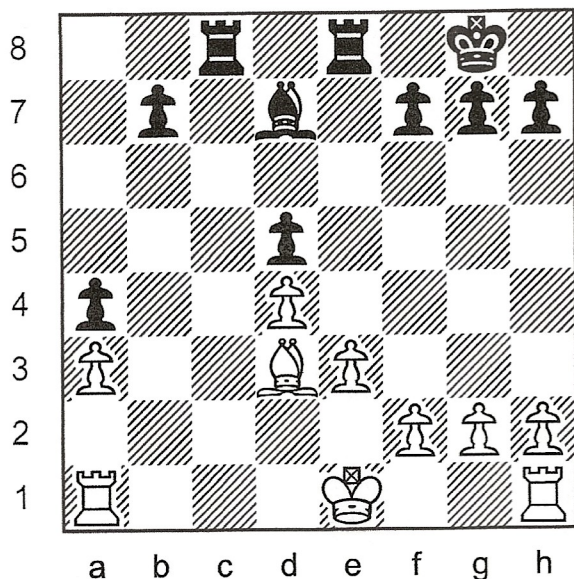


Even before the endgame is reached, we should think about getting the king ready for action.



In this diagram, some players might castle automatically if they were white. But the endgame is near and the king's services will be needed. So it's better to leave him in the centre and free the rook on h1 with ...

**1. Kd2!**

The king on d2 will also allow white to challenge black's control of the c-file and to keep a black rook out of c3.

Let's look at the trouble white can get into after 1.0-0? Rc3! 2.Rfd1 Rec8

3.Kf1? Rxd3! 4.Rxd3 Bb5  
5.Ke2 Rc2+ 6.Kf3 Bxd3  
5.Rd1 Rc3 6.Ke2 Rxa3

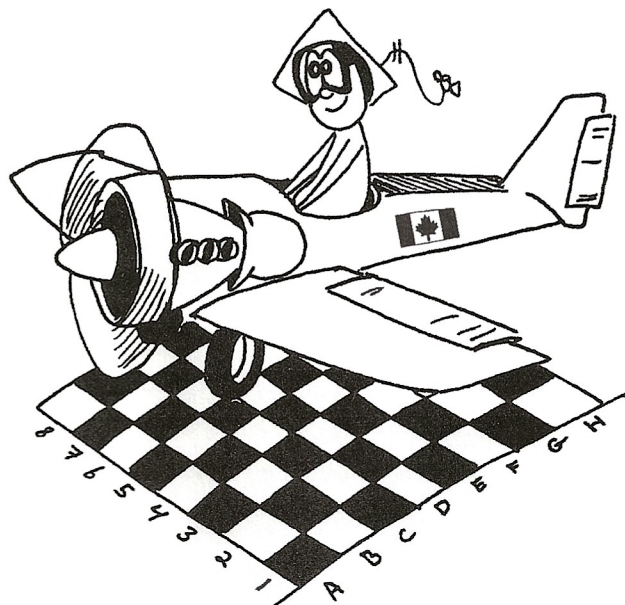
3.Rab1? Rxa3 4.Rxb7? Rxd3!  
5.Rxd3 Rc1+ 6.Rd1 Rxd1#

**1. ... Rc7**

Black prepares to double the rooks.

**2. Rhc1 Rec8**

**3. Rxc7 Rxc7**



**4. Rc1**

Without the king's support, this move would be unplayable.

**4. ... Rxc1**

4...Bc6? 5.Bb5! Kf8 6.Bxa4 Oops!

**5. Kxc1**

The white king is forced to take a step backwards. But he is still better placed for the endgame than the black king.

The key feature in the position is the weak black pawn on a4. The black king cannot arrive in time to stop the white king and bishop from winning it.

**5. ... Kf8**

**6. Kc2!**

Grabbing a pawn with 6.Bxh7? loses (now and next turn) because the white bishop gets trapped by 6...g6 7.h4 Kg7. White focuses on the target at a4.

**6. ... Ke7**

**7. Kc3 h6**

Black defends the h-pawn to avoid the line: 7...Kd6 8.Bxh7 g6 9.h4 Ke6 10.h5! (10...Kf6 11.hxg6 Kg7 12.gxf7!)

**8. Kb4 Kd6**

**9. Bb5**

The a-pawn is about to say good-bye.

**9. . . . Bf5**

Trading down with 9...Bxb5? 10.Kxb5 would give white an easy pawn ending. (10...h5 11.Kb6! g5 12.Kxb7 f5 13.Kb6)

**10. Bxa4 Be4**

**11. Kb5!?**

11.g3 or 11.f3 are normal ways to win.

**11. . . . Bxg2**

Guarding b7 is no help. 11...Kc7 12.f3 Bd3+ 13.Kc5 Bc4 14.Bb5 b6+ 15.Kb4 Ba2 16.Bd3 g5 17.Kc3 Kc6 18.a4! f6 19.g4 Kd6 20.Kb2 Bc4 21.Bxc4 dxc4 22.Kc3 Kd5 23.e4+ Kd6 24.Kxc4

**12. Kb6**

The white king leads the way, clearing a path for his a-pawn.

**12. . . . g5**

**13. Bb5 f5**

**14. Kxb7 h5**

**15. a4 1 - 0**