

# 1. USCF BLITZ RULES

1. **Time control-** The time control is Game 5 minutes. Use 2 second delay when possible.
2. **Initial position-** Before play begins both players should inspect the position of the pieces and the setting of the clock, since once each side has made a move all claims for correcting either are null and void. The only exception is if one or both players have more than five minutes on their clock, then the tournament director may reduce the time accordingly.
3. **Clock hand-** Each player must push the clock button with the same hand he uses to move his pieces. Exception: only during castling may a player use both hands. When capturing only one hand may be used. The first infraction will get a warning, the second a one minute penalty and the third will result in the loss of the game.
4. **Clock orientation-** The tournament director should state at the start of the event the direction the clocks are to face. The player with the Black pieces then decides which side he will play with that opponent.
5. **Touching a clock-** Except for pushing the clock button neither player should touch the clock except for the following:
  - I. To straighten it;
  - II. If either player knocks over the clock, his opponent gets one minute added to his clock;
  - III. If your opponent's clock does not begin you may push his side down and repunch your side; however, if this procedure is unsatisfactory, please call for a director;
  - IV. Each player must always be allowed to push the clock after their move is made. Neither player should keep his hand on or hover over the clock.
6. **Define a win-** A game is won by the player:
  - I. who has mated his opponent's king;
  - II. whose opponent resigns;
  - III. whose opponent's flag falls first, at any time before the game is otherwise ended, provided he points it out and neutralizes the clock while his own flag is still up and that he still has mating material;
  - IV. who, after an illegal move, takes the opponent's king or stops the clock;
  - V. an illegal move doesn't negate a player's right to claim on time, provided he does so prior to his opponent's claim of an illegal move. If the claims are simultaneous the player who made an illegal move loses.
7. **Defining mating material-** Either two minor pieces (except K vs K+N+N), a pawn, a rook or a queen will be sufficient mating material. No trick mates are allowed, which means a lone knight or bishop is insufficient unless a forced win can be demonstrated.
8. **Defining a draw-** A game is a draw:
  - I. If one of the Kings is stalemated, even if a fallen flag is claimed simultaneously.
  - II. By agreement between the players during the game only.
  - III. If the flag of one player falls after the flag of the other player has already fallen and a win has not been claimed, unless either side mates before noticing both flags down. Checkmate nullifies any later time claims.
  - IV. To claim a draw by perpetual check, a three-time repetition is necessary with the player counting 1, 2, 3 out loud so as to make it quite clear and easier for the tournament directors to assist. Claimant should stop the clock after the third repetition.
  - V. If both players each have just one identical piece either may claim a draw by stopping the clock unless the opponent can demonstrate a forced win.
  - VI. If one player has insufficient mating material when his opponent's flag falls or makes an illegal move.

- VII. In K+B vs K+B and the bishops are of opposite colors, with only one pawn on the board, or 2 pawns vs 1 pawn in a clearly blockaded position, a draw can be claimed by stopping the clocks and summoning a tournament director, provided that no forced win can be proved.
- VIII. K+rook pawn vs K can be claimed as a draw once the defender's King is on the rook file in front of the pawn. K+pawn vs K can be claimed as a draw once the defender is on the square directly in front of the pawn, as long as the pawn is not on the 7th rank.
- IX. K+R+rook pawn vs K+R is a draw, if the pawn is blockaded by the King and there is no immediate win evident.
9. **Replacing Pieces-** If a player accidentally displaces one or more pieces, he shall replace them on his own time. If it is necessary, his opponent may start the opponent's clock without making a move in order to make sure that the culprit uses his own time while replacing the pieces. Finally, it is unsportsmanlike to knock over any pieces then punch the clock. For the first offense the player will get a warning (unless this causes his flag to fall, in which case the opponent will get one extra minute added to his clock). For a second offense a one minute add-on for the opponent will be imposed. For a third offense the offender shall forfeit the game. Thereafter, the tournament director may use other penalties or expel a player from the event for repeated offenses.
10. **Dispute between players-** In case of a dispute either player may stop the clock while the tournament director is being summoned. In any unclear situation the tournament director will consider the testimony of both players and any reliable witnesses before rendering his decision. If a player wishes to appeal the decision of a tournament director, the player must first appeal to the section chief then, if necessary, the player may appeal to the Chief floor director, whose decision in all cases is final.
11. **TD touching the clock-** The tournament director shall not pick up the clock; except in the case of a dispute.
12. **Observer Conduct-** Spectators and players in another game are not to speak or otherwise interfere in a game. If a spectator interferes in any way, such as by calling attention to the flag fall or an illegal move, the tournament director may cancel the game and rule that a new game be played in its stead, and he may also expel the offending party from the playing room. The tournament director should also be silent about illegal moves, flag falls, etc. (unless there is an agreement with the players, before the game, to call them) as this is entirely the responsibility of the players.
13. **Asking a TD to declare a draw-** When a clearly drawn position is reached either player may stop the clocks and appeal to the tournament director for a draw.
- I. If the tournament director rules a draw, as in Rule #8, the game is over.
  - II. If the appeal is rejected, then a one minute penalty is imposed on the player who stopped the clock.
14. **Illegal moves-** Illegal moves, unnoticed by both players, cannot be corrected afterwards, nor can they become the basis for making a claim.
15. **Touch move-** A legal move is completed when a player's hand leaves the piece.
16. **King next to King-** Moving the King next to another King is illegal and cause for forfeit of the offender.
17. **Replacing a promoted pawn-** If a player promotes a pawn and leaves the pawn on the board, the opponent only has the option of stopping the clocks while a replacement piece is found.
18. **Replacement clock-** Only a tournament director may determine if a clock is defective and change clocks.
19. **Initial setup error-** If the King and Queen are set up incorrectly when the game begins, then you may castle short on the queenside and castle long on the kingside. Once each side has made a move, incorrect setups must stay - unless a tournament director gives permission to restart the game.
20. **Player behavior-** Excessive banging of pieces or clock will not be tolerated and the offending player may be penalized with loss of time.
21. **Bring a clock-** Each player is responsible for coming to the game with a clock. If neither player has a clock, then both players will receive a forfeit loss for both games. All players are required to know how to operate their clock and how to make any changes to the clock that may be necessary during a game.
22. **Insufficient Losing Chances-** insufficient losing chances claims cannot be made in Blitz games.
23. **Rules Not Covered Above-** The Official Rules of Chess shall be used to resolve any situation not covered by these rules.