

Sportsmanship & Conduct For USCF Tournament Participants - 31 December 2002

The USCF rules as enforced by the TD (Tournament Director) is the final authority for all rulings.

You MUST be at your table on time –The clock will be running while your opponent waits
Pairing charts are posted a few minutes before the game with table and piece color assignments.
Score sheets are available at the TD table. You will have to provide your own pencil.
Do not begin before the TD instructs you to.

Take time to think about each move - Hurrying causes more losses than any other mistake
Move at your own pace. Don't move quickly to be like your opponent.
1) Write down opponents move on scoresheet (used for later analysis and possible TD rulings).
2) Study opponent's last move to find their plan.
3) Consider several moves and opponent's likely response, and then choose the best one.
4) Write down your move on the scoresheet (scorekeeping is not mandatory, but encouraged).
5) Move your piece and hit clock with same hand

If you need to go to leave the table, raise your hand for TD permission.
Speak to nobody else while gone, to avoid disqualification.
Your clock will run against you while gone, so hurry back.

Ignore your opponent's activities, comments and reactions to moves
Sometimes opponents move a lot or, walk around behind you. If it's too distracting report it to the TD.
Comments may be made to try and upset you or influence your move in their favor.
If comments are a continuing problem, raise your hand and report the problem to the TD.
Body language can be used to deceive, and make you think they blundered, when really it's a trap.

YOU Must Enforce the Rules – Raise your hand for the TD if any rules are violated and not corrected
Touch move – touch take – removing hand from piece ends turn.
Illegal moves – including: king into check; improper en-passant; castling from, into or through check.
Starting clock before completing a move, or with hand not used to move piece, or pausing clock.
More than one draw offer before you return the offer (mark draws offers with = on scoresheet).
If anyone communicates (notes, speaking, signals, noises, gestures, sign language, etc.) to your opponent during the game, Raise Your Hand Immediately and accurately describe the violation to the TD.

Don't Break the Rules
Accidentally touching a piece may force you to move or capture it, so be careful reaching over the board.
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT: Make sure that ALL your guests watching you understand that
YOU MAY RECEIVE NO COMMUNICATION OF ANY KIND FROM ANYONE during a chess match, regardless of the situation. This may get you disqualified. Report problems to your coach.
Also, never talk to anyone at another board while you are playing in a match.

Always be a good sport regardless of how the game turns out
Always be respectful toward your opponent, even if they are not.
Don't state anything about your expectations other than to have a good game.
If you win, thank opponent for a good game and shake hands. Celebrate when not seen or heard by them.
If you lose, thank opponent for a good game and shake hands. Try not to get upset, everyone loses sometimes. It's best to study your game and try to learn what you did wrong, so that you will lose less in the future. An entirely emotional response will not help prevent a repeat of the loss.
Remember, you can learn more from a loss than a win.

Always play your best game, regardless of your opponent's rating.
Low ratings can be very misleading and a person with a high rating may have a bad game.
Never take a draw offer unless you have insufficient material to checkmate or it's really hopeless.

Immediately following the game, quietly reset the board and report the result to the TD.

Most importantly, HAVE FUN!!!