

BRAILLE AUTHORITY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
CHESS COMMITTEE

**BRAILLE CHESS CODE
AND LAYOUT**

2001

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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1.	3
2. Abbreviations	3
3. Notation	6
(a) Algebraic notation	6
(b) Descriptive notation	8
4. Layout	10
5. Diagrams	10
6. Problems	11
7. Example	11

INTRODUCTION

Membership of Committee

Mr F J Jakeman (Chairman)

Mr H H Cohn

Mr T M Jarrold (Secretary)

Mr S Lovell

* * * * *

This code has been formulated to facilitate transcription from print into braille, and also for use by blind players when writing annotation.

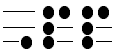
When writing down chess moves and annotation (as distinct from transcription from print) the minimum amount of coding should be used when defining moves.

Terms used in this code:




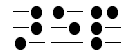







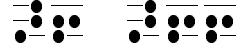
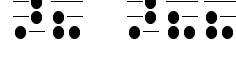

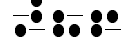
Move: This usually consists of the name of the piece and the square to which it is moving, e.g. Qa5.

Game move: A move made by a player within the course of a game (usually denoted by bold print), and preceded by the move number, e.g. **12. Ke8**.

Analysis: Text and moves (in ordinary print) which are a comment on the game taking place, by one of the 2 players or someone else.

The plural is expressed by doubling the sign, e.g.  for pawns.

2.2. Abbreviations and symbols used in moves:

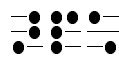
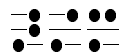
	→	Attack
	↔	Counterplay
	$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$	Draw (if it occurs at the end of a game); Will lead to a draw (if it occurs in the middle of a game)
		En Passant
	△	With the idea
	↑	With initiative
	X	Mate
	±, ∓, ±̄, +̄, +−, −+	Plus, With Advantage. This represents all the various degrees of advantage
	=	With Equality
	1-0, 0-1	Resigns (this replaces print's usual method of showing resignation, 1-0 (where black resigns) and 0-1 (where white resigns))
	∞	Unclear position
	! !!	Good Move and Excellent Move
	? ??	Bad Move and Very Bad Move
	!?	Interesting or Risky Move
	?!	Dubious Move

Within analysis, an oblique stroke is substituted for the word “or” between moves. The oblique stroke should be unspaced.

The following is a list of other print symbols which may appear but for which there are no special braille signs. For these the meaning must be written out in words.


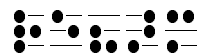

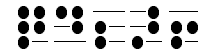
- ∞ compensation for the material
- > strong (sufficient)
- < weak (insufficient)
- ≥ better is
- ≤ weaker is
- only move
- ↑↑ development advantage

The following abbreviations may be used by blind players when writing notation.


 perpetual check
 stalemate

Notes:






(1) All abbreviations in this list, except for the resigns sign, and with the idea sign, are brailled immediately after the move, e.g.


 e8X 
 d2! 

(2) The resigns sign is unspaced from the previous move when the player of the last move resigns (this is relatively unusual), otherwise it is spaced.

(3) The  sign is to be followed by the move(s) suggested by the ‘idea’ without intervening space, the moves being preceded by the symbols dots 4-6 or 3-6 (white or black), or a dot 6 if print does not specify the colour.

(4) In cases where a player loses because of time, the braille should follow print in the indication of this, e.g.



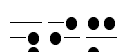


33.  h8 1-0 T    

(5) Note: when two signs from list 2.2 occur consecutively only one  sign is needed, e.g.

 e5!± 

(Knight moves to the E5 square, good move, with advantage)

2.3. Miscellaneous:

 Black
 Championship
 Game
 Grand Master
 International Master
 Move
 Square
 Tournament
 Variation



White

2.4. Abbreviations (except the one for ‘king’) are used to form longer words in a chess context: e.g. dot 6 qside, ENdgm, sqd.

2.5. The abbreviations listed in 2.3 should only be used when their original chess meaning is intended, e.g. *not*: Bk sea, Mr Wht mvs house.

3. NOTATION

Two methods of chess notation are described in this section: (A) Algebraic Notation and (B) Descriptive Notation. The method used depends on which method print uses.

(A) Algebraic Notation

3.1. Squares are counted from white’s side of the board, ranks numbered from 1 to 8 (white to black), files lettered from A to H (left to right from white’s point of view).

3.2. Piece moves normally consist of three symbols: the name of the piece to be moved, the letter of the file without letter sign, and the number of the rank written as a lower number without a numeral sign. The name of the square is that to which the piece is moving, e.g.



(Rook to the F4 square)

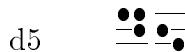
3.3. If print introduces a hyphen between the piece and the square to which it moves, the hyphen is omitted.

3.4. Moves where a piece makes a capture (indicated in print by a cross ×) have dots 5-6 inserted between the name of the piece and that of the square [the dots 5-6 sign is not inserted when the print makes no special indication of capture]. Checks (indicated in print by a plus sign +) are shown by inserting dots 4-5 in the same place. Similarly, dots 4-5-6 are used when a piece both captures and checks, e.g.

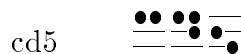


(Rook captures on the F4 square and gives check)


3.5. Pawn moves are shown thus:



(Pawn is moved to the D5 square)

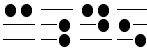


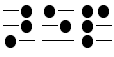
(Pawn on the C-file captures on the D5 square)

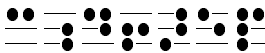
cd 

(Pawn on the C-file captures to the D-file)

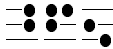
Braille follows the print as closely as possible in all these cases. Thus, when a capture sign is shown in print (e.g. a ×) you would braille the following:

c × d5 

When a pawn captures en passant, the  symbol is used after the move, e.g.

c × d6 

3.6. Checks given by a pawn move are shown thus:

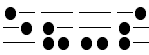
f5+ 

(Pawn moves to the F5 square and gives check)

3.7. Pawn promotion is shown thus:

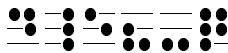
g8-♚ 

(Pawn moves to the G8 square and promotes to a queen)

e8-♞ 

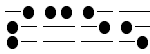
(Pawn moves to the E8 square and promotes to a knight)

3.8. The following type of pawn move may also need to be shown:


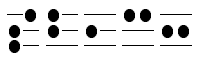
d × e8-♚+ 

(Pawn on the D-file takes on the E8 square, promotes to a queen, and gives check)



3.9. Where two similar pieces can move to the same square, it is necessary to specify which piece is being moved, e.g.

♞ce5 

(Knight on the C-file moves to the E5 square)


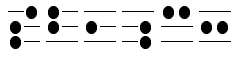
 b1c3 

(Knight on B1 moves to C3)

 1c3 

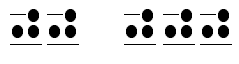
(Knight on the 1st rank moves to c3)

If the piece being moved in the above example were capturing a piece, the move would be shown thus:

 b1×c3 

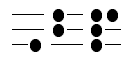
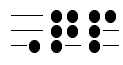
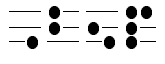
3.10. There are no abbreviations for double check or discovered check. They must follow the move and must be in round brackets.

3.11. Castling is shown as follows:

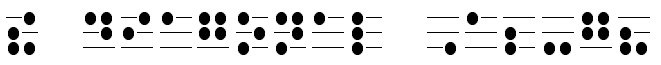
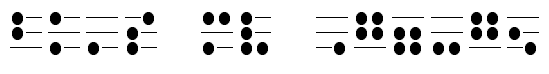
11. 0-0 0-0-0 

(Move 11, white castles kingside, black castles queenside)

3.12. Print's various methods of referring to pawns and pieces on specific files and squares can be abbreviated and made consistent. Thus

b pawn or b-pawn 
 queen's pawn 
 b5p  (b5 pawn)



3.13. When print inserts a hyphen between squares, or between one square and another within a move, they should be brailled thus:

the diagonal a2-g8 
 black's move g7-g5 

(B) Descriptive Notation

This notation has been superseded by algebraic notation in print. These notes will enable anyone not familiar with descriptive notation to read braille previously transcribed. Some knowledge of algebraic notation will be necessary.

3.14. Extra Abbreviations.

 Bishop
 Knight

These are used in place of 'l' and 's' of the algebraic notation.

3.15. The squares are counted independently from white's position and from black's position. This means that each square has two names.

3.16. The Board.

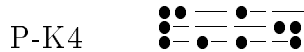
The side of the board to the right of white's king (to the left of black's) is known as the king-side; the side of the board to the left of white's queen (to the right of black's) is known as the queenside. This always applies, even when both kings and queens have left their initial positions after the start of the game.

The vertical lines (files) are named according to the pieces that stand on their initial squares as the board is set up for the start of a game. They are, from left to right for white, and inversely for black: the queen's rook's file, the queen's knight's file, the queen's bishop's file, the queen's file, the king's file, the king's bishop's file, the king's knight's file, the king's rook's file. Note that in texts these are usually written as:

QR-file, QI-file, QB-file, Q-file, K-file, KB-file, KI-file, KR-file.

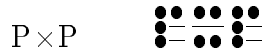
The horizontal lines (ranks) are numbered from one to eight, counting from white's first rank in white's case and from black's first rank in black's case.

3.17. Print has a hyphen between the piece/pawn being moved and the square to which it is moved. Dot 3 represents the hyphen but it has not always been present. E.g.



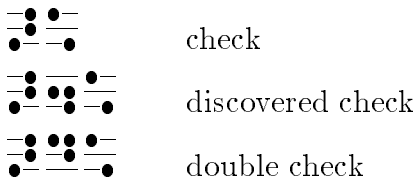
(Pawn to king 4)

3.18. Print has a cross between the piece/pawn making a capture and the piece/pawn being captured. x represents a capture (the letter sign is omitted). E.g.



(Pawn captures pawn)




3.19. The following symbols represent various types of check and appear at the end of a move:



3.20. Pawns adopt the name of the file on which they stand, a capture will thus alter the name to that of the file onto which the pawn captured. Qualification of pawn moves is often necessary e.g. PKB4 instead of PB4 because PQB4 was also possible in that position. Varying degrees of qualification become necessary depending on the position e.g. IP x P instead of simply P x P because another P x P capture is possible elsewhere; KIP x P instead of IP x P because QIP x P is possible on the other wing; KIP x RP would be necessary if both KIP x BP and QIP x RP were possible. Qualification may also occur at the point of capture e.g. P x BP or P x QBP.

3.21. Qualification of piece moves is often necessary e.g. IKB3 instead of IB3 because IQB3 was possible; KRQ1 instead of RQ1 because QRQ1 was possible. The former shows specification of the square to which the piece is moving while the latter specifies which piece is moved.

3.22. Castling may appear as follows:


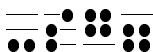
	castles (to whichever side is legal)
	castles kingside
	castles queenside

4. LAYOUT

4.1. The title of a game is centred, with ‘v’ for ‘versus’, or a dash between the names of the players, following print if appropriate. The venue (if present) and the opening are also centred, on the same line if space allows.

4.2. A new line starting in cell 3, running over into cell 1, is taken when print takes a paragraph (this normally only occurs in analysis).

4.3. Game moves are brailled starting in cell 5 with runovers also in cell 5. More than one pair of numbered moves may be brailled on one line. If the game is being taken up after analysis with black’s move, then the move number is given followed after a space by dots 3-6. A full stop is not needed after the move number. E.g.

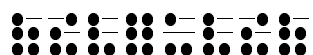
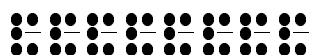
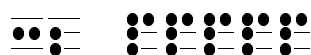

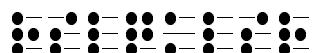



21... ♞g7  

(21. Black knight to g7)

4.4. Analysis is not to be put in brackets but ends with a full stop after normal English text; if the analysis ends with a chess move then no full stop is needed. Where print uses brackets within annotation, then braille should do the same. A further level of brackets should be brailled as square brackets. In complex annotations with several layers of brackets an opening and closing short dash may be used for clarity to replace the 3rd level of brackets.

5. DIAGRAMS

5.1. Diagrams are brailled using the Forsyth system. The positions of the pieces and pawns are given rank by rank, with a space separating each rank, starting from the A8 square and finishing at the H1 square. Pieces and pawns are indicated by their abbreviations (see list 2.1), black pieces being distinguished by the addition of dot 6 in the same cell. The number of vacant squares on each rank is shown as a lower number without the numeral sign. Where more than one empty rank occurs consecutively the number of vacant squares is shown as one group. E.g. at the start of the game the position would be:

5.2. Diagrams are laid out as follows:

- (1) If the diagram occurs during the main game, the word ‘Diagram’ or ‘Diagram n’ followed by a colon, is brailled in cell 1.
- (2) The diagram itself starts in cell 7 of a new line with runovers also in cell 7.
- (3) All diagrams are reproduced in chess books.
- (4) Text resumes on the next line, following the rules given in §4.
- (5) Where helpful, diagrams are numbered within a game.

6. PROBLEMS

6.1. An introductory comment to a problem is brailled as a paragraph, and the position (and number of the problem, if present) is in cell 5 with runovers in cell 7.

6.2. 12 centred commas separate the problem from the solution.

6.3. The solution is brailled as a line paragraph or paragraphs.

6.4. When a solution ends with a move, a full stop is not needed.

7. EXAMPLE

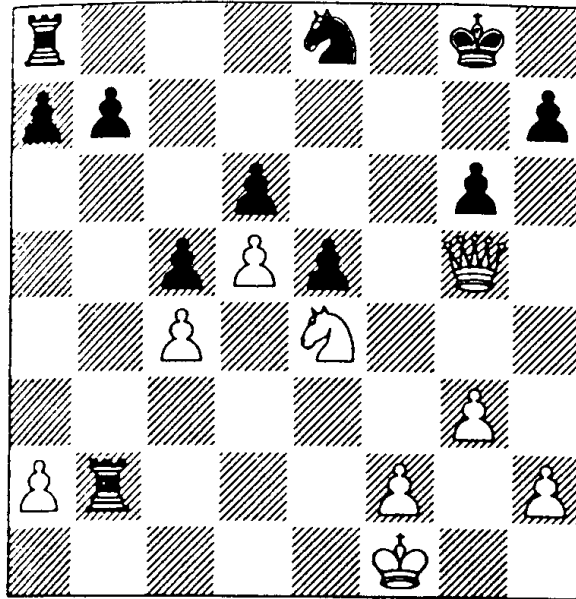
(This is example given in braille in both the algebraic notation (P.13), and in the descriptive notation (P.15).)

RG 4.1

Velimirovic—Miralles

Vrsac 1989 (5)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘×e5 d6 4.♘f3 ♘×e4 5.d3 ♘f6 6.d4 ♙e7 6...d5 is safer. 7.c4 0-0 8.♘c3 c5?! This move gives White a space advantage. Black should try 8...c6, planning ♘bd7, ♗e8 and ♘f8, which is the way Petrosian and Smyslov sometimes handled this position. 9.d5 ♙f5 10.♙d3 ♚d7 Black’s idea looks awkward—perhaps 10...♙×d3 11.♚×d3 ♘bd7 was a better try. 11.0-0 ♘a6 12.♙×f5 ♚×f5 13.♘h4 ♚d7 13... ♚g4 is weak; 14.♚×g4 ♘×g4 15.♘f5 ♗fe8 16.♘b5±. 14.♚f3 g6 15.♙g5 ♘h5 16.♙×e7 ♚×e7 17.g3 ♗fe8 18.♗fe1! ♚×e1+ White’s queen will prove stronger than Black’s rooks. Even 18... ♚f6 19.♘e4 ♚×f3 20.♘×f3 ♗ad8 21.g4 f5 22.g×h5 ♗×e4 23.♗×e4 f×e4 24.♘g5 or 18... ♚d7 19.g4 (19.♘e4 f5! 20.♚×h5 f×e4, and the sacrifice on g6 yields nothing) 19... ♘g7 20.♘e4, with a strong initiative, don’t seem better. 19.♗×e1 ♗×e1+ 20.♙g2 ♘g7 Black cannot connect the rooks with 20... ♗ae8 because of 21.♘b5 ♗d8 22.g4 ♘g7 23.♚f6. 21.♘e4 ♘e8 22.♚f4 ♘b4 An attempt to activate Black’s pieces. On 22... ♗d8 it is possible to play 23.♘f3 ♗e2 24.♙f1! ♗×b2 25.♘f6+ ♘×f6 26.♚×f6 ♗b1+ 27.♙g2 ♗d7 28.h4 h5 29.♘g5, threatening 30.♘e6. 23.♘f3! ♘d3 24.♚h4 ♗e2 25.♙f1! ♗×b2 26.♚h6 f6□ 27.♚e3 ♘e5 There is no other defence against 28.♘×f6+ ♘×f6 29.♚e6+. 28.♘×e5 f×e5 29.♚g5!



The invasion of the queen is decisive. On 29... ♔f7 30. ♚h6 ♔g8 31. ♘g5 ♘f6 32. ♘e6 ♜×f2+ (32... ♘e8 33. ♚f8 mate) 33. ♔e1, and White wins. 29... a5 30. ♚e7 h6 31. ♚e6+ ♔g7 32. ♘×d6 ♜b1+ 33. ♔g2 ♘×d6 34. ♚×e5+ ♔f7 35. ♚×d6 ♜f8 36. ♚×c5 ♜b2 37. a4 ♔g8 38. ♚d4 ♜e2 39. d6 Black resigned.

