

KING

The King is TOO VALUABLE to have a value! That's because, if the King is checkmated, the game is over. In the early part of the game (the OPENING) the King is usually tucked away in a safe corner position after castling; during the middle part of the game (the MIDDLE GAME), the King usually stays in its safe position, guarded by pawns and, if necessary, pieces such as a Knight or Bishop; during the latter part of the game (the ENDGAME), with few pieces on the board, the King is rarely in danger of checkmate and, consequently, can become a very powerful piece.

QUEEN

The Queen is the most powerful piece on the board, capable of swooping across the board and delivering checkmate. It is worth:

 **9 pawns**

ROOK

The Rook is the next most powerful piece; two rooks working together can be a very dangerous combination. The Rook is worth:

 **5 pawns**

TWO ROOKS is worth about a QUEEN and ONE PAWN, but such a comparison depends on the nature of the position.

BISHOP and **Knight**

A Bishop is approximately equal in value to a Knight; both are worth about:

 **3 pawns**

A BISHOP and TWO PAWNS or a KNIGHT and TWO PAWNS are approximately equal in value to a Rook; but again, the nature of the position will determine if either side has an advantage.

The EXCHANGE

This is a term to describe when one player loses a ROOK for a KNIGHT or a BISHOP. Occasionally, a player will “sacrifice” the exchange (give up a Rook for a MINOR PIECE – a term for a Knight or a Bishop) in order to secure an advantage in position. In the ENDGAME, the advantage of the exchange is usually decisive – as fewer pieces are left on the board, the Rook becomes stronger as the Knight or Bishop becomes weaker

MORE information:

Go to the Irish Chess Union website, at www.icu.ie