
 - 18.4.3 reducing the remaining time of the offending player,
 - 18.4.4 increasing the points scored in the game by the opponent to the maximum available for that game.
 - 18.4.5 reducing the points scored in the game by the offending person,

- 18.4.6 declaring the game to be lost by the offending player (the arbiter shall also decide the opponent's score),
 - 18.4.7 a fine announced in advance,
 - 18.4.8 exclusion from one or more rounds,
 - 18.4.9 expulsion from the competition.
- 18.5 Before the beginning of each game, each LCA is responsible for checking that all the playing devices are in compliance with the requirement of Article 16.7.
- 18.6 Before the beginning of each game, each LCA is responsible for conducting the fair-play check of all the players.
- 18.7 Each LCA is responsible for monitoring the venue's camera recordings.
- 18.8 Each LTA is responsible for monitoring each player's connection to HIP and to a communication system (if required by the competition regulations) before and during each game.
- 18.9 Each LTA shall immediately report to the Chief Arbiter about each disconnection case. Once the connection is reset, relying on specific circumstances, the Chief Arbiter takes a decision including but not limited to:
- a) resumption of the game from the adjourned position,
 - b) reducing remaining time of the disconnected player,
 - c) restarting the game from the initial position with the same time limit,
 - d) restarting the game from the initial position with a shorter time control.

Article 19: Irregularities

- 19.1 Each player is entitled to ask for an arbiter's assistance. If a player calls the Arbiter in order to seek the arbiter's assistance, the arbiter shall determine whether the player has a valid reason for doing so. If the player has no valid reason for doing so, he/she may be penalised in accordance with Article 18.4.
- 19.2 If a game has started with colours reversed then, if less than 10 moves have been made by both players, it shall be discontinued and a new game played with the correct colours. After 10 moves or more, the game shall continue.
- 19.3 If a game is not drawn automatically when one of the situations described in Article 5.4 (automatically drawn situations) has occurred, the arbiter will declare the game drawn.
- 19.4 If a playing zone automatically declares a draw in contradiction with Article 4.5 (mate possibilities still exist), the arbiter is entitled to modify the automatic result.
- 19.5 If during a game it is found that the setting of either or both clocks is incorrect, the arbiter shall adjust the chess clock immediately. The arbiter shall install the correct setting and adjust the times, if necessary. He/she shall use his/her best judgement when determining the clock settings.
- 19.6 If the game needs to be interrupted for any reason, the arbiter shall pause the chess clock if possible. If it is not possible, the arbiter may add additional time to either or both players.