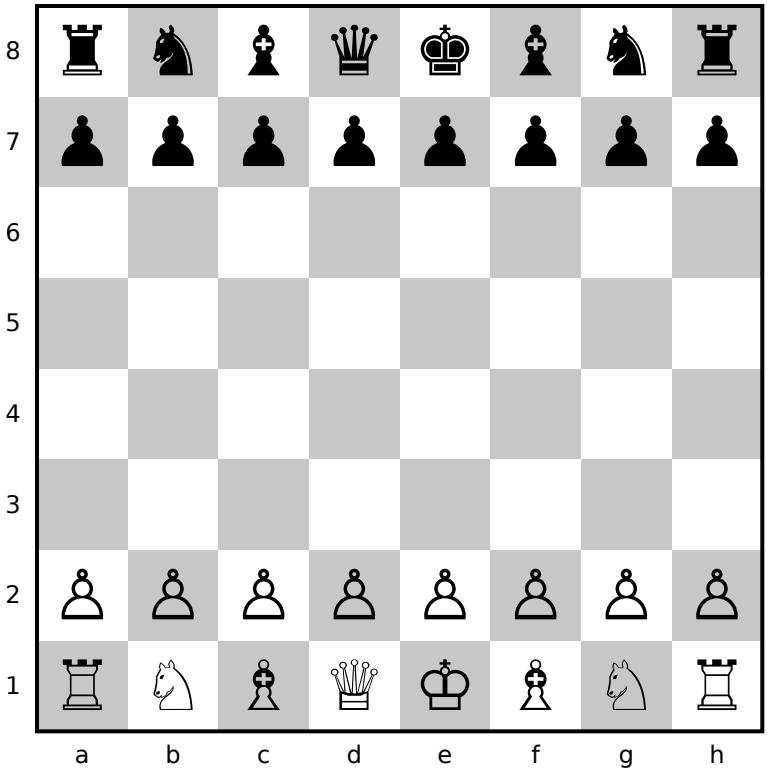
How to Set Up a Chess Board

Printable setup sheet. Light square on the right, queen on her own color.



White's side is at the bottom. h1 (bottom right) is a light square.

The 6 rules

1. Light square in each player's bottom-right corner.
2. Pawns on the second row: White on 2, Black on 7.
3. Rooks in the four corners: a1, h1, a8, h8.
4. Knights next to the rooks: b1, g1, b8, g8.
5. Bishops next to the knights: c1, f1, c8, f8.
6. Queen on her own color (d1, d8), king on the last square (e1, e8).

Check your setup

- ☐ Bottom-right square is light for both players
- ☐ All 16 pawns are on the 2nd and 7th rows
- ☐ Rooks are in the corners, knights beside them, bishops beside the knights
- ☐ White queen on d1 (light), black queen on d8 (dark)
- ☐ Kings on e1 and e8, facing each other

Every square in algebraic notation

White: Ra1 Nb1 Bc1 Qd1 Ke1 Bf1 Ng1 Rh1 pawns a2–h2
Black: Ra8 Nb8 Bc8 Qd8 Ke8 Bf8 Ng8 Rh8 pawns a7–h7
16 pieces each, 32 in total. White always moves first.

Interactive diagram and full guide: chessmovefinder.com/chess-board-setup
Free to print and share for clubs, schools and home. Chess Move Finder