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C O L U M N I S T S

Chess Mazes

Bruce Alberston



Chess Mazes

In the fall of 2004, popular chess author Bruce Alberston released a book called *Chess Mazes*, designed to help students to develop their visualization and planning skills. *Chess Mazes* was an instant success and **ChessCafe** was delighted when Bruce agreed to offer a new *Chess Maze* puzzle each week.

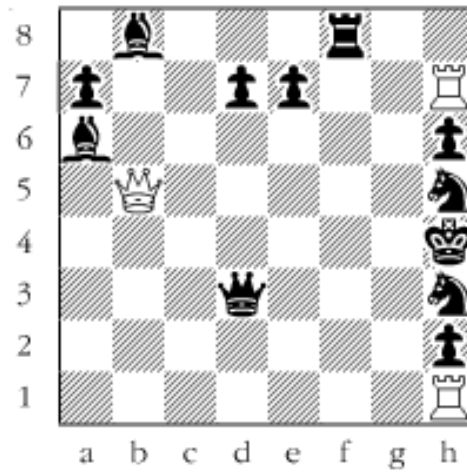
The concept is simple enough: The object is to place the black King in check in the shortest number of moves. The one restriction is that the white piece may not put itself *en prise*, i.e., on a square where it can be captured.

For those who may be interested in a more detailed introduction and overview to these puzzles, we invite you to take a look at the introduction from Bruce's book. Click [here](#) to read more, otherwise, we hope you enjoy this week's *Chess Maze* puzzle...

A Queen Maze

No checks in a queen maze, only checkmate, and that better be the final move. If it comes before the final move it's probably a check. Your heping rooks cannot move, nor can any of the black forces. So the only moving piece is the white queen and she's not permitted to place herself on a square subject to capture. Find the shortest route to checkmate.

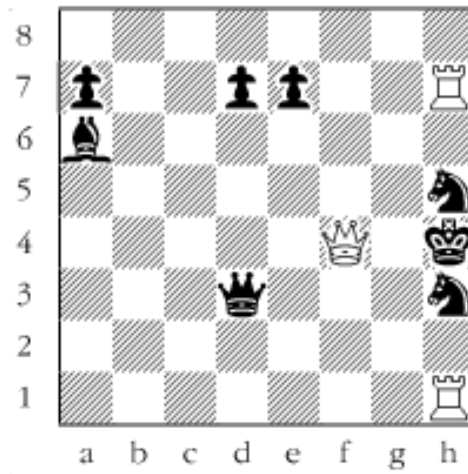
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Scroll down for the solution

Someone tried 1. Qb4 and 2. Qxe7, overlooking that both moves were checks—not permissible in a queen maze. But even if it wasn't check it's still not the shortest. 1. Qb2 2. Qc1 3. Qxh6 4. Qxf8 5. Qxb8 6. Qxh2 7. Qf4# The old epaulet mate.

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