

# End Game Strategy – King/Pawn and King 2

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1. While reading this lesson, there are two things to remember: Advantage in Opposition and Critical Squares.
2. The King/Pawn and King end game strategy is the most basic end game there is. With White's King and Pawn against Black's King, the object is for White to promote its Pawn, protected by its King. Black must prevent this forcing a stalemate with its King only. The key to success, for both sides, is to visualize the moves ahead of time.
3. If White has a Pawn and King, and Black has a King, White's King must escort the Pawn to promote and win. In order to do this, White's King must occupy one of three critical squares.
4. Black must maintain an advantage in opposition with White to force a Draw. If White maintains this advantage instead, White will succeed in promoting its Pawn.

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5. Original position: White Pawn on e2, White King on e3, and Black King on e5.
  6. In this position, if it's Black's move, White can win. If it's White's move, Black can force a Draw. Study this position carefully and think ahead to achieve your position so you always gain the advantage in opposition.
  7. If the White King can occupy one of the following squares – d4, e4, or f4 – White can promote the Pawn. The three critical squares for White to occupy are the three squares centered on and two ranks above the White Pawn. As long as the Black King prevents white from occupying any of these three squares, the game will result in a Draw.

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8. Start with the original position and Black to move. Black's move is either Kd5 or Kf5 (assume Kf5). White's move is Kd4 and now occupies one of the three critical squares. White can now escort the White Pawn and promote.

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9. Start with the original position. White's move is either Kd3 or Kf3 (assume Kf3). Black's move is Kf5 and now has the advantage in opposition and forces White to again move first. When both Kings are lined up on the same file with one square separating them, the next King to move loses its

advantage in opposition. If White moves to Ke3, Black moves to Ke5, and it is not possible for White's King to occupy any of the critical squares (d5, e5, f5).

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10. Start with the original position and Black's move again. Black moves to Kf5, and White's move is Kd4. If Black moves Kf4, White's King can now protect the White Pawn to promote. White's next move is e3. Black moves to Kf5. White moves to e4, and so on until White's Pawn is promoted, all the time protected by the White King.
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11. Start with the original position and Black's move again: Black moves to Kf5. White moves to Kd4. If Black moves to Ke6, what is White's next move? The two options are to either move the Pawn to e3, or the King to Ke4. White wants to move to Ke4 to maintain the advantage of opposition. (If White moved to e3, Black moves to Kd6 and gains the advantage in opposition.) Black then moves to Kd6 and white moves to Kf5 and occupies one of the three critical squares. Black moves to Ke7. White moves to Ke5 to gain advantage in opposition. Black moves to Kd7 and white moves to Kf6 pushing the Black King further down the board. If Black moves to Kd6 to attack White's Pawn, White moves its Pawn to e4. Black moves to Kd7. White moves to e5 and is protected by White's King.
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12. When the White Pawn reaches the fifth rank (or past the half way point), White's King must now just occupy one of the three critical squares one rank in front of the Pawn, not two or more ranks in front of the Pawn.
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13. Begin again with White's Pawn on e5, White's King at Kf6, and Black's King on Kd7. Black moves to Kd8, White moves to Kf7, Black moves to Kd7.
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14. Instead of Kd8, if Black moves to Ke8, White moves to Ke6 to gain advantage in opposition. Black moves to Kf8. White moves to Kd7 and can protect the Pawn to promote.
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15. If White's next move was e6 (instead of Ke8) the game would result in a Draw. Black would move to Kd8 and gain the advantage in opposition. White next moves to e7, Black moves to Ke8, and White must move to Ke6 to protect the Pawn. This is a Stalemate – a Draw.
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16. Try another position, place the White Pawn on c4, White King on Kd4, and Black King on Kc7.
17. White moves to Kc5 to gain advantage in opposition. Black moves to Kd7. White moves to Kb6 and occupies one of the three critical squares and can protect the Pawn to promote.

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18. The end game described so far is good when Pawns are anywhere on the B through G files. If Pawns are on the A and H files, the end game is different. For these cases, in order for Black to draw, its King must occupy the corner square. For example, assume the White Pawn is on a5, the White King is on c5, and the Black King is on Ka8. Black wants its King to occupy the corner square (Ka8) for a draw. White moves to Kb6. Black moves to Kb8. White moves to a6. Black moves to Ka8. White moves to a7. This is a Stalemate.

19. With the same position (except the black King on Kb8) try the following: White moves to Kb6. Black moves to Ka8. White moves to a6. Black moves to Kb8. White moves to a7. Black moves to Ka8. White moves to Ka6. Another Stalemate.

20. Try the following: White's King is on Ka7, White's Pawn is on a6, and Black's King is on Kc8. Can you guess the result? White moves to Kb6. Black moves to Kb8. White's Pawn moves to a7 – another stalemate.