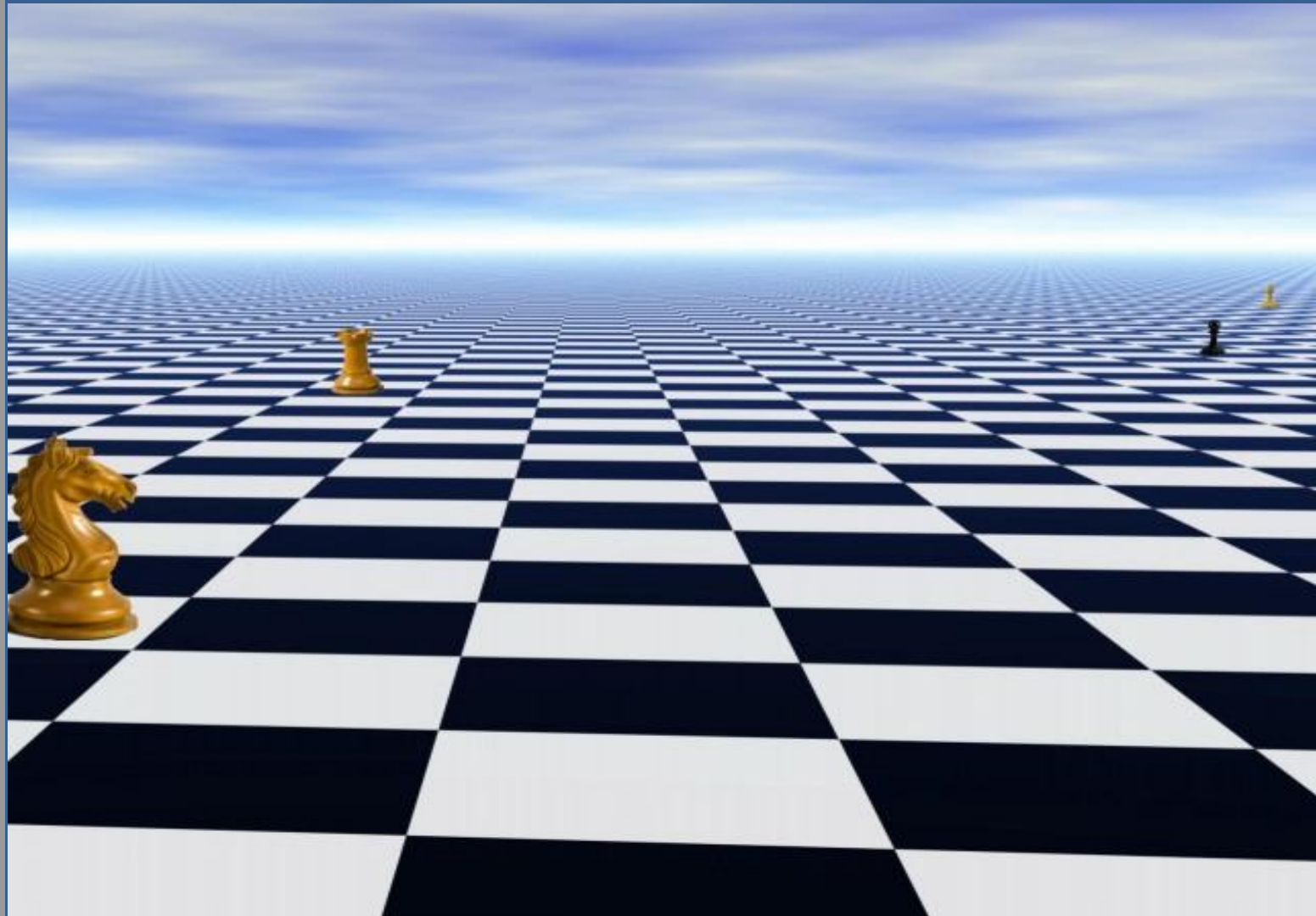


99+1 Chess Tactics:

Understanding Chess Tactics

100 exercises to deepen your understanding of tactical motifs

<http://www.chess-skills.com/>



99+1

UNDERSTANDING CHESS TACTICS

Foreword by the author:

The 99+1 chess tactics eBook consists of 100 chess tactics puzzles - specifically chosen for their instructive value. Each puzzle is commented with a unique “key idea” which describes the essence of the tactic used in that position. Illustrating these “key ideas” is the heart of the unique value of this book. The purpose is to help you understand chess tactics in a deeper measure and to provide you with a method of finding the maximum value from your tactics training.

A common mistake when studying chess tactics is to focus on quantity instead of quality. Solving hundreds of chess puzzles - without making a concerted effort to understand that particular tactic - will cause you to miss an important part of the overall value you could get from those positions.

The main difference between this book and other chess tactics puzzles is the area of focus - finding the solutions is not the end goal of these exercises... Instead, you are advised to spend most of your time studying the solution and understanding exactly how the tactic worked and which factors made it possible. The key idea written below each puzzle will go a long way to help you get real value from these lessons.

The “key ideas” below the exercises are not meant as “rules of thumb” – they are simply a starting point for thinking about the tactic before just speeding on to the next puzzle. This way of training will help you focus on the quality of your understanding instead of making the mistake to focus on how many exercises you can do (which doesn’t do much for your understanding of the tactics).

This eBook will not only help you improve your tactical understanding, but will also help you to get the most value from any other tactics puzzle you will ever work on.

❖ Louis Holtzhausen

Previous editions:

1st edition 2010

2nd edition revised – October 2012 (current edition)

Important Study Tips and Suggestions:

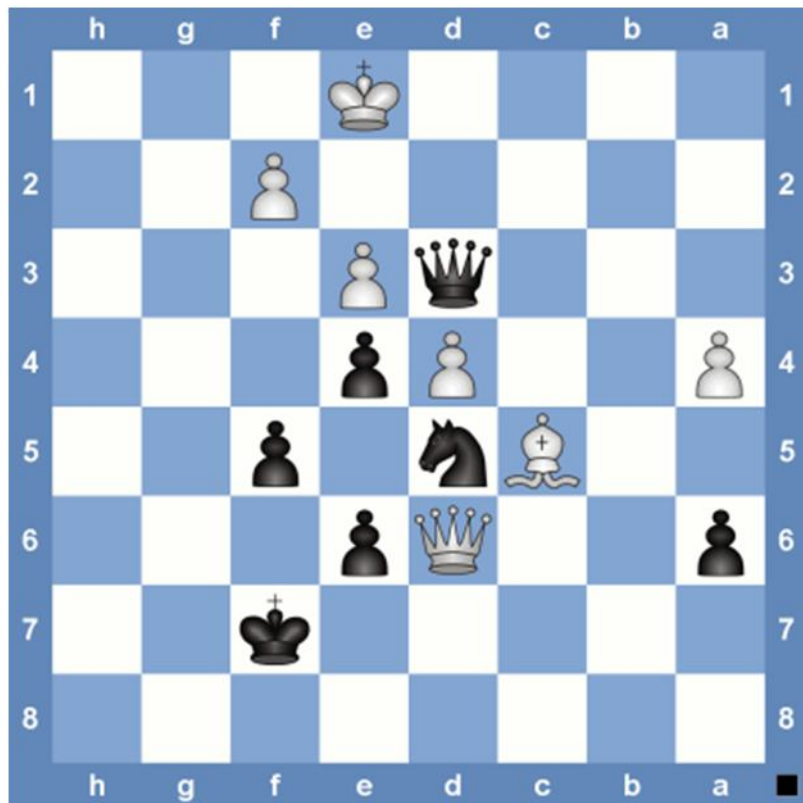
[Read and apply this carefully to get the most from this book]

- ❖ Start each exercise by comparing the material and determine the **probable goal** in the position at hand.
- ❖ Try to identify aspects of the position which could possibly lead to an opportunity for a tactic. Only once you have done that, see if you can find the solution.
- ❖ Calculate in this order: 1) All checks, 2) all captures and 3) all threats. Train your mind to calculate moves and responses in this way until it becomes second nature to you.
- ❖ Don't spend more than 5 minutes trying to find the solution, unless you believe you are really close to finding the solution. If after 3-5 minutes of thinking you still feel unable to come up with something, it is an indication that you are not very familiar with the tactical idea. In such a case you should rather spend your time looking at the answer and studying the solution.
- ❖ The answers have been checked with a chess engine for accuracy. Only the best variation in each position is presented but it will be good for you to investigate other variations and to see if you can find the refutations of other moves.
- ❖ Below each exercise is some space for making notes – this is a very useful idea that will deepen your understanding of the solution. Make it your goal to understand the tactics in these 100 positions as deeply as you possibly can!
- ❖ The solution in each exercise position will achieve an advantage to the value of about 2 pawns or more.
- ❖ Don't just see how quickly you can go through all the exercises - study the solutions and the key idea in depth to help you improve your understanding of the tactics.
- ❖ Repeat these tactics regularly – look at the positions regularly and see if you can recall the solution and “key idea”.
- ❖ Pack the positions out on a real chessboard if you play over-the-board games too. This will help you get used to seeing the pieces and squares on a real board and not only on a diagram.
- ❖ Try to visualize the answers straight from the notation instead of making the moves on the board. This will help you further develop your visualization skill and eventually make it easier to study chess from diagrams.
- ❖ Memorize the “key idea” written below each tactic but remember the key idea in the context of the particular position. The written “key ideas” might not make much sense on their own – which is why you should think of the mentioned idea in the context of the example position.
- ❖ In future, when you do tactics puzzles – try to understand the key ideas before just going on to the next puzzle.

Tactics Study – exercise 1

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1.... Qb1+ 2.Ke2 Nc3+ 3.Kd2 Qb2+ 4.Ke1 Qc1# OR 2.Kd2 Qb2+ will also lead to mate.

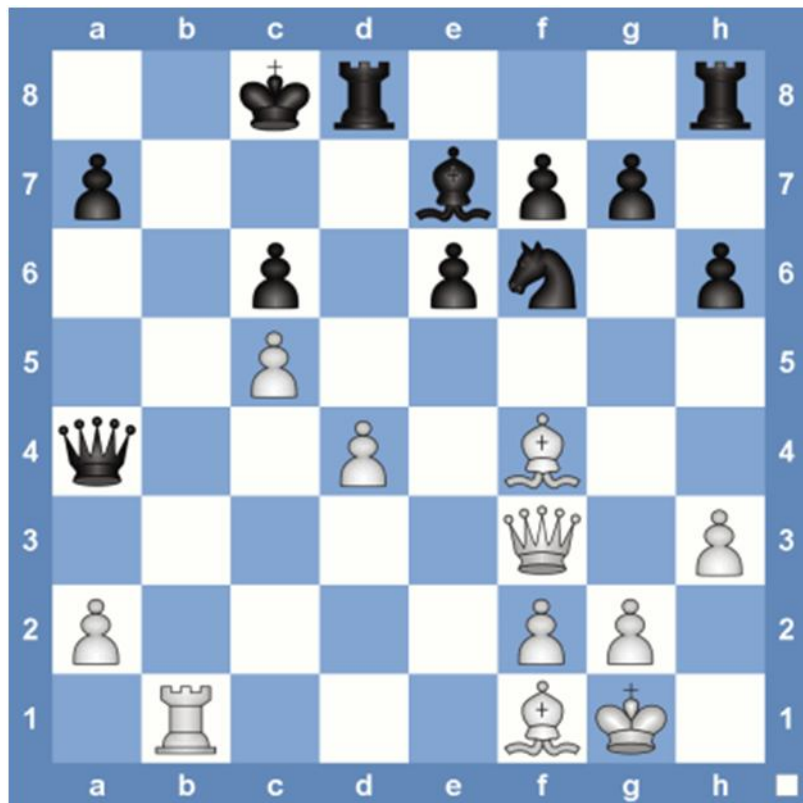
Study the coordination between queen + knight in this position. It will be interesting to note that the knight can usually cover the squares which the queen cannot cover at the same time – which makes them a powerful combination. Also note how 1... Qb1+ prevents the king from escaping via the f1 square.

Key idea: Black uses the well-known good **coordination between a queen and knight** to exploit the exposed king.

Tactics Study – exercise 2

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Rb4 Kd7 2.Rxa4

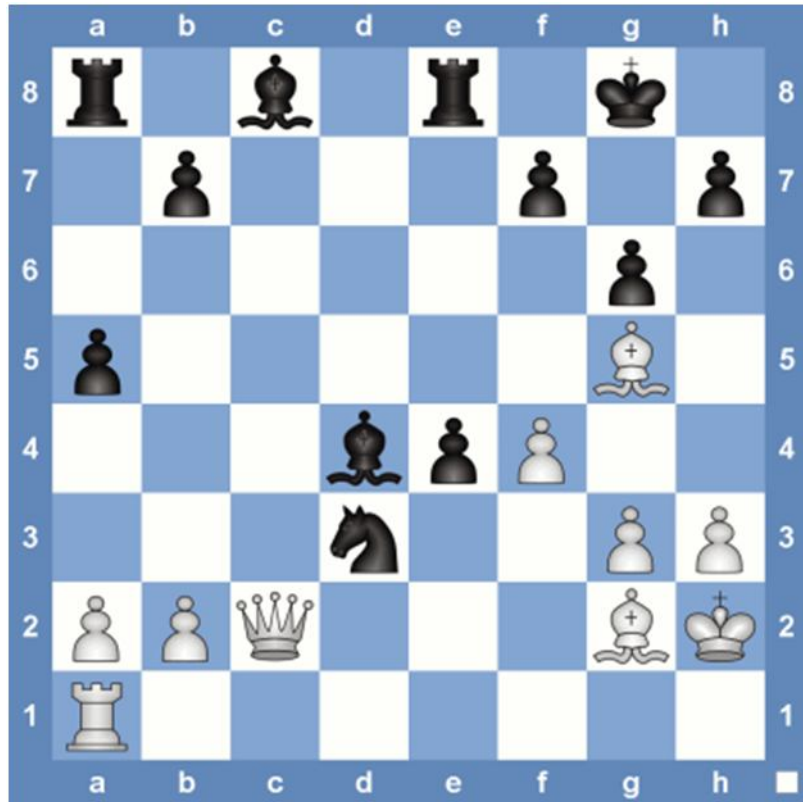
The black Qa4 is a key defender of the c6 pawn (c6 is a key square).

Key idea: White **attacks the defender of a key square**. Since the black Qa4 absolutely must protect c6, white can attack the black queen even from an undefended square.

Tactics Study – exercise 3

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Qa4 Be6 2. Qxd4

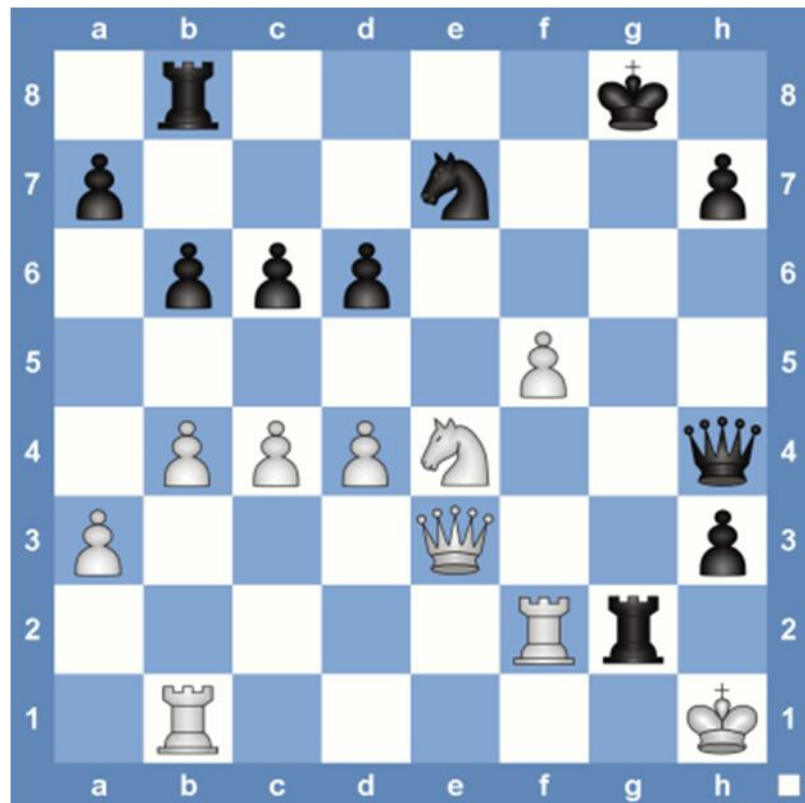
The black Re8 and Bd4 are both undefended.

Key idea: White creates **simultaneous threats** against black's unprotected pieces. This kind of attack is also known as a double attack or fork.

Tactics Study – exercise 4

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Rf4 Nxf5 2.Rxf5 or 1.Rf4 Qh6 2.Rg4+ gets the black queen.

Key idea: The high value of the queen also makes her a primary **target** for tactics. White exploits the position of the black queen and black's **exposed king** to create a tactical combination.

Tactics Study – exercise 5

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

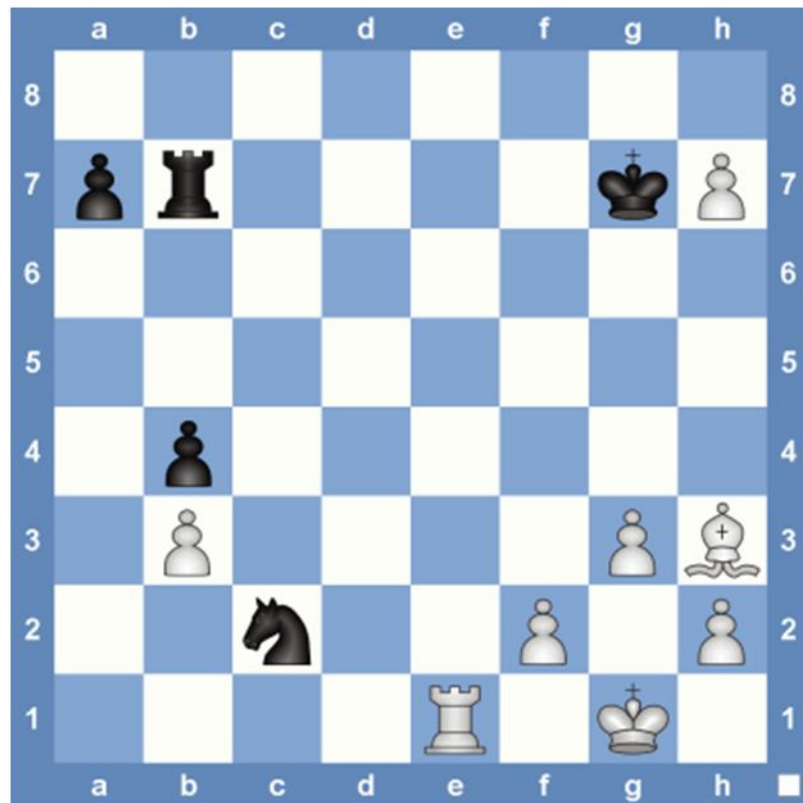
1. Nh6+ Kh8 2.Nxf7+ Kg8 3.Nh6+ Kh8 4.Nxd5 exd5 5.Nf7+ Kg8 6.Nxd8+

Key idea: Don't neglect **positional considerations** when you see a tactical combination. By playing the in-between move 4.Nxd5 - white doesn't allow black to play Nxc3 and thus avoids weakening his position - and still wins material. Get the best of both worlds when you can.

Tactics Study – exercise 6

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Re8 (threatening h8Q) Kxh7 2. Bf5+ winning the knight. White already had a significant advantage in this game but found the best way to continue.

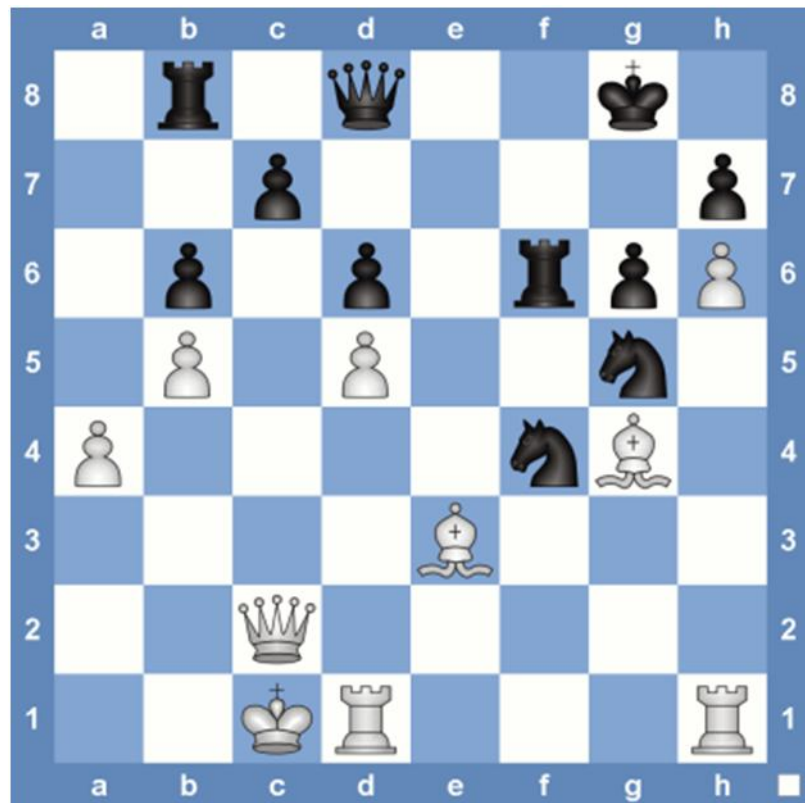
This proves why undefended pieces are very often vulnerable to tactical combinations, even if they seem safe.

Key idea: An **advanced pawn** can empower your other pieces to perform tactics. This is because the passed pawn in itself holds a strong **threat** (promotion) which means some enemy resources are **forced to guard** the passed pawn.

Tactics Study – exercise 7

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Qc4 Qf8 2.Rd4 (or 1.Rd4 Qf8 2.Qc4) and there will be nothing black can do to prevent the loss of a piece.

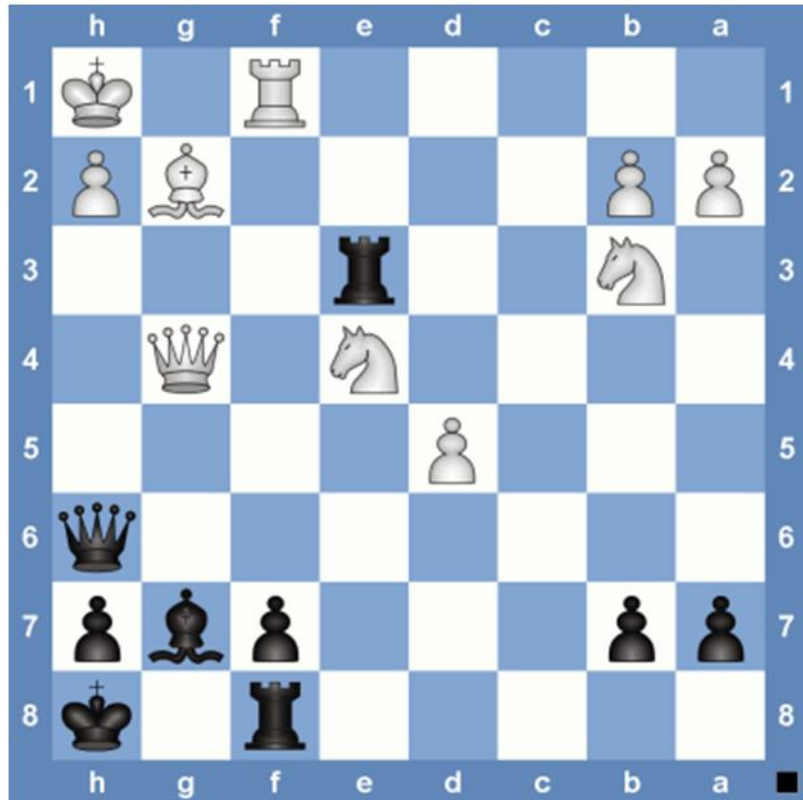
1.Qc4 or Rd4 is the only good moves to put pressure on the pinned pieces, other moves lead to unpleasant complications i.e. 1.Rdf1 Nxd5 attacking the bishop or 1.Rhf1 Nh3 defends the black pieces.

Key idea: Pinned pieces can be put under more pressure since they can't easily move away. However, the secret often lies in finding the **correct way** to add more pressure to the pinned pieces.

Tactics Study – exercise 8

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... f5 2.Qg5 fxe4

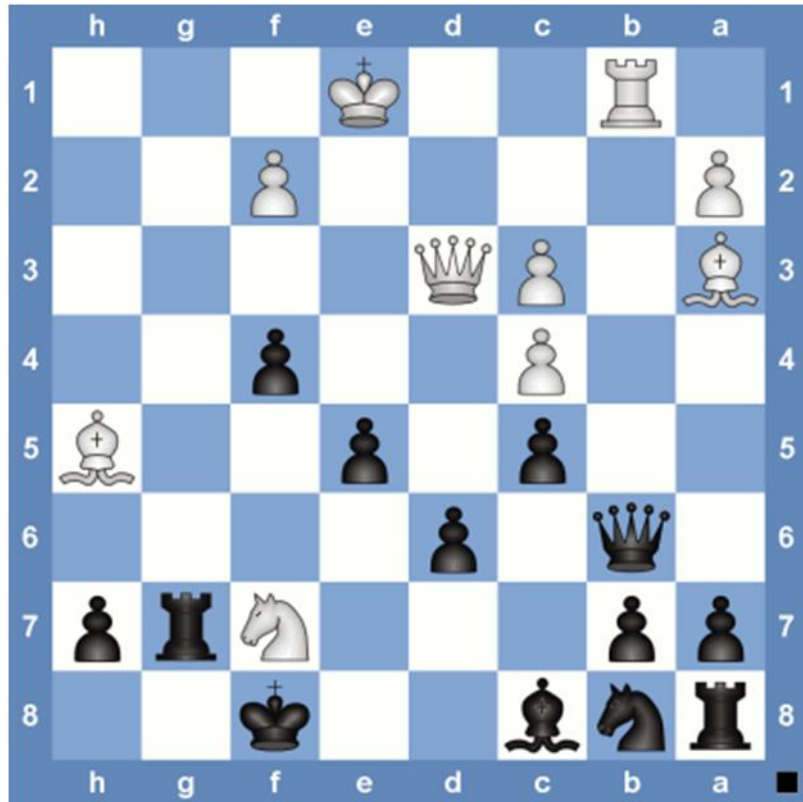
OR 1.... f5 2.Rxf5 Re1+ also wins a piece.

Key idea: A strong **pawn move** can easily be overlooked when you mainly focus on piece movements.

Tactics Study – exercise 9

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

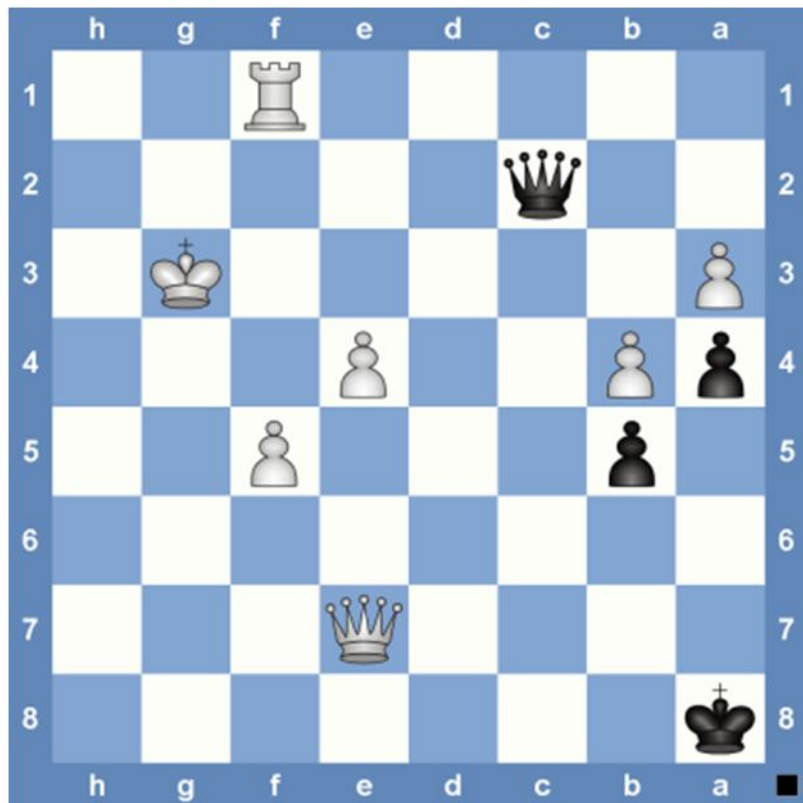
1.... Qxb1+ 2.Qxb1 Rg1+ 3.Kd2 Rxb1

Key idea: Sacrifice tactics become increasingly possible when the opponent's king is exposed.

Tactics Study – exercise 10

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qc7+ 2.Qxc7 stalemate.

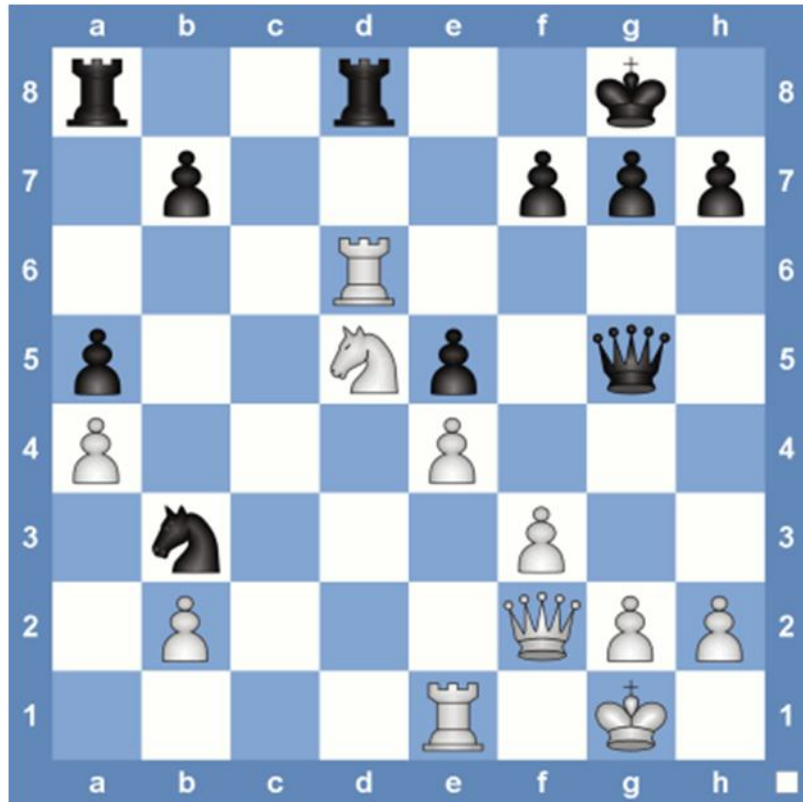
White must capture the black queen since his own queen is undefended and will be lost otherwise.

Key idea: In lost endgame positions you should be on the lookout for stalemate combinations – it can sometimes save you from an otherwise lost position.

Tactics Study – exercise 11

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

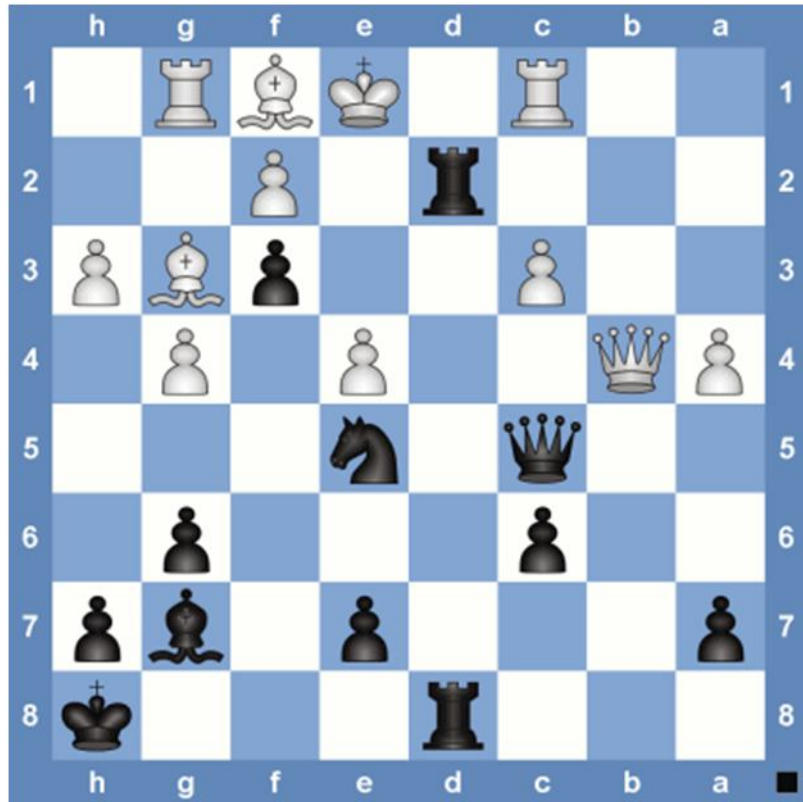
1. h4 Qh5 2. g4 Rxd6 3. gxh5

Key idea: Pawns can be very effective in attacking and trapping pieces.

Tactics Study – exercise 12

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

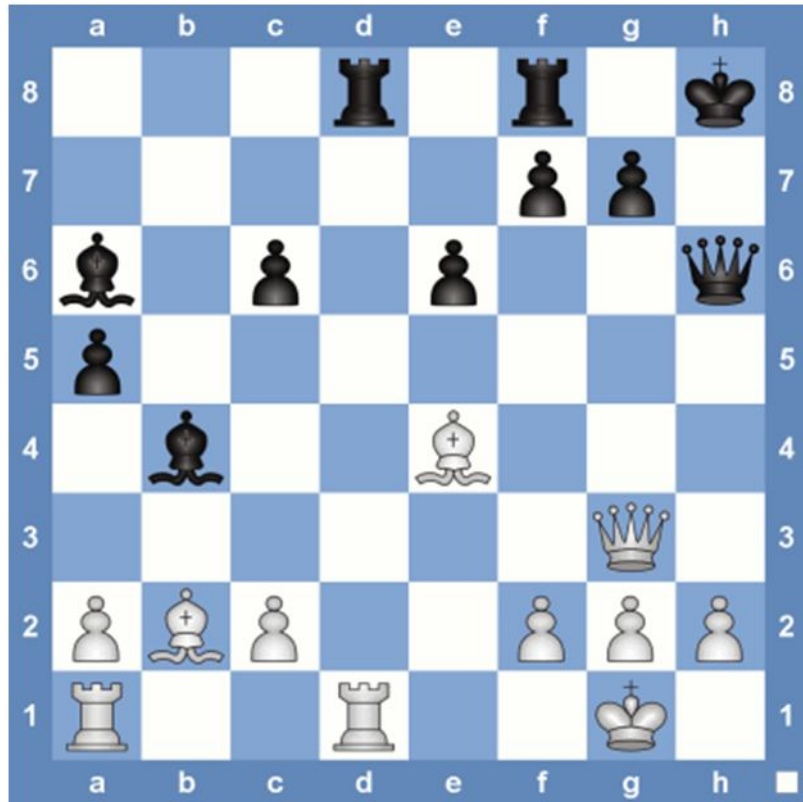
1... Qe3+ 2.fxe3 f2+ 3.Bxf2 Nf3#

Key idea: Black uses a sacrifice to clear the f2 square for another tactical combination (**clearing a square**). Knights are usually only powerful in the attack if they can access an unprotected square near the action.

Tactics Study – exercise 13

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

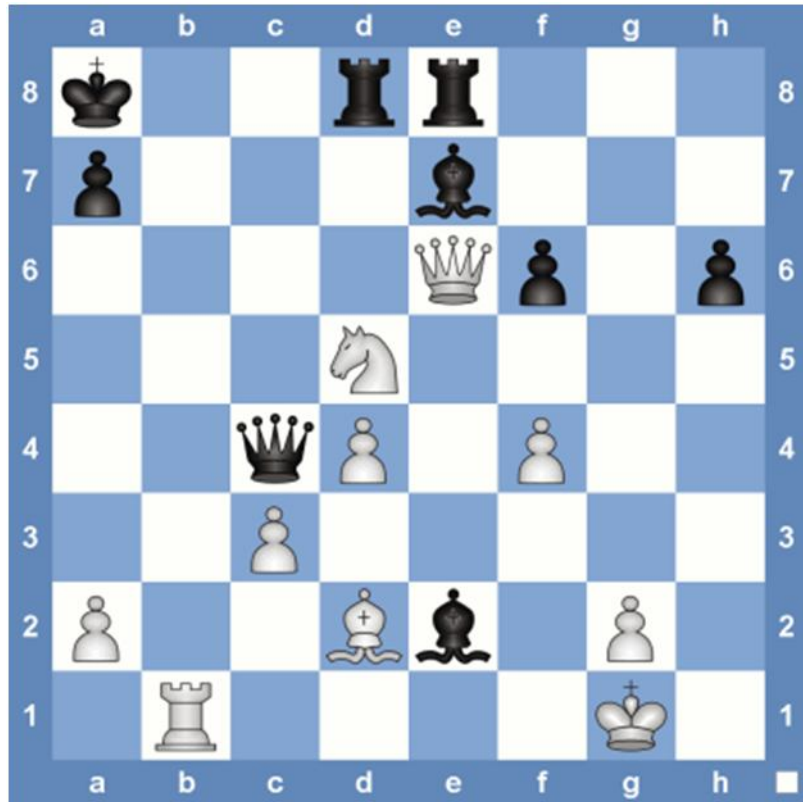
1.Rxd8 Rxd8 2.Bxg7+ Qxg7 3.Qh4+ Kg8 4.Qxd8+

Key idea: White uses a **clever exchanging** of pieces to create an undefended target (Rd8 becomes an undefended target).

Tactics Study – exercise 14

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Nc7+ Qxc7 2. Qe4+

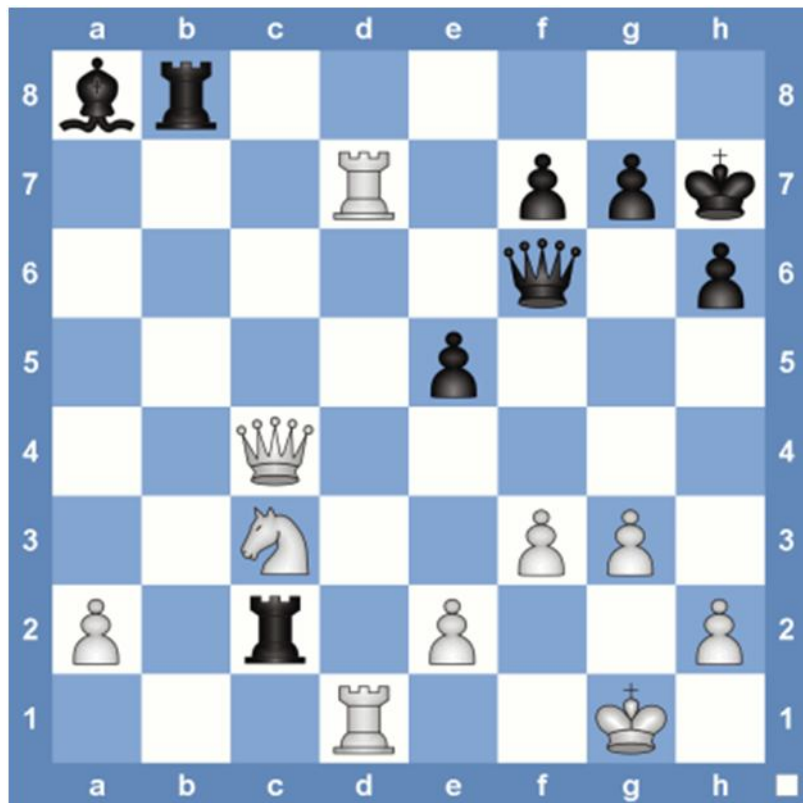
Key idea: White uses a tempo move (check threat) to open up the weak a8-h1 diagonal.

Once you notice the weak diagonal, the solution becomes a lot simpler.

Tactics Study – exercise 15

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.R7d6 Qf5 2. g4 Rxc3 3. Qxc3

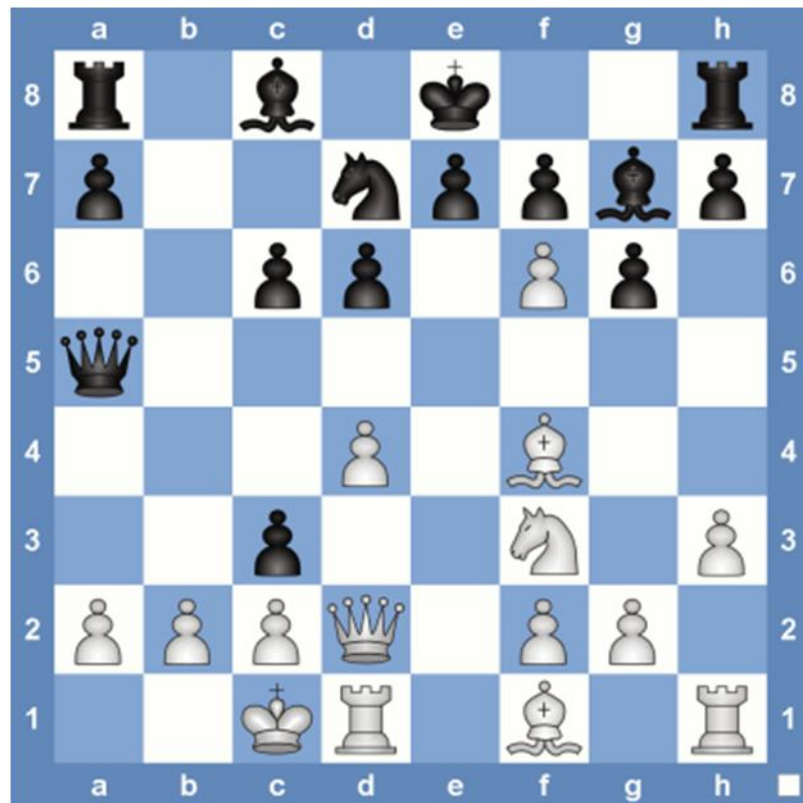
Not 1.R1d6 since black plays Rb1+ 2.Kg2 (Kf2) Qxf3+ or 2.Nxb1 Rxc4 3.Rxf6 and white only has a small advantage.

Key idea: Potential tactical threats (Qd3+ forking Kh7 and Rc2) can be exploited by attacking the defenders. Black needs the queen to defend against the Qd3+ threat, which gives white the opportunity to attack the defender (attack the black Qf6).

Tactics Study – exercise 16

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Qxc3 (threatening Qxa5) Qxc3 2. fxg7 (threatening gxh8-Q) Qxc2+ 3. Kxc2 and white won a piece.

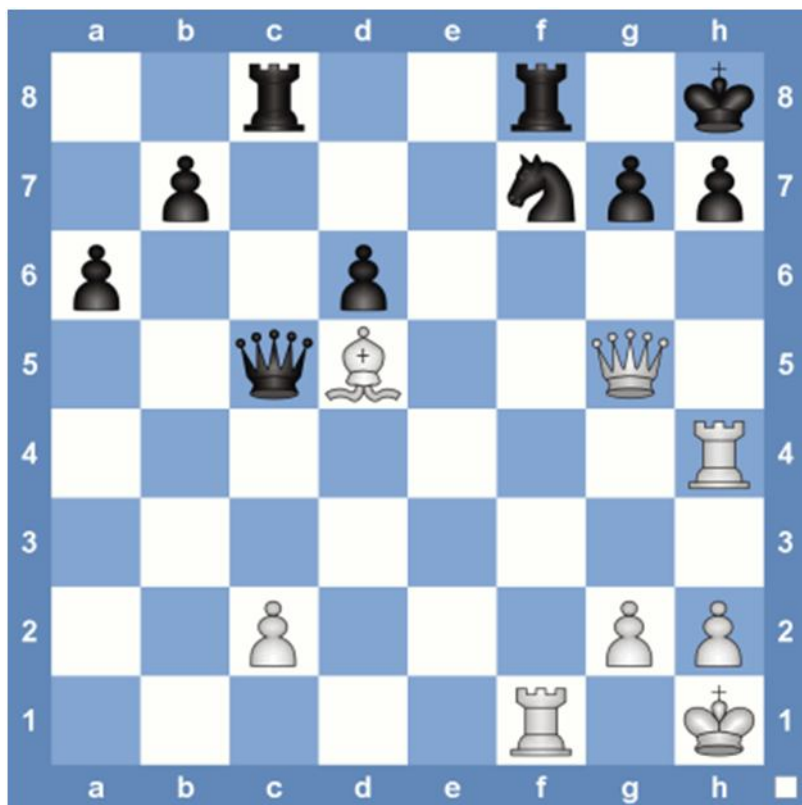
A very instructive example of making counter threats against undefended pieces – study this one extra carefully.

Key idea: White removes the threat against his queen and in the same time renews two threats against black: 1) Qxa5 and 2) fxg7. Making a new threat with your threatened piece is an effective way to keep up the pressure.

Tactics Study – exercise 17

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

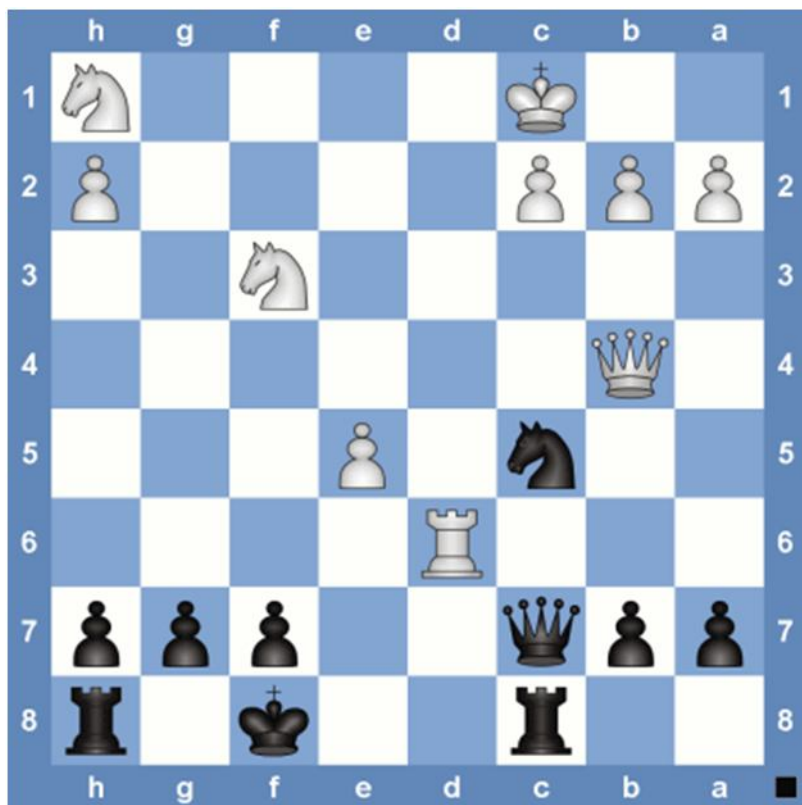
1.Rxf7 Rxf7 2. Rxh7+ Kxh7 3.Qh5+ Kg8 4.Qxf7+ Kh8 5.Qh5# OR 1.Rxh7 Kxh7 2.Rxf7 leads to the same position.

Key idea: The white attackers outnumber the black defenders. When you outnumber the defenders near the enemy king, it often gives you the opportunity to remove the remaining defenders by means of sacrifices.

Tactics Study – exercise 18

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

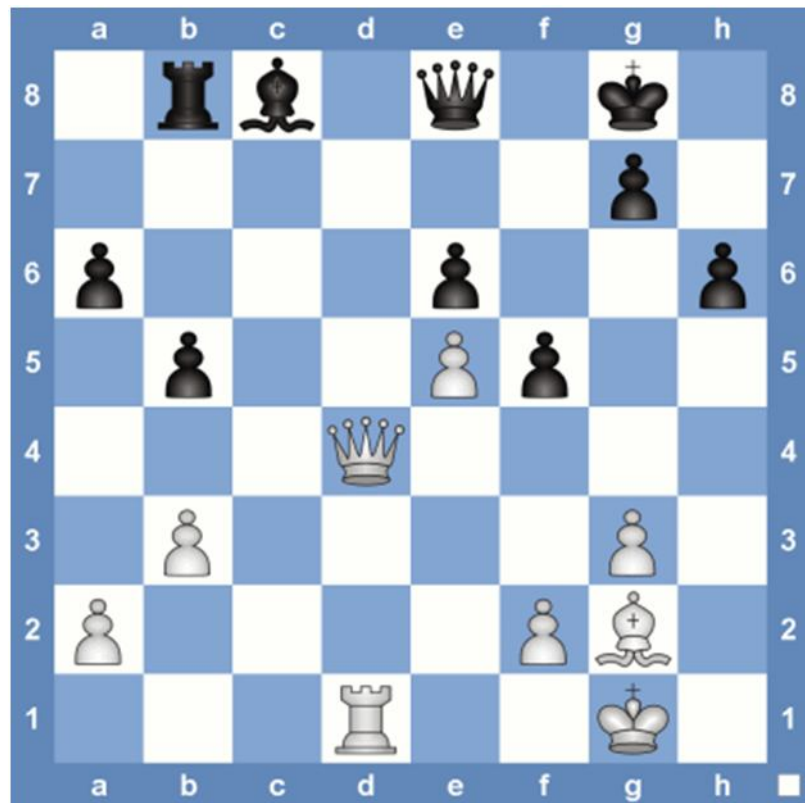
1... Qxd6 2.exd6 Nd3+ winning back the queen since c2 is pinned by Rc8.

Key idea: Black captures the white Rd6 which had the role of defending against black's hidden threat – Nd3+! Pieces that defend against tactics (Rd6 defends d3 square) are themselves vulnerable to tactics such as a sacrifice.

Tactics Study – exercise 19

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

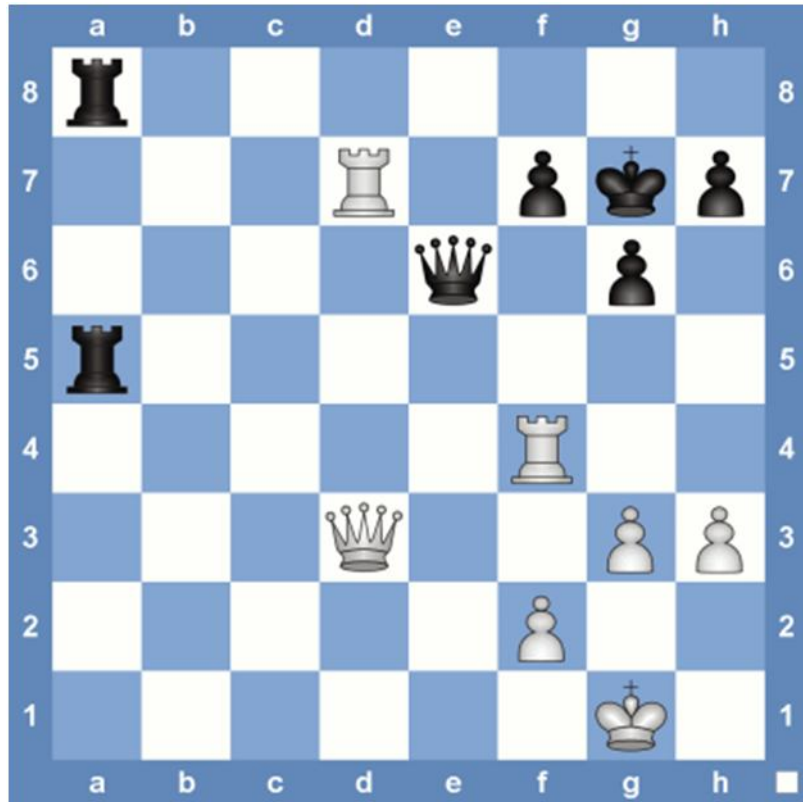
1.Qa7 (threatening Qxb8) Bb7 2. Bxb7 winning a piece

Key idea: Black's pieces are not well developed - which exposes them due to their bad coordination. Poorly coordinated (or undeveloped) pieces can often be exploited by well-coordinated pieces.

Tactics Study – exercise 20

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

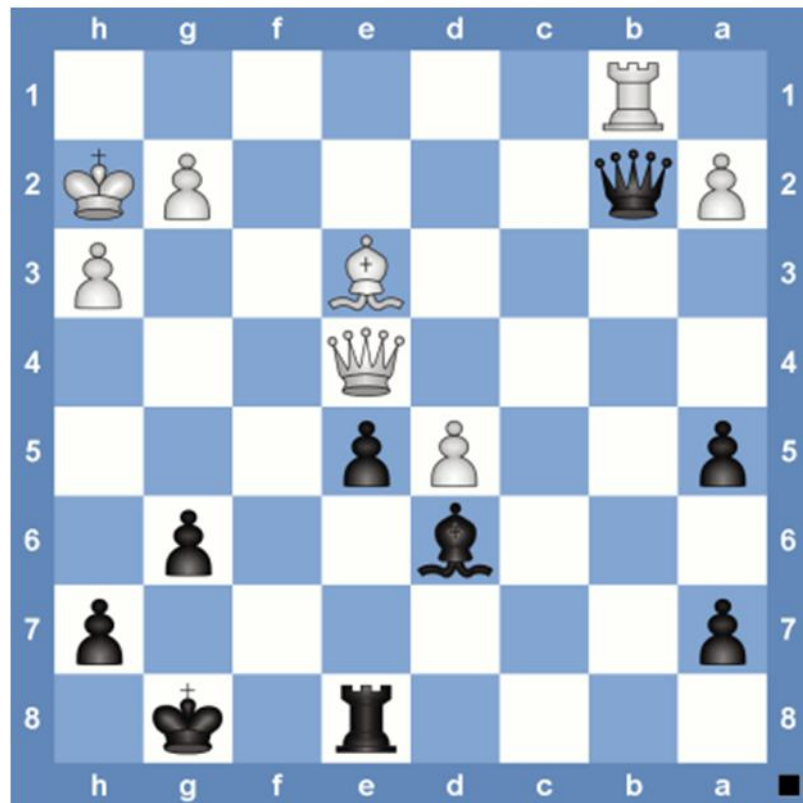
1.Qd4+ Kg8 2. Rd8+ Rxd8 3.Qxd8+ Kg7 4.Qxa5

Key idea: White uses the exposed position of black's king to create a 2nd weakness. Creating a second weakness is often the key to properly exploiting an exposed king.

Tactics Study – exercise 21

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qd4 (forking Qe4 and Be3) 2.Bxd4 exd4+ 3.g3 Rxe4 or the more complicated variation 1... Qd4 2.Qf3 e4+ 3.Kg1 Qe4 (with the threat Qh2+ leading to a winning position).

The tactical ideas in this puzzle are very instructive – study them carefully. Black combines the potential discovered attack with an unexpected attack on the undefended white queen.

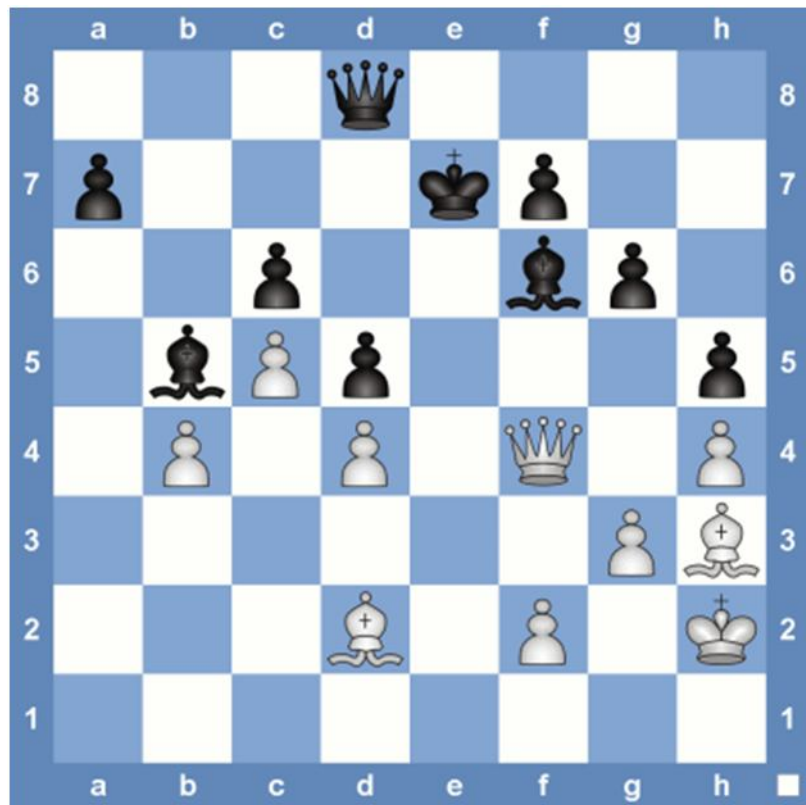
The idea of these exercises is that you should pack them out on a real chess board and study them well. Not all the possible variations are presented in the answers and you will get more benefit if you identify them and study them critically.

Key idea: The ability to combine tactical ideas is a skill which can take your tactical powers to a higher level.

Tactics Study – exercise 22

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

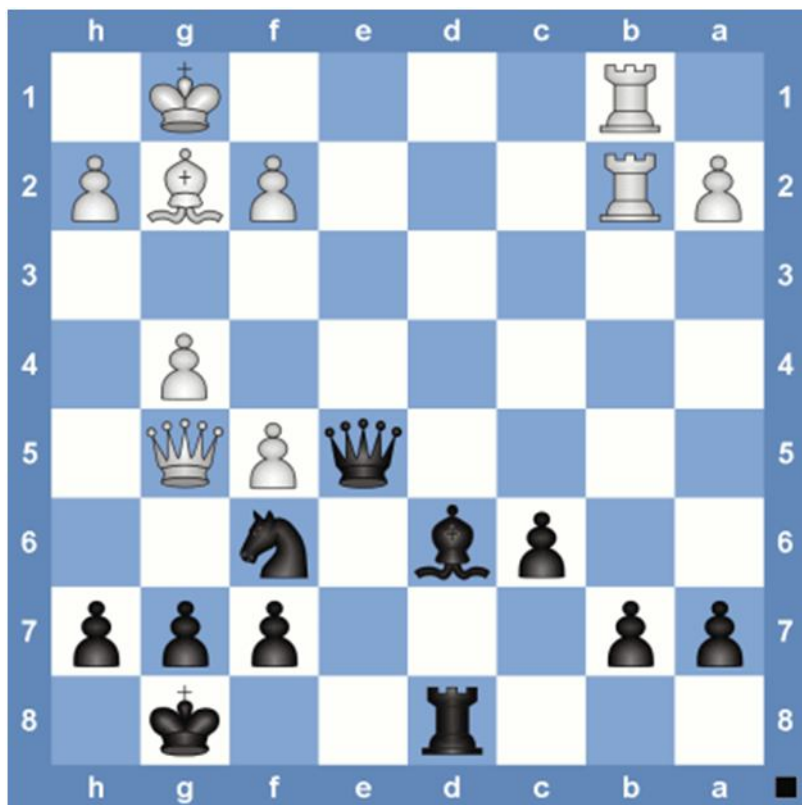
1.Qxf6+ Kxf6 2.Bg5+ Kg7 3.Bxd8

Key idea: White finds a way to setup an effective pin and win a piece in the process. The fact that so many of black's pieces stood on black squares made them more vulnerable to the attacking power of white's dark-square bishop.

Tactics Study – exercise 23

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qxh2+ 2.Kf1 Bf4 trapping and winning the white queen.

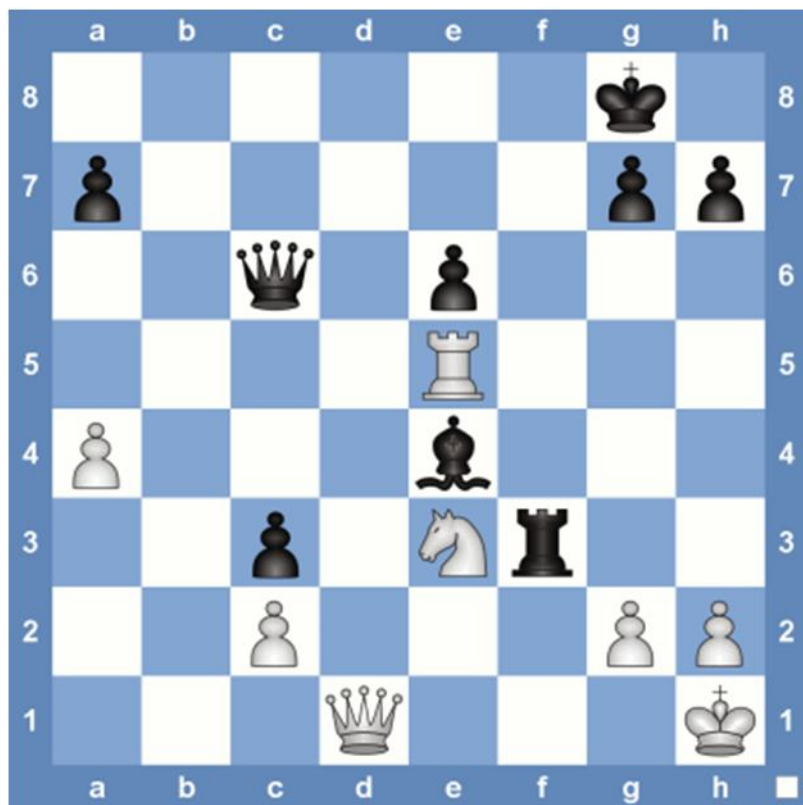
Black uses the forcing move, Qxh2+, to cover the white Qg5's only escape square (h4) and opens the way for the bishop to come to f4.

Key idea: Threats which force a defensive move is almost always a strong move. Here black uses threat as an effective method of covering the escape squares of the white Qg5.

Tactics Study – exercise 25

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

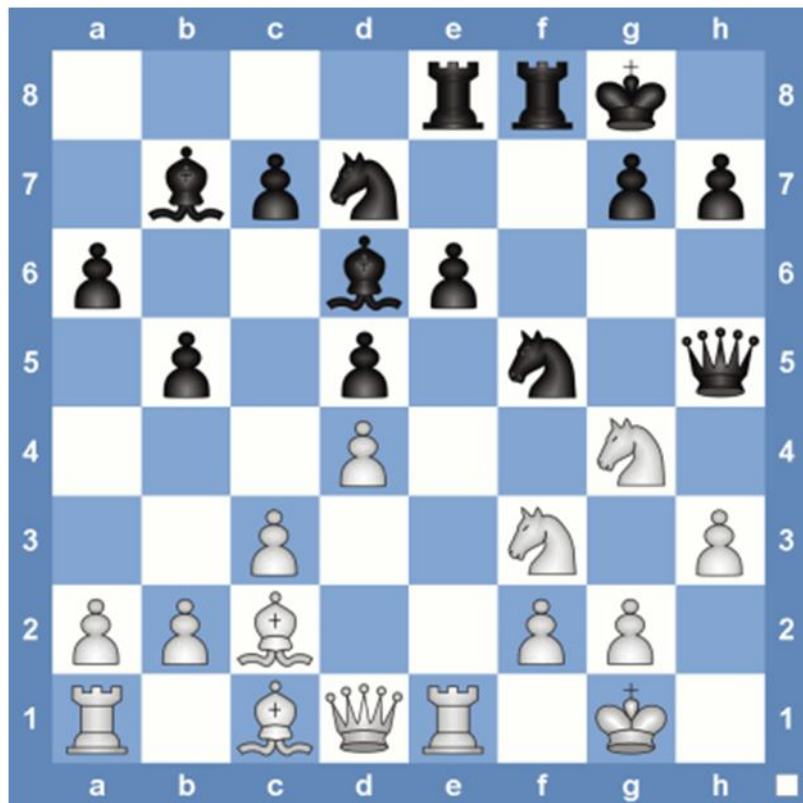
1.Rxe4 Qxe4 2.Qxf3 wins a piece

Key idea: The key to this tactic is to notice the **role of the black Be4**. The Be4 indirectly protects the Rf3 against the gx f3 capture since black responds with Bxf3+ - forking the white king and queen. The Be4 also indirectly protect the Rf3 against Qxf3 due to the response – Bxf3, getting the queen. If you take all this in consideration the move, Rxe4 (removing the defender of the Rf3), starts to make a lot of sense.

Tactics Study – exercise 26

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.N3e5 Bxe5 2.Nh6+ Qxh6 3.Bxh6 gxh6 4.dxe5

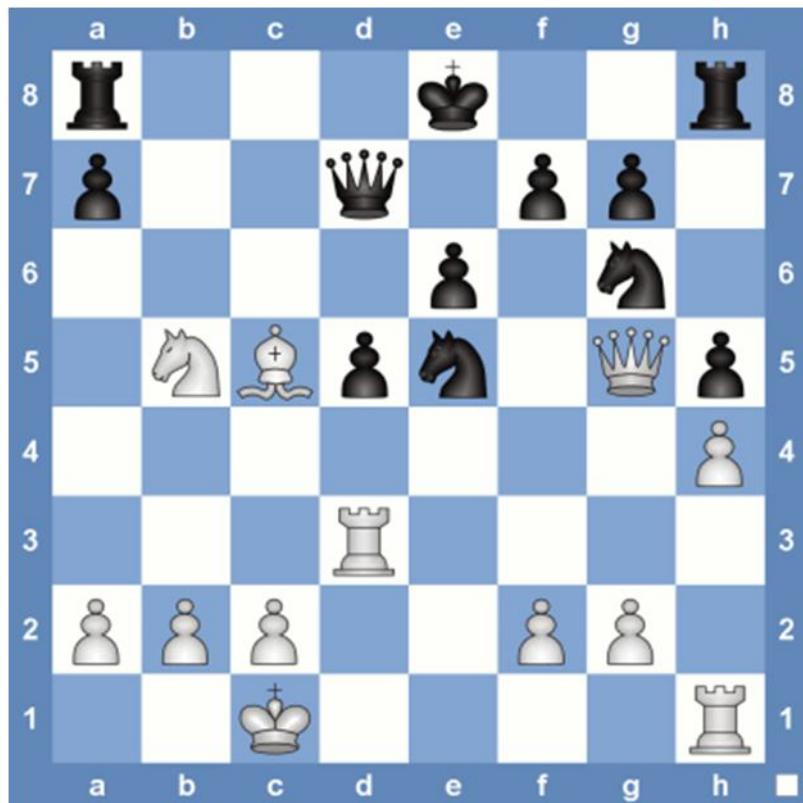
On move 2.Nf6+ don't work since 2... Nxf6 defends Qh5

Key idea: White uses threats and checks as a very effective way to clear the d1-h5 diagonal exposing an important target – the black queen.

Tactics Study – exercise 27

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Nd6+ Kf8 2.Nc4+ Kg8 3.Nxe5

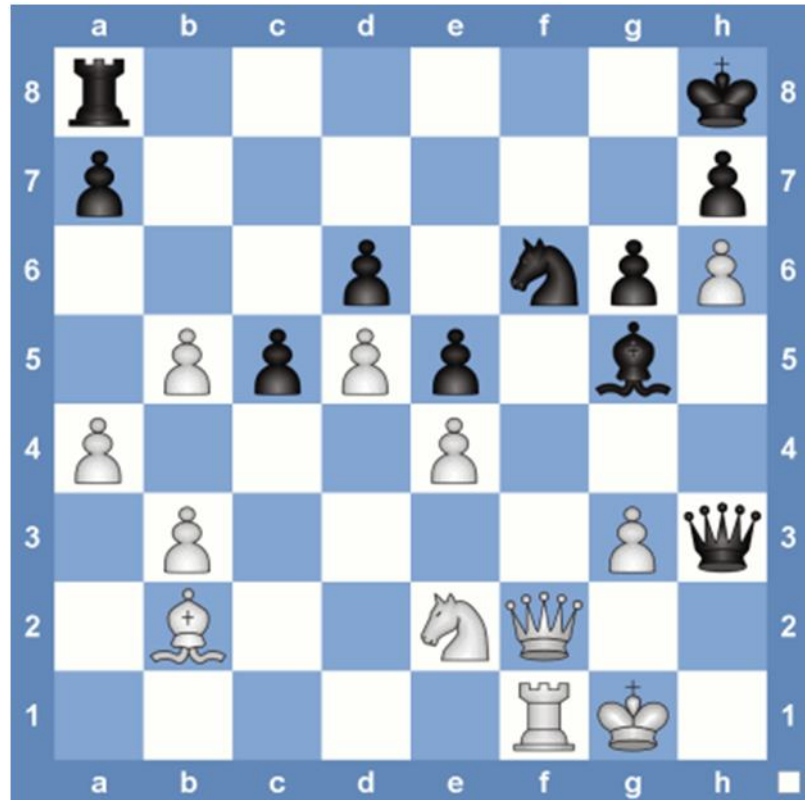
The black Ne5 is already attacked by the white Qg5. Since Ne5 is only defended once it can be viewed as an undefended piece which is vulnerable to tactics.

Key idea: The solution to this position is actually relatively simple – white sets up a discovered check to win the Ne5. Searching for complicated tactics can make you miss something simple - first find the simple tactics before you search for something spectacular.

Tactics Study – exercise 28

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

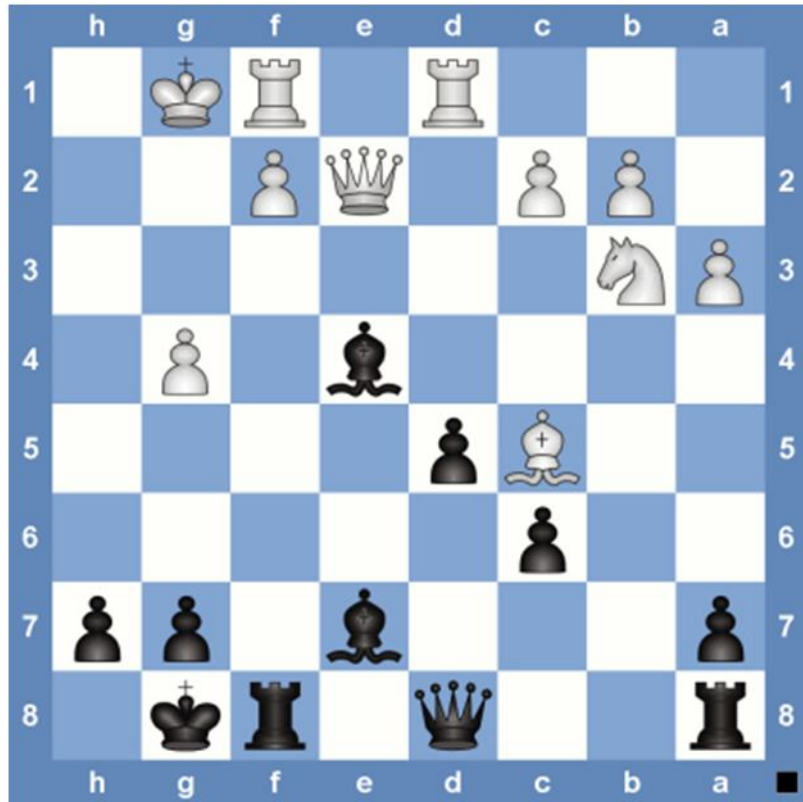
1.Bc1 Qh5 2.Bxg5 Qxg5 3.Qxf6+ wins a piece.

Key idea: The black Bg5 can hardly move since it is a defender of Nf6. Defending Nf6 is critical for black since the black Nf6 will even be captured with check (Qxf6+ Kk8 Qg7#). White essentially overloads the Bg5 when he plays Bc1.

Tactics Study – exercise 29

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Bxc5 2.Nxc5 Bf3 3.Qe6+ Kh8 4.Rd3 Qh4 5.Rxf3 Rxf3 - winning the exchange.

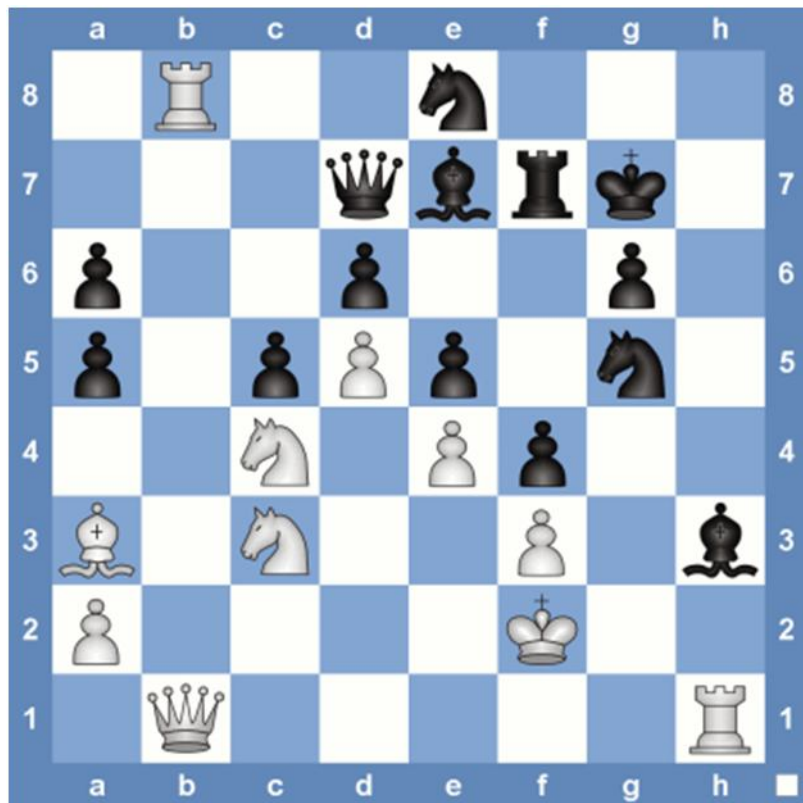
1... Bxc5 removes white's threat of Bxe7 and also allows black to play Qh4 – threatening Qh1#.

Key idea: A skewer contains two threats on the same line or diagonal - even if one piece can escape with tempo (check) the other piece will still be under threat. Black keeps up the pressure by making new threats with the move 4... Qh4!

Tactics Study – exercise 30

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

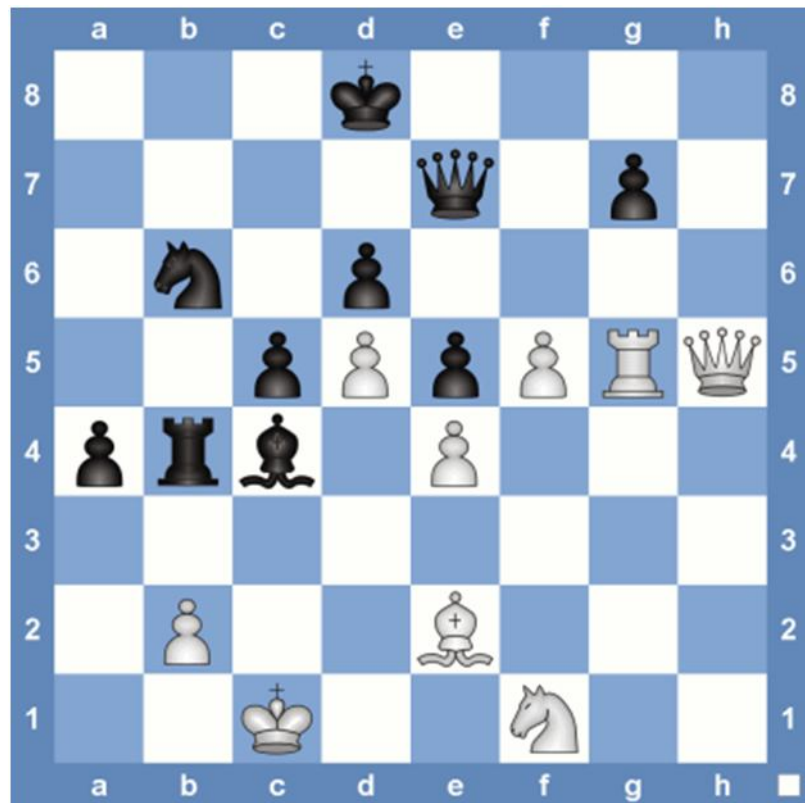
1.Nb6 Qc7 2.Rxe8

Key idea: White simply attacks the Qd7 which has the role of defending the Ne8. Due to her high value, the queen is usually not an ideal defender – since she is vulnerable to simple threats.

Tactics Study – exercise 31

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.f6 Qxf6 2.Qh8+ Kc7 (or 2..Kd7 3.Bg4+) 3.Rxg7+ Nd7 4.Rxd7 wins the queen.

OR

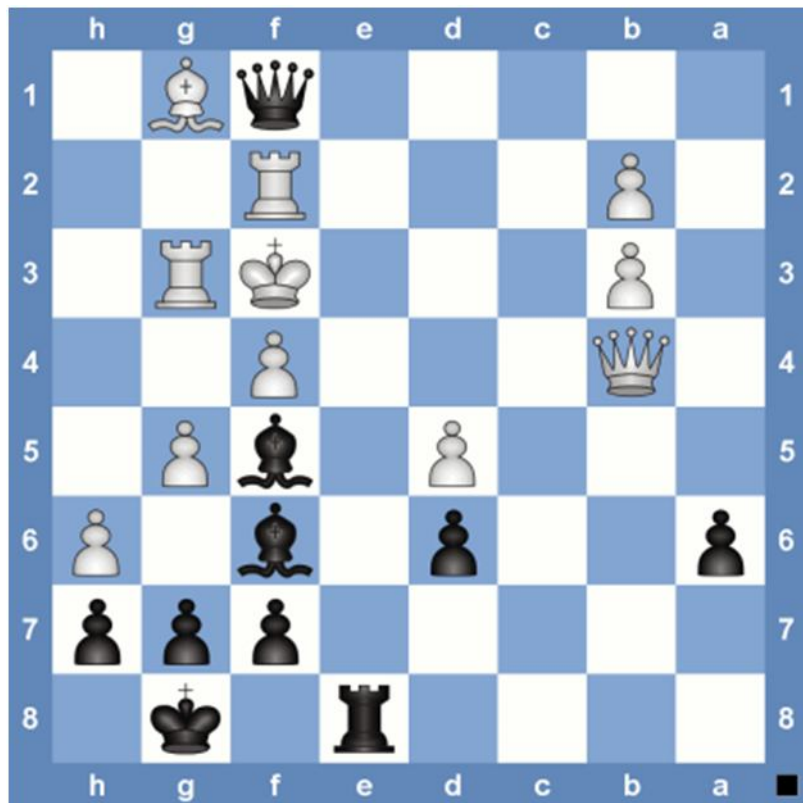
1.f6 gxf6 2.Qh8+ Kd7 3.Rd7+ wins the queen for a rook.

Key idea: White uses the good coordination between queen and rook on open files. Together they can often force other pieces into a pin (particularly when the enemy king is exposed).

Tactics Study – exercise 32

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

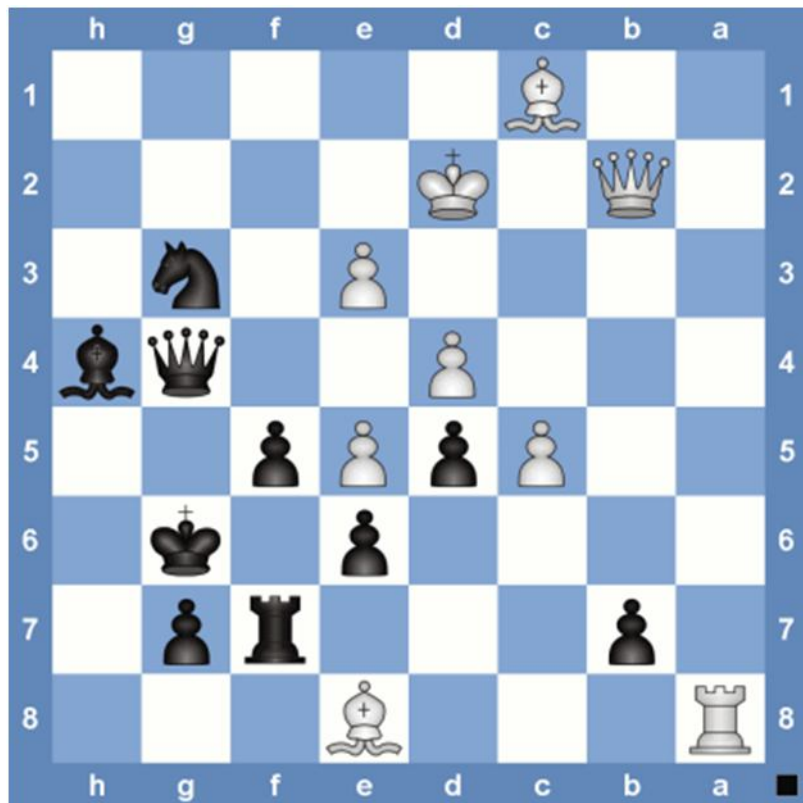
1... Re3+ 2.Kxe3 Qd3#

Key idea: Black delivers a well-known checkmate pattern – (in this case known as the Gueridon’s checkmate). The knowledge of the common checkmate patterns can be very useful when you try to calculate a forced combination against an opened king.

Tactics Study – exercise 33

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qe2+ 2.Kc3 Qc4 3.Kd2 Nf1+ 4.Kd1 Qd3+ 5.Bd2 Nxf3+ 6.Kc1 Qf1+ 7.Be1 Qxe1#

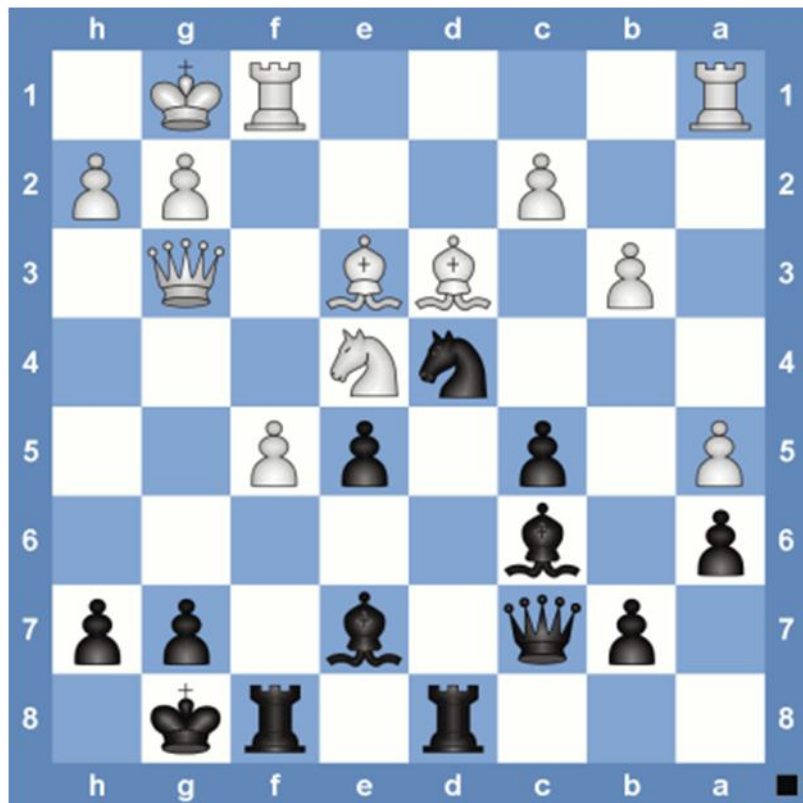
(2... Qc4 forces the white king into an area from where he cannot escape.)

Key idea: Black makes sure that the king cannot escape from his checks. A very important idea in a **king hunt** is to cut off the escape squares with forcing moves.

Tactics Study – exercise 34

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

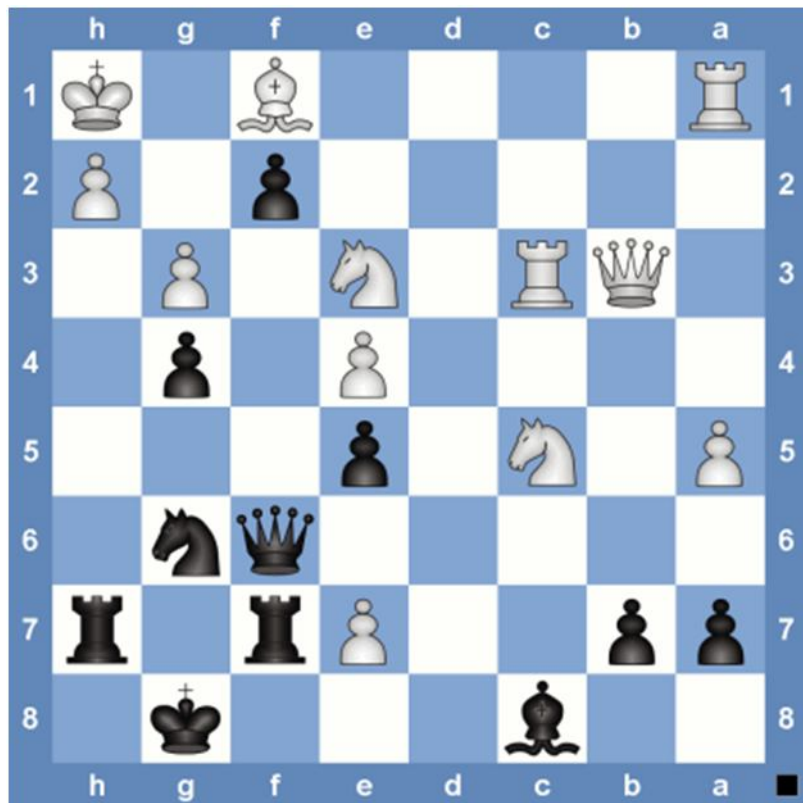
1... Bxe4 2.Bxd4 Rxd4 3.Bxe4 Rxe4 wins a bishop.

Key idea: The key idea here is that when black plays 3... Rxd4, his rook is now helping to defend the e4 square.

Tactics Study – exercise 35

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rxh2 2.Kxh2 Qh8+ 3.Kg2 Qh3#

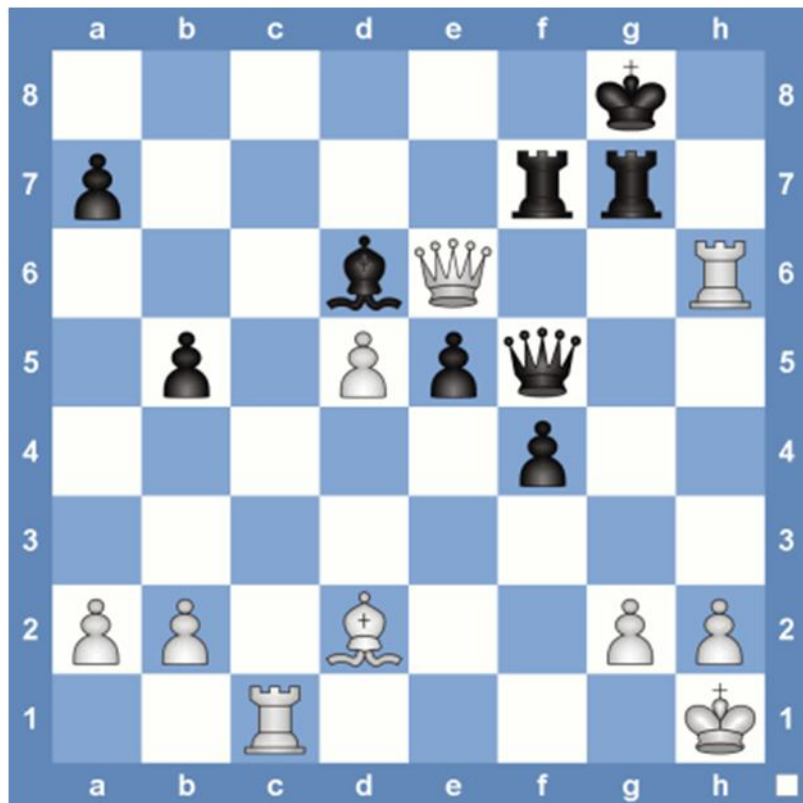
Note: Rf7 is pinned

Key idea: Retreating moves that attack are naturally harder to find than forward attacking moves. If you remember to always look at all checks, captures and threats you would increase your chance of spotting such opportunities.

Tactics Study – exercise 36

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Rc8+ Bc8 2.Rxc8 Kxc8 3.Rh8+ Rg8 4.Bb4+ 5.Kg7 Qh6#

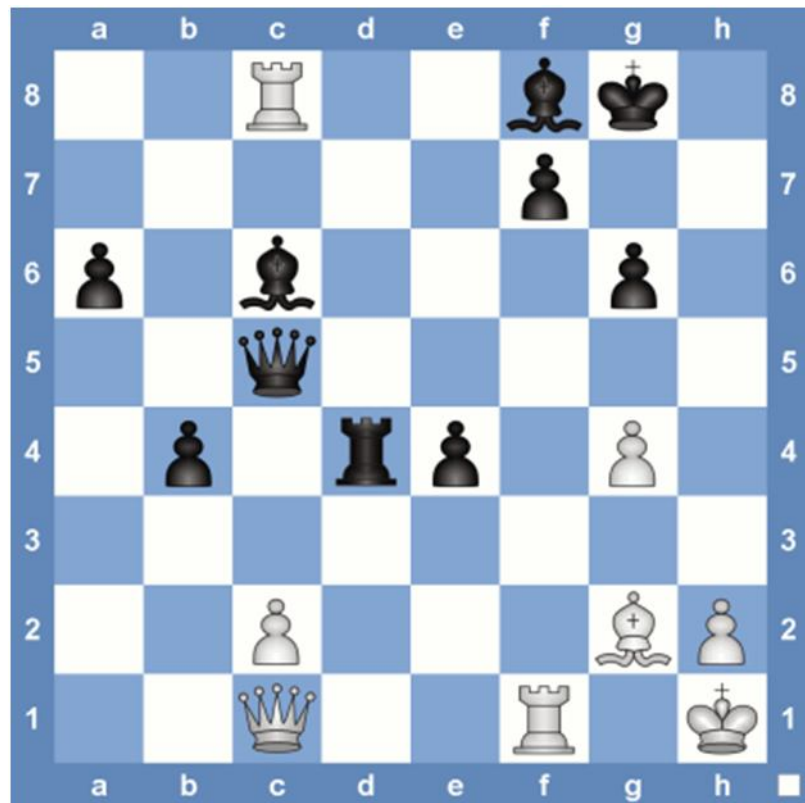
White sacrifices the exchange to remove an important defender and at the same time allow the dark square bishop into the attack.

Key idea: White uses the idea to bring more pieces into the attack by use of **tempo moves**. Tempo moves are moves which forces your opponent to make a passive move whereas you get the opportunity to strengthen the attack (you gain a “free move”). Tempo moves can significantly increase the power of your attack, even to the extent that you can afford to sacrifice some material in the process.

Tactics Study – exercise 37

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Qf4 Rd7 2.Qf6 Qd6 3.Rxc6 Qxf6 4.Rxf6

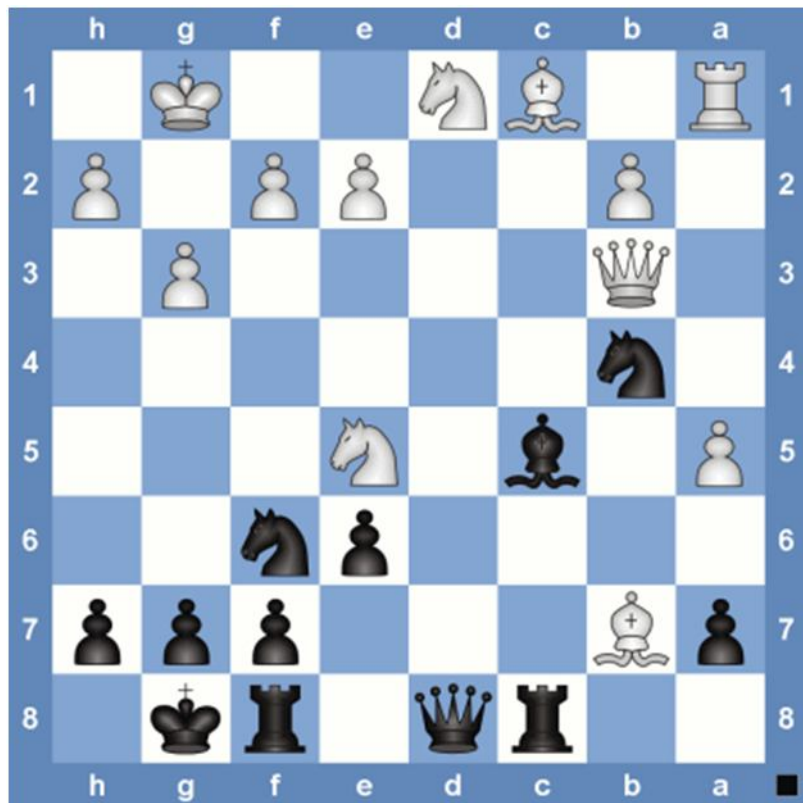
Note that the black Qc5 is weak in helping with defence since she has to baby-sit the black Bc6.

Key idea: White keeps making threats which forces defensive moves. In the end it leads to a new tactical opportunity. A series of simple threats can force the opponent to make defensive moves which could lead to new tactical opportunities.

Tactics Study – exercise 38

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Nc2 2.Bf4 Nxa1

OR

1... Nc2 2.Qxc2 Bxf2+

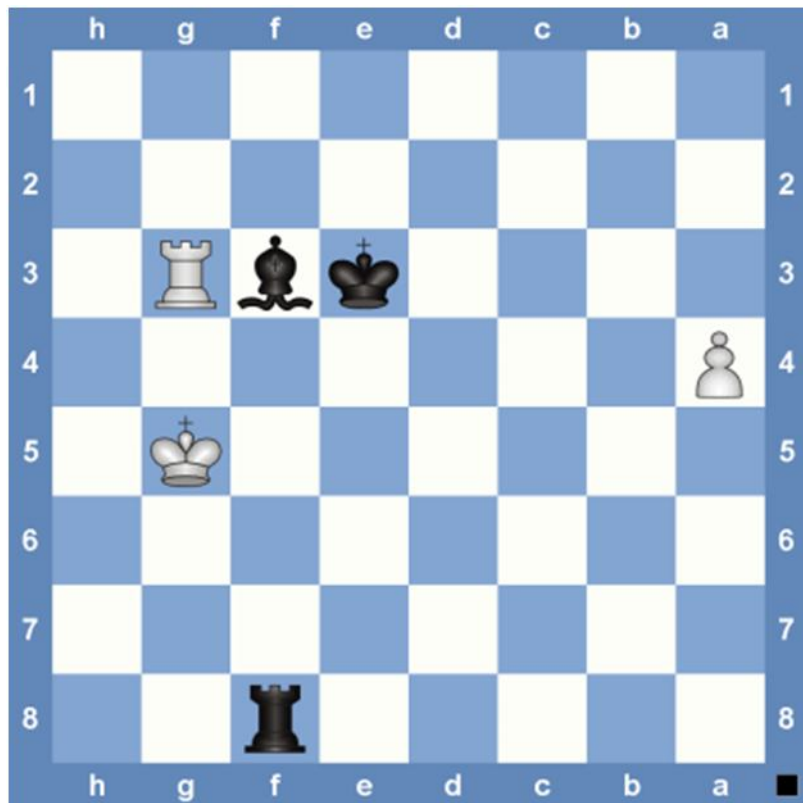
The c2 square is indirectly defended by the Bxf2+ threat.

Key idea: The 'undefended' squares beyond a piece which threatens a discovered attack are actually indirectly defended by the threat of the discovered attack.

Tactics Study – exercise 39

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rg8+ 2.Kh4 Rh8+ 3.Kg5 Kf7 and the white rook is trapped.

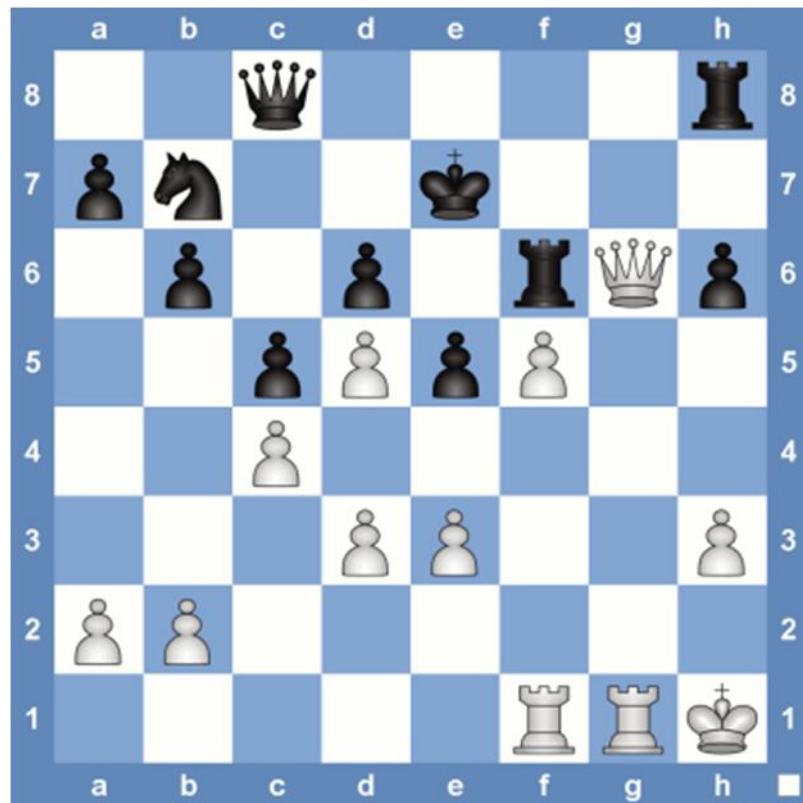
In this example black creates a trapped piece before attacking it.

Key idea: Tactics often occur in 2 steps – creating a weakness followed up by exploiting the weakness.

Tactics Study – exercise 40

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Qg7+ Rf7 2.f6+ Ke8 3.Qxh8+ (not 3.Qxf7 Qh3#)

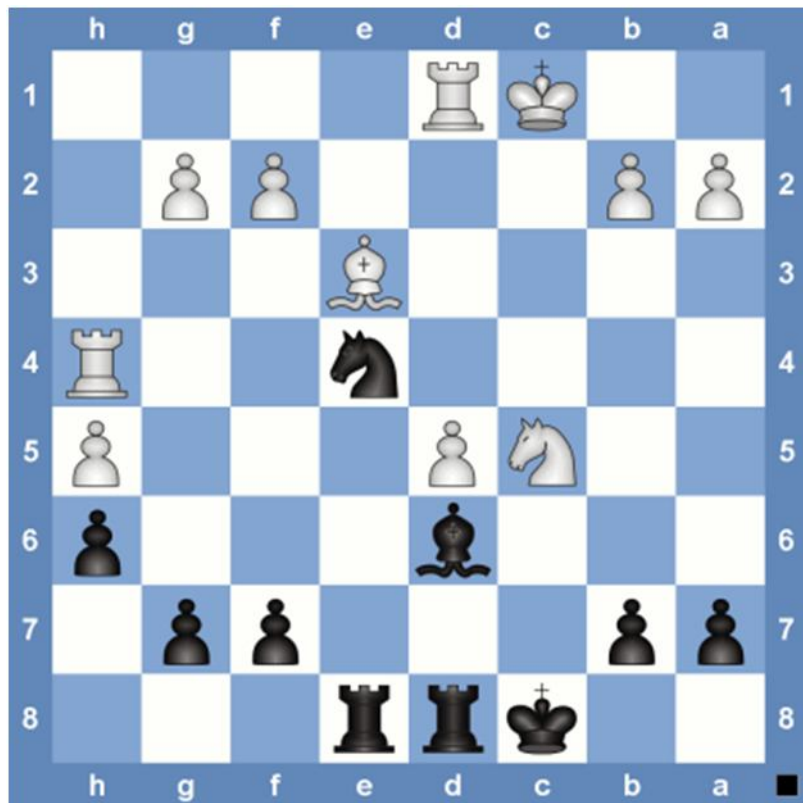
Note: Watch for Qxh3#

Key idea: White has a strong attack but can easily make a mistake if he gets too carried away by his own ideas and forgets about his opponent's threats. Once the white f6 pawn moves, black has the potential threat of Qxh3#. Keep your opponent's threats in mind - particularly at times when you are excited by your own opportunities.

Tactics Study – exercise 41

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

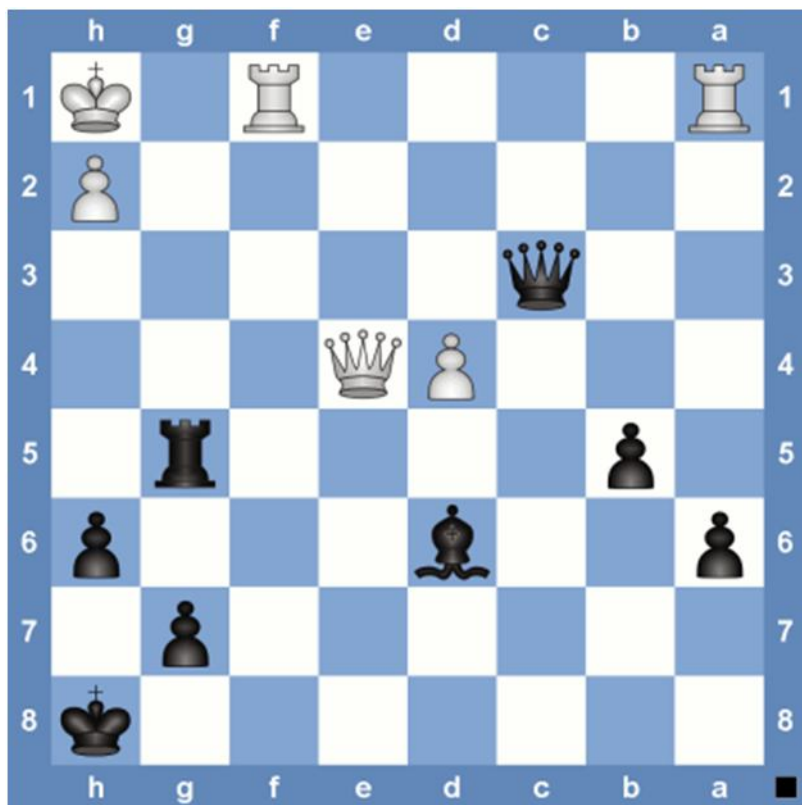
1... Bxc5 2.Bxc5 Nxc5 3.Rc4 b6 4.b4 Re4 and black keeps his extra piece.

Key idea: Black attacks the piece which pins him. At the same time the pinned piece actually protects the rook. It is quite an interesting defence.

Tactics Study – exercise 42

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qb2 2.Rf8+ Bxf8

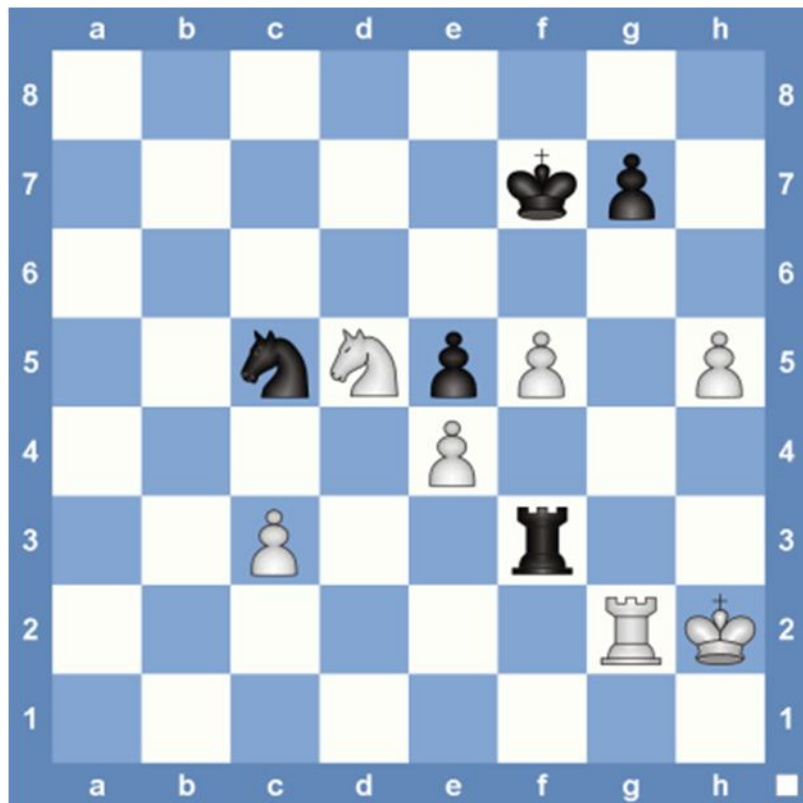
White gives up material to prevent the checkmate threat on h2 or g2. White can't defend h2 and g2 and thus finds a way to relieve the pressure on h2... but at the cost of material.

Key idea: Black's move threatens Qxh2# and the only way to defend against this threat, is to give up the defence of another critical square. The move 1... Qb2 in effect overloads the white Qe4.

Tactics Study – exercise 43

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.f6 Rxf6 2.Nxf6 and white has a winning endgame

Or

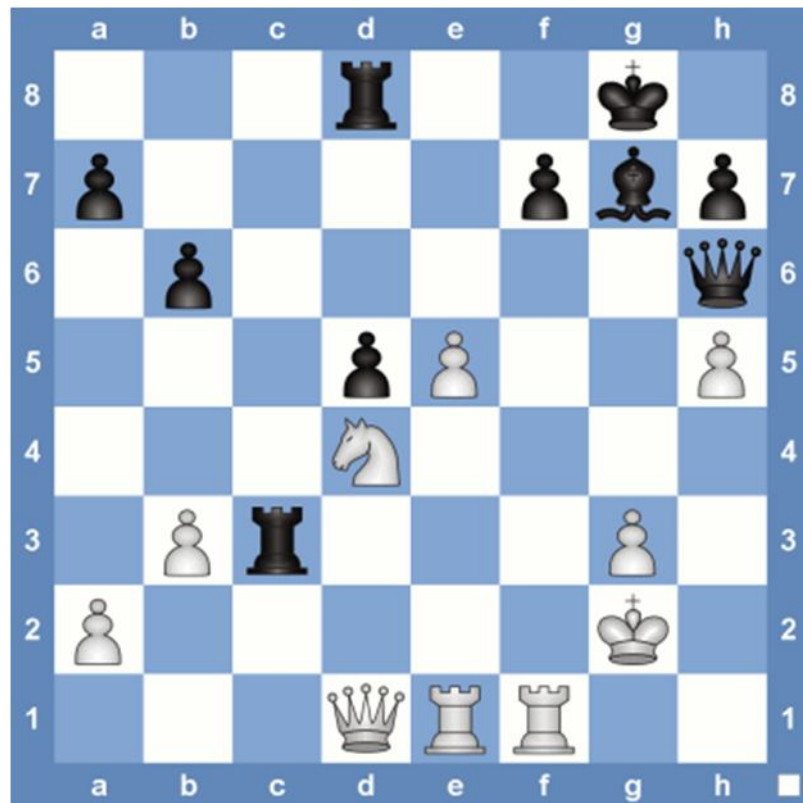
1.f6 gxf6 2.h6 and black cannot stop the passed pawn.

Key idea: The two main objectives of the endgame are to 1) activate your king and 2) create a passed pawn. Thus, in the endgame you should always be on the lookout for tactics which create a passed pawn.

Tactics Study – exercise 44

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Qg4 Kh8 2.Nf5 and white will win the black queen.

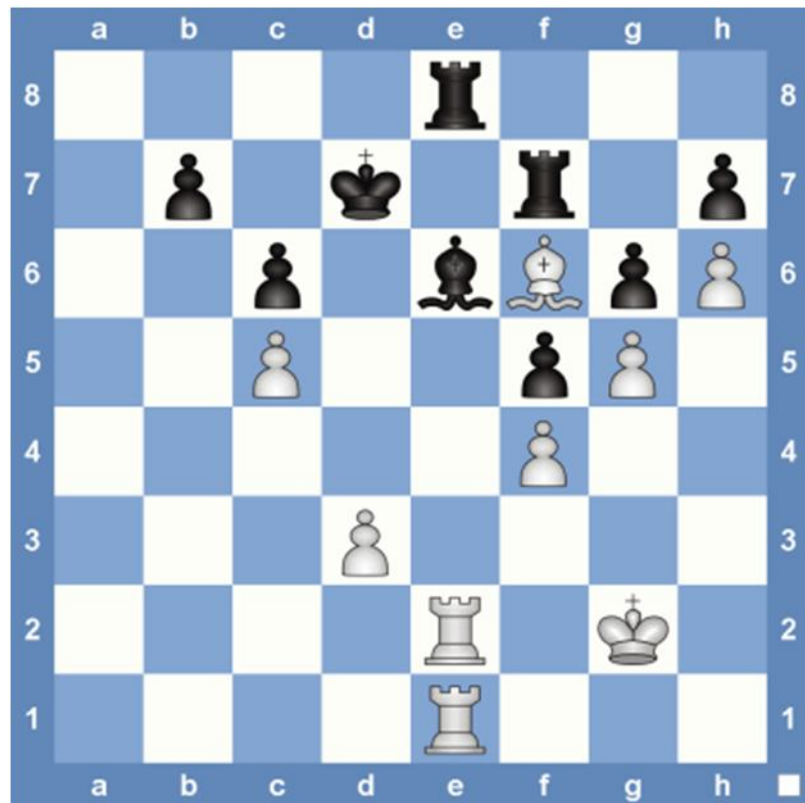
1.Qg4 prepares Nf5 which will threaten the Qh6 as well as the Bg7 – black queen can't stay to defend the Bg7.

Key idea: 1.Qg4 doesn't allow black to play Qg5 and at the same time sets up the lethal threat – Nf5. Safely landing a knight on f5 (or f4 for black) is often a sign of a good position.

Tactics Study – exercise 45

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Kf2 (or any move that prevents a check from the black bishop)

Any move that black makes can be exploited by white.

1... b6 cxb6 gives white a decisive passed pawn.

Key idea: The key to this solution is to notice that black don't have any good moves. He is in *zuchzwang* – any move he makes is bad since it gives up the defence of something else. The *zuchzwang* idea can become possible if you can tie down all enemy pieces to important defensive tasks.

Tactics Study – exercise 46

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Nxe6+ fxe6 2.Nxg7 and next Nxe8 since Kxg7 3.Qg6+ will lead to checkmate.

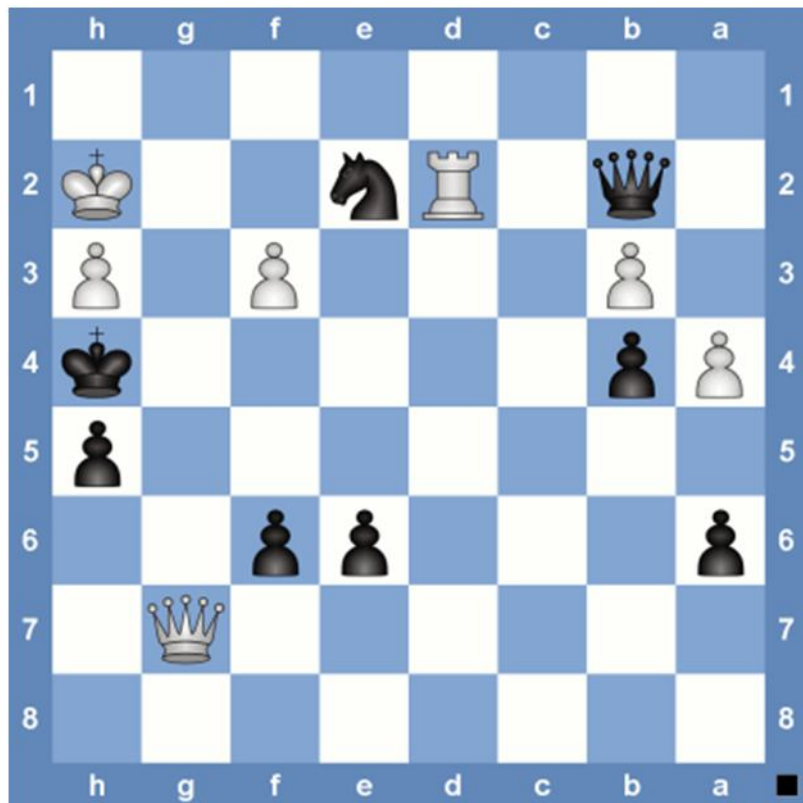
2.Nxg7 threatens Nxe8 as well as another fork with Nxe6.

Key idea: White first removes a defender of the g7 pawn and next opens up black's king whilst at the same time threatening a fork on e6 as well as entering on h7 with the queen.

Tactics Study – exercise 47

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qxd2 2.Qxf6+ Qg5

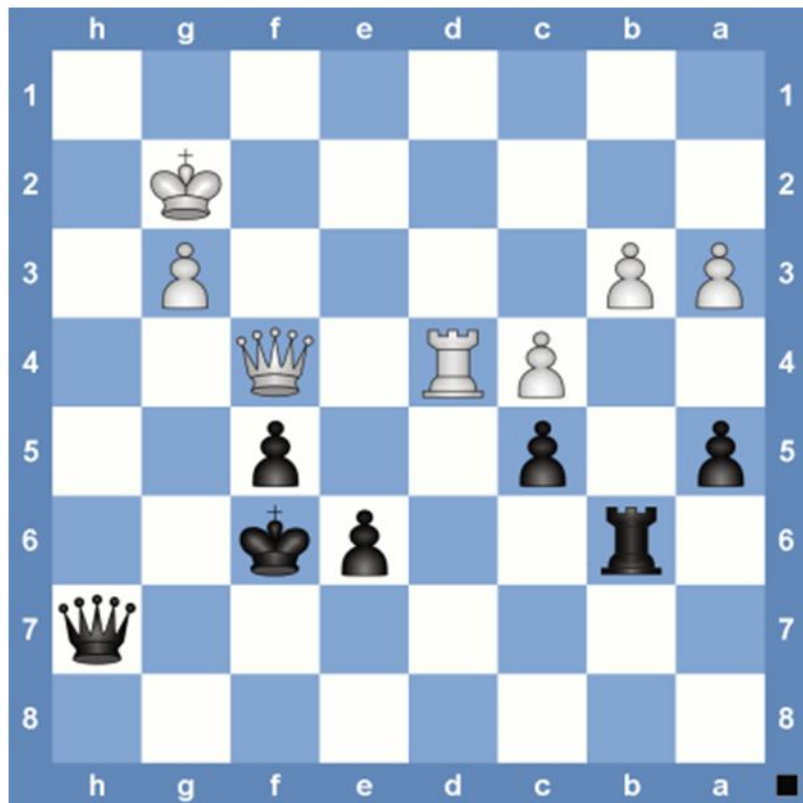
Accepting a sacrifice if you found a suitable defence can win you the game.

Key idea: Black just had to be sure that it is safe to capture the unprotected Rd2. Finding the refutation of your opponent's tactic can be just as effective as a tactical combination from your side.

Tactics Study – exercise 48

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qb7+ 2.Kf2 cxd4 is the only safe way to win the white rook.

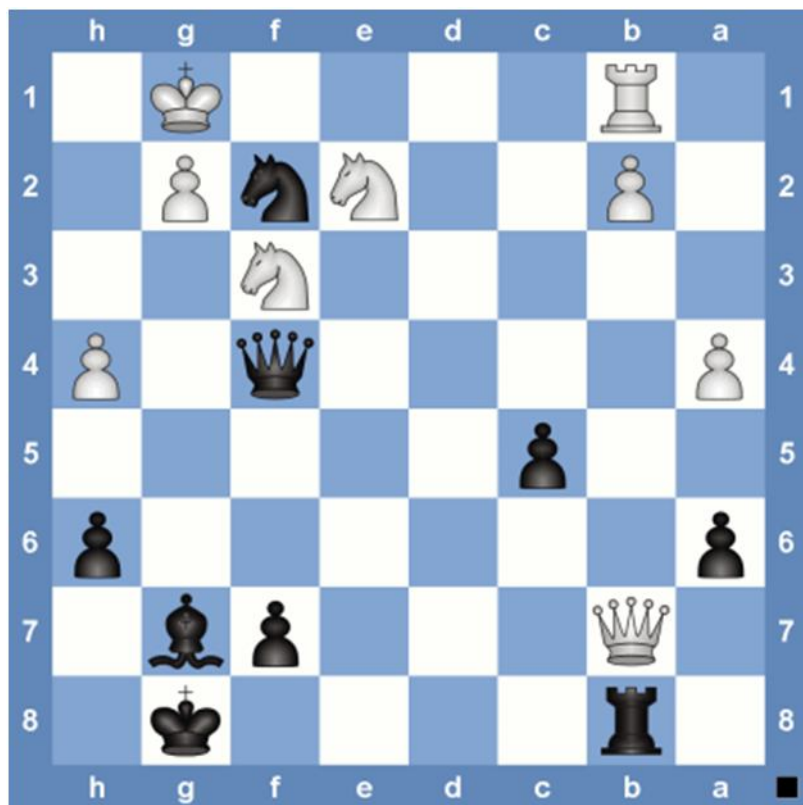
1... e5? , Qh4+ or 1... e5? 2.Rd7 Qxd7 3.Qh6+ Ke7 4.Qxb6

Key idea: Black uses a check (tempo move) to protect one of his undefended pieces before he captures the white rook.

Tactics Study – exercise 49

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Nh3+ 2.Kf1 Rxb7 3.Nxe4 Nxe4

1... Nh3+ creates a defender of Qf4 – which allows black to win material after 2... Rxb7.

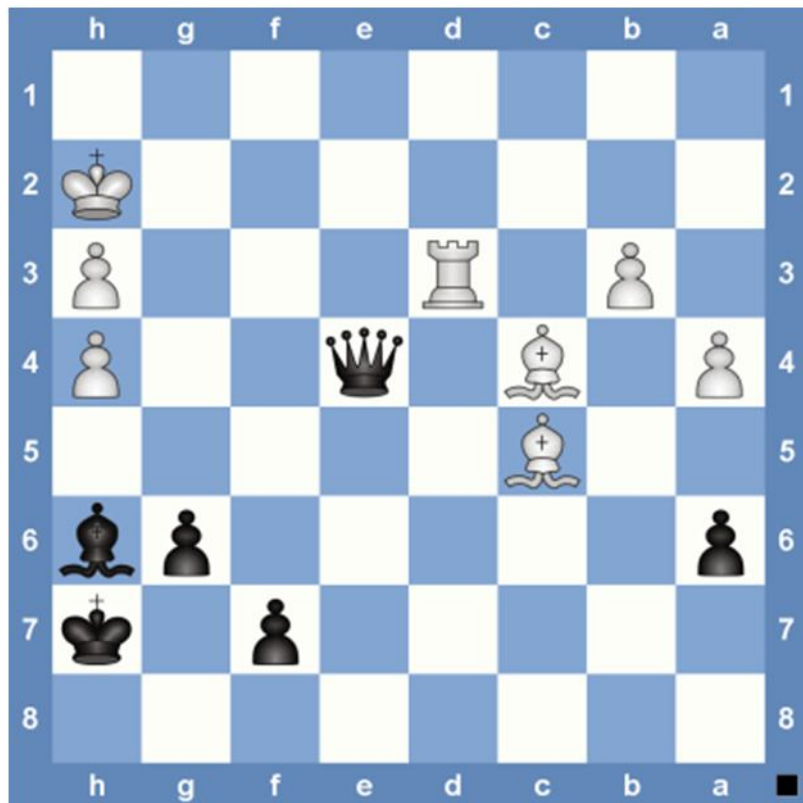
1... Nh3+ 2.gxh3 allows black to move his queen to a safe square (with tempo) before capturing the white Qb7.

Key idea: A recapture which will at the same time move your attacked piece to a safe square, can be a useful idea in a series of captures.

Tactics Study – exercise 51

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qe5+ 2.Kg2 Qxc5

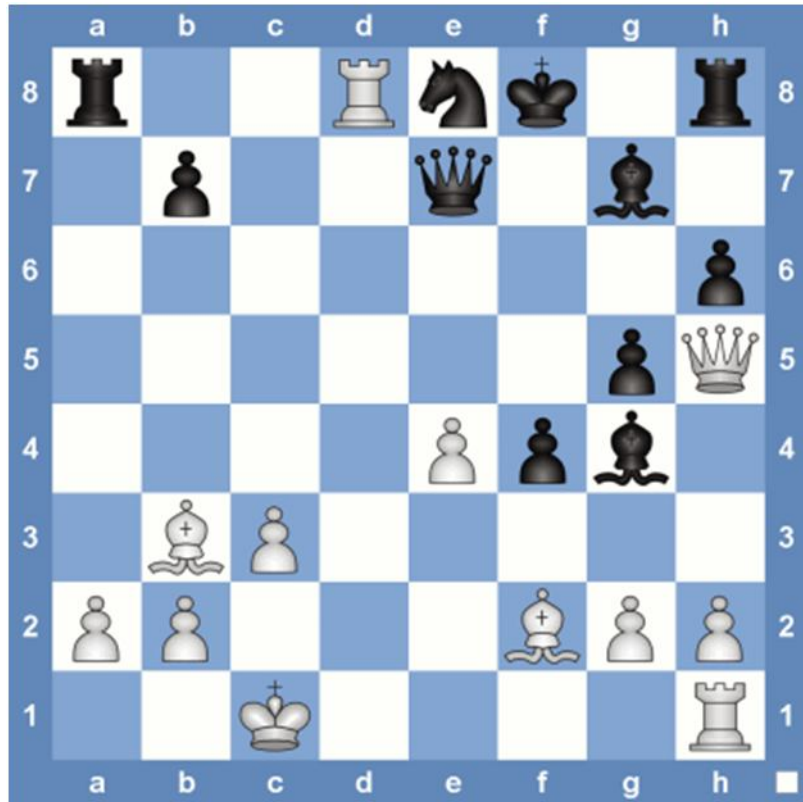
There is no quick checkmate combination in this position.

Key idea: A simple tactic that wins easily should always be preferred over a complicated combination which might look pretty but involves unnecessary risk.

Tactics Study – exercise 52

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

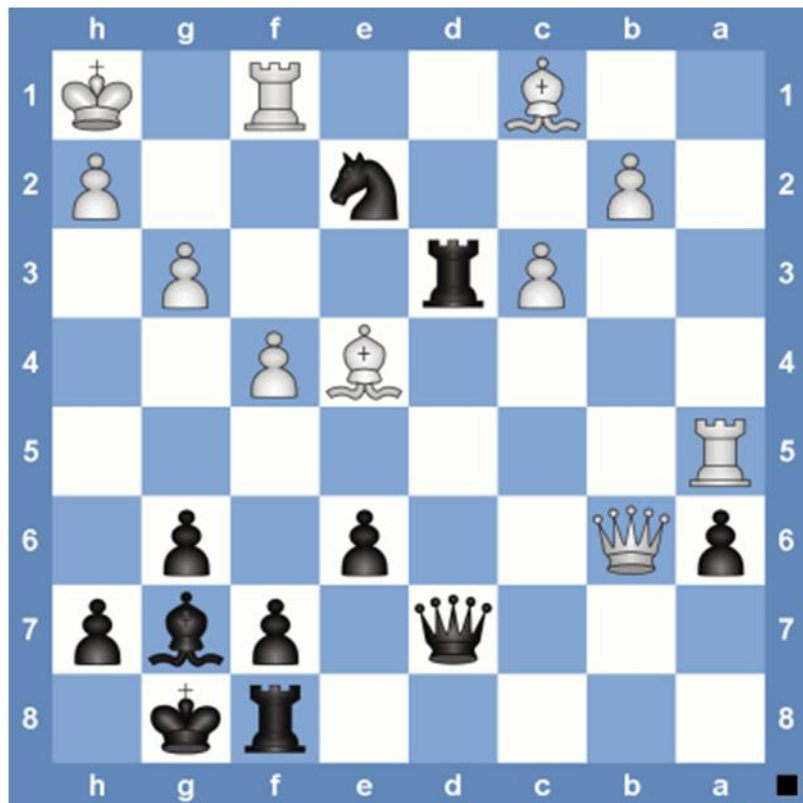
1.Qxe8+ Qxe8 2.Bc5#

Key idea: The bishop pair is exceptionally dangerous in positions with long open diagonals, even more so when the enemy king is exposed.

Tactics Study – exercise 53

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rd1 2.Qf2 Nxc1 wins a piece

OR

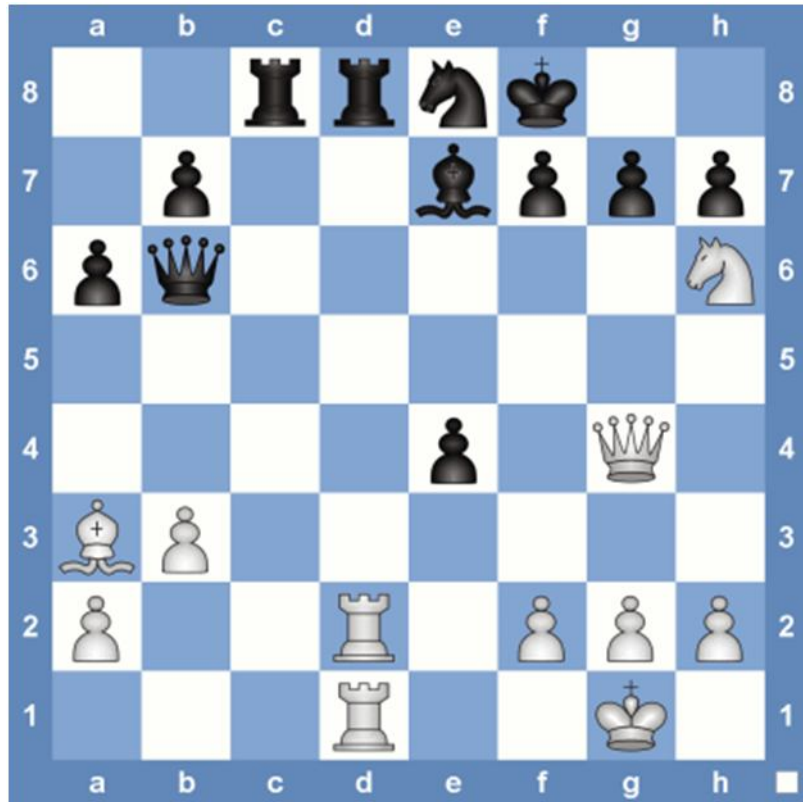
1... Rd1 2.Rxd1 Qxd1+ 3.Kg2 Qxc1

Key idea: The move 1... Rd1 effectively breaks the contact between the Rf1 and Bc1. Breaking the coordination between enemy pieces can create vulnerable (undefended) targets.

Tactics Study – exercise 54

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

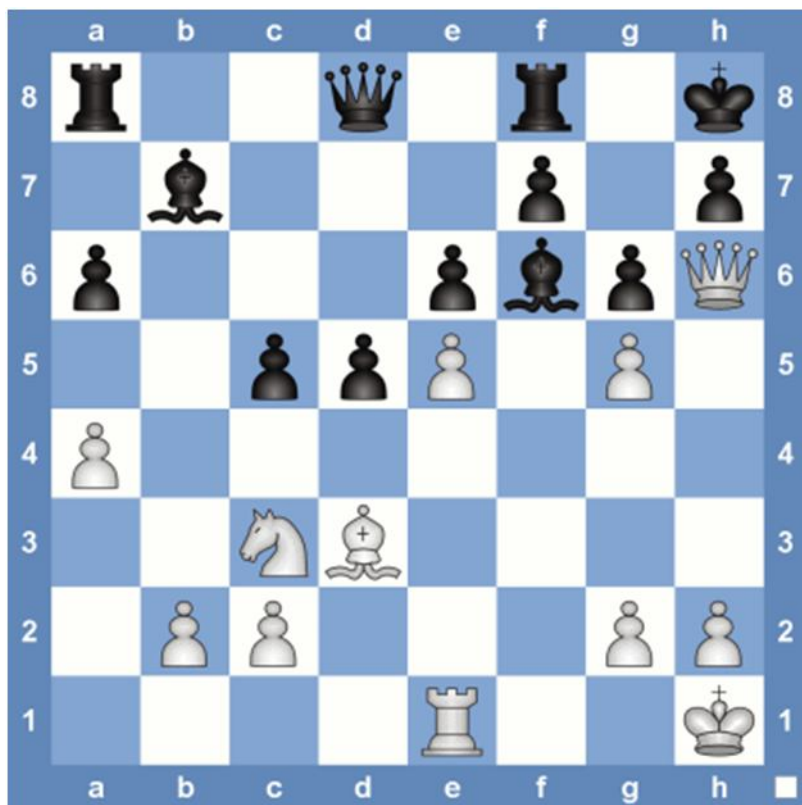
1.Bxe7+ Kxe7 2.Rd7+ Rxd7 3.Rxd7+ (or Qxd7+) will lead to checkmating the black king.

Key idea: Moves that force the enemy king to come out of his hiding place should be considered optimistically if the king cannot retreat to safety quickly.

Tactics Study – exercise 55

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.exf6 Rg8 2.Re3 Qe8 3.Qxh7+ Kxh7 4.Rh3+ Qh6 5.Rxh6# (the point of playing exf6 instead of gxf6)

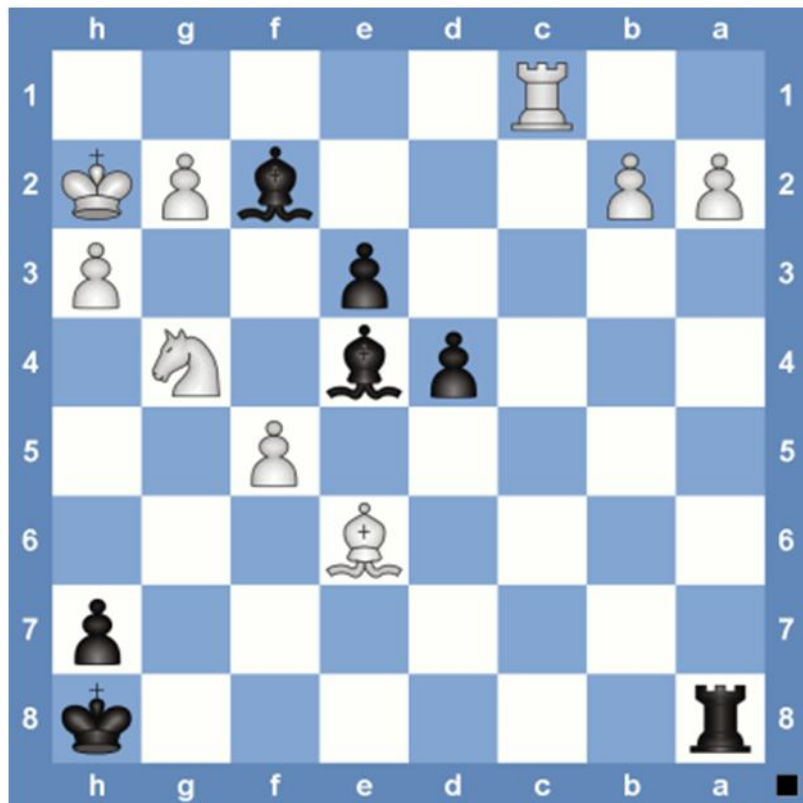
Which is better: exf6 or gxf6? The important target in this position is not so much the centre anymore, but rather the black king.

Key idea: Capturing towards the centre is a basic chess principle, but capturing **towards the area of attack** can increase your control in that area of the board.

Tactics Study – exercise 56

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... d3 2.Nxf2 d2 3.Rd1 e2 4.Rxd2 e1(Q)

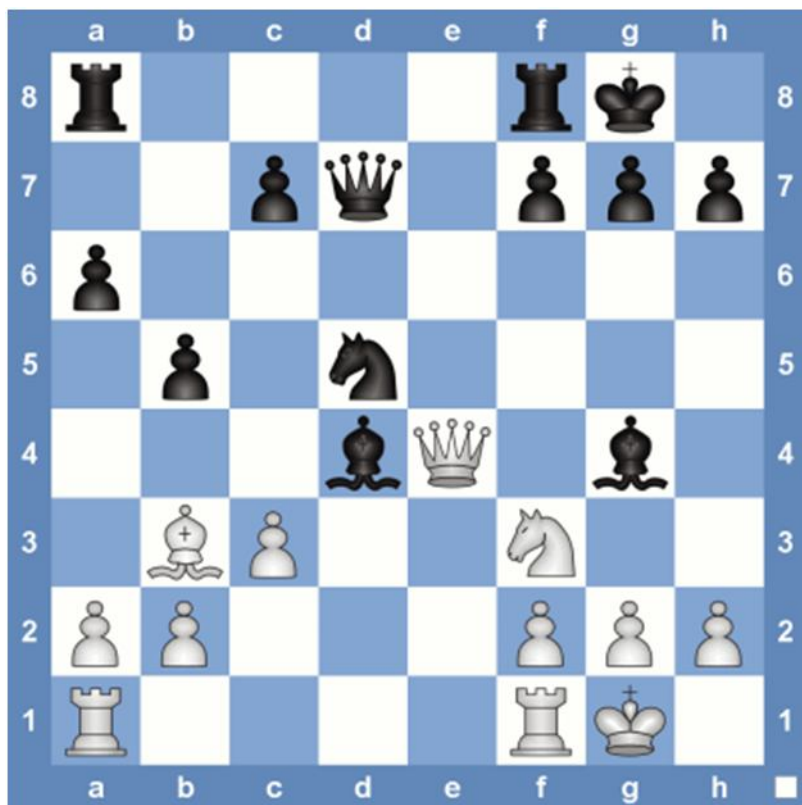
The increasing value of passed pawns often make worthwhile to keep on pushing them.

Key idea: Connected passed pawns rapidly increase in value when they advance and are quite able to defend themselves against frontal attacks.

Tactics Study – exercise 57

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Bxd5 Bxf3 2. Qxf3 Rad8 3. Bc6 Qd7 4. cxd4

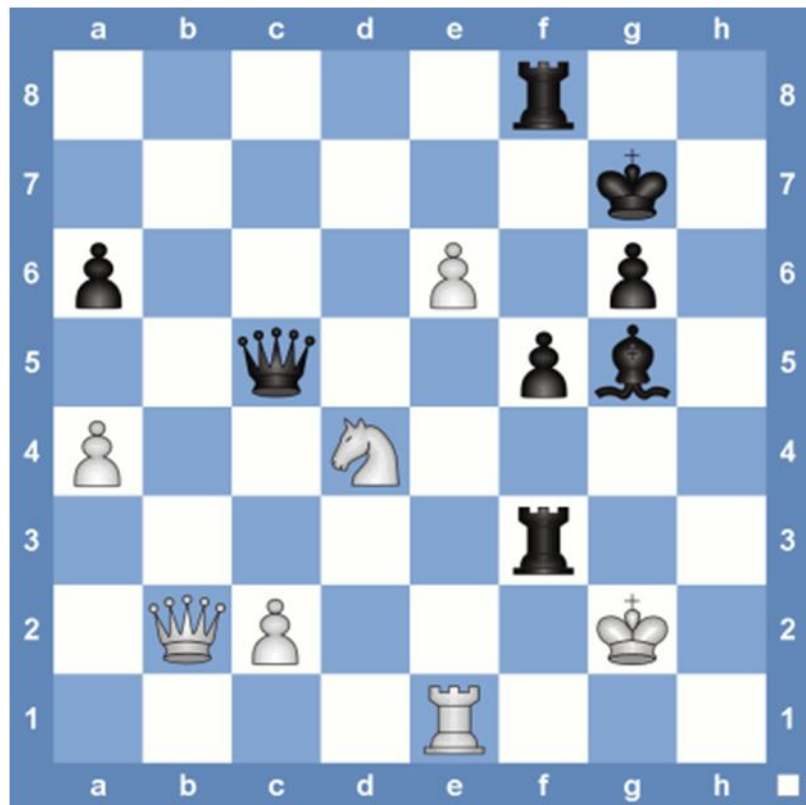
The key to winning the black Bd4 is the move 3. Bc6 which gets the white bishop to safety whilst at the same time gaining a tempo by attacking the black queen.

Key idea: Moves that make a threat and hold the potential to make a new threat is a powerful way to get your piece to a safe square with tempo.

Tactics Study – exercise 58

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

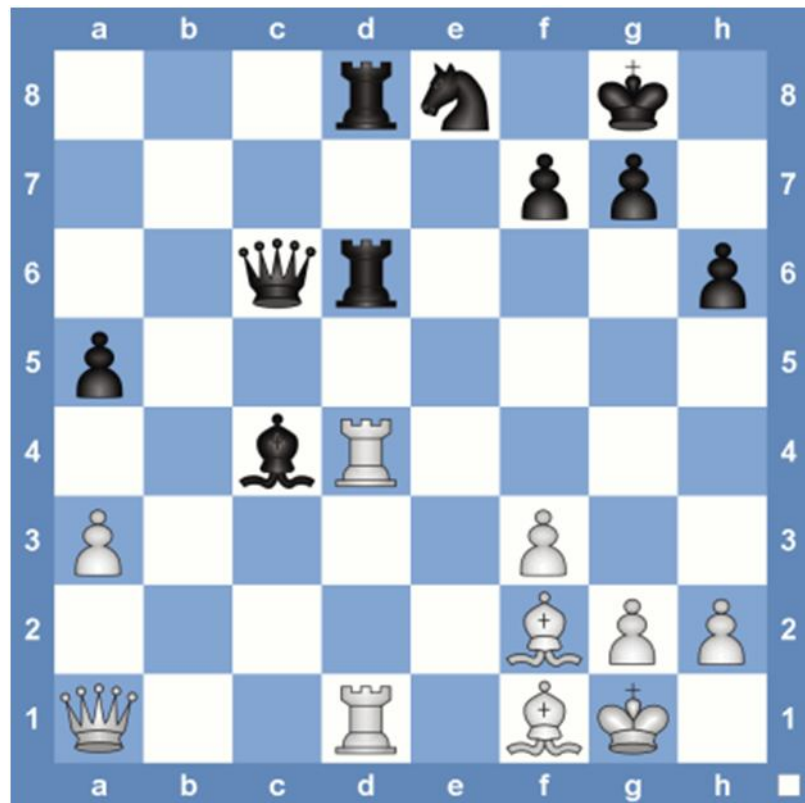
1.Nxf5 db+ Kg8 2.Qf7#

Key idea: A double check forces the king to move – this dramatically reduces the amount of calculation you need to do when you consider a double check.

Tactics Study – exercise 59

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Rxc4 Rxd1 2.Qxd1 Rxd1 3.Rxc6

OR

1.Rxc4 Qxc4 2.Rxd6 winning a piece thanks to the Bxc4 threat

OR

1.Rc1 also wins but is a lot more complicated and not as effective as 1.Rxc4

1.Rxd6? Nxd6 and black defends everything.

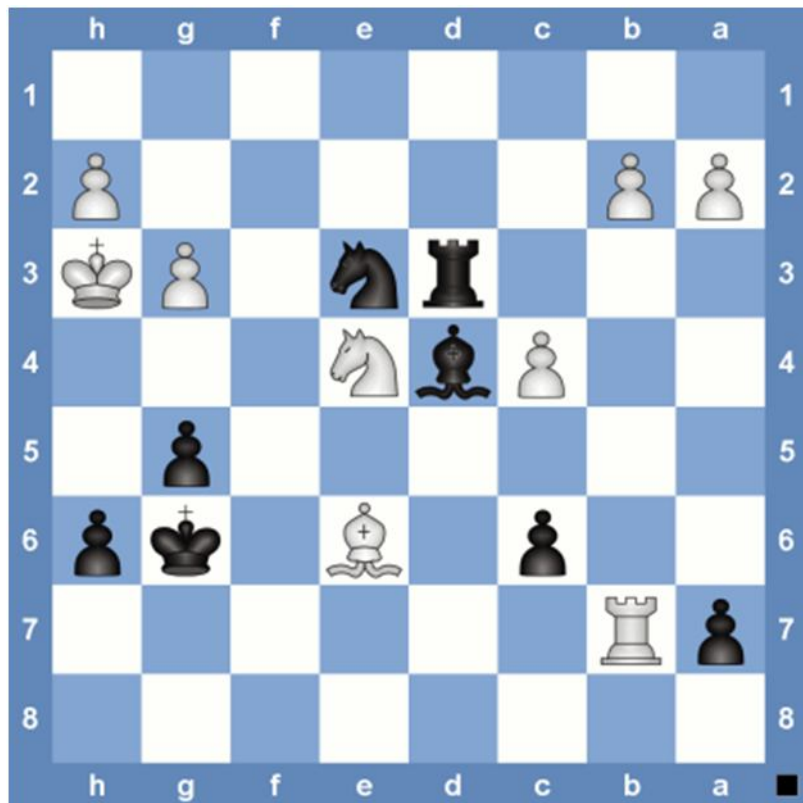
Key idea: The **correct move order** is often the key factor in tactical exchanges or combinations.

This example is instructive for the importance of correct move order.

Tactics Study – exercise 60

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

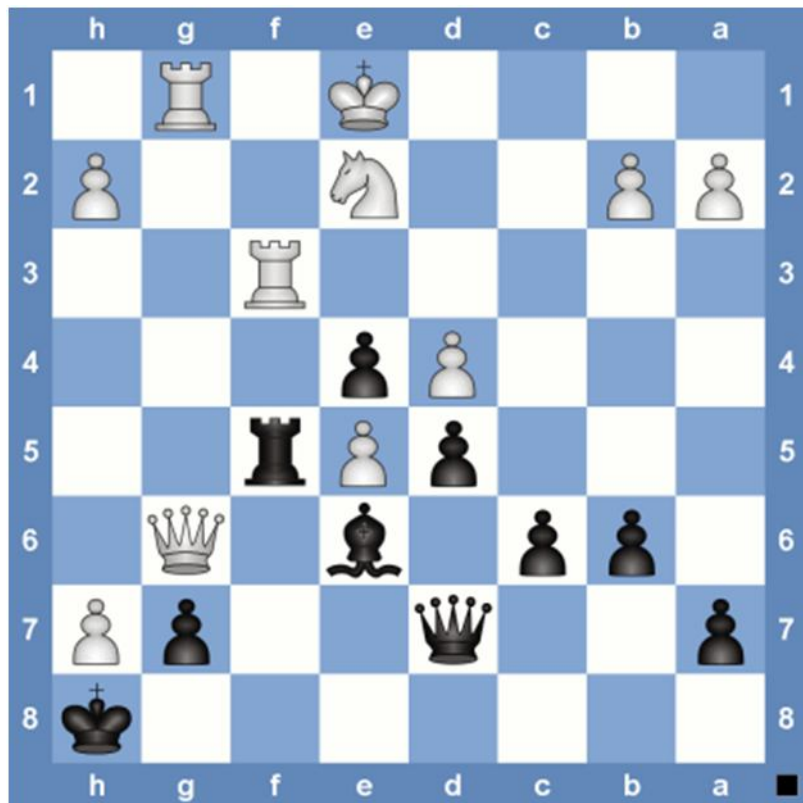
1... h5 2.Bf7+ Kh6 3.Nxg6 Kxg6

Key idea: The move 1... h5 creates a “mating net”. A **mating net** can often force a checkmate or force your opponent to sacrifice material in order to create an escape square.

Tactics Study – exercise 61

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... exf3 (threatening f2+) 2.Rf1 fxe3 winning a piece

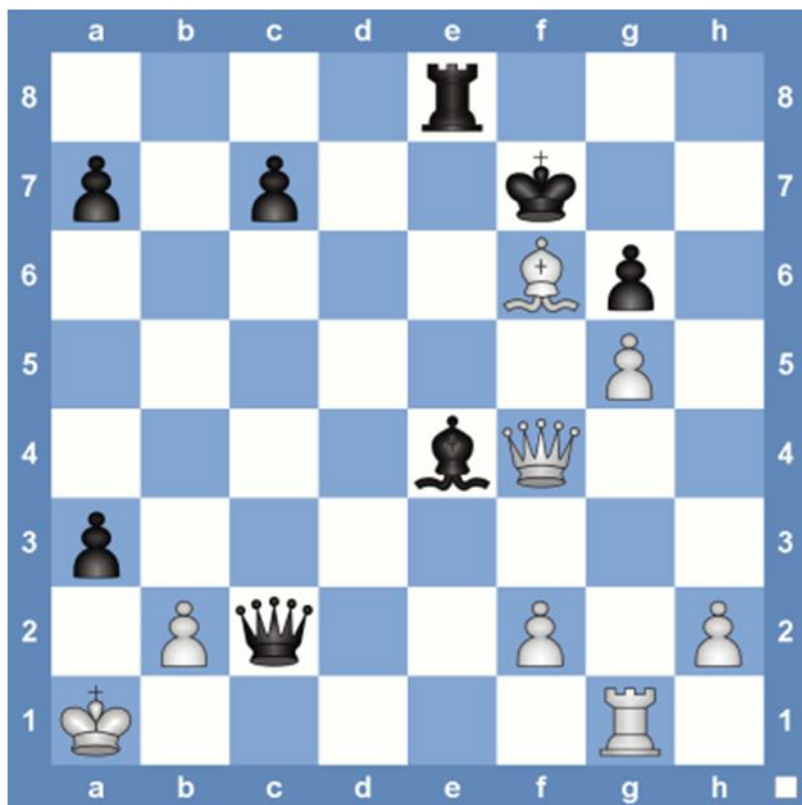
In positions where the pieces are active it is possible to forget about the tactical powers of the pawns. Training your mind to be aware of the power of your pawns will help you overcome this problem.

Key idea: The “pawn-push fork” is when a pawn continually moves forward with threats and eventually ends up forking two pieces.

Tactics Study – exercise 62

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Rc1 Qxc1 2.Qxc1

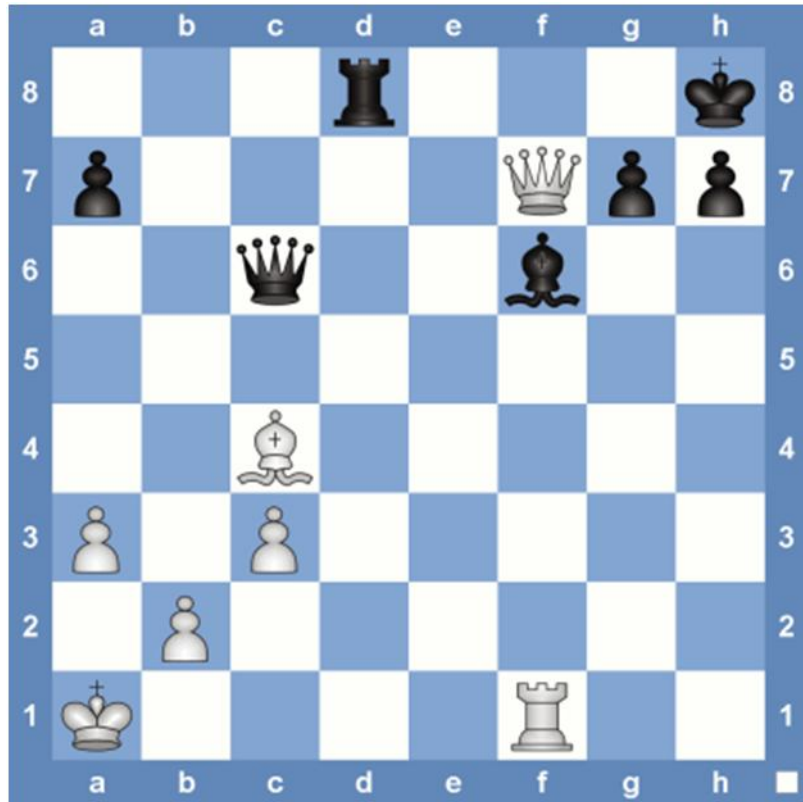
The discovered check by moving the Bf6 leads to nothing concrete. It is a good habit to be aware of all your possible threats before you start investigating one particular move.

Key idea: When the most obvious threat (moving the Bf6 to create discovered check) seems to lead to nothing - it's time to investigate other threats (ie. Rc1).

Tactics Study – exercise 63

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Be6! Qe8 2.Rxf6 Qxf7 3.Rxf7 wins a bishop.

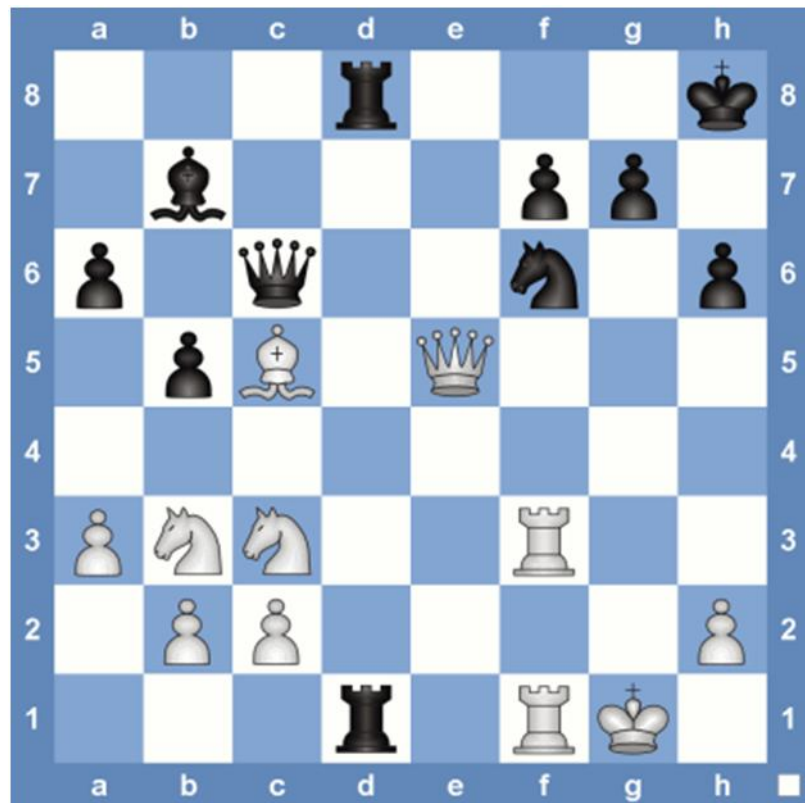
1.Be6 threatens Rxf6

Key idea: Breaking the connection between enemy pieces can be a very effective tactical weapon.

Tactics Study – exercise 64

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Nxd1 Rxd1 2.Nd4

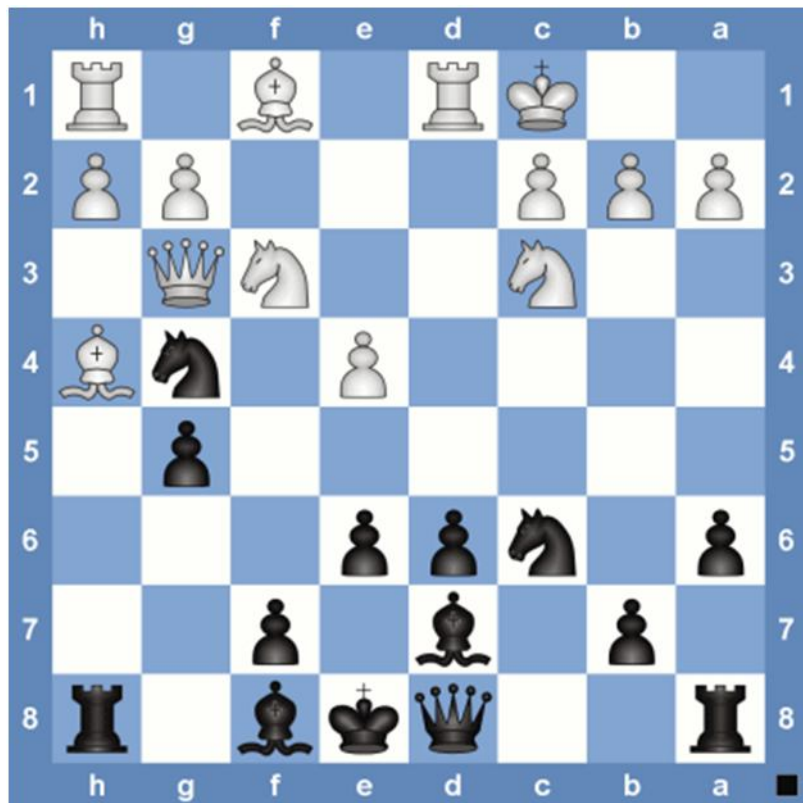
2.Nd4 is a great defensive move which holds white's position together and effectively defends against all black's serious threats

Key idea: Finding the refutation of your opponent's attack can be just as effective as finding a combination which wins material.

Tactics Study – exercise 65

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... gxh4 2.Qxg4 e5 3.Qg5 Bh6

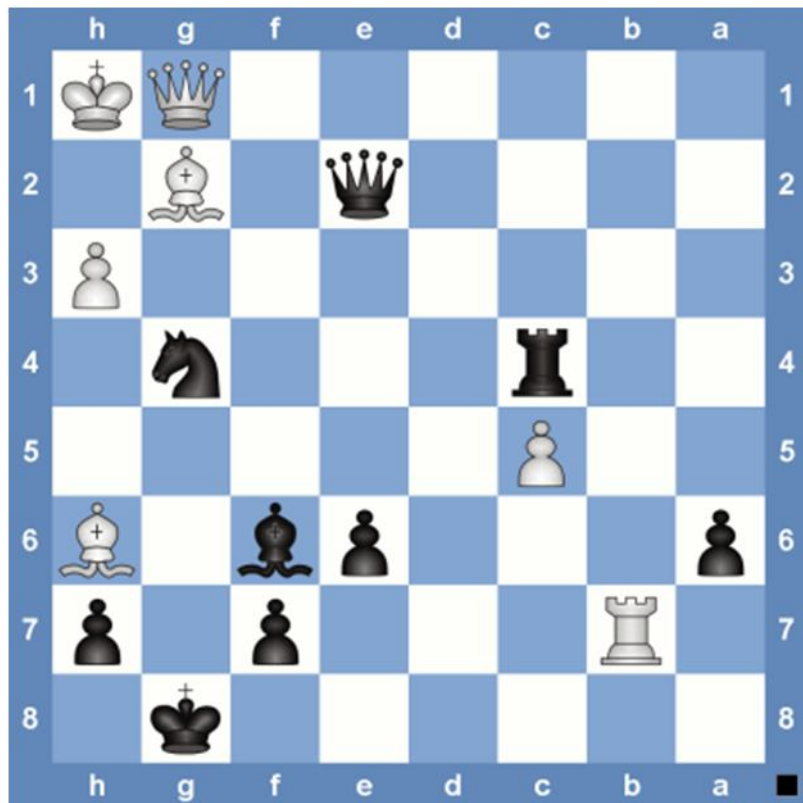
The g5 square is indirectly defended by the Bh6 pin possibility.

Key idea: Squares are indirectly defended if you can pin an enemy piece on that square.

Tactics Study – exercise 66

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Nf2+ 2.Qxf2 Rc1+ 3.Bxc1 Qxf2

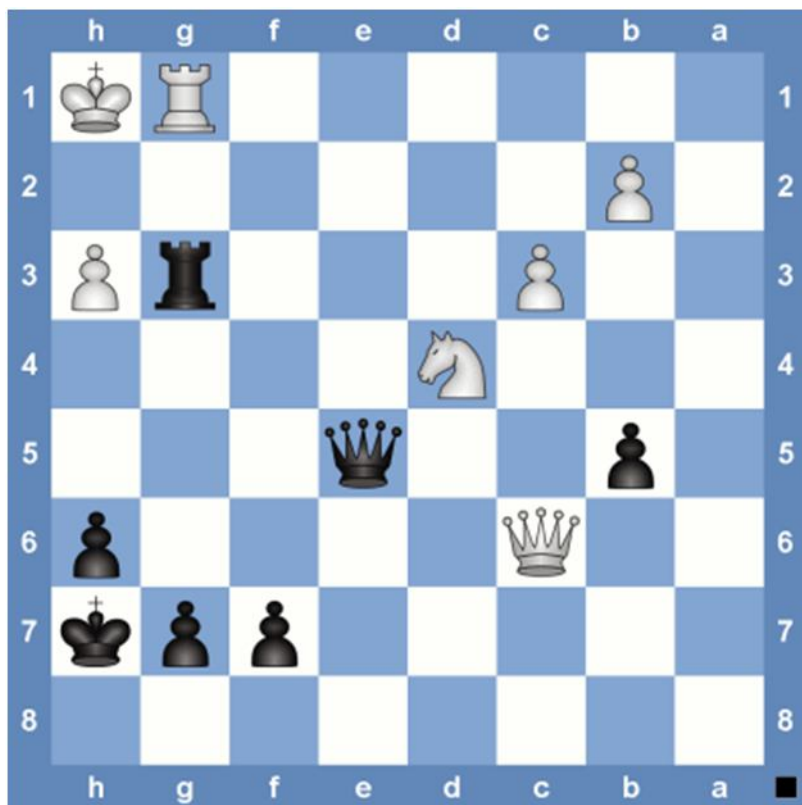
Black finds a way to distract the important role of Bh6 (to break the Rb8+ threat).

Key idea: A sacrifice could be useful to lure an important enemy piece to a less threatening square.

Tactics Study – exercise 67

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rxh3+ 2.Kg2 Rg3+ 3.Kf1 Qf4+ 4.Nf3 Rxf3+ 5.Qxf3 Qxf3+

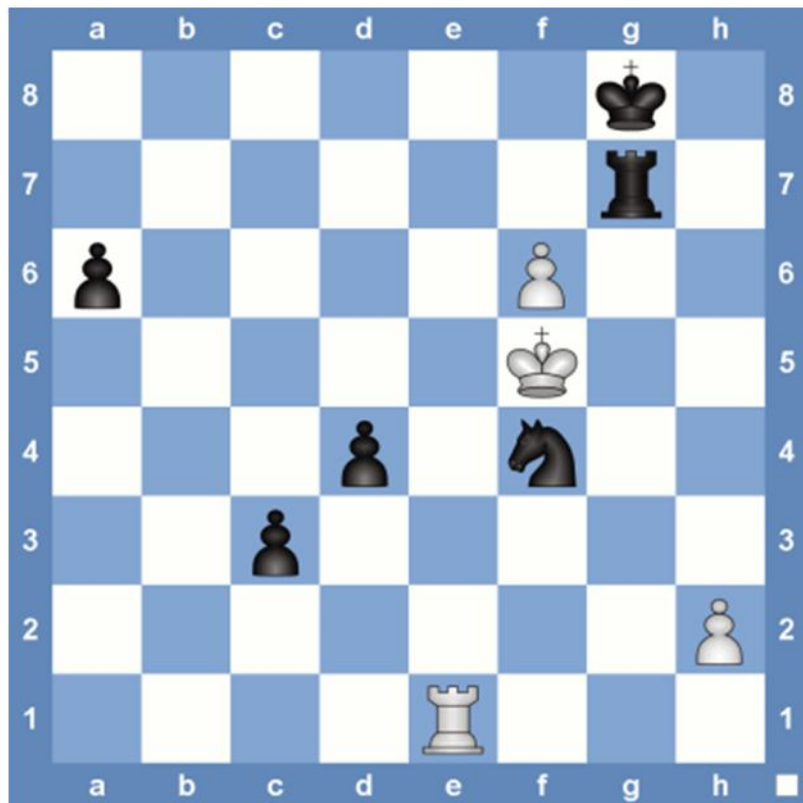
Practice the Q+R coordination in this example. Try to find the ways how black could checkmate white if white tries to save material.

Key idea: Queen + rook coordination against an exposed king is often deadly but can be rather tricky to master.

Tactics Study – exercise 68

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Re8+ Kh7 2.fxg7 Kxg7 Kxf4 followed by Rc8

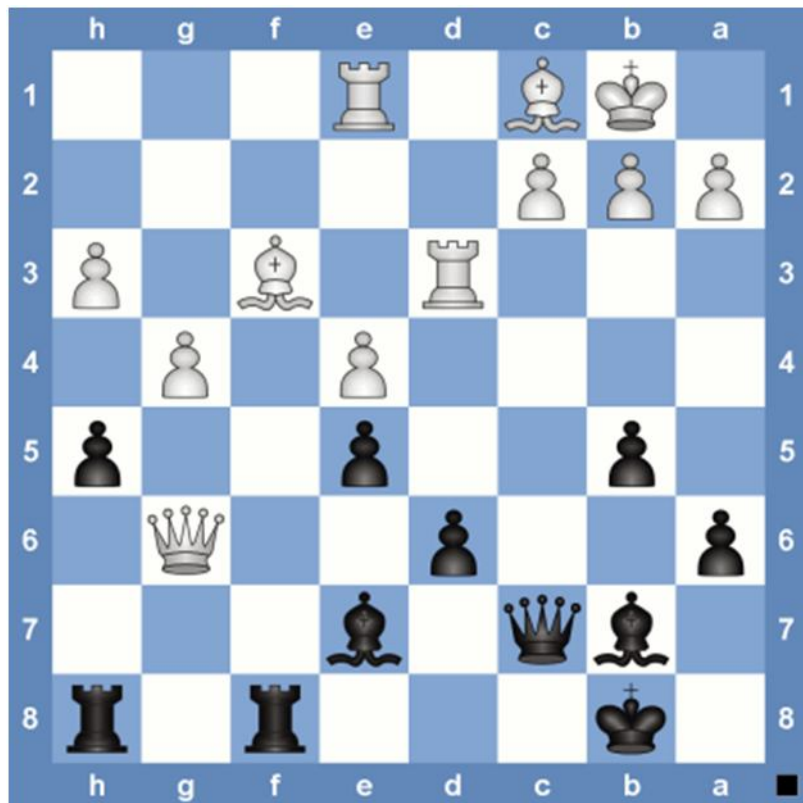
White had to be sure he will be able to stop the black passed pawns.

Key idea: Tactics can be useful in achieving a winning endgames position but need to be calculated carefully.

Tactics Study – exercise 69

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Bh4 2.Rg1 Rf6 traps the white queen.

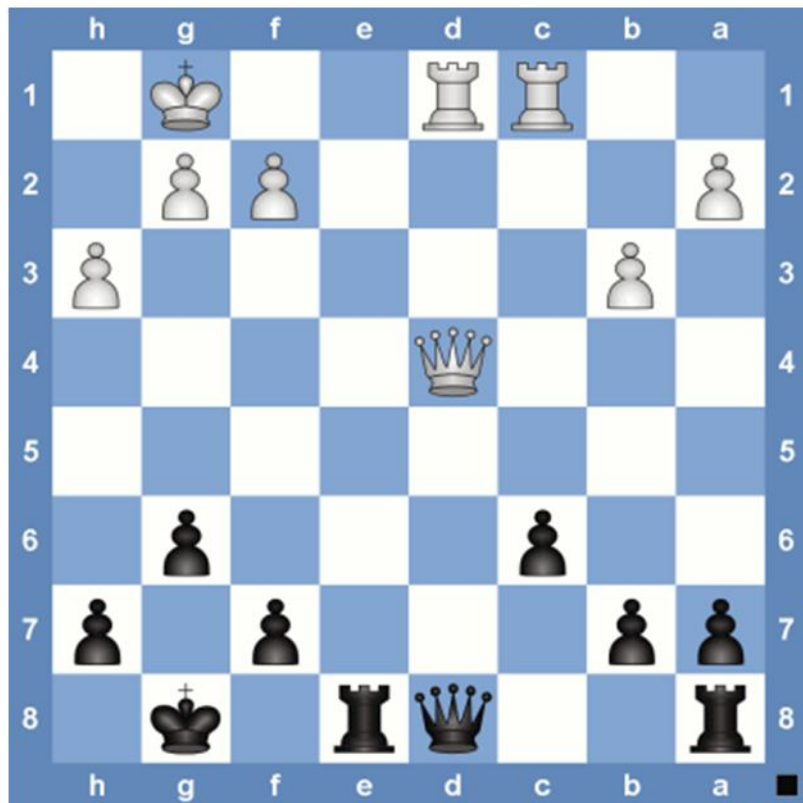
1... Bh4 threatens the undefended Re1 and covers the squares on the 7th rank with the Qc7.

Key idea: An enemy queen that ventures beyond your own pawns can be very dangerous but at the same time very vulnerable to traps.

Tactics Study – exercise 70

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Re1+ 2.Rxe1 Qxd4

Or

1... Re1+ 2.Kh2 Qxd4 3.Rxd4 Rxc1 leaves black a rook ahead

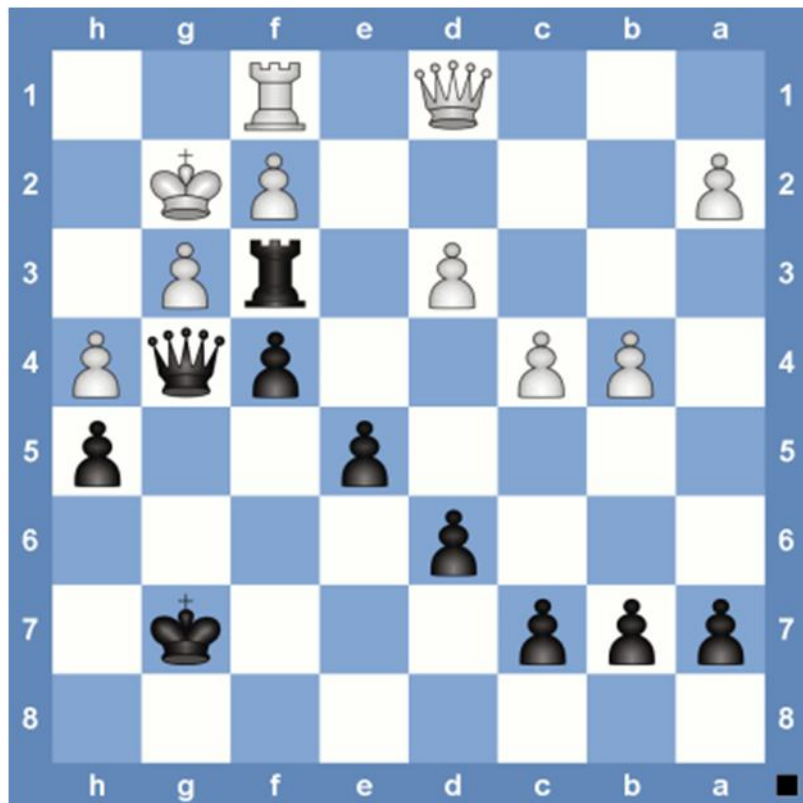
Ladder trick – Black pulls the support point of the ladder (d1) out from beneath the queen.

Key idea: The ladder trick is a common but useful tactic to remove a rook which defends the queen.

Tactics Study – exercise 71

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rxf2+ 2.Rxf2 Qxd1

Or

1... Rxf2+ 2.Kxf2 Qxg3+ 3.Ke2 Qe3#

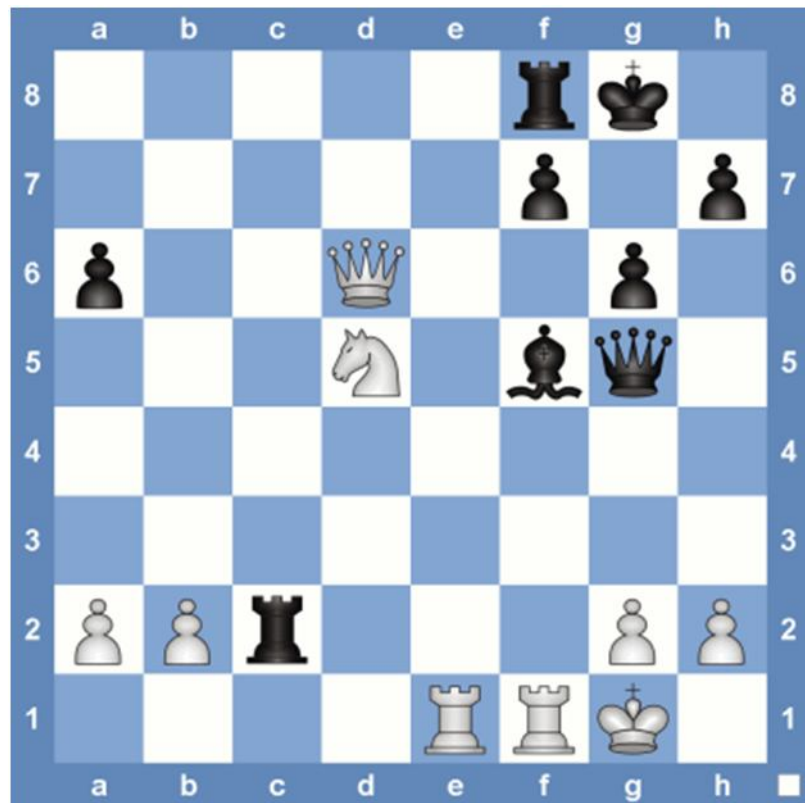
This shows a variation of the old ladder trick – this time just turned on it's side.

Key idea: The sideways ladder trick is a common but useful tactic to remove a rook which defends the queen.

Tactics Study – exercise 72

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

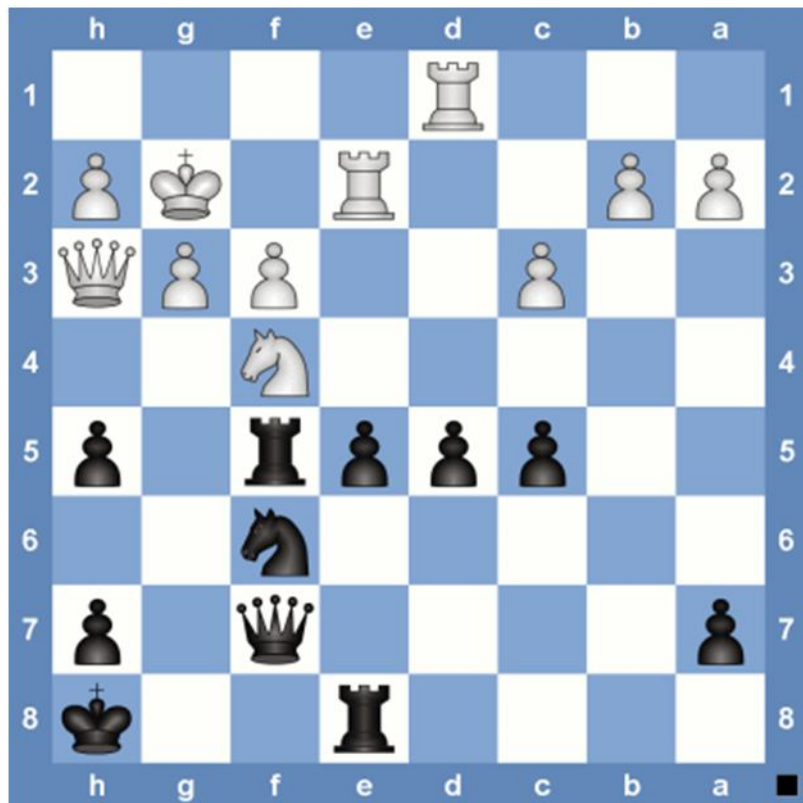
1... Nf6+ 2.Kg7 Qxf8+ 3.Kxf8 Nxf7+ forking the king and queen.

Key idea: Knights are masters of fork tricks – in the presence of knights and high valued pieces you should always investigate the possibility of knight forks.

Tactics Study – exercise 73

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... exf4 2.Rxe8 Nxe8 discovers a defence on Rf5 by the black queen.

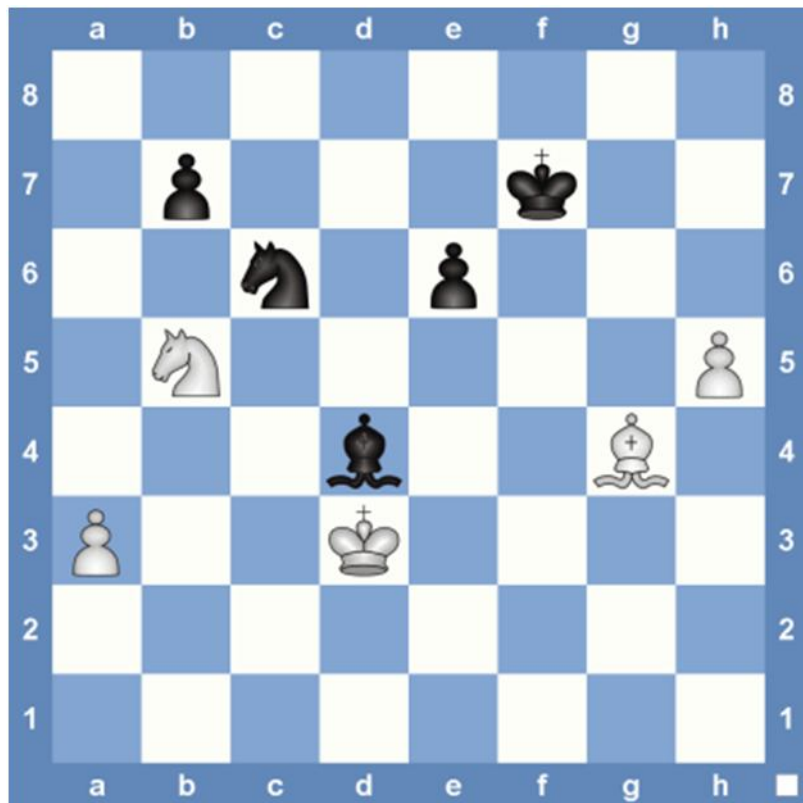
The move 2... Nxe8 reveals that Qf7 protects the Rf5.

Key idea: A move that discovers an unexpected defence between your own pieces can be a useful resource in combinations which involve exchanges.

Tactics Study – exercise 74

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1. Bxe6+ Kxe6 (or Ke7) 2. Nxd4 and white reaches a winning endgame.

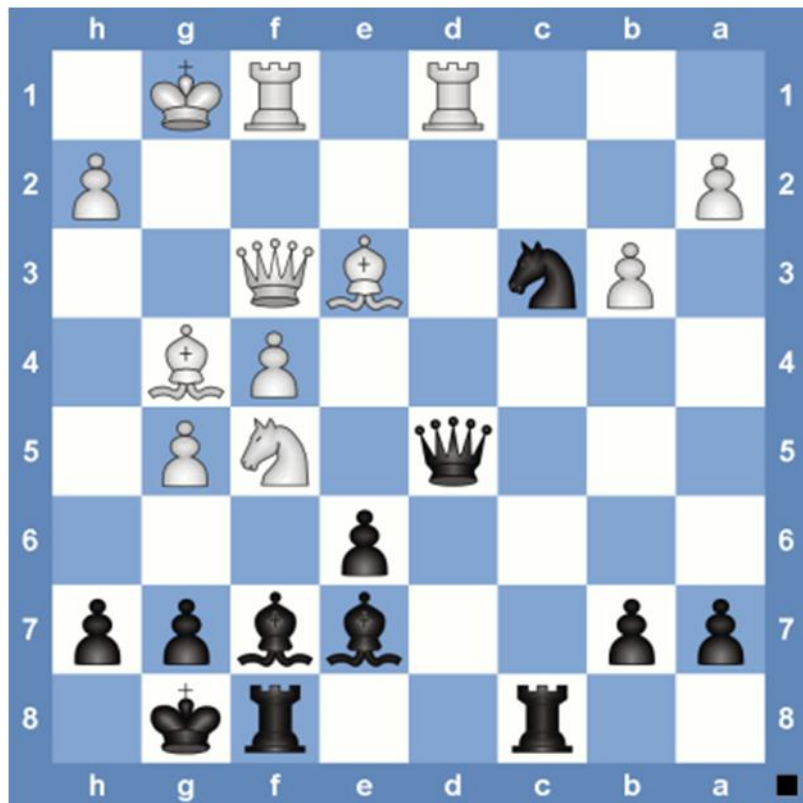
The black king will be forced out of play by the white pawn on h5.

Key idea: An outside passed pawn is a common trump card which often gives you the opportunity to exchange (or even sacrifice) into a won endgame. The power of the outside passed pawn is due to the fact that the opponent is forced to dedicate valuable resources to try stopping the pawn from promoting.

Tactics Study – exercise 75

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... exf5 2.Rxd5 Bxd5 3.Qh3 fxg4

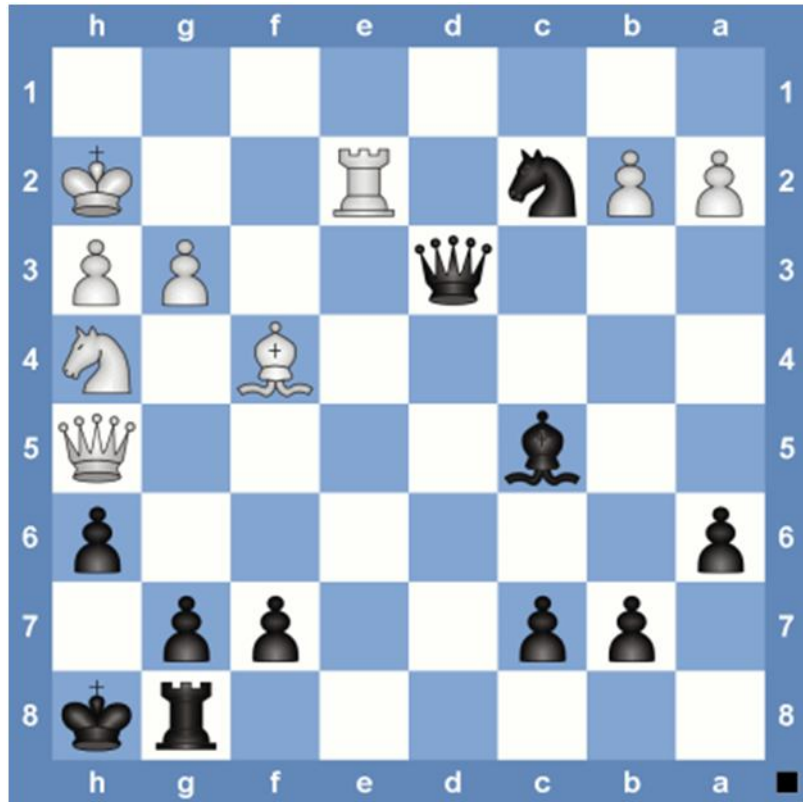
Train your mind not to overlook tactics where you get sufficient material for your queen, even if your opponent keeps his queen.

Key idea: 3 minor pieces are almost always stronger than a queen due to their extra flexibility and the possibility to overpower the queen on a specific target. A queen cannot defend herself, whereas the 3 minor pieces can coordinate. If the 3 pieces were badly coordinated in an open position, then the queen might have a better chance.

Tactics Study – exercise 76

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Qd1 2.Rf2 Qxh5

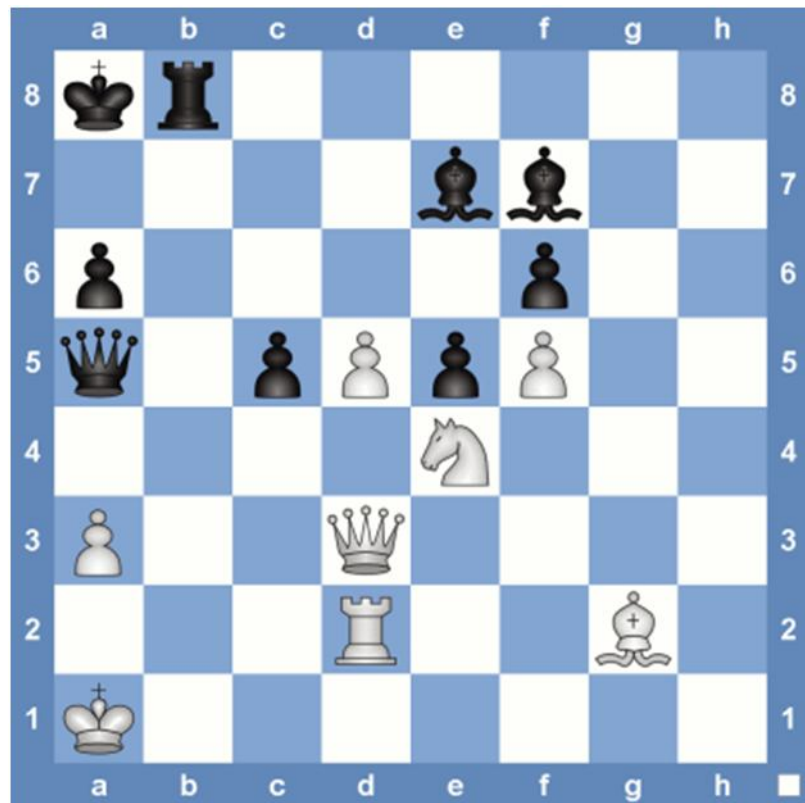
First consider the power of your own threats as a means to defend against an opponent threat.

Key idea: Strong attacking moves (threats) are often hard to find when you are concerned about defending against an enemy threat. Making a threat in spite of your opponent's threat is called a **counter-threat**. Counter threats can be extremely powerful but should always be considered with much caution.

Tactics Study – exercise 77

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

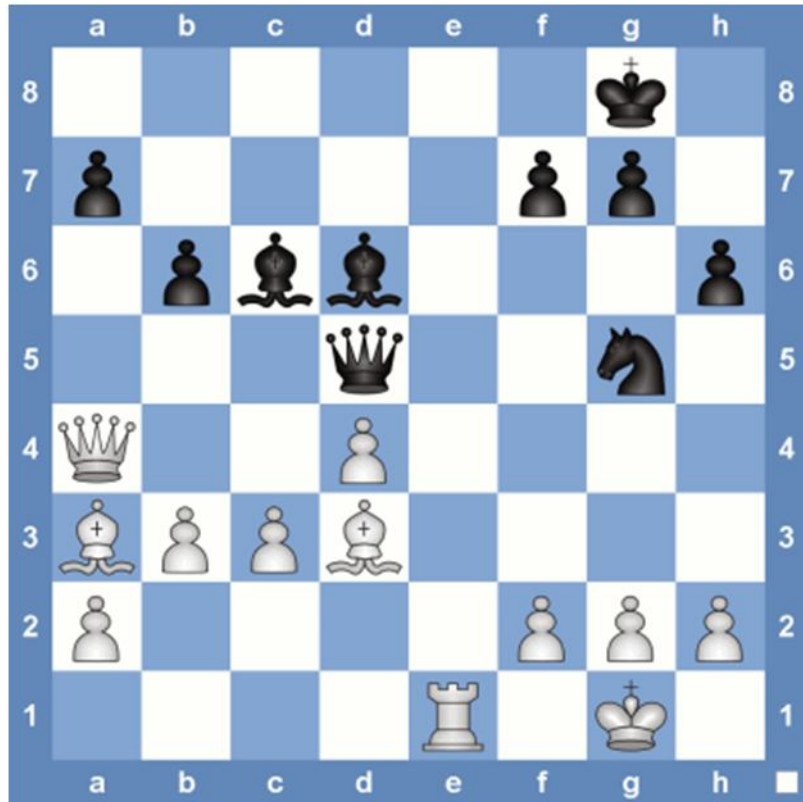
1.d6 Bd8 2.Ng5+ Kh7 3.Nxf7

Key idea: Positions where a checkmate or significant material gain *seems* possible can often make you oversee the simple tactic which wins a piece – train your mind to be not neglect simple tactics.

Tactics Study – exercise 78

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

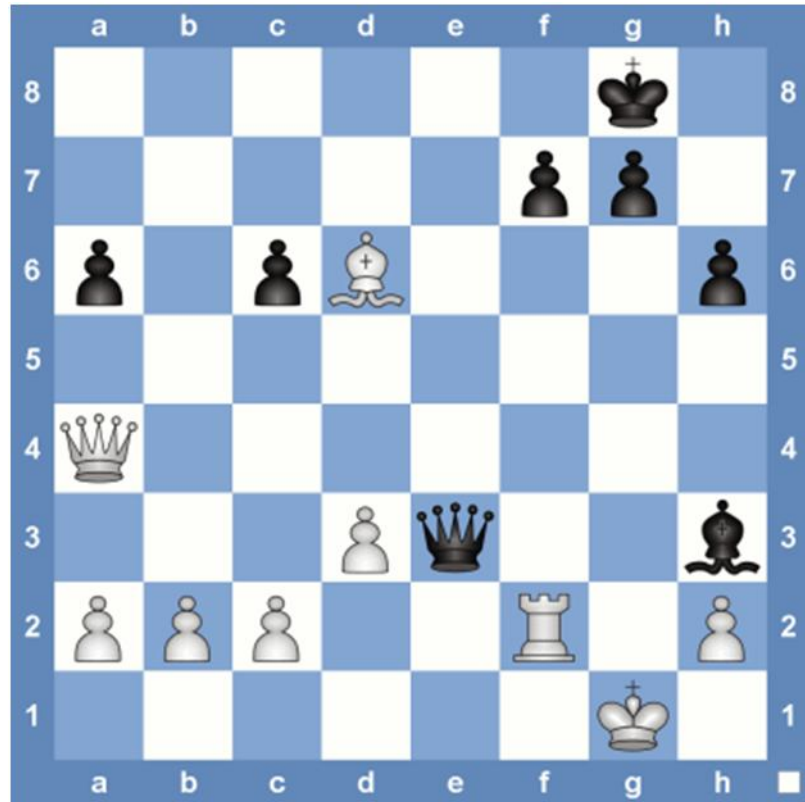
1.Re8+ Bxe8 2.Qxe8 Bf8 3.Qxf8#

Key idea: The x-ray motif shows how a piece can have some control over squares in spite of an obstruction.

Tactics Study – exercise 79

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move – black threatens Qe1+



Study the solution moves:

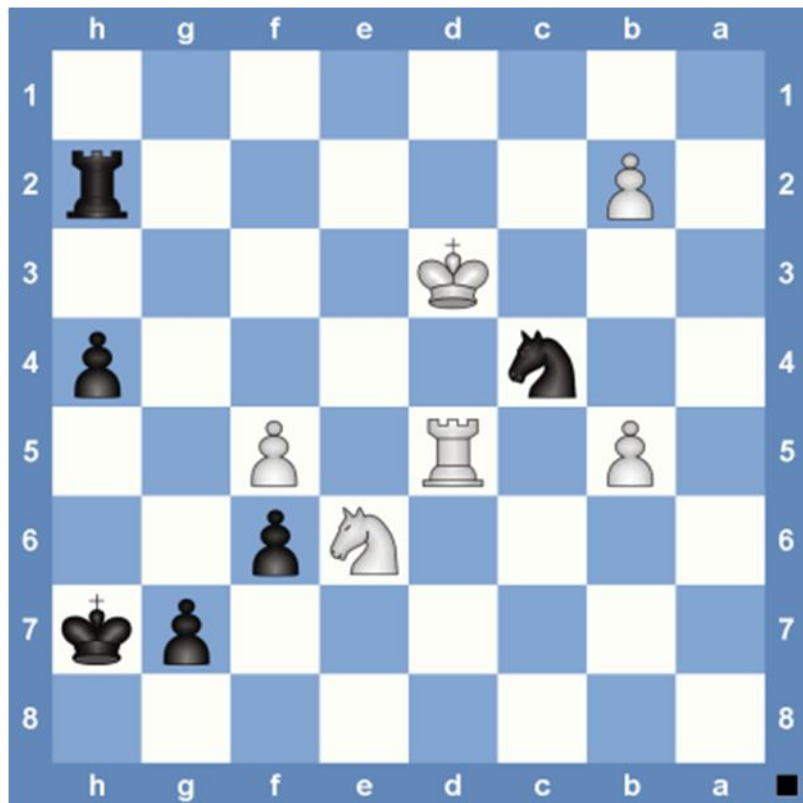
1.Qf4 Qe1+ 2.Rf1 Bxf1 3.Qxf1 and white saves the day.

Key idea: The X-ray motif can be valuable not only in attack but also in defence - protecting critical squares.

Tactics Study – exercise 80

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

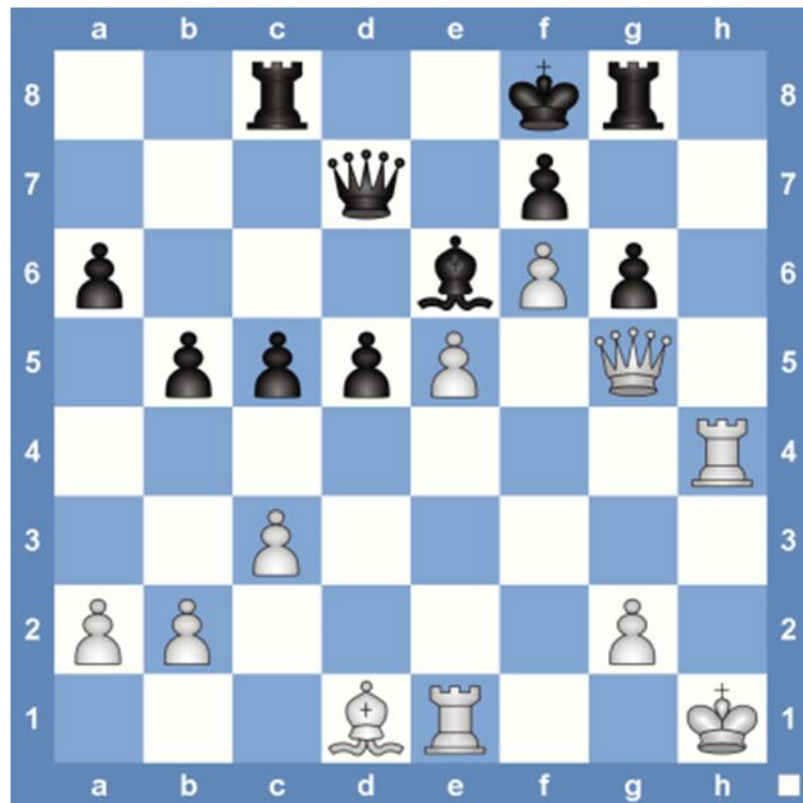
1... Rd2+ 2.Kxc4 Rxd5 3.Kxd5 h3 and white cannot stop the passed pawn.

Key idea: Knights can be rather slow to catch passed pawns, particularly if it is a pawn on the edge of the board which limits the knight's mobility near the pawn.

Tactics Study – exercise 82

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Qh6+ Ke8 2.Qg7 Kd8 3.Qxg8+

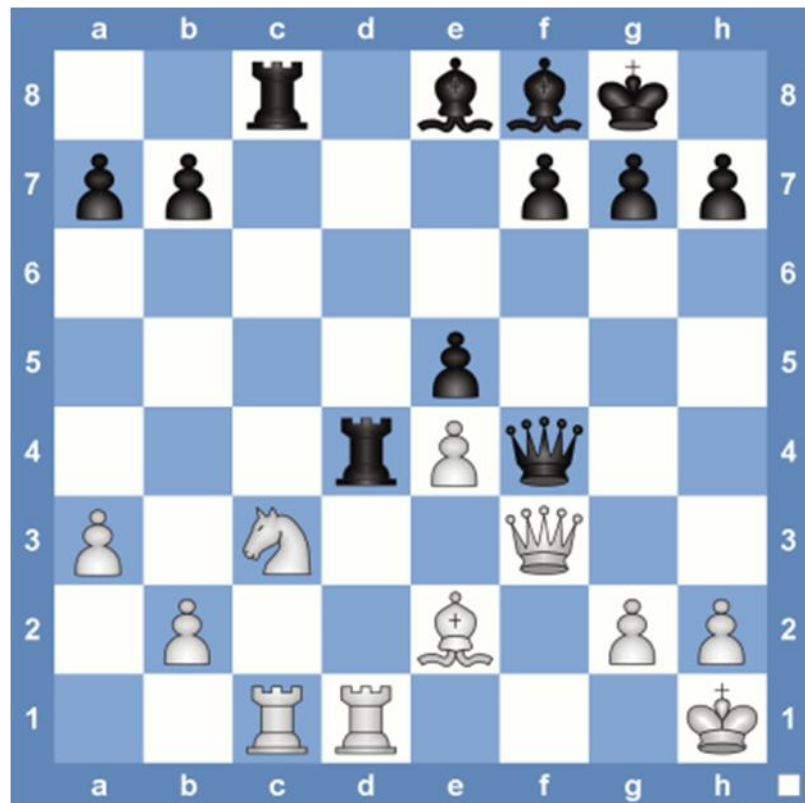
When a queen comes close to a target, she can attack on the ranks, files AND diagonals. This is not quite possible when the queen is attacking from a distance.

Key idea: The queen is a powerful attacker particularly when she can come close to the action since this way she can attack more squares in the area.

Tactics Study – exercise 84

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Qxf4 Rxd1+ 2.Nxd1 exf4 3.Rxc8

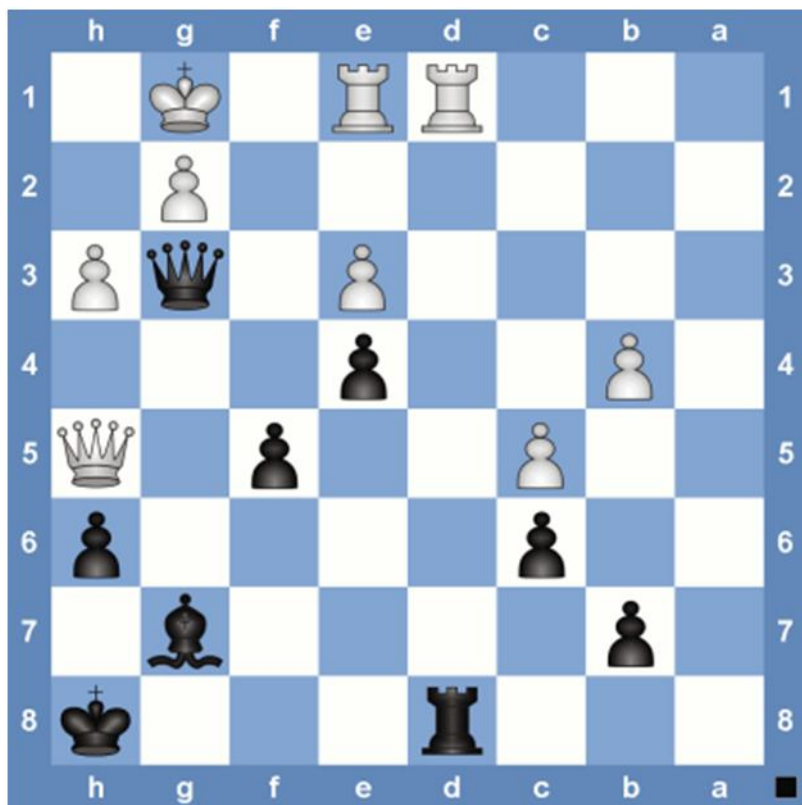
This once again shows how undefended pieces can become unexpected targets.

Key idea: The move 1.Qxf4 also protects the Rc1 after 1... Rxd1+ 2.Nxd1. This position reviews the usefulness of discovering an attack on an undefended piece whilst making a recapture.

Tactics Study – exercise 85

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rd2 2.Qe8+ Kh7 3.Rxd2 Qxe1+ 4.Kh2 Qxd2

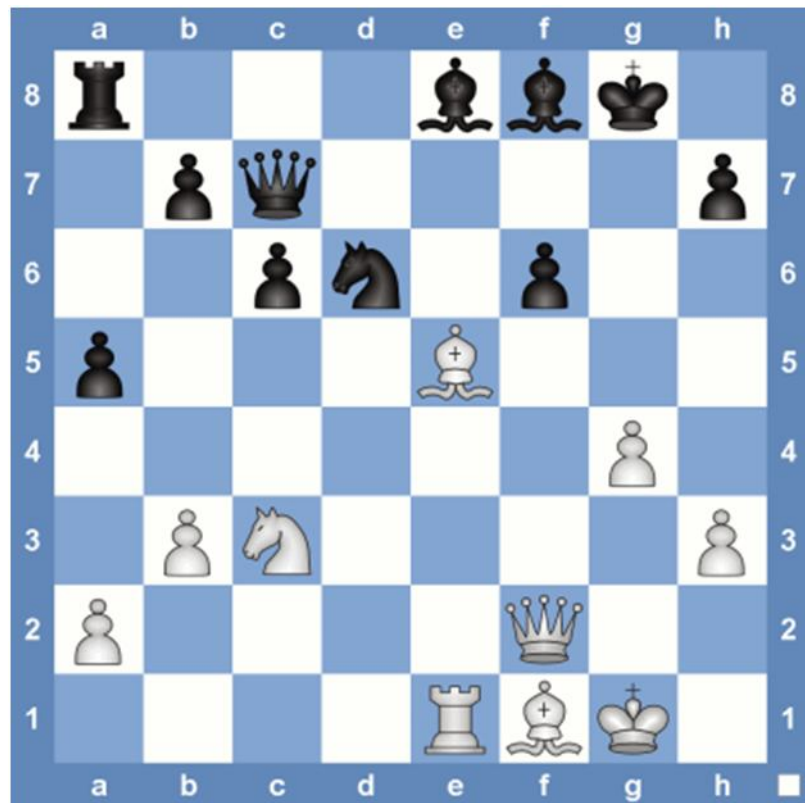
Black makes use of the fact that the white Rd1 essentially cannot leave the first rank, due to Qxe1+

Key idea: This puzzle reviews the idea that squares are indirectly defended if the piece protecting them are tied down to an important defensive task. The white Rd1 becomes **overloaded**.

Tactics Study – exercise 86

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Bc4+ Nxc4 2.Bxc7

OR

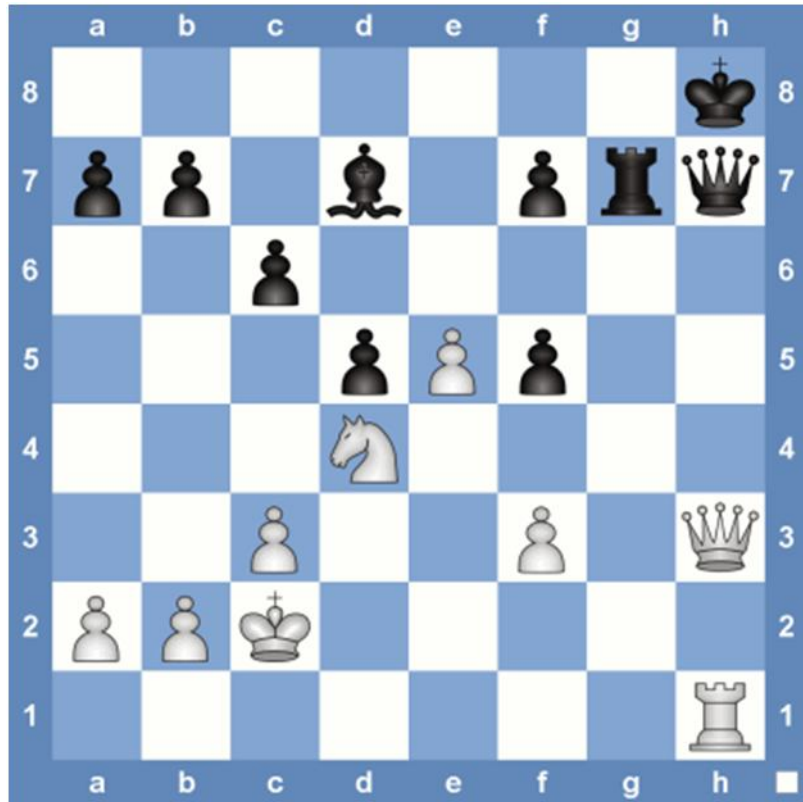
1.Bc4+ Bf7 2.Qxf6 threatening Qh8# or 2.... Bxc4 3.Qh8+ Kf7 4.Qg7+ gets the black queen.

Key idea: This position reminds you of the power of the bishop pair on an open board.

Tactics Study – exercise 88

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

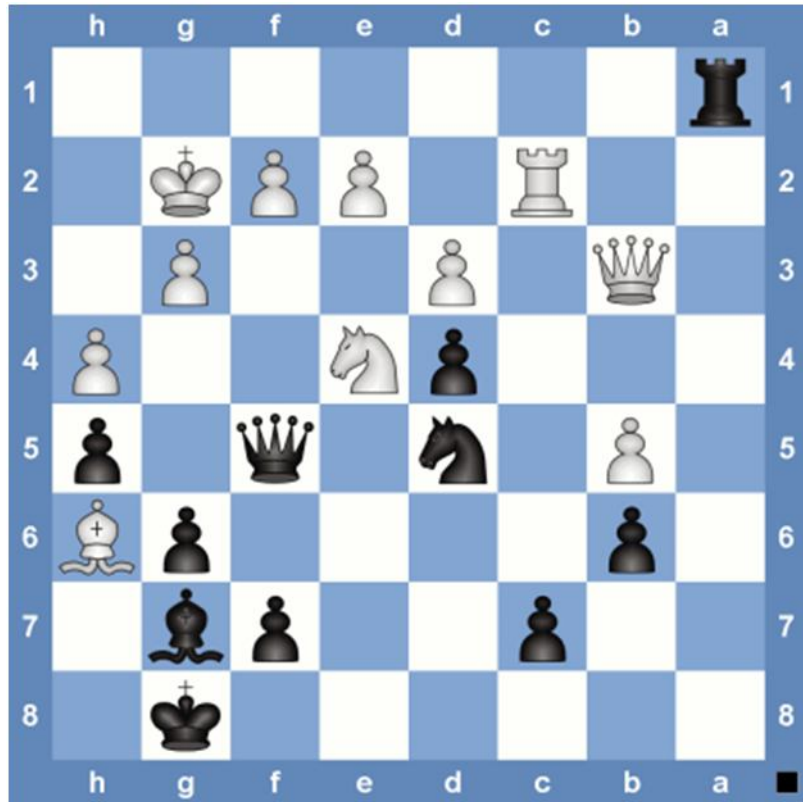
1.Qf1 Qxh1 2.Qxh1+

Key idea: Revealing a pin by a piece with a lower value increases the value of the pin.

Tactics Study – exercise 89

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Bxh6 wins a piece. (2.Qxd5 Qxd5 - the white Ne4 will be pinned.)

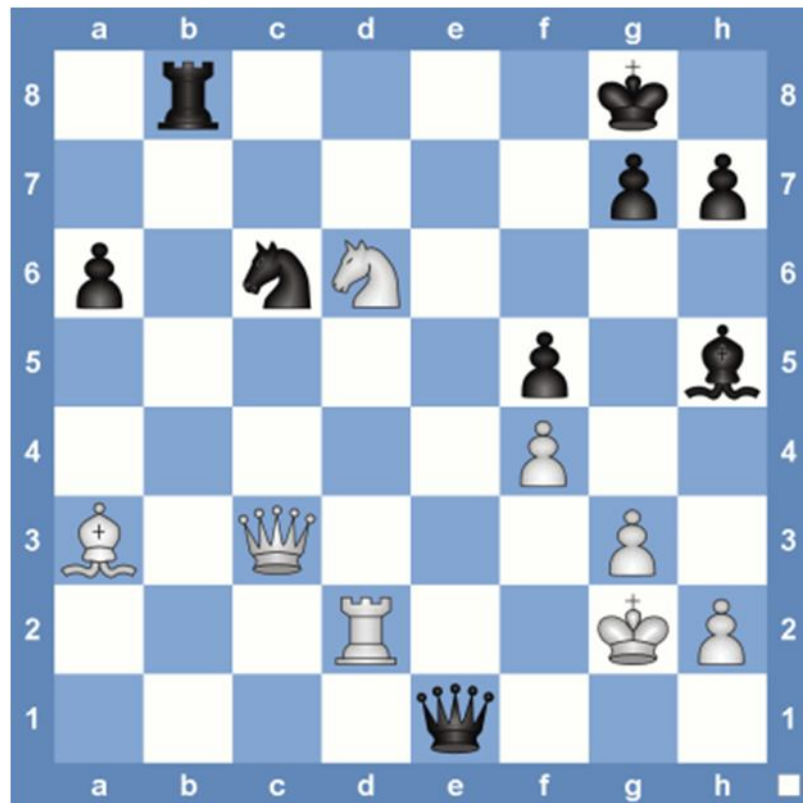
White seems to have the idea of forking black's king and queen with the move 3.Nf6+ but missed that his knight will be pinned to the Kg2.

Key idea: Never trust what your opponent is trying to tell you – look for a flaw in his intended tactic.

Tactics Study – exercise 90

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

1.Bb2 is a simple threat that wins material since black don't have a good defence against the Qxg7# threat.

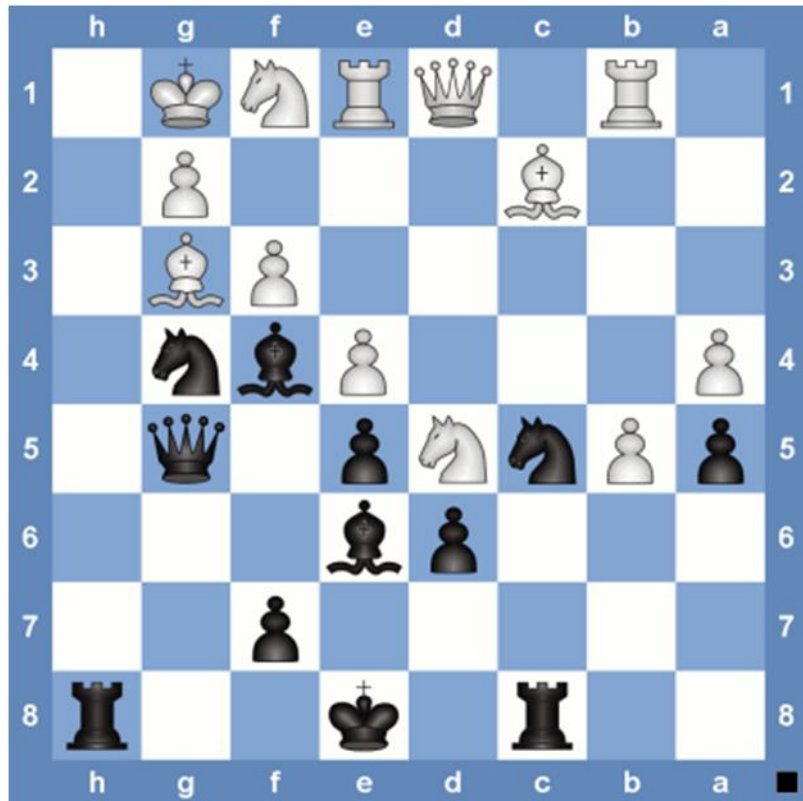
Key idea: Dynamic (seemingly complicated) positions can easily cause you to forget to look for simple, effective threats. You should always look at the simple checks, captures and threats before calculating deeper variations.

The last 10 exercises in this e-book are significantly harder than the previous ones...

Tactics Study – exercise 91

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

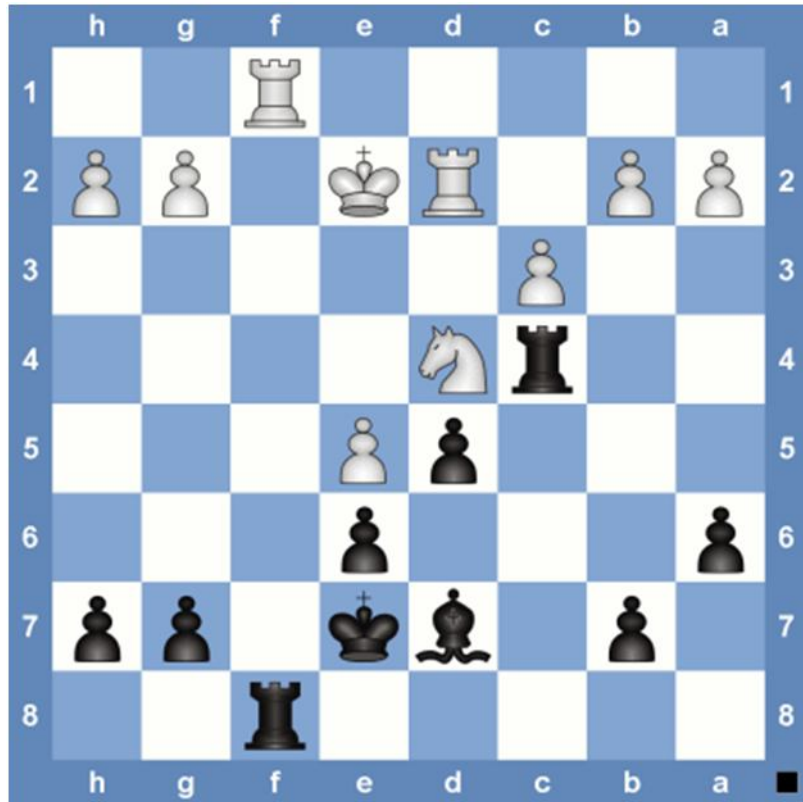
1... Rh1+ 2.Kxh1 Bxg3 3.Nxg3 Nf2+ 4.Kg1 Nxd1

Key idea: A tactic that simply wins material can be present in a position where you were actually looking for a checkmate combination.

Tactics Study – exercise 92

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Bb5 2.Nxb5 Re4+ 3.Kd3 Rxf1

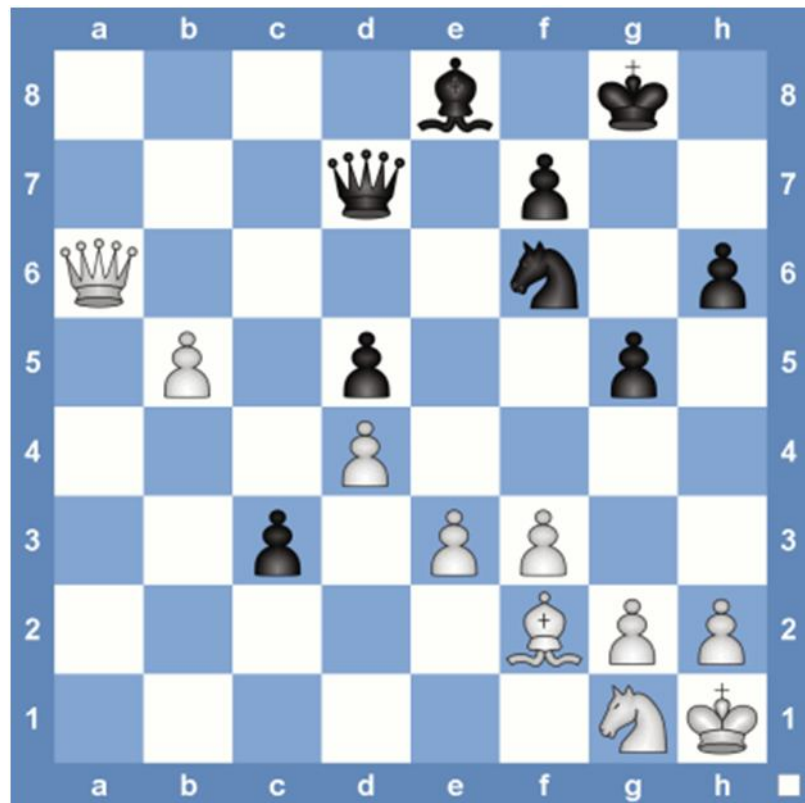
1... Bb5 practically forces white to remove the dangerous bishop due to the discovery threat.

Key idea: A strong threat can be an effective way to remove an obstruction.

Tactics Study – exercise 93

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

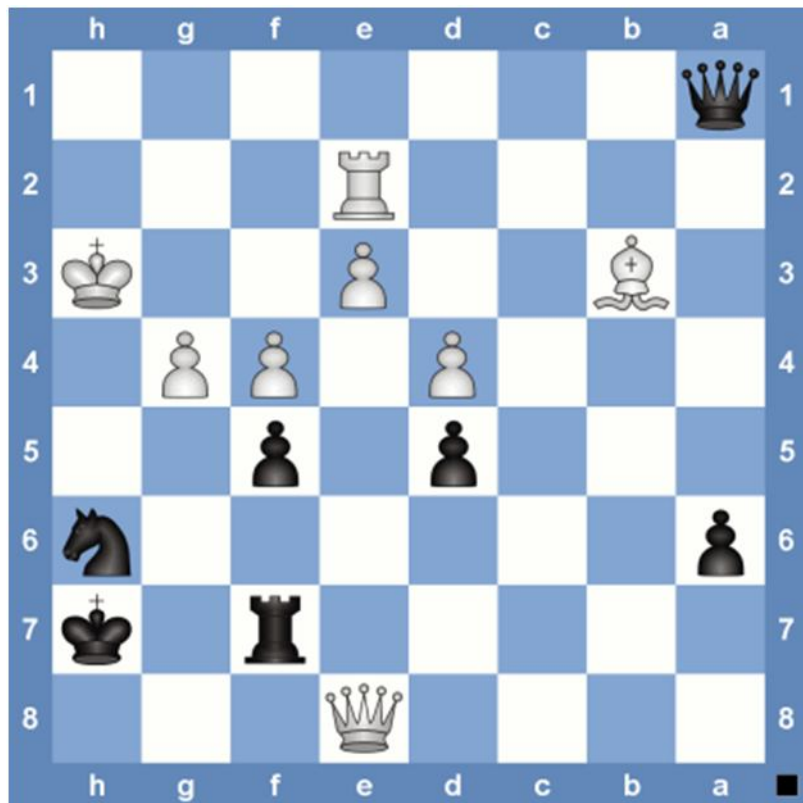
1.Qxf6 c2 2.Bg3 Qe6 3.Qxe6 fxe6 4.Ne2

Key idea: An unopposed bishop (opponent don't have a bishop on the same colour squares) is very powerful if the enemy king is weak on the same colour squares as that bishop.

Tactics Study – exercise 94

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

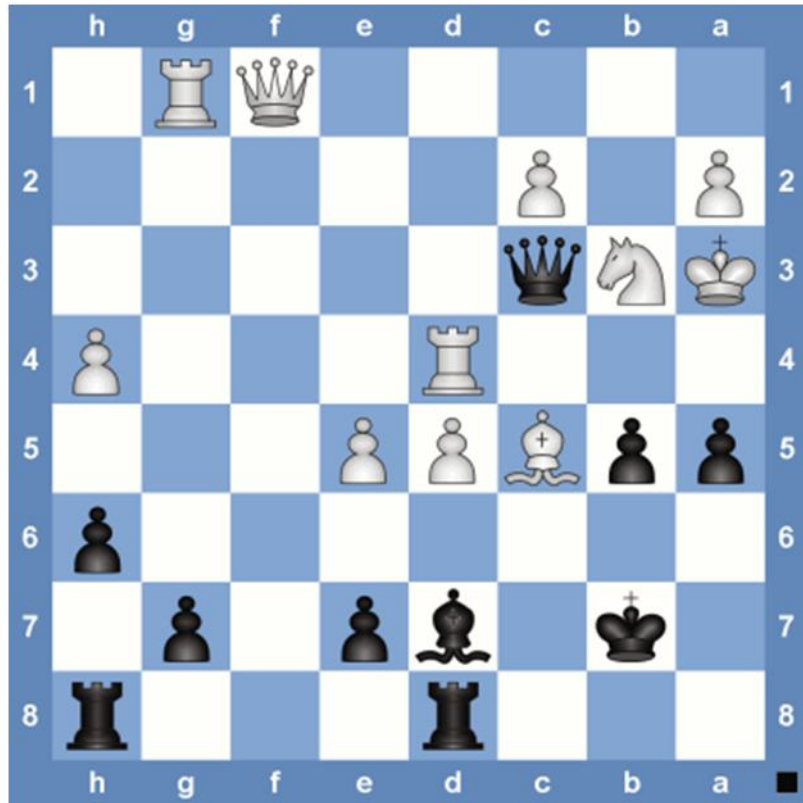
1... Qg1 (threatening fxg4# and Qxg4+) 2.g4 Qg4+ 3.Kh2 Qxe2+

Key idea: Winning a piece mostly results in a won position. Therefore an undefended piece is a serious weakness that deserves the same amount of attention you would give to a checkmate combination.

Tactics Study – exercise 95

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Ra8 2.Qxb5 Bxb5

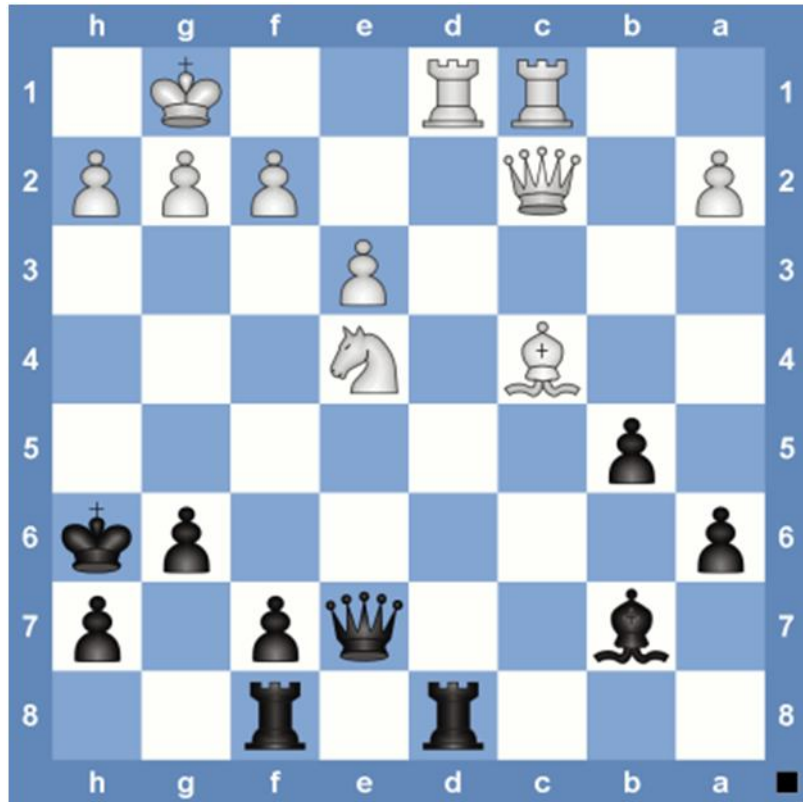
Not 1... b5+ 2.Bxb5 axb5+ since 3.Rxb4+ is check

Key idea: In a position where you have a strong attack but just can't find a winning move – the secret often lies in finding the correct **preparatory move** (sometimes called a “quiet move”) since the threat isn't so obvious.

Tactics Study – exercise 96

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

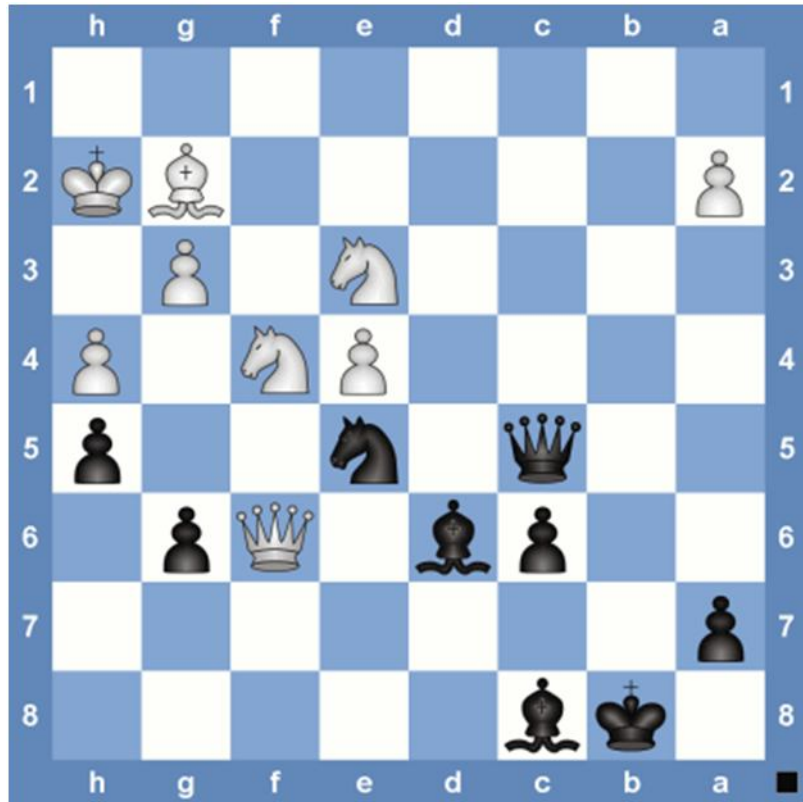
1... Bxe4 2.Bd3 Rxd3 3.Rxd3 Rd8 4.Rcd1 Bxd3 5.Rxd3 Qe4 (6.Rc3 Qxc2 7.Rxc2 Rd1#)

Key idea: A pin can give you just the little time you need to bring reinforcements to put more pressure on the pinned piece.

Tactics Study – exercise 97

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Bc7 2.Nxg6 Nxg6 3.Qxg6 Qxe3

1... Bc7 moves the bishop away from the pressure from Qf6 and renews the threat of 2... Qxe3

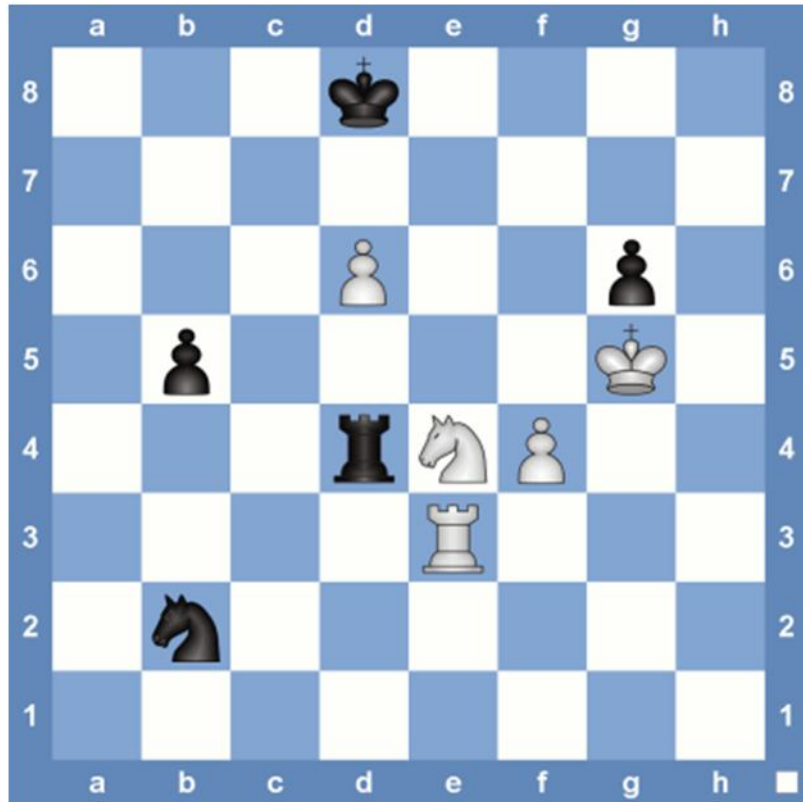
This exercise is a very instructive exercise on threats vs. counter-threats and it will be a good idea to study this one carefully.

Key idea: A counter-threat can be a powerful idea but need to be considered carefully. Once a counter-threat is neutralized the original threat might still be present.

Tactics Study – exercise 98

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

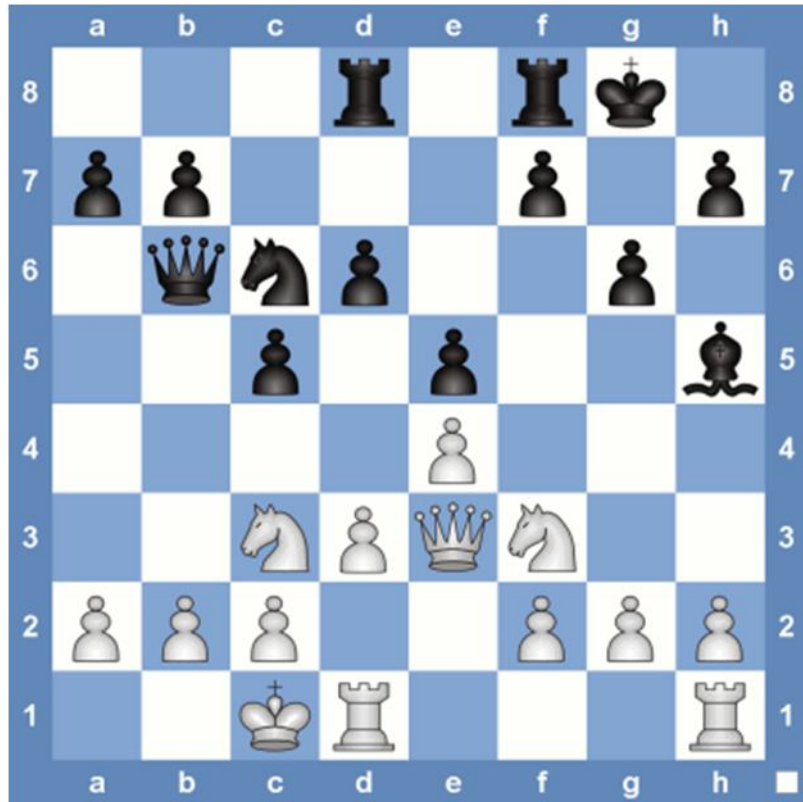
1.Nf6 (threatening Rf8#) Rxe6 2.Re8+ Kc7 3.Re2 (threatening Rxb2 and clearing f8 for Nf8+ threat) Rd1 4.Rxb2

Key idea: Improve your tactical creativity by deeply understanding tactical motives and by studying creative solutions such as this one.

Tactics Study – exercise 99

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

White to move



Study the solution moves:

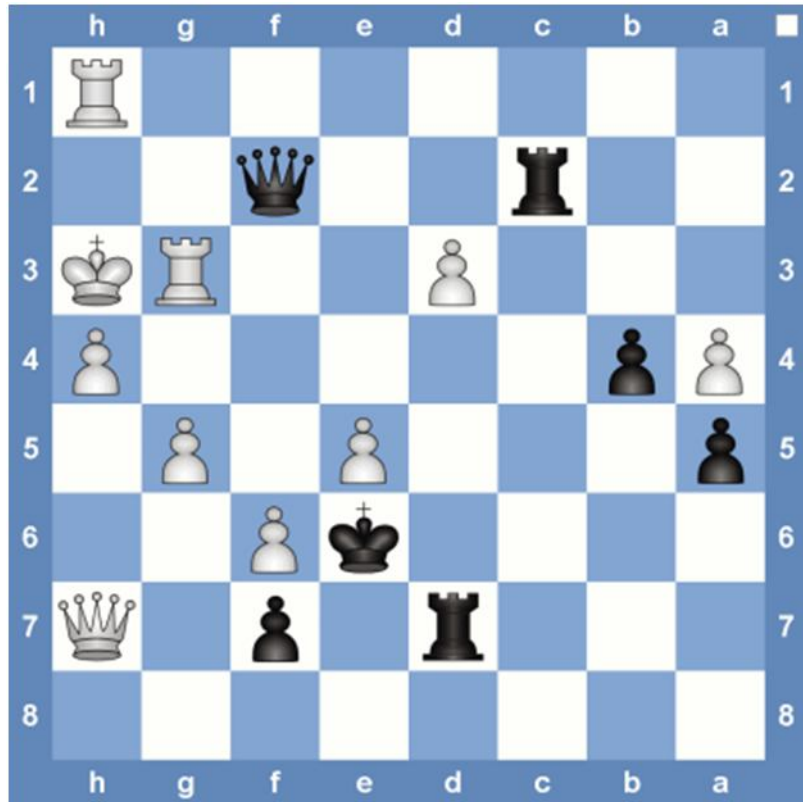
1.g4 Bxg4 2.Nd5 Qa6 3.Nf6+ Kh8 4.Nxg4

Key idea: Due to their relatively low value, pawns are very effective in forcing higher valued pieces to more vulnerable squares.

Tactics Study – exercise 100

Which factors indicate the possibility of a tactic in the position below? Try to solve the puzzle.

Black to move



Study the solution moves:

1... Rd4 (to stop Qe4 and push b3)

The advanced passed pawn on b4 can only be stopped by the queen via e4... Black simply prevents white's hope with 1... Rd4

Key idea: Sometimes in a seemingly complicated position your opponent could actually have no serious threats against you. This can give you the chance to simply continue with your plan. You should always be aware of what your opponent is threatening. If you can verify that your opponent don't have any serious threats, it gives you a free hand to continue your plan.

Closing comment:

Congratulations on completing the exercises in this book. I hope and believe that you will find real benefit from it. Now that you have a much deeper understanding of chess tactics, I suggest that you to follow this book up by training specific tactical patterns one-by-one, ie.X-Ray tactics, Forks, Pins etc. Exercises are available from chess-skills.com.

Check out www.chess-skills.com for more unique chess training material.