



SOUTHEAST MASSACHUSETTS SCHOLASTIC CHESS LEAGUE RULES 2018

I. Order of rules to be followed

- A. Southeast Massachusetts Scholastic Chess League (SEMASCL) rules
- B. United States Chess Federation (USCF) rules
 - 1. USCF rules are to be followed in absence of an applicable SEMASCL rule.

II. Team eligibility and rules

- A. Fees
 - 1. Each team must pay an entry fee of \$150 to participate in the SEMASCL.
 - a. Any additional funds accumulated will be used to promote school clubs and tournaments in accordance with the SEMASCL's nonprofit standing.
- B. School attendance
 - 1. Each student must attend the specific school that he or she plays for. No teams may be composed of students from different schools.
 - a. Participants in the high school (HS) league must be in grades 9-12.
 - b. Participants in the middle school (MS) league must be in grades 6-8.
 - c. Participants in the elementary school (ES) league must be in grades K-5.
 - 2. Elementary and middle school students are not allowed to play up in a higher league.
 - 3. Students who are homeschooled can play for their local district public school chess team, or they may submit an application to form their own team to the SEMASCL Director and Assistant Director. These applications are considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - 4. All teams seeking admission to the league are subject to the discretion and final approval of the Southeast New England Chess Association board of directors. All applications—for both homeschool and non-homeschool teams—are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- C. Multiple teams
 - 1. Any school may enter more than one team in its respective league, but the school must pay another entry fee for each additional team.
 - 2. Multiple teams from the same school may have different schedules.
 - a. Schools or districts with multiple teams can have “double matches” and try to play the same schedule, but an effort should be made to accommodate the other schools they must play.
- D. Home team locations
 - 1. Any location can be chosen by the home team to host its matches, provided that the location is quiet and has tournament-like conditions.
 - 2. It is encouraged that schools be used as the location for home matches, though this is not obligatory.
- E. Coaches
 - 1. The coach for a team need not be a teacher, but he or she must be a responsible adult who is eighteen (18) years of age or older.



2. A student from the school cannot be the official team coach.

III. Scheduling matches

A. Confirmation and cancellation of matches

1. It is the responsibility of both teams' coaches to arrange a date and time for their match.
2. It is the responsibility of the visiting coach to call the home team coach to confirm the time of arrival and the location of the match.
3. Any team that does not show up to a match without notifying the other coach will forfeit the match.
4. A coach wishing to cancel a match must call the other coach no later than 12:00 PM the day of the match. It is strongly recommended that coaches cancel matches at least 24 hours in advance, however.
 - a. Any team who does not comply with these rules will forfeit the match.
5. If it is necessary to reschedule a match, it must be moved to a day that is convenient for both teams.
6. If a team cancels the same match twice, it will forfeit that match.
7. If a coach does not respond to three (3) emails and two (2) phone calls concerning match scheduling over the course of fourteen (14) days, his or her team will forfeit that match.
 - a. In order for this to occur, the coach who is trying to communicate with the other coach must document all communication attempts and present them to the Director and Assistant Director of the SEMASCL. These individuals will then make a judgment as to whether or not a forfeit should occur.
 - b. Note well that no forfeits will be given in this manner without sufficient documentation.

B. Makeup games

1. Unless otherwise stated on the schedule issued each year, all matches are to be completed during the season.
2. Any matches not completed by the deadline stated on the schedule will be recorded as a forfeit for both teams.

IV. Chess sets

A. Type of sets

1. USCF regulation boards and sets must be used for matches.
2. Boards with faded squares or sets with multicolored pieces cannot be used.
3. The best sets available should be used for matches.

B. Provision of sets

1. It is the obligation of the home team to provide four (4) boards and sets for the varsity games.
2. The coaches of the two teams can decide on who will provide boards and sets for the junior varsity games, as applicable.

C. Setup of sets



1. Boards and sets must be set up with pieces on the correct squares and with algebraic notation on the correct side of the board.

V. Quiet area

- A. The playing area must remain quiet while games are in progress.
- B. Any commentary or analysis must be carried out away from nearby games.
- C. Players are strongly encouraged to relocate to a nearby area away from other games once their own games are finished. This will keep distractions to a minimum and will prevent any problems.

VI. Notation

- A. Notation (recording the moves of games) is not required but is strongly encouraged.
- B. If a dispute arises between two players, notation sheets are given priority in resolving the dispute.

VII. Clocks

- A. It is the responsibility of the home team to provide four (4) clocks for the varsity games.
- B. The coaches of the two teams can decide on who will provide clocks for the junior varsity games.
- C. Digital clocks must be used if they are available.
- D. If no clocks are present, they need not be used, but if players have clocks and want to use them, they must do so.

VIII. Time control

- A. The time control for all matches is G/60 (60 minutes for each player to complete all of his or her moves).
- B. If both players agree, a game may be reduced to G/45 (45 minutes for each player to complete all of his or her moves).
 1. If both players do not agree, the game must be played with a time control of G/60.
- C. A five-second delay must be used when using digital clocks. In this case, the time control will be G/60 d5 or G/45 d5 if both players agree.
- D. Running out of time
 1. Only players in a game can call attention to their opponent running out of time.
 2. Coaches and spectators watching the game cannot say anything, as it is the responsibility of each player to pay attention to the clock.
 3. If a spectator calls attention to one player running out of time, the game will be ruled a forfeit for the team to which the disruptive spectator belongs.
- E. Coaches should consult the USCF rules for other clock-related issues.

IX. Board order

- A. Determining players for each board



1. Players should play in order of estimated strength, with the strongest player on board 1, the next strongest player on board 2, and suchlike.
 2. If a player is missing on a given day, all players move up a board to fill the empty board.
- B. USCF ratings
1. When they exist, USCF ratings are to be used in determining board order if the difference between two players is greater than 75 points.
- C. Shuffling players
1. Teams cannot rotate players on boards 1, 2, and 3.
 2. Teams can rotate players on board 4 only.
- D. Color determination
1. Board 1 for the home team plays white.
 2. Board 2 for the home team plays black.
 3. Board 3 for the home team plays white.
 4. Board 4 for the home team plays black.
 5. For junior varsity games, board 5 for the home team plays white, and colors alternate thereafter.

X. Draws

- A. When a player offers a draw, he or she should do so after his or her move has been made.

XI. Other important rules

- A. Touch-move rule
1. If a player touches a piece, he or she is required to move it, provided that it is legal to do so.
- B. Illegal moves
1. If a player makes an illegal move, the player's opponent may request that two (2) minutes be added to his or her clock.
- C. Other rules
1. For all other rules or situations, consult the *U.S. Chess Federation's Official Rules of Chess*, sixth ed. (2014). This book can be purchased from the USCF at www.uscfsales.com.

XII. Varsity and junior varsity games

- A. Varsity games
1. The top four boards are referred to as the varsity boards.
 2. The games played on these boards are used to determine which team wins a match (see § XIV.A).
- B. Junior varsity games
1. Any boards lower than the top four boards are referred to as the junior varsity boards.
 2. The games played on these boards have no bearing upon which team wins a match.



3. Junior varsity games only occur when both teams have more than four players.

XIII. Disputes during matches

A. Involving coaches

1. If a dispute arises during a match, players should stop the clock and call over the coaches from both teams to resolve the issue.
2. Coaches should try to resolve the dispute during the match.
3. Coaches may consult the SEMASCL rules and the USCF rules to answer questions and resolve disputes.

B. Contacting SEMASCL officials

1. Coaches may elect to contact a SEMASCL official during the match.
2. Contact information for SEMASCL officials is listed on the bottom of the Coaches Directory provided by the SEMASCL Director.

C. When to resolve disputes

1. Disputes should always be resolved during the match if possible.
2. If a problem arises after a match has been completed, coaches must take the following steps:
 - a. Coaches first must contact each other to try to resolve the dispute.
 - b. If a solution cannot be reached, either coach may elect to submit a protest to the SEMASCL Director and Assistant Director, and both coaches must be notified that a protest has been made.
 - c. Upon submission of a protest, both coaches will have two weeks to submit their arguments.
 - d. A final, binding decision will be made by the SEMASCL Director and Assistant Director after they consider the circumstances.

XIV. Match results

A. Determining match results

1. The match winner is determined by the results of the four varsity games. Points are awarded for each game as follows:
 - a. Win = 1 point
 - b. Draw = ½ point
 - c. Loss = 0 points
2. The team with the greatest number of points wins the match, so a team wins the match if it has 2.5 or more points. The match is drawn if both teams have 2 points.

B. Reporting responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of both coaches to report match results to the SEMASCL scorekeeper. Coaches can decide among themselves who will report the match results, but if a coach is unsure as to who will report the results, he or she should send the results. It is better to have both coaches send the results than to have no coaches send the results.
2. Match results should be reported as soon as possible upon conclusion of the match.



3. If the results of a match are not sent to the SEMASCL scorekeeper by the deadline on the schedule sent out each year, both teams will receive a forfeit for the match.
- C. How to report results
1. All results are to be reported to the SEMASCL scorekeeper via email.
 2. Coaches should send an email to richessscores@yahoo.com with the results of each individual game and the result of the overall match.

XV. Determination of SEMASCL place awards

A. Order of factors in provision of awards

1. Match points
 - a. For each match a team wins (see § XIV.A), it receives one (1) match point.
 - b. For each match a team draws, it receives one half (1/2) of a match point.
 - c. For each match a team loses, it receives zero (0) match points.
 - d. The team with the most match points will be SEMASCL champion.
2. Head-to-head results
 - a. If two teams are tied with the same number of match points, head-to-head results will be used to determine the winner.
 - b. Of the teams in contention, whichever team won the match between them during the season will be declared the winner.
 - c. Head-to-head is only used if there are two teams tied with the same number of match points.
 - d. Head-to-head is not used if there are three or more teams tied with the same number of match points (game points are used in such a case).
3. Game points
 - a. If two teams are tied with the same number of match points and drew each other during the regular season, game points are used as a third tiebreaker.
 - b. Of the teams in contention, whichever team had the greatest number of game points during the regular season will be declared the winner.
4. Discretion of SEMASCL officials
 - a. If two teams are still tied after considering match points, head-to-head results, and game points, the SEMASCL officials will determine a method to select a winner.
5. The case of three or more teams
 - a. If three or more teams are tied with the same number of match points, then game points will be used to determine correct finishing places for each team in contention.
 - b. If teams have the same number of game points, the SEMASCL officials will determine a method to select a winner.

XVI. Trophies

A. Awarding trophies

1. Trophies are awarded as follows:



- a. The first through fourth place teams in each league will receive a regular team trophy and individual trophies for their four varsity students which they can keep.