



## C&O Family Chess Center

217 West Diamond Ave.  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
[www.chesscenter.net](http://www.chesscenter.net)

# The “10 BAD MOVES”

(Summary)

## 1. Moving Too Fast. (Impulsiveness)

*This is the single greatest contributor to lost positions.* It really has to do with taking the time to carefully look at the position - and to ask yourself (and answer) certain very specific “key questions” (see other side).

## 2. Developing the Queen Too Early, or Exposing the Queen to Attack.

What is meant by “too early?” If the queen may be easily threatened or attacked by developing enemy pieces or pawns then it’s too early. She usually needs support and protection to attack effectively.

## 3. Moving the Same Piece Too Many Times, or Making Too Many Pawn Moves in the Opening.

Making such “extra” moves is one of the chief contributing factors in cases of failure to achieve the “*7 Things To Do in the First 10 Moves.*”

## 4. Failure to Castle, or Exposing the King to Attack.

The king is the most important piece you have. If he is lost the game is lost, therefore “king safety” is *always* an important consideration.

## 5. Attacking Too Soon.

As with developing the Queen, the key here is judging just what is “*too soon.*” Does the attack have enough support from other pieces, etc.?

## 6. Ignoring, or Failing to Relieve, a Pin.

The pin is number one of the four primary tactical weapons (pins, forks, skewers, and discovered attacks). A pinned piece is temporarily immobilized, threatened with capture, and usually neutralized both as an attacker and a defender.

## 7. Ignoring a Threat, or Failing to Guard Against Captures.

After the first few moves, captures and threats will exist all over the board, but they must be “*looked for.*” The key is “*visualization*” (the ability to imagine what the board will look like after a move).

## 8. Impulsive Pawn Snatching.

The “*hanging pawn*” (seemingly unprotected) may be “poisoned” (bait for a trap), or may open lines of attack for your opponent. Or you may waste time when a more direct attack is possible

## 9. Useless, or Weakening, Exchanges.

Will the exchange help you? It’s generally “bad” to trade pieces if you have the initiative, if your opponent has a cramped position, if it will weaken your pawn structure, or if you are behind in material. “*Visualize*” (see in your mind) the results before you make your move.

## 10. Losing, or Drawing, a Won Game. (Losing Your Focus/Overconfidence)

“If you have a better position, watch out!” A player may sometimes lose his focus or become so frustrated with an opponent who “plays on” in a “hopeless” position that he blunders into a draw or a loss.

Almost as bad as losing a won game is “giving up” when there may be chances for a draw.

For more detail see the full Journal Article The “10 Bad Moves.”



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### **KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF (AND ANSWER) BEFORE CHOOSING A MOVE!**

#### **ABOUT THE MOVE YOUR OPPONENT JUST MADE:**

1. Did my opponent make a threat or capture?
2. Did my opponent defend against my threat?
3. Did my opponent improve his position?

**Three "no" answers indicate  
a possible mistake!**

4. Can I capture the piece that moved? ...or any others?

#### **ABOUT YOUR POSSIBLE MOVES:**

1. Does this move make a threat or capture?
2. Does this move defend against a threat?
3. Does this move improve my position?
  - a. development/cooperation of my pieces
  - b. control of the center or other space
  - c. improved pawn structure
  - d. king safety

**Three "no" answers indicates you  
may be about to make a mistake!**

4. Can my opponent capture any of my pieces?
  - a. ...the piece I will move?
  - b. ...any unprotected pieces?