



Frequently Asked Questions

Have you ever wondered how the chess program at our school works? Your PS 41 child shows interest in chess, but you don't know where to start? We've compiled a list of the most frequently asked questions to help you out. (August 2016)

1. Why play chess?

Chess turns problem solving and learning into a game! Studies conducted over the last 30 years show that student IQs increase and test scores improve after less than a year of systematic chess study. Chess is fun and motivational. It develops self-esteem, builds team spirit, and increases concentration.

Chess is a thinking game. It encourages students to use patterns and logical deductive reasoning to solve problems. It is also a sport that levels the playing field: age, gender, ethnic background, socioeconomic status, and spoken language are all irrelevant factors when playing chess.

2. What kind of chess learning opportunities does PS 41 offer?

Chess programming at PS 41 is possible due to the generosity and support of the school, the PTA, and Principal Kelly Shannon. This includes:

Curriculum Chess

Kindergarten, first, and second grade students receive weekly chess instruction in their regular classrooms. The PTA funds this enrichment program, which began in 2003.

After School Chess

Our popular after school chess program has three sessions per school year and classes run from 3:00-4:30pm). Classes are offered include: PreK-1 Chess, Grade 2-5 Chess, and Advanced Chess. The program is available to current PS 41 students only.

Students are escorted to the chess classrooms at the regular dismissal time. At 4:30pm, all students must be picked up outside the school auditorium. For an extended day option (after 4:30pm), inquire with the "YMCA at PS 41" after school program (families will be required to sign up with **both** the PS 41 After School Chess program and the McBurney YMCA program separately).

After School Chess registration takes place in early September, late December, and early April. Late registrants are welcome based on availability and will be charged a pro-rated fee. For registration and further details, visit nycknights.com.

Summer Chess Camp

Our after school program becomes a full day chess camp in the summer at PS 41. Students can register by the day or by the week. The camp is open to all elementary school age children. For registration and further details, visit nycknights.com.

NEED MORE INFO OR HAVE QUESTIONS?

Jeremy Scheinbach at ps41chess@gmail.com • www.nycknights.com

PS41 Chess Parents at ps41chessparent@gmail.com



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3. Who are the PS 41 chess teachers?

Jeremy Scheinbach is the Chess Program director and has been teaching chess at PS 41 since 2003. He started the after school program in 2008 and has since organized the PS 41 Chess Team. He has been playing chess since he was 4 years old and has been teaching for the past 13 years. He loves the way chess challenges his students to become critical thinkers and develop more patience.

Anatoly Trubman is originally from Moldavia and started playing chess when he was 6 years old. At age 13, he became the 1985 U.S. National K-8 Champion. For the past 22 years he has taught in NYC schools, as well as coached at Nationals. According to Anatoly, "My motivation for teaching has always been seeing the direct results of my work. I enjoy the success my students have had as chess players."

James Lewis hails from the Dominican Republic, and has represented his country in four Chess Olympiads (1984, 1986, 1988, and 1990). He started playing at 7 years old and has been a National Master since the early 1980's. He started teaching at the age of 14, and has been teaching in the NYC area since 1996, and at PS 41 since 2008.

Roman Krant started teaching chess at PS 41 since January 2013. He is a National Chess Master and competed in numerous international chess tournaments in the USA and Europe. Roman started playing since he was 4 years old and has been teaching for 24 years in NYC schools. His chess motto is: "Stay focused—and good things will happen!"

4. What are chess tournaments?

Tournaments are a great way to practice and develop chess skills. There are at least one or two scholastic tournaments held every weekend in the NYC area. Tournament organizers prefer early player registration though some organizers will allow tournament day registration. Most tournaments require a registration fee, but there are some free tournaments offered (see FAQ #8).

Most **tournament sections** play four games and begin at around 9:30-10am. **Pairings** are posted before each **round** with the chessboard number and color (black or white) your child will play. (For more advanced players, pairings are based on the Swiss System matching players who are on a similar level.) The **tournament directors** will call out your child's section when a new round is ready to start.

Parents are not allowed to be in the **Playing Hall** while the games are played. Parents are required to stay on the tournament premises and supervise their child between games.

There are usually food concessions organized by the chess parents of the hosting school, where lunch and snack items are available for sale. An awards ceremony follows the end of last round of each section. Many tournaments post the results online within days.

5. What are the PS 41 Chess Tournaments?

Our home tournaments are terrific for our beginner players because of the familiar environment. They will probably be your child's first exposure to chess tournaments. Our school hosts four tournaments during the academic year. Our chess teachers will be on hand to help beginning chess players.

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6. How do I know my child is ready to play in a tournament?

Children can start playing in tournaments as soon as s/he knows how to move the pieces. Most children start playing in the local tournaments in the **Unrated** ("No Score" or "Rookie" or "Novice") sections.

As children improve their skills, they will start playing in **USCF Rated** sections (see FAQ #9) that have **time controls** (time limits) ranging from 30 to 90 minutes per player. Players earn 1 point for a win, half point for a draw, and 0 point for a loss. Unrated sections (where no points are awarded) can end as early as 12-1pm, however, most rated sections finish in the mid to late afternoon.

7. How do I know which tournament section to sign up for?

If your child has just started playing chess, the child will most likely play in the **Unrated** ("No Score" or "Rookie" or "Novice") sections. Once your child has a USCF rating (see FAQ #9), your child will play in a **USCF Rated** section. His or her rating will determine which sections to sign up for (e.g. under 600, under 800, etc.). Note that each tournament may have slightly different section criteria. If you are not sure which section to sign up for, ask Jeremy Scheinbach (ps41chess@gmail.com) or the tournament director.

8. How do I find out about other local tournaments?

Our chess teachers recommend tournaments hosted by PS 41, **NYChessKids**, and **Hunter Elementary School** because of their adequate time controls. Most tournaments have a registration fee, but **Chess In The Schools** (chessintheschools.org) and **The Right Move** (therightmove.org) offer free tournaments throughout the year. A comprehensive list of scholastic tournaments can be found at:

Littlehouseofchess.com (click the "Our Chess Calendar" link)

9. What is a USCF rating and why do I need it?

Participation in **USCF Rated** sections requires membership with the **United States Chess Federation** (USCF). Your child can register for a USCF Scholastic Membership (currently \$17/year) online at uschess.org (under the "Join/Renew" tab) and s/he will receive an official Player ID number.

By becoming a USCF Scholastic Member, your child will be able to earn a chess rating in the official national rating system. Ratings start from 100 and will remain provisional until the child has played 25 games. You can track your child's rating at uschess.org or plycount.com.

10. What is a "bye"?

A **bye** is a half or full point you gain without playing a game. At registration, you can request a half-point bye for any round if you need to miss a game. A bye is often not allowed in the highest section as there are a fewer number of rounds. In the case of an odd number of players in a section, the player with the section's lowest rating or points will receive a full point bye.

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11. What does my child need to bring to tournaments?

Tournaments usually supply chessboards and pieces. If your child is playing in a rated section, he or she will need to bring a scorebook (notation book), pencils, and chess clock. You can purchase scorebooks, chess clocks, and books at some local tournaments, at local chess stores, or online.

USCF Sales (uscfsales.com)

Tri-State Chess Store (325 East 88th Street) (tristatechess.com)

Chess Forum (219 Thompson Street) (chessforum.com)

12. What is the PS 41 Chess Team and how does my child sign up?

At local tournaments, children are automatically placed on their school chess team and represent PS 41. Typically two or more players from the same school need to compete in the same section to qualify for a team trophy (if offered at the tournament).

At **major scholastic tournaments** (see FAQ #13), the accumulated scores of the top three or four players of a team determine the team rank. Parents should consult with chess teacher Jeremy Scheinbach about the appropriateness of major scholastic tournaments for their child.

13. What major scholastic tournaments does the PS 41 Chess Team attend?

Every year, the PS 41 Chess Team hopes to attend these five major scholastic tournaments:

National Scholastic K-12 Championship in Nashville, TN or Orlando, FL (held in Dec)

Greater New York Scholastic Championships in Brooklyn, NY (held in Jan)

New York State Scholastic Championships in Saratoga Springs, NY (held in Feb or Mar)

All-Girls National Championships in Chicago, IL (held in Apr)

National Elementary K-6 Championship in Nashville, TN (held in Apr or May)

These events involve a 2- to 5-day commitment including travel. Participants play seven games during the course of three days (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday), and the tournaments conclude with an award ceremony. Coaches will attend these events, and provide pre-game strategies and post-game analysis.

14. What other chess activities happen at PS 41?

Our year-end **Chess Celebration Party** invites all PS 41 students, parents, and teachers to enjoy casual games of chess over food and drinks. It is a great way to meet the rest of the school chess community. Members of the Chess Team are recognized for their efforts at the major scholastic tournaments. Other activities include **friendly matches** with other schools; simul and bughouse **chess socials**; and **fundraising events** to benefit the Chess Team.

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15. What chess resources do you recommend?

Mobile Device Apps

Chess Free Optime; Chess.com; Dinosaur Chess; Shredder Chess

Online Chess

Chess.com; Chessmagnetschool.com; Chessclub.com; Chesskid.com

Books

Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess by Bobby Fisher

How To Beat Your Dad At Chess by Murray Chandler

Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids by Jeff Coakley

16. What is the PS 41 Chess Club, Inc.?

A **Not for Profit organization** has been formed to promote chess at PS 41. Our goal is to support the chess program and raise funds for the Chess Team. Activities include fundraising, tournament coordination, communications, and general administration. Volunteers and donations at our events are always welcome! Please contact the PS 41 Chess Parent Coordinators at ps41chessparent@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer and help grow chess at PS 41!

17. How do I learn more?

For further information about the chess program, registration forms, and other PS 41 chess activities and calendar go to nycknights.com or visit the **PS 41 Chess Bulletin Board** located by the Nurse's office (Room 105)

For inquiries about chess education (curriculum chess and after school program), home and away tournaments, the Chess Team, and summer camp, contact coach **Jeremy Scheinbach** at ps41chess@gmail.com.

For inquiries about non-teaching chess activities (fundraising, events, volunteering or making donations) or just want to hear from a chess parent's perspective, contact the **PS 41 Chess Parent Coordinators** at ps41chessparent@gmail.com.

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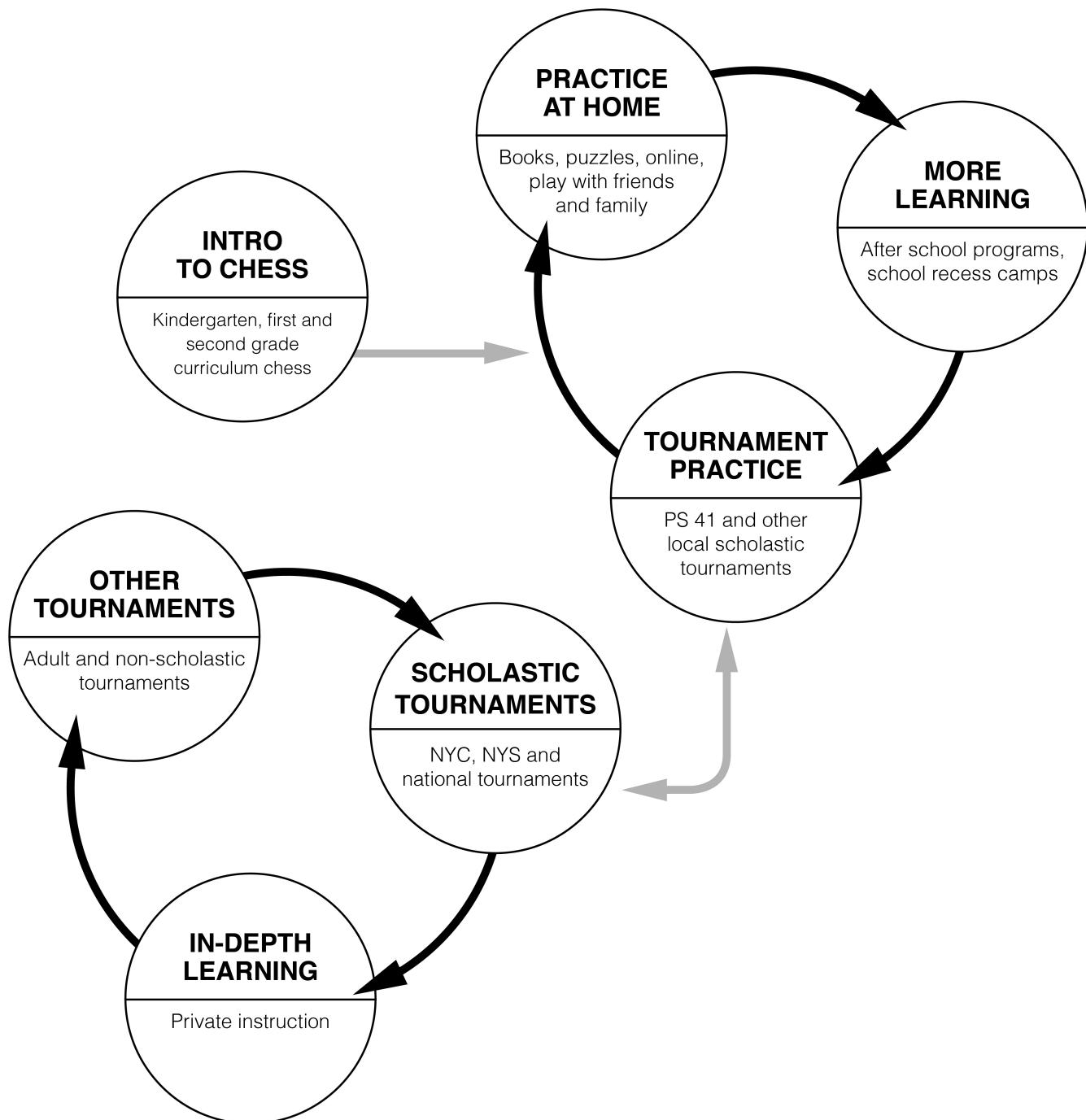
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Understanding Your Child's Chess Education

Below is a sample progression of how chess is taught and learned among PS 41 students.
(August 2016)



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