**1) Know the rules.**

It is important to know the special rules in chess as well as how the pieces move.

Don't believe your opponent (they may know less than you do!).

Get a rule book.

**2) What is under attack?**

Since the object of chess is to 'checkmate' the King, it would seem the player with the most pieces would have a better chance of winning. If you have nothing to attack with, you cannot win.

Don't give away pieces (material) for nothing. Ask yourself, "What is under attack?", or "What will be attacked very soon"?

**3) What can I attack** (or do)?

There may be times when your pieces are under attack but you have a move that makes a bigger threat against the other player.

A strong defense can be a good offense.

**4) Develop quickly**.

You cannot win if your pieces are still on the back row. Your pieces need to be moved into action. Avoid moving big pieces (like the Queen and Rooks) too early. In the beginning of the game they can be attacked by too many other pieces.

Usually develop Knights before Bishops.

**5) Look for moves that ‘open’ up squares**.

The player who can attack (cover) the most squares has a better chance. This is the ***'KING of the HILL***' principle.

Make moves that limit or force your opponent to respond.

**6) When you are ‘ahead’, trade pieces.**

If you are ahead (have more pieces), try to exchange pieces.

In the end you will have more men left to finish the attack and should be able to win.

Remember the objective is checkmate. You do not need to capture extra pieces if you have a move that will end the game.

Do not be tempted by ‘bait’ or poisoned pieces.

**7) Be a good sport.**

Chess is a game. It is competitive, but it is a game.

Winning and losing is not what is important. Being fair and doing your best is your goal.

No matter how good you are, there will always be someone somewhere who is just a little better.

There will be days when you will make mistakes. The only 'REAL' mistake is when you fail to learn something from a 'bad' situation, problem, or action.

**8) Don't be '*and if only I*....'**

After a game is over, don't boast of the victory or dwell on the defeat. Often times a player will go over the game and find many choices where *'A better move would have been...'*,

or *'If only I had played such-and-such move, then...'.*

It's nice to find new things, but the game is over and what

'*might have been if only I had...*' doesn't count or change the past

**9) Play the Board, not the Person!**

Do not look at the person you are playing; keep your focus on the board. It does not matter the age, race, sex or anything else about the person. Many 'older' players tend to get intimidated by 'younger' players and many 'younger' players often get intimidated by 'older' players. Sometimes boys get distracted by a girl player – It is not about the person.

**10) Seek out harder opponents!**

If you always play easier opponents, you will not grow in wisdom or maturity. Seek out players who will challenge you and cause you to think and work harder. Likewise, be willing to share what you know with less experienced players and realize that sometimes a student may become stronger than the teacher!