

Ranges Rookies Shield FAQs

Q1. This is my child's first Chess Tournament - what should I & my child be expecting?

- Make sure your child is registered in the tournament. It helps to do this before the day on-line at www.rangeschessclub.com.au or by phoning Paul on 0417319355.
- All players will be paired with someone unless there is an odd number of players. If your child gets a BYE, they get a free point (1).
- Upon the first pairing, help your child locate his/her name & the table number on the screen. If your child's name appears on the LEFT column, they are playing WHITE; if their name appears on the RIGHT column, they are playing BLACK.
- Be seated at the correct table number & colour, check that the pieces are set up correctly, and wait for your opponent.
- Wait for the arbiter to start the round, shake hands, and the player with BLACK turns off the PAUSE button to start WHITE'S clock.
- After your child has made his/her move, they press their clock, causing their opponent's clock to begin to count down. After the opponent moves, they press their clock to start your child's clock. For help with operating clocks, please see the arbiters. Remember to press your own clock but do not press your opponent's clock.
- The game will end with one of 3 results: 1 point for a win, ½ points each for a draw and 0 points for a lost.
- A game is lost either by checkmate or by losing on time. If one player's timer counts down to ZERO that player loses on time unless it is a draw because the other player has insufficient pieces left to cause checkmate (e.g. a king & knight or bishop – but note that if they still have a pawn it is a win because a pawn can promote).
- The Ranges Rookies Shield is NOT a knock-out tournament. All players will play the stated number of rounds (7 games of Rapid Chess or 9 games of Lightning/Blitz).
- After the results of Round 1 are entered, in Round 2 the player with 1 point will be paired with another player with 1 point; the player with 0 point will be paired with someone with 0 point. As the tournament progresses, your child is paired with opponents on the same score.
- Because of the COMPUTER pairing, it is not unusual for your child to be paired with an adult or with their siblings.
- If the child has any question during the game, they should pause the clock, raise their hand & wait for an arbiter to attend their table.
- On-lookers must not interfere with games. If you see what appears to be an illegal move (e.g. a king is left in check) please immediately speak to an arbiter.

Q2. How serious is this chess competition?

The five Ranges Rookies Shield Chess Tournaments are intended to provide the enjoyment of competitive chess for Beginners and Intermediate level players of all ages. As the name suggests, it is NOT targeted at advanced or professional chess players. Therefore, the competition is restricted to adults and juniors who do not have an Australian Chess Federation (ACF) rating above 1700. Due to the short game time, players are not expected to write down their moves. However, the international FIDE laws of chess apply in this tournament. The two Rookies Shield competitions that have a game time of 15 minutes (held in June and November) will have their results sent to ACF so that the players can earn an official Rapid/Allegro rating. A copy of the FIDE laws of chess is available from the arbiter.

Q3. What happens if my kid gets upset with a loss?

Learning to cope with losing as well as winning is all part of competing in a chess tournament (as well as life). Some kids find themselves having an easy win with their computer, or within their school and family but find themselves losing their first few games in a club level chess tournament and get disheartened. They just found themselves in a bigger pond and realized there are other bigger fish in the pond. Kids generally rebound after a hug and some positive encouragement (not empty praise or false hopes). Remind them to shake hands after every game. This helps them learn how to win and lose graciously.

Q4. What are some practical things that I can do to encourage and help my child improve their chess?

Join a local chess club such as Ranges Chess Club in Upwey. There are other fantastic chess clubs around the vicinity including Croydon Chess Club, Noble Park Chess Club & Canterbury Junior Chess Club. Many schools also encourage chess for its educational value.

Chess coaching: Most chess clubs offer coaching as well as a safe social environment to play against others. If your kids show more than just a passing interest in chess and are keen to improve their game rapidly, private chess coaching may cost a bit more, but will help.

Play Often: Sign up for www.chess.com and play chess with kids and adults worldwide. At www.rangeschessclub.com.au there is a list of some of the many chess resources on the internet.

Invest in a regulation size chess set. It helps if you are practicing on the same type of chess set that you will be using during the tournament. Eventually you might like to buy a digital chess clock.

Take an interest in chess yourself. It's really useful when you understand your kids when they tell you that they did a fork, pin, skewer and you realized it has got nothing to do with the cutlery, sewing kit or BBQ. Wait till they tell you about other cool stuff (tactics,

opening traps, opening, middle game strategy and end games) and see their eyes light up. It encourages your kids tremendously if you share their enthusiasm.

Solve chess puzzles together. A new puzzle is available each day on <http://www.shredderchess.com/daily-chess-puzzle.html>. Challenge your kids and see who can solve it first.

Help your kids to slow down, analyze a chess position together and visualize the pieces moving a few steps (2, 3, 4 & 5) ahead without actually moving them. It's quite amazing to see young children being able to sit still, focus & visualize the various possible positions / outcomes before making the move. This will help their future development as they foresee the potential consequences of the decision they are making now.

Invest in age-appropriate chess books. Younger kids tend to be more visual. Chess books heavy in text and variations bore them to tears. Make a trip to your local library and get them to pick a chess book themselves.

Invest in suitable chess software. The most expensive is not necessarily the best. Here are some suggestions for graduated improvement:

- Fritz & Chesster's: 1,2 & 3 for beginners, fun and educational for Prep ~ Grade 2 by Viva Chess
- Chess Master: Grandmaster Edition, it comes with useful tutorial "The Art of Learning" by Josh Watzkin and it should last them a while.
- Fritz 11 & Rybka 3 with Aquarium. These programs suit advanced players who have more than a passing interest. This generally would not benefit most junior players.
- Chess Database: Chessbase & Chess Assistant.

Enter competitions. Be prepared for an emotional roller coaster ride.

Share their victory and defeat: High 5 for a win and a hug for a loss.

Enjoy the journey with your kids! Chess is just a game, don't take it too seriously.

Maintain a balanced lifestyle. There's more to life than chess alone e.g. family, friends, faith, sports, education, music, arts (in no particular order).