

Exeter Chess Club: General advice on the endgame:  
1 key idea, 3 principles, 15 general laws, 12 practical guides and 6  
tips for the ending

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## Contents

<b>1 One key idea: the passed pawn.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3 15 general laws (Fine again)</b>
<b>2 3 principles (Fine)</b>	<b>1</b>	1. Doubled, isolated and blockaded pawns are weak: avoid them!
<b>3 15 general laws (Fine again)</b>	<b>1</b>	2. Passed pawns should be advanced as rapidly as possible.
<b>4 12 practical tips (Mednis)</b>	<b>2</b>	3. If you are one or two pawns ahead, exchange pieces but not pawns.
<b>1 One key idea: the passed pawn.</b>		4. If you are one or two pawns behind, exchange pawns but not pieces.
1. Endgames, and some middlegames, are all about creating and advancing a passed pawn. Either the pawn queens, or your opponent gets so tied up in knots trying to stop it that they lose something else.		5. If you have an advantage, leave pawns on both sides of the board.
<b>2 3 principles (Fine)</b>		6. If you are just one pawn ahead, in 99 cases out of 100 the game is drawn if there are pawns on only one side of the board.
1. Without pawns, you must be at least a Rook ahead in order to force mate (exceptions: R+R wins against two minor pieces; four minor pieces win against a Queen)		7. The easiest endings to win are pure King+Pawn endings.
2. If you are two or more Pawns ahead the win should be routine by advancing the Pawns		8. The easiest endings to draw are those with opposite coloured bishops.
3. With only one Pawn advantage, you will win if you can use it to gain more material - it is not usually enough just to advance the Pawn. Often one Pawn advantage is thought to be a theoretical draw, although the practical difficulties may be very great. Winning by the advance of the Pawn may be won because it allows entry with the King, or causes distraction from one vulnerable side, or allows simplification into a known won ending.		9. The King is a strong piece: use it!
		10. Do not place pawns on the colour of your bishop.
		11. Bishops are better than knights in all except blocked pawn positions
		12. Two bishops vs. B&N or N&N are usually a real advantage.
		13. Passed pawns should not be blockaded by the king: the only piece which is not much harmed by watching over an opponent's pawn is the knight.
		14. A rook on the seventh rank is worth a pawn.
		15. Rooks belong behind passed pawns, of your own or the opponent.

## 4 12 practical tips (Mednis)

1. The king is a fighting piece and should be centralised and used actively.
2. Material advantage wins endgames: hold on to your material.
3. Be wary of sacrificing pawns for development: only in Rook+Pawn endings is an active piece worth material.
4. Try and gain tempi whenever possible, but without giving up material.
5. The fewer the pieces, the more important the pawns
6. Keep a flexible, sound pawn formation: avoid doubled, isolated and blockaded pawns.
7. Passed pawns must be pushed.
8. The outside passed pawn is an advantage: in King&Pawns endings it is decisive.
9. Rooks belong behind passed pawns.
10. In open positions the two bishops are murder: in most other positions they are a real advantage.
11. In open or semi-open positions a bishop is usually superior to a knight.
12. The knight is superior to the bishop in blocked positions or when the bishop is hemmed in by pawns on the same colour squares as the bishop.

**COOL TIP: MEDNIS says ‘good technique’ means:**

1. not allowing counterplay
2. holding on to material advantage
3. establishing a clear plan and following it
4. being careful
5. never being in a hurry
6. avoiding complications (and ... winning the game!)