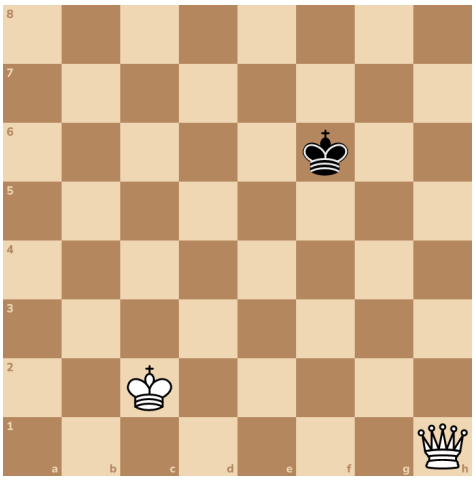
My Chess Family

How to checkmate with a king and queen

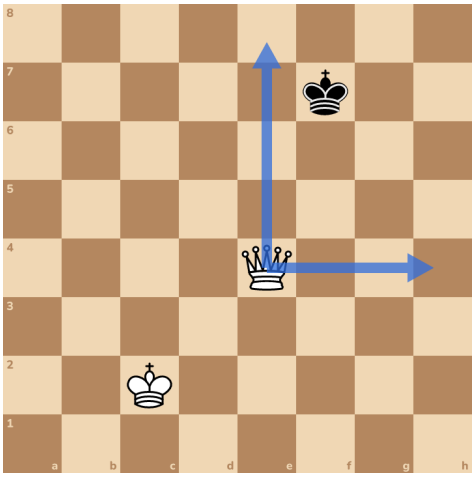
Try each question on a real board, then check the answers at the end of the sheet.

The queen's box

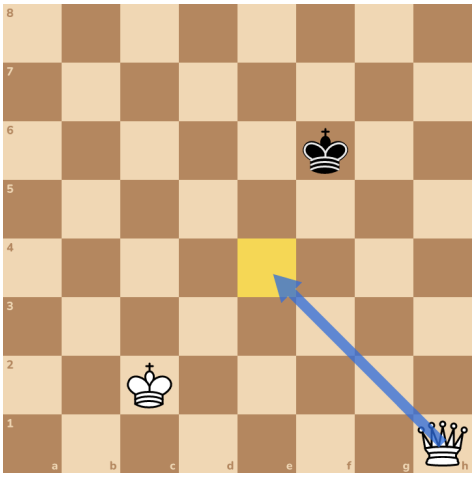
A king and queen can always checkmate a lone king. There are two jobs. First, the queen traps him in a box.



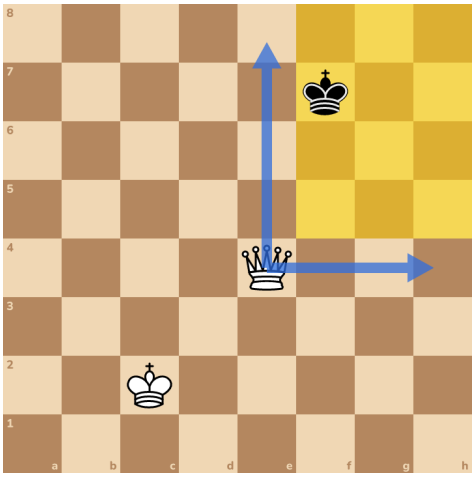
Your queen guards the whole e column and the whole fourth row. They're like two walls.



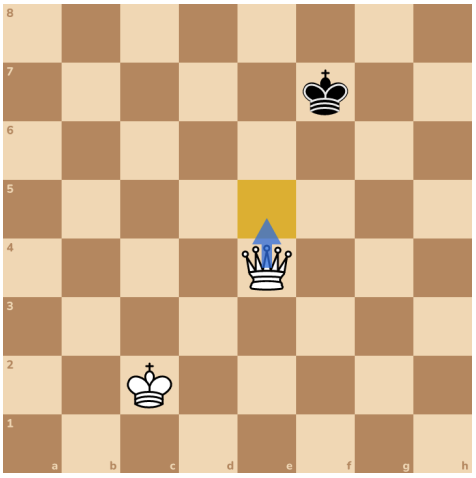
Try it 1. Move your queen to e4, the shining square.



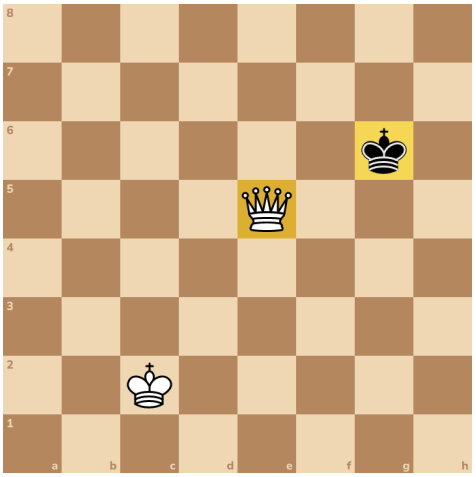
The black king can't cross the walls. He's shut in this box.



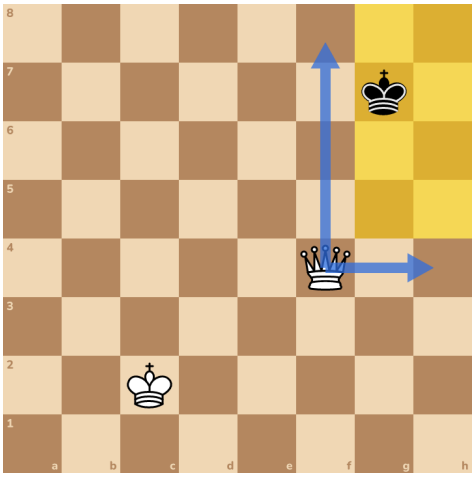
Try it 2. Now make the box smaller. Move your queen up one square, to e5.



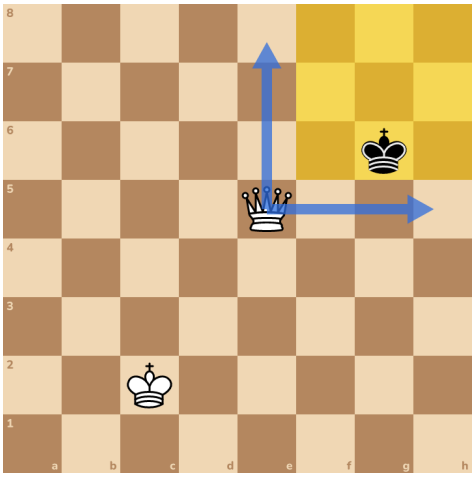
Here's a trick. Your queen is a knight's jump from the king. That keeps the box small, and he can't get next to her.



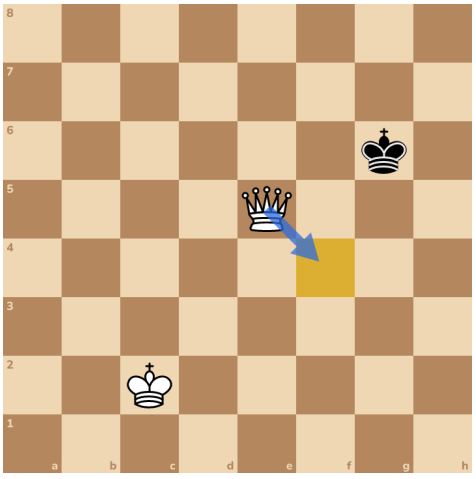
Now the walls are the f column and the fourth row. The box keeps shrinking.



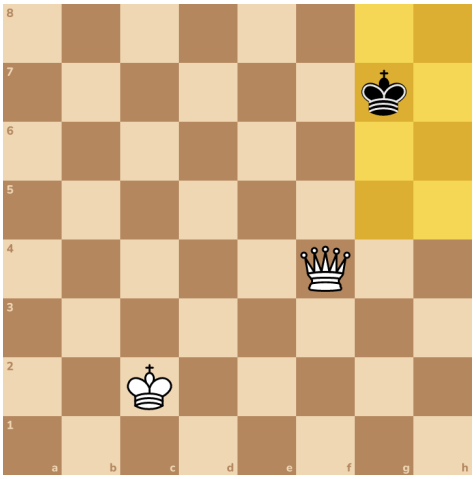
The walls moved closer. Now the box has only nine squares.



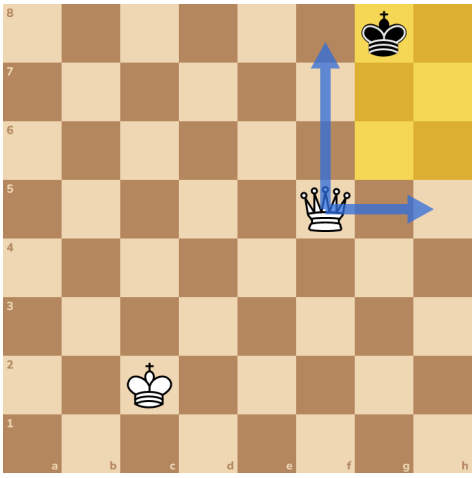
Try it 3. Make it smaller again. Move your queen to f4.



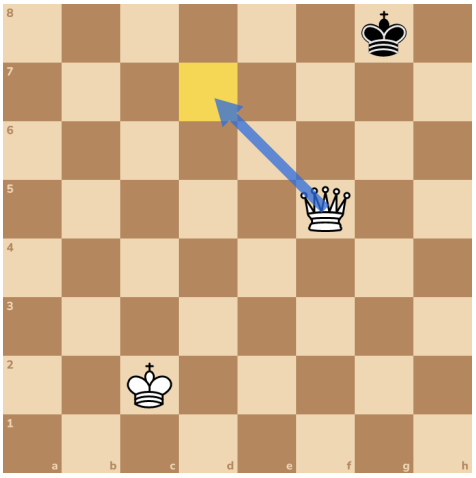
Try it 4. Your turn to choose. Make the box smaller. Put your queen a knight's jump from the king, on the f column.



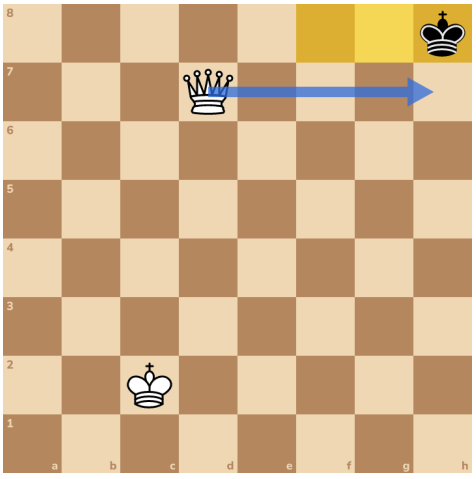
The king is on the edge of the board now. Only six squares left in his box.



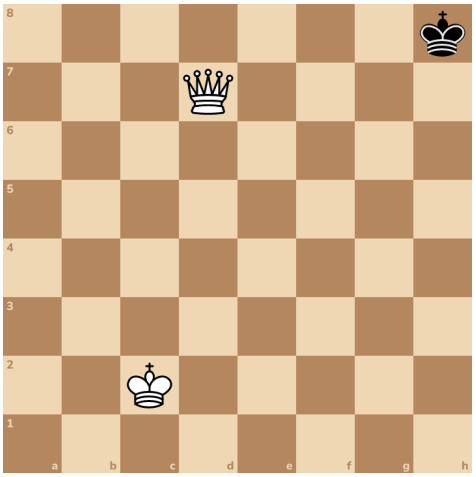
Try it 5. Move your queen to d7. That makes a wall along the seventh row.



Now he can only walk along the back row. Job one done! He's trapped on the edge.

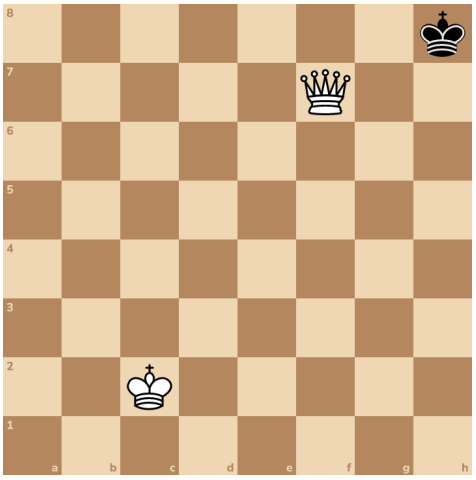


Careful! Don't squash the box any smaller. If the king can't move and isn't in check, it's stalemate, a draw.



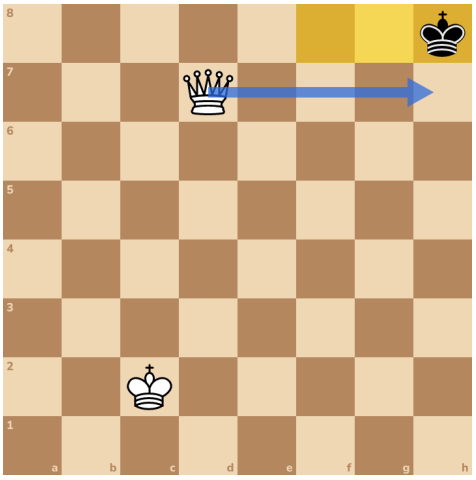
Try it 6. Here's a new position, with the queen on f7. Black to move. Is this stalemate?

A: Yes **B: No**

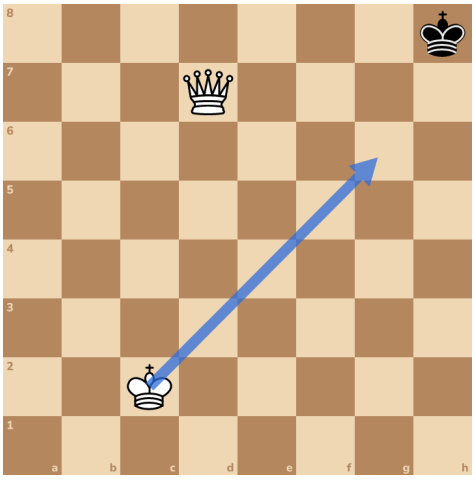


King and queen

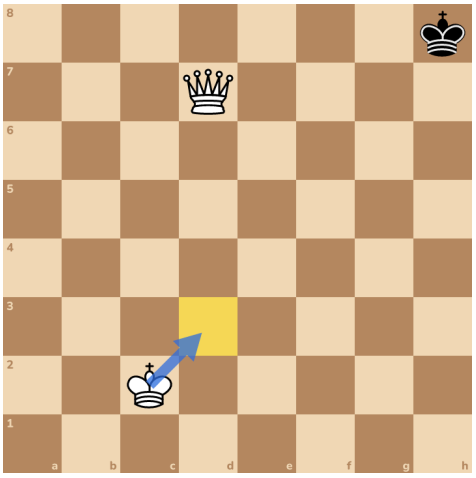
Here's where the box ended. The queen keeps the king on the back row. Job two is to checkmate him.



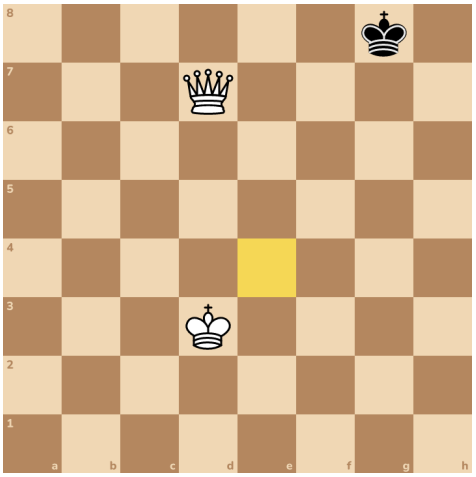
The queen can't do it alone. If she checks him, he just steps away. Your own king has to walk up and help.



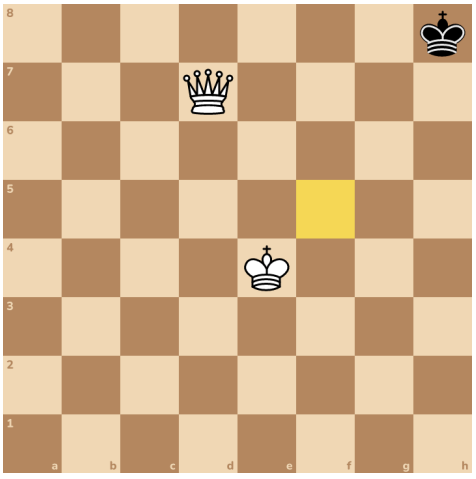
Try it 7. Walk your king towards him. Step to d3.



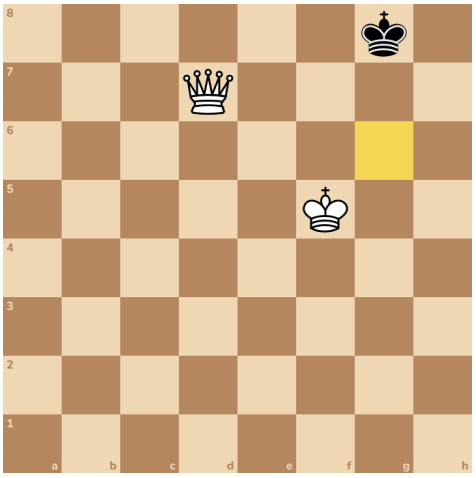
Try it 8. Keep walking. Step to e4.



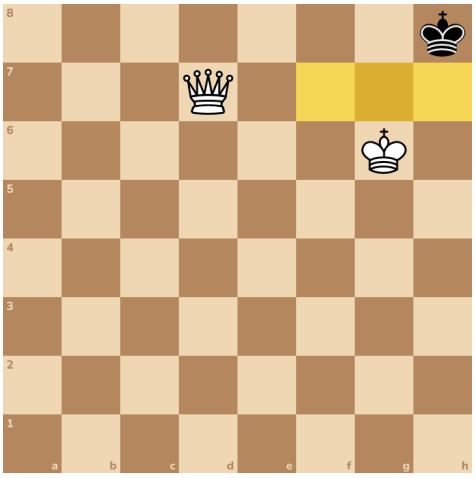
Try it 9. And again, to f5. The queen keeps him stuck while your king walks.



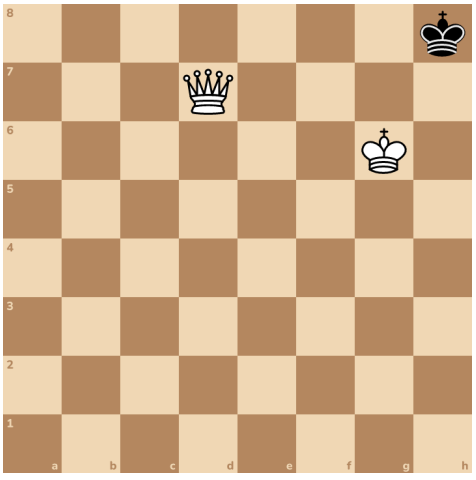
Try it 10. Now step right up close, to g6.



Your king guards f7, g7 and h7. The black king can't step off the back row, even if the queen moves.

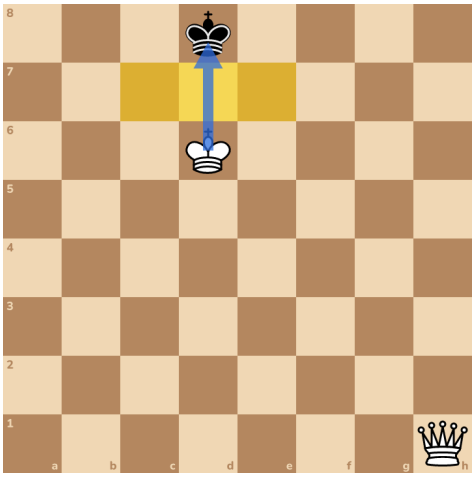


Try it 11. Give checkmate! Check him where he can't escape.

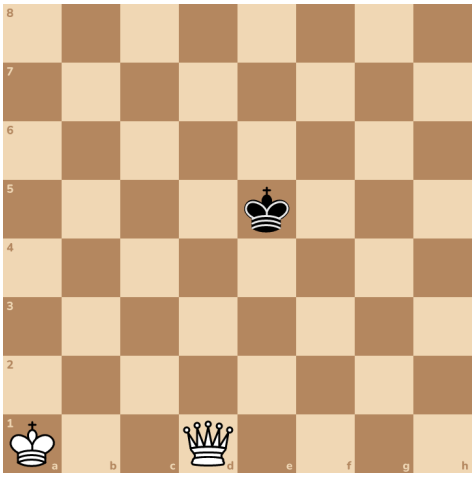


Checkmate! The queen gives check, and your king guards the squares he could escape to.

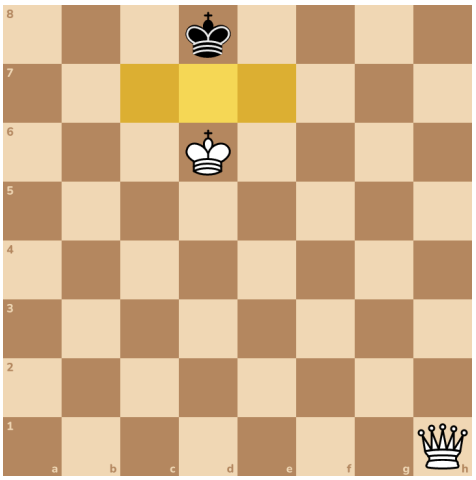
Here's another checkmate to know. The kings face each other, with one square between.



Play it out: Your turn. Make the box smaller until he's on the edge. Then bring your king and checkmate! Try it on a board, or in the app.

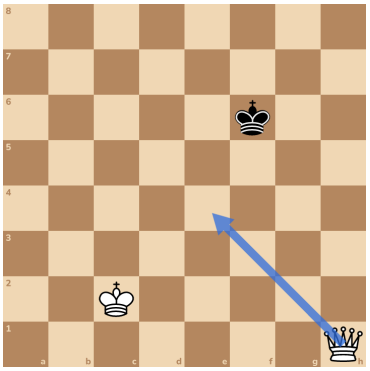


Try it 12. Your king guards the three shining squares. Check along the back row. Checkmate!

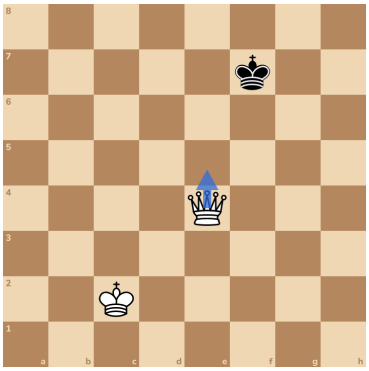


Answers

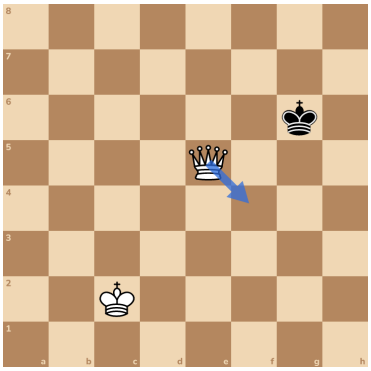
1. Qe4



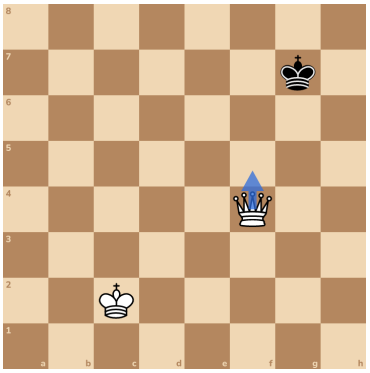
2. Qe5



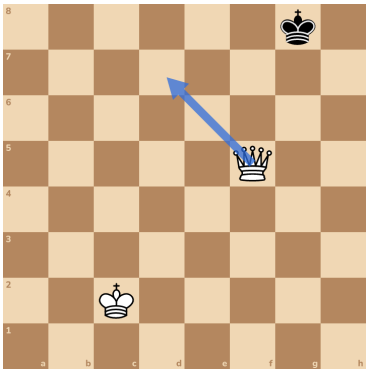
3. Qf4



4. Qf5

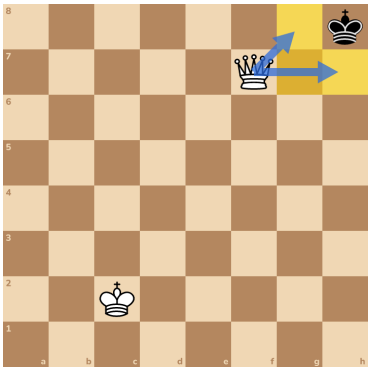


5. Qd7

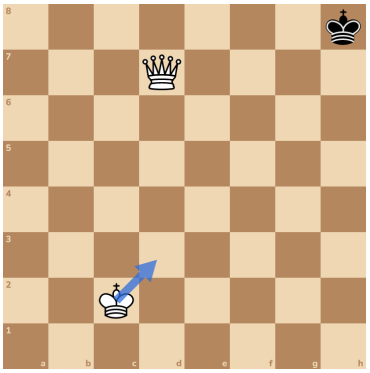


6. A: Yes

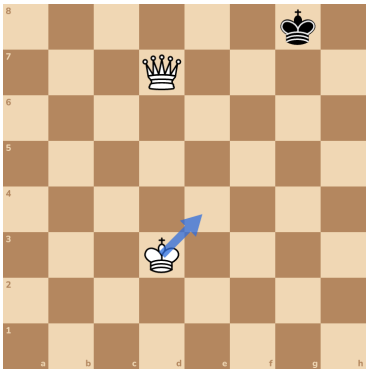
Yes, stalemate! The queen guards every square around him. Always leave the king room, until it's checkmate.



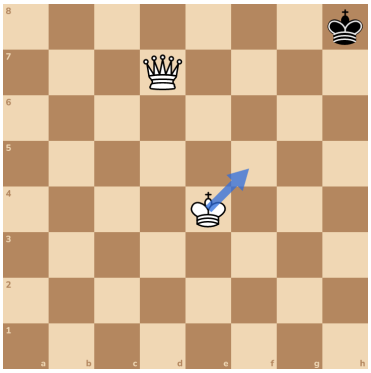
7. Kd3



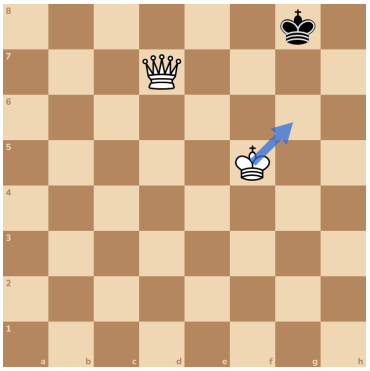
8. Ke4



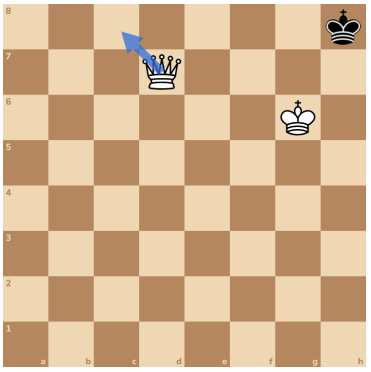
9. Kf5



10. Kg6



11. Qc8# or Qd8# or Qe8# or Qg7# or Qh7#



12. Qa8# or Qh8#

