

The Laws of chess do not restrict the game to face to face over-the-board play. Under the Laws games by means of the Internet, telephone, radio and other forms of communication are allowed provided that a certified tournament director verify the results and attest to the fact that the Laws of Chess were enforced and followed. The amount of care taken may depend on the level of the event or the amount of prize money involved.

Guidelines for Internet tournaments and matches

Chief and assistant tournament directors.

The Chief TD who submits the report certifies that the games were played according to US Chess standards for rated play.

A certified assistant TD is available and is able to witness (computer screens visible, and actions of the players monitored) each player and game while games are in progress. This means that at each site that is connected for play an assistant is appointed to aid the chief TD in ensuring that the Laws of Chess are followed.

Though not required, it is advisable that the same software (or display interface) be used on both sides of the games. This will give no advantage to one player over the other due to the software used.

All chess playing software and engines must be disabled or turned off during play. This is to be verified by the onsite TD.

Time keeping.

Official time for each game is kept at each player's home site either through an on-screen display or through a chess clock.

Many Internet sites have coordinated time keeping and adjustment software that adjusts games for transmission delays. In those cases, the flag fall on the screen (transmitted by the host site) may be considered official.

In cases where the time is not coordinated, the assistant TD has the responsibility for calling the flag fall. Either player may request at any time the time remaining on their opponent's flag.

In the case where the move is physically transferred from the printout or display to a physical board, the assistant TD will make the move on the board, then press the clock. That clock is then official. The TD will call the flag fall.

In either case, the amount of time delay allowed should be considered when organizing the event. Make sure that a sufficient time delay for each move is allowed to help in avoiding unnecessary controversy.

Touch and completed move.

Software chess interfaces vary widely on touch move. In most cases, a move is not transmitted until a legal move is released on the board. The time of transmittal is considered the "touch."

Mouse slips. Occasionally, the move transmitted is not the move intended. The on-site TD may verify unintentional mouse slips for retraction of a transmitted move. Examples of such moves may be the "drop" of a piece too soon (on the way to an intended square), the accidental selection of a piece (and subsequent drop) on the way to picking up of the intended piece, etc. It does not include the picking up of a piece and "waving it around the board" looking for a square, and its subsequent drop, etc.

Alternate rule for mouse slips: No appeal is allowed, if mouse slips occur refer to paragraph one of this section.

If the fact that a piece was "picked up" is made visible to the opponent, all normal touch move/illegal move rules should be enforced.

Scorekeeping.

Most software automatically keeps score for the players. Additional notation is not required.

Illegal moves.

Most software interfaces do not allow illegal moves. This is allowable if both players have access to the same information and assistance.

Identities of the players.

The Chief TD is responsible for verifying the identities of the players. In general, a simple user id/password system is NOT sufficient to establish identity. Assistant TDs can check IDs just as they do at ordinary events. When there are no assistant TDs, the Chief TD must take care.

Playing from home.

Be careful, very, VERY, careful.

In any events where play is allowed that does not have a non-playing certified TD present at all locations (e.g. from home), then the event coordinator and chief TD are ultimately responsible for assuring the adherence to the Laws of Chess. At a minimum, there should be a pre-determined set of playing conditions transmitted to each player and a signed statement attesting to compliance to those playing conditions. This is similar to the submission of a report of a match between two individual players.

Starting and resumption of a game.

After the pairings have been determined, the players are sent an instruction to match their respective opponent. Players should match their opponent or accept their pending challenge in a timely manner. The tournament director will use discretion in judging delays and the enforcement of penalties.

When a player gets disconnected during the tournament, that player should try to return as soon as possible. If a player gets disconnected during a game, the game is considered to be adjourned. The opponent of the disconnected player is to resume an adjourned game when the disconnected player returns. The tournament director will use discretion in judging delays, frequent disconnects and the enforcement of penalties.