



Hi Chess Parents!

We know your child/children are excited to play in the first-ever US Chess/ChessKid K-12 Showdown. We are thrilled to be able to host a large, marquee event for children all over the country. More than 2000 kids are registered! Both the US Chess Federation and ChessKid have been working very hard to make this event as fun, smooth, and inclusive as possible.

This is going to be a long email, but every topic is vital for you to read, and for you to go over with your child/children.

Online chess tournaments require a little more explanation and diligence before the event begins.

We cannot stress this enough. Sit down, take it slow, read this over with your child. Make sure you understand everything involved in an online tournament.

Warm-Up Tournament!



Saturday, December 5th

8amPST/11amEST

Warm Up Event - Grades K through 5 on [ChessKid.com](https://www.chesskid.com)

Warm Up Event - Grades 6 through 12 on [Chess.com](https://www.chess.com)

Grades K through 5 on  ChessKid

If you are in K-5, you will play your warmup event on ChessKid, just like for the main event. You must join the [ChessKid Official Club](#) to join the warm-up tournament. You will use the account you registered on USChess.org with. This is your regularly used ChessKid account you play with normally.

Grades 6 through 12 on  Chess.com

If you are in 6-12, you will play your warmup event on Chess.com, just like for the main event. You must be in the [US Chess and ChessKid K12 Showdown Club](#) to join the warm-up tournament. You will use the account you registered on USChess.org with. This is your regularly used Chess.com account you play with normally.

For simplicity, there will be one large K-5 section (not split up by grade) and one large 6-12 section for the warmup. There are no prizes

-- this is just to test systems and have fun!

The time control for both warmups is 10+0 (10 minutes with no bonus time per move) --
note that the main event on December 12-13 has different time controls 25+5).

It is highly encouraged to participate so that kids and families can practice joining a
ChessKid or Chess.com tournament and test their internet and browser.

You can join the tournament 30 minutes prior to start time on ChessKid.com, and 1 hour
prior on Chess.com. Once you've joined, stay in the Tournament screen and wait for your
game to begin. Again, there are no prizes for the warm-up; the intention is to test your
computer, internet, and get used to registering and playing in an event.



ChessKid Players will need to be in the ChessKid Official Club and can join from the
main club page:

<https://www.chesskid.com/clubs/chesskid-official-club2/home>

JOIN CLUB

Once you've joined the Club, you will see the tournament in **Fast Chess**.

Here is a direct link to the tournament:

<https://www.chesskid.com/play/fastchess#t=149429>



Here is a detailed step by step, please read:

How To Join A Live Tournament on ChessKid

To be able to play in the tournament, you must join the tournament. Click the Join button, when it's active (it only activates 30 minutes before actual Tournament Start Time) to JOIN and enter the Tournament.



Once you've successfully joined, [STAY IN THE TOURNAMENT LOBBY](#) and your game will start when Round 1 begins. If you do not get a game, your system may have lost connection to the server.

Refresh your browser just in case! F5 button on Windows, and CMD+F5 on a Mac. Refreshing will ensure your browser screen stays active and any games that have started will display.

If your system has frozen, restart the browser, or you may even need to restart your computer. As long as you return to Fast Chess before the 10-minute game is over, you should be able to continue.



Join a Tournament on Chess.com

To be able to play in the tournament, you must join the tournament in the [K12 Showdown Club](#). Click the Join button, when it is active (it activates 60 minutes before actual Tournament Start Time) to enter the Tournament.

The screenshot shows the tournament interface on Chess.com. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Warm-Up - K12 Sh...', 'Play', and 'Tournaments'. The 'Warm-Up - K12 Sh...' tab is selected. Below the tabs, there is a tournament card for '10 min - Warm-Up - K12 Showdown'. The card includes a logo for the '2020 K12 Showdown' and the following details: 'Standard | 6 rounds | 0 players' and 'Scheduled - Starts in 59:14:40'. To the right of the card are three icons: a circle with a slash, a close icon (X), and a share icon. Below the card, there are two icons: a chessboard and a checkered flag. At the bottom of the card, there is a text message: 'Registrations begin 1 hour before the event starts.' and a 'Join' button.

Join



Once you've successfully joined, **STAY IN THE TOURNAMENT LOBBY** and your game will start when Round 1 begins. If you do not get a game, your system may have lost connection to the server.

Refresh your browser just in case! F5 button on Windows, and CMD+F5 on a Mac. Refreshing will ensure your browser screen stays active and any games that have started will display.

If your system has frozen, restart the browser, or you may even need to restart your computer. As long as you return to Fast Chess before the 10-minute game is over, you should be able to continue.

December 12th & 13th

K-12 Showdown Information

There will be fixed round times, with US Chess staff handling all of the pairings. The event will be **7 rounds** with a time control of 25+5 (25 minutes with a 5-second increment per move). All players will play seven rounds, with **four on Saturday**, December 12 and **three on Sunday**, December 13. There is no elimination -- children play all 7 rounds.

The event will be paired using a player's US Chess rating and standard Swiss pairing format (note that this could look like "strange" pairings if you focus on the rating that shows online, but it's actually the official US Chess "classical" rating being used "behind the scenes" for pairings, as would normally be used in an over-the-board event). After the event is over, the games will be rated for US Chess online regular rating (they will not affect US Chess "regular" rating as per the federation's rules).

Matches will start "automatically" at the posted round times (or within a few minutes). Players will need to be in the live server at the designated round time and wait for the game to start. This means Fast Chess for ChessKid, and Live Chess for Chess.com



Grades K-5 play on ChessKid.

ROUND TIMES

(all times Eastern).

Saturday 12/12

11am

1pm

3pm

5pm

Sunday 12/13

11am

1pm

3pm

Grades K-5 will need to be in ChessKid Fast Chess at the designated round times (it is NOT acceptable to be on other parts of the site).

<https://www.chesskid.com/play/fastchess>



Grades 6-12 play on Chess.com

ROUND TIMES

(all times Eastern).

Saturday 12/12

11:30am

1:30pm

3:30pm

5:30pm

Sunday 12/13

11:30am

1:30pm

3:30pm

Grades 6-12 will need to be in Chess.com Live Chess at the designated round times (it is NOT acceptable to be on other parts of the site).

<https://www.chess.com/live>

Reminder

Your child will log in using their "normal" (most widely used, longtime) ChessKid or Chess.com account for the event (i.e. the one you registered with!). If you use some other username, we won't know you are online and you'll essentially be "unknown" to us and likely forfeit your game.

Don't Be Late!

Please show up on time for each round! Unlike many kid activities like karate practice or a birthday party, showing up even 2 minutes late to a round may prevent your child from playing that round or will keep their opponent waiting. With set round times, players will know exactly when rounds begin. Please be in the live server at the designated round times and wait for your game to auto-start.

Note that your game may not start *exactly* on the hour. That's because it does take time for US Chess staff to manually start all games. It could also be because *you* are present but your opponent is not. If you are in the live server and your game does not start right on the hour, don't panic. Wait a few minutes. If you still don't have a game, you can have your parent contact the [live Slack help desk](#) and we will likely inform you that your opponent did not show up, so there was no way to start your game. Standby for the next Round. The TD will know if you were present, and your opponent was not.

There is a 10-minute default time for each round. Translation: If the round has begun on time as we expect, then if US Chess cannot start your game within 10 minutes because you are not in the live server, you will lose the game by forfeit. There is no "time deduction penalty" for showing up late. Have to use the restroom right at the start time? That's fine! Just show up, wait for the game to start, make your first move, then go!

When Your First Game is Over

If you finish your game early, you may leave your computer until the next round begins. With set round times, families will know exactly when rounds begin, allowing for more restful breaks between games. Please return to your computer and be in the live server at the designated round times and wait for your game to auto-start.

Fair Play

Fair play will be taken very seriously. All players and parents have agreed to fair play terms upon registration. Every single game of the event will be subject to review by Chess.com/ChessKid's industry-leading fair play measures. If a player has violated them, he/she will be removed from the tournament, all games may be declared lost, and possible further action can be taken by the US Chess Federation. Parents, your role as stewards of proper behavior is vital – we greatly encourage you to have a talk with your child about this before the event.

A reminder of things that are not allowed when playing online chess: No computer assistance, no human assistance, no watching the live stream, no tablebases, no databases, no books, no notes, no past games or scorebooks, no use of a physical chess set to analyze variations. In addition, no other programs of any kind are allowed to be open on your child's computer, and only one browser tab is allowed to be open. If other tabs or programs are found to be opened, this constitutes a "technical violation" and your child may be removed from the tournament and all games declared lost.

Keep in mind also that all "mouse-slips," accidental resignations or draw offers, internet stability issues, all "count" as they happen. Players are not allowed any recourse for these events. If you do disconnect because of an internet issue, you do have time to reconnect for as long as the game has time left on the clock (your game will not be automatically lost by the server).

By playing in this tournament, you are agreeing to all of these fair play rules. As per US Chess rule, you are allowed to appeal any ruling. However, once US Chess and ChessKid/Chess.com conduct an appeal and give an appellate ruling, you agree to accept that conclusion. There will not be any further appeal or discussion beyond that.

Here's a video from FunMasterMike and PoppaBear reminding kids that honesty and integrity are part of being a good chess player:

<https://www.chesskid.com/videos/fair-play>



Have Your ChessKid Equipment Ready

To help ensure the best experience, ChessKid recommends using a strong Wifi connection (or even better, a wired connection), a newer computer and the Chrome or Firefox browser. We don't recommend Chromebooks – past experience has shown that they are not reliable. We also recommend clearing your browser's cache before playing.

Here's how: <https://www.chesskid.com/article/view/how-to-clear-your-browsers-cache>

****Note that ChessKid STRONGLY prefers you play on a laptop/desktop computer and not on an iPad or iPhone. While we did recently add the ability to play in tournaments from iOS devices (but not Android), the feature is still in beta. In addition, iPads have notoriously weaker Wifi connections, which is very risky for a several hour event.**

You should also close down all other programs on your computer and only have the ChessKid board open on a single tab. It is also recommended to “refresh” your browser every few games to clear out the memory. Refreshing your browser in the middle of the game is fine and will not affect the game.

All “mouse-slips” stand as played, as well as loss because of disconnect and inability to reconnect in time.



Here's FunMasterMike's "pro tips" when playing a game on ChessKid:

- 1) Do not touch the board when it is not your turn to move. Very important! You may accidentally be locked in to making a move automatically after your opponent moves. There is "pre-move" on both Chess.com and ChessKid which very advanced players know about but if that is a term your child doesn't know, then it is not worth trying to use it for this event (with 5 seconds added per move, a child never needs to pre-move).

- 2) If you have a long move, like Ra1-a8, sometimes that is hard to execute for children and they can accidentally drop the piece before getting to a8 (all so-called "mouse-slips" stand as played in the tournament). Better is to use the "click, release, click" method rather than the "click, drag, and drop" method. A child can instead click on the rook, let go, then click on a8 (the destination square) and there is a much less chance of a mouse-slip.

- 3) All 3-fold repetitions, 50-move rule claims, etc. are auto-claimed by the server and your child need not "recognize" them as in an over-the-board tournament.

- 4) It is not polite to ask your opponent for a draw every turn by clicking the draw button.

- 5) There is no "auto-queen" on ChessKid (there is this option on Chess.com – check your settings!). When a pawn reaches the other side of the board for promotion, a child will always get to pick which piece he/she wants.

Live Tournament Help Desk

ChessKid staff will be available starting 30 minutes prior to the main tournament start time of 8am Eastern, which means the Help Desk will open at 7:30am Eastern on both December 12th and December 13th to assist you with any questions or issues.

You can find our help desk here:



[Slack Support Desk](#)

When you click the link, you'll be prompted to create an account for Slack.

Please change your Slack Display Name to your child's ChessKid/Chess.com username.

Be prepared to provide us your child's username so we can assist you!

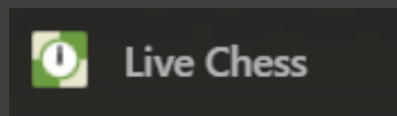
Troubleshooting

If you experience a frozen screen, open your applications task manager and “force quit” or “exit application” for your browser and then re-open it.

If you return to your game quickly, before the time runs out, you should be able to continue to play. If you are disconnected from the game and your time runs out, the game will unfortunately end as a loss.

If you do not get a game, you may have a Bye (if there are an odd number of players), or you may have lost connection. Refresh your browser just in case!

Just make sure you get back into Fast Chess or Live Chess so you can access the Tournament again.



If you do not get a game, you may have a Bye (if there are off number of players), or you may have lost connection and were not paired for this Round. Refresh your browser just in case!

To refresh: F5 button on Windows, and CMD+F5 on a Mac.



There will be a live broadcast of the championship event, hosted both days by FM Mike Klein (FunMasterMike) and IM Kostya Kavutskiy It will be on several channels including:

<https://www.twitch.tv/chesskid>

<https://www.youtube.com/chesskidofficial>

Parents and Teachers, please tune in! (But note that players are not allowed to watch any of the ongoing broadcast). The video will be available on YouTube afterward.

Good luck and thanks for being part of this historic and fun event!