

Torus Chess — Intermediate Level

Coach Lesson Plans: Week-by-Week Curriculum

For coach use — one plan per 60-minute class. Rhythm: Warm-Up (5 min), Core Lesson (15 min), Puzzle Practice (15 min), Free Play (20 min), Wrap-Up (5 min). One new idea per week. Target: 600 → 1000 Elo.

Students enter as graduates of the Kingdom's Beginner realms. The Intermediate year covers tactics (forks, pins, skewers, discovered attacks), essential mating patterns, foundational endgames, and a first opening repertoire. The CCT Scan (Checks, Captures, Threats) taught in Week 1 is enforced in every class all year.

Realm: Detective Forest (Weeks 1–12)

Week 1 — The CCT Scan

Objective: Students consistently apply the Checks, Captures, Threats checklist before moving.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: entering the Detective Forest, where clues hide in every position.

Core Lesson (15 min): The mandatory scan order — opponent's threats first, then your own checks, captures, threats.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): CCT Check races: list every check, capture, and threat in set positions.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a spoken "CCT clear" before each move.

Homework: Worksheet: full CCT lists for 6 positions.

Coach Notes: This scan is the spine of the whole year; never let it lapse.

Week 2 — The Fork (Knight & Pawn)

Objective: Students identify and execute knight and pawn forks.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the forest fork in the road — two paths, one traveler.

Core Lesson (15 min): Attacking two pieces at once; royal forks; pawn forks on advance.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Fork Finder drills — place the knight to hit king and queen.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a fork bounty (star per executed fork).

Homework: Worksheet: 10 knight/pawn fork puzzles.

Coach Notes: Teach fork *prevention* too: keep king and queen off matching knight-circuits.

Week 3 — The Fork (Queen, Rook, Bishop)

Objective: Students identify and execute forks with sliding pieces.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the long-sighted archer striking two targets across the forest.

Core Lesson (15 min): Line forks; the queen's diagonal-plus-file double hits; loose pieces as targets.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Long-Distance Fork puzzles with unprotected targets.

Free Play (20 min): Games with the "loose pieces drop off" mantra.

Homework: Worksheet: 10 sliding-piece fork puzzles.

Coach Notes: Connect to Safety Scan: undefended pieces invite forks.

Week 4 — The Absolute Pin

Objective: Students understand and execute absolute pins against the king.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the paralyzing web of the forest spider.

Core Lesson (15 min): Pinned to the king = illegal to move; attacking pinned pieces with pawns.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Pin-the-Knight setups; win the pinned piece.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a pin-spotting bounty.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 absolute-pin puzzles.

Coach Notes: Show the classic Bg5/Bb5 pins arising from the Italian they know.

Week 5 — The Relative Pin

Objective: Students understand and execute relative pins against valuable pieces.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the trap you *can* escape — at a price.

Core Lesson (15 min): The pinned piece may legally move but loses value behind it; when breaking a pin is right.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): To Move or Not to Move decision puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): Games with pin/counter-pin discussion at the board.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 relative-pin decisions.

Coach Notes: Warn against "pin worship" — sometimes the pin is an illusion (tactics that break it).

Week 6 — The Skewer

Objective: Students understand and execute skewers.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the x-ray arrow that passes through the first target.

Core Lesson (15 min): The reverse pin: high-value piece in front must move, exposing the piece behind.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Skewer the King drills (R and B skewers).

Free Play (20 min): Games with a skewer bounty.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 skewer puzzles; explain pin vs. skewer to a parent.

Coach Notes: Contrast side-by-side diagrams of pin vs. skewer until the difference is automatic.

Week 7 — The Discovered Attack

Objective: Students unleash discovered attacks by moving a front piece with a threat.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the curtain pulled back to reveal the archer.

Core Lesson (15 min): Battery mechanics; the moving piece makes its *own* threat for maximum force.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Find-the-discovery puzzles with B/R batteries.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a discovery bounty.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 discovered-attack puzzles.

Coach Notes: Emphasize choosing the best square for the moving piece, not just any square.

Week 8 — Discovered Check and Double Check

Objective: Students execute discovered checks and know double check forces a king move.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: two alarms ringing at once — the king must run.

Core Lesson (15 min): Discovered check as a "free move" for the mover; double check answers only with a king move.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Windmill-lite and double-check puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): Games hunting discovered checks.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 discovered/double check puzzles.

Coach Notes: Show one famous windmill game as inspiration (keep analysis light).

Week 9 — Removing the Defender

Objective: Students win material by capturing or driving away a key defender.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: bribe the guard, then raid the vault.

Core Lesson (15 min): Identify the defender, remove it (capture, chase, trade), then take the target.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Two-step "remove then take" puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): Games with defender-mapping pauses.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 remove-the-defender puzzles.

Coach Notes: Have students name the defender aloud before calculating.

Week 10 — The In-Between Move (Zwischenzug)

Objective: Students spot in-between moves instead of automatic recaptures.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the detective who asks one more question before answering.

Core Lesson (15 min): Checks and big threats can come *before* the recapture; automatic moves are the enemy.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): "Recapture or better?" decision puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a no-instant-recapture rule (three-second pause).

Homework: Worksheet: 6 zwischenzug puzzles.

Coach Notes: This week quietly upgrades the CCT Scan — checks before recaptures.

Week 11 — Combining Tactics

Objective: Students solve two-motif combinations (e.g., deflect then fork).

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: chaining clues to crack the case.

Core Lesson (15 min): Tactics rarely come alone; find the forcing sequence linking two motifs.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Mixed two-move combination sets.

Free Play (20 min): Games with post-game "find the missed tactic" reviews.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 mixed combinations.

Coach Notes: Require full lines aloud: "if he takes, then I..."

Week 12 — Boss Battle: The Tactics Sphinx

Objective: Consolidate all Detective Forest motifs under friendly pressure.

Warm-Up (5 min): The Sphinx blocks the forest exit with riddles.

Core Lesson (15 min): Motif-identification circuit: name it, then solve it.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Sphinx's trial: timed mixed-motif ladder per student.

Free Play (20 min): Victory games.

Homework: None — award the **Emerald Shard** and the rank of **Forest Detective**.

Coach Notes: Pass bar: name and solve four of six motifs; rematches next week.

Realm: Checkmate Citadel (Weeks 13–18)

Week 13 — Back-Rank Mates

Objective: Students execute and prevent back-rank mates.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the castle with no back door.

Core Lesson (15 min): The trapped castled king; deflecting back-rank defenders; making luft.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Back-rank mate-in-one/two sets.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a "check your back rank" ritual after move 15.

Homework: Worksheet: 10 back-rank puzzles.

Coach Notes: Teach both sides: attack it, and know when to play h3/h6.

Week 14 — The Smothered Mate

Objective: Students execute the classic Qg8+/Nf7# smothered mate sequence.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the king buried by his own bodyguards.

Core Lesson (15 min): The full sequence: Nf7+, Nh6+ double check, Qg8+!, Nf7#.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Smothered-mate pattern sets from both sides of the board.

Free Play (20 min): Games from set positions where the pattern is available.

Homework: Worksheet: 6 smothered-mate puzzles; perform it for a parent.

Coach Notes: The queen sacrifice moment is pure magic — let them feel it.

Week 15 — Mating Patterns Gallery I (Anastasia, Arabian, Hook)

Objective: Students recognize three named rook-based mating patterns.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: portraits in the Citadel's gallery of famous victories.

Core Lesson (15 min): Anastasia (N+R on the h-file), Arabian (N+R corner), hook mate structure.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Name-the-pattern, then mate-in-two sets.

Free Play (20 min): Games with a pattern-spotting bounty.

Homework: Worksheet: 9 gallery puzzles (three per pattern).

Coach Notes: Naming patterns accelerates recognition — quiz names all week.

Week 16 — Mating Patterns Gallery II (Batteries and the Killer Duo)

Objective: Students mate with Q+B and Q+N batteries against the castled king.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the duos who conquered the Citadel together.

Core Lesson (15 min): Q+B on the b1–h7 diagonal; Q+N "killer duo" around g7/h7.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Battery mate-in-two sets.

Free Play (20 min): Attack-the-castle themed games from set middlegames.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 battery puzzles.

Coach Notes: Link back to Week 7 batteries — same geometry, deadlier purpose.

Week 17 — The King + Rook Mate

Objective: Students deliver the K+R mate using the box and opposition-shoulder technique.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: one loyal tower is enough to crown a victory.

Core Lesson (15 min): Shrinking the box with the rook, walking the king, the waiting move, edge mate.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Box-shrinking and finishing drills.

Free Play (20 min): K+R vs K races (target: under 25 moves, no stalemate).

Homework: Worksheet: next-move K+R technique puzzles.

Coach Notes: This mate is harder than K+Q — allow two weeks of warm-up reps afterward.

Week 18 — Boss Battle: The Citadel Champion (Defense Included)

Objective: Consolidate mating patterns and learn basic defense against mating attacks.

Warm-Up (5 min): The Citadel Champion challenges all comers — and defends like a wall.

Core Lesson (15 min): Defensive triad: luft, trade the attackers, bring defenders home; then review circuit.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Champion's trial: mixed mate-in-two ladder plus one "find the defense" puzzle.

Free Play (20 min): Attack-vs-defense paired games.

Homework: None — award the **Citadel Crest**.

Coach Notes: Grade defense generously; awareness is the goal at this level.

Realm: Endgame Meadows (Weeks 19–24)

Week 19 — The Active King and Opposition

Objective: Students activate the king in endgames and take the opposition.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: when the battle quiets, the king rides out.

Core Lesson (15 min): King as a fighting piece; direct opposition and why it wins tempo battles.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Opposition duels — take it or lose the square.

Free Play (20 min): King-and-pawns-only games.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 opposition puzzles.

Coach Notes: Physically walk kings on a giant board if available — bodies remember.

Week 20 — King + Pawn vs King

Objective: Students win winning K+P vs K positions and hold drawn ones.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: one villager's march to become a queen.

Core Lesson (15 min): Key squares, king in front of the pawn, the rook-pawn exception.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Win-or-draw verdict puzzles, then prove it on the board.

Free Play (20 min): K+P vs K duels swapping colors.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 verdict puzzles.

Coach Notes: "King in front, opposition, promote" — make it a chant.

Week 21 — The Rule of the Square

Objective: Students instantly judge whether a king catches a running pawn.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the magic square drawn in the meadow grass.

Core Lesson (15 min): Drawing the square from the pawn to promotion; counting instead when in doubt.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Catch-it-or-not verdict flashes.

Free Play (20 min): Pawn-race games with outside passed pawns.

Homework: Worksheet: 10 rule-of-the-square verdicts.

Coach Notes: Verify with counting for skeptics — the rule earns trust fast.

Week 22 — Promotion Races and the Breakthrough

Objective: Students calculate simple pawn races and the classic 3v3 breakthrough.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the meadow sprint to the crown.

Core Lesson (15 min): Counting races (who queens first, who queens with check); the b6! breakthrough pattern.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Race-counting and breakthrough puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): Multi-pawn race games.

Homework: Worksheet: 8 race/breakthrough puzzles.

Coach Notes: "Queens with check" is the tiebreaker students forget — drill it.

Week 23 — Rook Endgame Basics: Cutting Off the King

Objective: Students use the rook to cut off the enemy king and escort a pawn.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the tower builds a wall across the meadow.

Core Lesson (15 min): Cutting off by file/rank; rook behind the passed pawn.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Best-cut-off puzzles.

Free Play (20 min): R+P vs R practice games.

Homework: Worksheet: 6 cut-off puzzles.

Coach Notes: Full Lucena/Philidor theory waits for Advanced; the wall concept is enough here.

Week 24 — Boss Battle: The Meadow Guardian

Objective: Consolidate all Endgame Meadows skills.

Warm-Up (5 min): The Meadow Guardian tests who may leave for the Opening Harbor.

Core Lesson (15 min): Endgame review circuit.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Guardian's trial: verdict quiz plus one played-out K+P win.

Free Play (20 min): Endgame duels.

Homework: None — award the **Meadow Medallion**.

Coach Notes: Track who still loses drawn positions on time pressure — flag for Trials prep.

Realm: Opening Harbor (Weeks 25–28)

Week 25 — Your First Repertoire: The Italian Plan for White

Objective: Students play the Italian to move 8 with plans, not just moves.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the harbor where every voyage begins the same safe way.

Core Lesson (15 min): Italian setup (c3+d4 plan), typical piece placements, what White wants.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): "Find the plan move" from Italian middlegames.

Free Play (20 min): All-White-plays-Italian games.

Homework: Worksheet: Italian plan questions; play it in two home games.

Coach Notes: Plans over memorization — ask "why" for every move.

Week 26 — Meeting 1.e4: A Solid Defense for Black

Objective: Students meet 1.e4 with a reliable e5 setup and know the early traps.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: the harbor's sturdy return route home.

Core Lesson (15 min): 1...e5 with Nc6/Nf6/Bc5 development; surviving the Fried Liver moment (safe move orders).

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Trap-defusing puzzles from the e4-e5 complex.

Free Play (20 min): Coach plays 1.e4 tries against the class defense.

Homework: Worksheet: defense move-order questions.

Coach Notes: Give one clear recommendation per branch; choices come at Advanced.

Week 27 — Meeting 1.d4: The Sensible Setup

Objective: Students meet 1.d4 with a solid d5/e6 or fianchetto setup and the same principles.

Warm-Up (5 min): Story: a second sea route, same compass.

Core Lesson (15 min): A simple, principle-based system vs. 1.d4; the same five golden rules apply.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): "Find the developing move" in d4 structures.

Free Play (20 min): Coach opens 1.d4 against the class setup.

Homework: Worksheet: complete-the-setup diagrams.

Coach Notes: Keep it one system; resist theory sprawl.

Week 28 — Boss Battle: The Harbormaster

Objective: Consolidate the three-part repertoire (White Italian, vs e4, vs d4).

Warm-Up (5 min): The Harbormaster inspects every ship before the Trials.

Core Lesson (15 min): Repertoire quiz circuit.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Harbormaster's trial: play each repertoire branch to move 8 against the coach.

Free Play (20 min): Repertoire games.

Homework: None — award the **Harbor Compass**.

Coach Notes: Score plans and safety, not memorized perfection.

The Trials (Weeks 29–32)

Week 29 — Full Games with the Detective's Checklist

Objective: Students integrate CCT, tactics, endgame technique, and repertoire in complete games.

Warm-Up (5 min): Mariposa opens the Trials grounds.

Core Lesson (15 min): The Intermediate thinking routine demonstrated on a live game.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Mixed review set across all realms.

Free Play (20 min): Serious full games with coach notes.

Homework: Two full home games with self-noted "best tactic I found."

Coach Notes: Note recurring blind spots for Week 30 targeting.

Week 30 — The Intermediate Trials

Objective: Formal assessment: tactics recognition, a mating-pattern demonstration, endgame verdicts, and one principled full game.

Warm-Up (5 min): The four trial chambers open.

Core Lesson (15 min): Trials 1–2: motif ladder; K+R mate against the coach.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): Trial 3: endgame verdict paper.

Free Play (20 min): Trial 4: complete game.

Homework: Rest before the Sapphire Cup.

Coach Notes: Bridge plans (4–8 weeks) for students needing time — never a repeat year.

Week 31 — The Sapphire Cup

Objective: Students compete in the celebratory five-round tournament with clocks and notation.

Warm-Up (5 min): Opening ceremony and sportsmanship oath.

Core Lesson (15 min): Notation refresher; tournament etiquette.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): (Folded into rounds.)

Free Play (20 min): Tournament rounds.

Homework: Replay and retell a favorite game at home.

Coach Notes: Collect scoresheets — they seed next year's game-analysis habit.

Week 32 — Awards Ceremony and the Road Ahead

Objective: Celebrate, deliver written progress reports, and preview the Advanced level.

Warm-Up (5 min): Shard display and detective roll-call.

Core Lesson (15 min): Awards and reports.

Puzzle Practice (15 min): One Advanced teaser puzzle (a queen-luring sacrifice!).

Free Play (20 min): Celebration games.

Homework: None — promotion to **Advanced**.

Coach Notes: One specific praise point per parent conversation.

— *The Torus Chess Coaching Team*