

DBS Chess

This program is intended to be an ethical assistant in recording your moves and analysis of chess games. Ethical in the sense that it does not help or advise you as to which is the "best" move. The idea is to let you remember your analysis as well as the actual game moves.
(deutsche Version der Hilfe Datei)

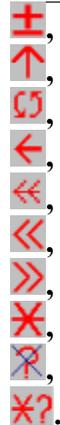
I wrote this program with the principal aim of its being applicable to correspondence chess. No doubt it will also be useful for post-mortems of OTB games and beginners tuition.

What it will do is to list the available legal moves in any position, allow you to explore (and record) variations other than the "game" line and add comments.

Note that the disclaimer includes no liability on my part if your analysis is insufficient to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat (or vice-versa).

Use the Search facilities of help to get help of specific topics OR press the F1 key during the run of the program (when some areas may get you directly to the relevant topic). Some of the more important topics are (just click on the coloured items) :-

Game Moves, Variations, Moving, Printing, Saving, **A**,



The initial notation is Short Algebraic. The menu item *View | Short Algebraic* changes this for all subsequent games (unlike View | Language which affects the notation for only the current game).

Help also appears as a "hint" when you leave the mouse stationary on certain areas - see F9.

Game Moves.

By default the first move made from a given position is classified as the "Game" move. At any time you can mark the moves that got you to the current position as having that status (demoting the previous Game moves to Variation status). To do this either

- a) Use the option in the *Edit | Mark as Game to here* menu.
- or b) Press the  symbol on the "toolbar" line.
- or c) Press the F10 key.
- or d) As a possible side effect of using the F12 key

Thereafter you will find that if you backtrack to an earlier position, the game move is shown at the top of the list of available moves, and preceded by an asterisk (*) symbol.

The process can be reversed, i.e. the move sequence converted to merely Variation status by either

- a) Use the *Edit | Game to Variation* menu.
- or b) Press the  button.

Note that the move that resulted in the current position and all subsequent variations thereof are now of Variation status.

Only one line can be marked as the Game, but "Game to Variation" can result in only variations existing beyond a certain point.

You can use the Page Down to move through each Game move in turn. This can be more reliable than the Return key which simply makes the move at the top of the list.

Variations.

If you analyse a sequence of moves, they are automatically marked as a known variation. When you backtrack to an older position, you will find that a variation move is preceded by a ? in the list of valid moves. The exception to this rule is that the first sequence of moves is assumed to be the game variation by default - you can correct this at the time with the CTRL key or later using  if this is not what you intended.

 Allows you convert a variation to game status. The alternative is to use the ***Edit | Mark as Game to here*** menu.

 Allows you to remove a variation; you position yourself at the point in the game which is the start of the unwanted one (which may diverge later into subvariations, all of which will also be removed). The alternative is to use the ***Edit | Kill variation*** menu. You must choose the required variation as there may be more than one from the current position.

 Takes you to the Alternative display (Alphabetic / Analysis) in which the variations are listed

Legal Moves

Alongside each current position is a list of all the legal moves that can be made. However, if **View | * & ? Moves Only** is checked, the list of all valid moves is truncated to show only any game and variation moves that have been already examined. The setting is preserved for the next run of the program.

If a sequence of moves has already been marked as the Game, the current game move is at the top of the list, marked with an asterisk. Next come any variations previously noted - these are marked with a question mark. Thereafter, the other moves are listed in alphabetical order.

In some configurations of Windows 95 there is a problem with the sorting of the moves in the legal moves list (the leading "space" isn't the true space character). If you check the **View | Win 95 ordering** option, you get an underline character for the unexamined moves - it doesn't look as nice, but at least the order is what I intended. Your preference is recorded in the INI file.

If there are a lot of moves, it is necessary to scroll down the list by clicking in the right-hand margin of the field to see the later ones.

An alternative method if you wish to see only the moves available to a given object is to click that object on the board display.

If you click on one of the moves in the move list, that move is made.

A move which causes check is marked with a plus sign in the normal way. Note that no special attention is drawn to a move that causes checkmate or stalemate - it is only when the move is played that you are informed.

If you cannot make the move you intended, please think about whether it really is a possibility. NB the rules for castling, en passant and not moving into check!

What the program does not implement is a draw by repetition of the position 3 times over.

Castling

King side castling is referred to as O-O, Queen side by O-O-O.

You can make the move either by clicking from the move list, or by dragging the King from the **e** column to either **g** or **c** as appropriate.

Note that you cannot castle if any of the following apply :-

- a) The King or the Rook concerned have already moved.
- b) The King is in check, would end up in check, or moves over a square (**f** or **d** column) that is attacked by the enemy.

En Passant

Many years ago, when the world was still young, it was decided to speed up the game by allowing a pawn to move forward 2 ranks on its first move.

However, it was pointed out that this denied the opposition the chance to exchange pawns as it passed the intermediate rank. E.g. if White has a pawn on d5, then Black can play c7-c5 without allowing the d pawn the chance to capture on c6. The En Passant rule says that in this situation White can play dc (with his pawn ending up on c6) just as if the Black pawn had only made a single rank advance.

However, it was then pointed out that if White does not avail himself of the opportunity, Black would be able to get his pawn to c5 and leave it there no longer under threat, as if it had travelled there under the old regime of c6 and then c5 next move.

Therefore, to keep everyone happy, the rule is that you get the chance of e.p. only if you opt for it **immediately** after the special double advance was played.

Dates

In correspondence chess you record the dates when a move was received and when you get it back into the post.

Originally I had intended to calculate the total time elapsed for the Game moves. However, the rules as to whether Sundays, Holidays and agreed Cessations make this far too complicated and variable.

I've just left the Received and Sent fields as simple text areas for your convenience to fill in in the notation of your choice. Buttons are there to insert today's date in either PGN or "dd mmm" format.

If you click on "Today" it becomes "Yesterday" instead and this date would then be added by the above mentioned buttons.

The F10 or F12 keys are the easy way to get to the display to set dates.

The F12 display will give you the previous values for the player if you are at a game move - this is useful if you include the time elapsed, e.g. by a format such as "dd mmm : total", to calculate the new value.

Bitmaps

The Board probably isn't to your taste as regards the choice of colours, shape of the horses, etc.! (I thought not).

There are some alternatives given in the subdirectories each having a name of the form **xxxx.BMP**, where **xxxx** is a colour. If you examine these you will find that they each contain 26 BMP bitmap files - you can use the *Edit | Load Bitmaps* menu entry to load one of these sets instead of the default set.

The issued choices have been chosen to be compatible with 16 colour displays, with the exception of BRWN.BMP. I am using BRWN as the default and sometimes find that it only works properly after reloading it using the bitmaps - comments appreciated if you find this problem. The black & white version (BW.BMP) is probably most suitable for printouts using the clipboard, the board will be improved by the addition of a border from your word processor.

If you wish to make your preferred choice the one it starts up with, answer "Yes" when you load a bitmap set in response to the query as to whether it should be made permanent. This simply copies the 26 .BMP files from a subdirectory onto the files in the working directory (e.g. \DBSCHESS).

If you are very brave, then there is nothing to stop you designing your own set as long as you stick to the following rules :-

- a) All the files are 48 * 48 pixels BMP files.
- b) The blank square representations are **Light.bmp** and **Dark.bmp**.
- c) Other files are of the form **XYZ.bmp** where :-
 - i) **X** is colour of the piece (W=White, B=Black)
 - ii) **Y** is the piece name (K, Q, B, N, R & P).
 - iii) **Z** is the background colour (L=Light, D=Dark).
- d) Set up the 26 files in a directory having a name of the type **xxxx.BMP** so that they can be found by the *Edit | Load Bitmaps* files menu command. Yes I do mean in a directory whose name has its last 4 characters as **".BMP"**.

I suggest that you use your favourite painting package (or Paintbrush in a real emergency) starting from one of the supplied examples. I can't be responsible if you do anything that doesn't fit in with the above rules - in particular if it causes an error.

Note that you can reverse the way that the knights appear (on the left-hand side of the board) with the *Edit | Reverse Knights* option.

Making a move

There are several ways of moving :-

- a) Click on one of the moves displayed in the list of valid moves. Algebraic notation (long variety) is used. You may first have to cancel the box showing the most recent moves if you have used the  button.
- b) Click on the piece you intend to move. The list of valid moves then changes to the subset of moves that apply to the chosen piece.
- c) Click and hold down the mouse so that you drag it from the original square of your chosen piece to the destination you intend. Note that to castle drag the King only, to make an En Passant move drag from the present square to the one on which the pawn ends up.

There is one situation in which method (c) does not work - pawn promotions. As I have to find out which piece you wish to promote to, please select from the list of valid moves.

- d) The following keys alter the current position displayed :-

Home : repositions to the start of the game.
End : moves to the position after the last game move.
Page Up : backs up one move.
Page Down : makes the next recorded game move.
Return : makes the Game or Variation move currently selected from the list (the first one unless you have used the Up / Down arrow keys to reposition first).

However, the **Home** and **End** keys work as editing keys if you have clicked into the Move Comment area. To escape from the Move Comment area, use the **Esc** key.

You may wish to add some comments to the move.

A translation of the move to reach the current position is also given in the International notation if the item **View | International (as well)** is checked. To change its status click on that menu entry.

The **View** menu controls which side you view the board from and whether this changes between moves. Button  exchanges the view, white « = » black or Side to Move « = » Side Not to Move.

The View settings are saved together with the game on **File | Save** and **File | Save As**.

If you have loaded a library, a search is made for identical positions in other games.

End of Game

You can jump to the final position, i.e. the one at the end of the sequence of moves marked as game ones, either by

- a) Use the *Move* | *End of game* menu.
- or b) Press the  symbol on the "toolbar" line.
- or c) Press the *End* key (when not in the move comment area).

If there are no valid moves from this position it is either checkmate or stalemate!

If 50 moves (both sides) have been played with neither a capture nor a pawn move, then the game is a draw. This is simply reported as a message.

The draw by the recurrence of the position for the third time is not reported. It would involve a significant overhead in calculation and not thought to be a frequent occurrence in correspondence matches.

Checkmate

Checkmate is defined as the situation where the player is in check and has no legal moves. That player has lost!

Stalemate

Stalemate is defined as the situation where the player is **NOT** in check and has **NO** legal moves. That player has got himself/herself a draw (and a large smile on their face!).

Back 1 move

To backtrack by just one move, you can either :-

- a) Use the *Move | Back 1 move* menu.
- or b) Press the  symbol on the "toolbar" line.
- or c) Press the *Page Up* key (when not in the move comment area).

The  symbol backtracks until a point is reached at which there are alternatives to the current variation or game line. The branch from which you came is highlighted. Think of it as a stronger form of moving back a move, i.e. move back to the start of the variation.

Backtrack

Allows you to go to any earlier position with respect to the current one. You are given a listing of all the moves in the game so far to get to the current position. This window is displayed if you either :-

- a) Use the ***Move | Backtrack*** menu.
- or b) Press the  symbol on the "toolbar" line.

Note that you arrive at the position before which the selected move was played.

If you are currently in the middle of a sequence of variation moves, one of the previous moves is highlighted. If you click on this move, it shows you the position from which the variation left the sequence of Game moves.

See also the  symbol to move back a variation.

Calendar

The calendar comes to you (basically) courtesy of the Delphi system in which this program is written. At least it's one way to find out what is today's date, but if you want to find out which day of the week you were born on ...

You can move up or down a month relative to the current display by clicking on the spin button on the top row. Alternatively you can choose a specific month using the tabs at the bottom - or the year by clicking / sliding the scroll region just above the tabs.

New game

This is the first option in the *File* menu.

It saves you all that fiddly business of putting the bits of wood back onto their starting squares!

If the current game has been amended and not saved to disc, you are given a chance to save it first. You are asked to provide the various details to identify the game - none of the fields are compulsory.

If, as is frequently the case, you are starting a pair of games against one opponent, you will find that when you start the second New one you are asked if you want to use some of the previous data with the white and black names exchanged.

Comments

There are two sorts of comments :-

- a) Describing the game itself (given when you start a new game).
- b) Describing a given move - i.e. appearing with the position after the move has been played. They appear (and can be edited) in the box at the bottom right of the normal screen.

The menu item ***Edit*** contains two entries to allow you access to the two sorts of comments. Note that the dates associated with a move are only relevant during the printout or analysis of a game and can only be edited via ***Edit | Move details***.

Dates in comments are simply free text.

The *F11* key is a shortcut to the ***Edit | Game details*** window
The *F12* key is a shortcut to the ***Edit | Move details*** window

Shortcut comments

Printing

I had originally intended to build printing facilities (including font selection etc.) into the program. However there are so many options that it would have meant writing a word-processor from scratch. As of version 1.6 you have 2 choices, either to use my layout with **File | Print Game** or to do it yourself with the Clipboard so that you can interface with your favourite word-processor (sic). My layout is not guaranteed to work with all printers, feedback to DBS is appreciated!

In version 1.7a there is a new **File | Print Game** routine.

There are 2 places where you can create new clipboard contents :-

a) In the **Edit | Copy to Clipboard** menu to produce :-

- 1) A simple set of the game moves.
- or 2) A bitmap of the board.

In option (1), you must select between having the moves produced in the mode :-

- i) **Newlines.** A tab character is inserted between the move number/ white move and white move/black move values. The next move pair is then on the next line.
- ii) **Semicolon.** A space is used instead of a tab, and the move pairs are separated by a newline only when there is a danger of exceeding the 255 string length limit!
- iii) **Variations.** Game moves and all variations are given.
- iv) **Correspondence.** Just the players' names and the (default) 3 latest moves are given. This is to aid the composition of your e/snail mail reply to the opponent.

b) Within the more complicated screen from **View | Analysis**.

This output is produced in the style of "Newlines" above. You should either select the entire output (use the button) or drag the cursor over the required area to define the area to be sent to the clipboard.

If you wish to use the clipboard more than once during the annotation of a game, you are advised to have both the word-processor and DBSCHESS running and use Alt/Tab features of Windows to switch between them, or use the "Email Window" (F6) facility.

Errors

Errors are fatal. I have written the program on the basis that I would rather know about them than attempt to make a soft recovery.

Apart from the few that are obviously "your fault", please send me any details of GPFs that might give me any clues as what might have caused my list and memory handling to go astray.

NB "your fault" errors include those resulting from any changes to the .DBS files not made by this program!

Saving

The File menu items **Save** and **Save As** allow you to place a disc record of the game and all its variations onto a disc file of your choice.

This mechanism is also triggered if you start a new game or exit using the **File | Exit** menu item.

The properties of Language, International moves and Viewpoint are saved with the file.

F3 is a shortcut.

File | Export | Genius lets you save the game moves in Genius format.

If **File | BAK Backup files** is checked, the previous version of the DBS file is saved with a BAK extension.

The new disc version is not compressed.

Clipboard

Either the game moves or the current board may be copied to the clipboard, e.g. for use for insertion into a word processor document. Choose an option from the window after the **Edit | Copy to Clipboard** menu (or **File | Export | Clipboard**).

See elsewhere : [Forsyth](#), [PGN](#) and [Results](#) options. Also the [Email Window](#).

The current board is copied as a bitmap or as a character representation for printing as part of a word processor document. As of version 1.7b a third alternative uses the CHEQ_TT font that is a public domain font giving figurine characters instead of ordinary letters. CHEQ_TT.ZIP is available in the Compuserve library (or DBS will send (registered) users a copy). Other chess fonts can also be used if a suitable *.TRA file is available to choose which characters are produced by DBSCHESS - contact DBS if your font doesn't appear in the list of TRA files. The format of a TRA file is defined in Annex J of the manual.

The game moves are listed, without comments (unless you set the checkbox), in the following styles :-

EITHER (Newlines)

1. e4 Nf6
 2. e5 Nd5
- etc.

(where there are tab characters between the move number and the moves).

OR (Semicolons)

- 1.e2-e4, Ng8-f6; 2. e4-e5, Nf6-d5; etc.

OR (Variations)

1. e4
1. ... c5; (Nc6) (e5 (d4 exd4) (Nf3 Nc6 Bc4))
2. f4 (Nf3)
2. ... d6; (Nc6)

OR (Correspondence)

23. d5-d6 c7xd6
24. Nf3-e5 Qd8-e8
25. Qd1-f3 Ra8-b8

depending on the option chosen after **Edit | Copy to Clipboard** and whether you have opted for long or short algebraic notation.

In the second option, the output does not consist just of one enormous string, but is broken up every couple of hundred characters into separate records.

The fourth option just gives the latest 3 move pairs and is designed for composing the reply to your opponent - so you must be positioned at the last game move. I've done this deliberately to force myself to make sure that the game is in the correct state when I've decided on the move.

The number of move pairs is 3 by default on loading the program.. You may change this value using *Edit | Set # Clipboard Moves* to increase it, or to force it just to give the single last move. The increased value may be useful if you want to give a conditional continuation (a bit of editing to insert the "if" is necessary later), the solitary move may be all that is required if you are playing online.

The moves are preceded by the game details - except in the third option when only the players' names are given. The final option just gives the game details.

The current board is copied as a bitmap or as a character representation for printing as part of a word processor document. As of version 1.7b a third alternative uses the CHEQ_TT font that is a public domain font giving figurine characters instead of ordinary letters. CHEQ_TT.ZIP is available in the Compuserve library (or DBS will send (registered) users a copy). Other chess fonts can also be used if a suitable *.TRA file is available to choose which characters are produced by DBSCHESS - contact DBS if your font doesn't appear in the list of TRA files.

Analysis from the *View | Analysis* (or **A**) is given with tab characters separating the columns. From this window you can either click the button to select everything or drag the mouse over the required area for a subset.

Note that the language notation used is that currently selected from the *View | Languages* menu.

Comment is also included (in braces) if the appropriate box is checked.

The clipboard is also set at various places in the program, e.g. via the F6, 10 and F12 keys and the Games and Results summaries.

International

The International notation for correspondence chess moves is an ultimately simple system, whereby a four digit number alone is used. The first 2 digits specify the start position of the object being moved (with the algebraic column value a-h being replaced by digits 1-8 respectively). The last 2 digits similarly give the co-ordinates of the square being moved to. The conventions for Castling and En Passant are the same as are employed in this program, i.e. use the start/end positions of the K/p concerned. Pawn promotion does not seem to be addressed!

The International notation is displayed on the standard screen as well as the algebraic version of the last move played if the ***View | International*** menu entry is selected by clicking on it (and again to remove it).

In printouts it is similarly displayed if the option to include it is ticked in the "included" section of the screen that appears when you select the ***View | Analysis*** menu.

Languages

Apologies, but my linguistic abilities do not extend to providing help except in English (similarly the words displayed when the program runs). However, I can at least allow you to display the moves with the abbreviations for the pieces in Spanish, French or German - use the ***View | Languages*** menu to select an option and you may feel more at home thereafter. Note that setting a non-English option affects the output to the clipboard and the expected notation in the import of games.

Deutsch Sprache - My friend Martin has provided a translation of this help system (see README.TXT).

Variation Listing

You arrive at a text grid either by the use of **A** or *View | Analysis*.

The problem with showing an arbitrarily complicated branching of possible moves is the way to list them. My solution is first to sort the variations so that the "heaviest" one comes last - in the style of "this move is the way forward, if there is a short digression let's get it out of the way first before continuing".

From a given position the variation moves are called ?1, ?2, ?3 etc (surprise!, but after 9 I go to ?a, ?b etc - you must be a real enthusiast to need these). The first subvariation of ?1 is ?11, the second subvariation is ?12. Thus ?3122 is the second subsubsubvariation of the second subsubvariation of the first subvariation of the third variation of the current position!

Starting from a well known (i.e. initial) position, we could have :-

```
?1  e2-e4
    ?11  e7-e5
    ?12  c7-c5
?2  d2-d4
    ?21  Ng8-f6
        ?211  c2-c4
    ?22  d7-d5
        ?221  c2-c4
            ?2211  d5xc4
?3  Ng1-f3
    ?31  Ng8-f6
        ?311  d2-d4
            ?3111  g7
    ?312  g3
            ?3121  g7
            ?3122  d5
                ?31221  Bg2
```

The analysis display uses indentations - until it gets too far to be readable.

If you decide to add a lot of moves to one variation line, note that it gets re-sorted to appear last - hence the numbering of the line may change.

To return from the analysis page to the normal graphical display, double click anywhere in the row describing the required move.

The default options for the display give variations and comments, and not dates and international notation. If you change these, it will also affect the output sent to the Clipboard.

Variation moves are all numbered, being preceded by the letter "w" or "b" to show a

white or black move. Game moves are shown only with the number if a white move.

Editing

The normal rules apply when you are editing within a text area (e.g. the Tournament box in the New Game window). I.e. if an area is highlighted by dragging the mouse across it :-

- a) ***Alt*** | ***c*** copies the text to the clipboard.
- b) ***Alt*** | ***x*** cuts the text to the clipboard.

Thereafter you can paste the result with ***Alt*** | ***v***.

The ***Home***, ***End*** and ***Delete*** keys have the obvious effect within a text area.

Matériel Difference

The  symbol on the toolbar produces a display of the difference in strength of the opposing armies.

Latest Moves

Click on  to see up to 8 of the most recent moves to get to the current position. This display overlays the list of currently available moves and you will have to remove it (use the Cancel button) in order to be able to scroll the complete list of available moves. The F7 key is an alternative way of doing this.

Import

File | Import | Clipboard

I endeavour to create a series of game moves from the contents of the clipboard - which I trust are in the algebraic notation of the language currently selected.

I ignore bits of punctuation like , ; + ! and tab characters.

I expect to find move numbers before the white moves, and will ignore text up to the first 1. of the game.

I will accept * as an alternative to x for capturing a piece, and ep or e.p. for en-passant.

Pawn promotions moves must have the =Q or Q (or whatever) appended.

This is obviously a "hairy" area, so please be forgiving if it isn't 100% successful. I am happy to receive comments on problems with importing from any variants of algebraic listings - but not descriptive!!

A disc file frequently contains a collection of games in PGN format. ***File | Import | PGN file(s)*** reads the entire file and produces a list of the separate games - click on the required entry to import that game. The text of that game is left in the clipboard.

File | Import | Genius inputs a Genius *.GAM file.

Autoplay

The *Move | Auto Play* menu selection plays through the game from the start automatically. You can control the time interval between moves to be in the range 0.2 to 9.8 seconds by clicking on the up / down arrows. At any point you may Pause the game and subsequently Resume by pressing the upper control button again. The Cancel button leaves the game in the normal mode at the point displayed.

The window controlling the autoplay may be dragged to a more convenient position.

Library

The Library is a coded store of the first 20 moves (and analysis to that depth) of all games occurring in the DBSCHESS directory and any subdirectories below it. The idea is to spot a duplicate position for which you may have left analysis earlier. A duplicate position not only has the pieces on the same squares, but has the same conditions for e.p. and castling to be possible. It does not need to have occurred after the same number of moves.

You could set up a reference game for your favourite opening, but DBSChess has no ambitions to rival databases that specialise in exhaustive analysis.

For reasons of efficiency, the positions are stored in a manner which can theoretically give rise to false positive identification of an identical position - however, you are less likely to meet this than an erroneous Pentium FDIV. The library actually consists of 2 files in the same directory as DBSCHESS.EXE.

Library | Create produces a new version of the library files. This is quite a slow process, please be patient. Games can be excluded from a library - see the Game Comments screen ([F11](#)).

Library | Load reads an existing library. Any files which have been modified since the creation of the library are displayed as being ignored. This is not usually much of a problem, as you normally only want to compare the game currently in action with those where you might have forgotten the sad accident in the past!

Either of the above options leave you in a mode where any move made in the current game is compared with the known positions. If there are any "hits", a button appears at the left hand end of the toolbar. If you press the button, a list of the other games is displayed - clicking on an item in this list will jump you into the other game.

Library | Load on Startup if "checked" will cause the library to be loaded automatically next time the program is started. This preference is recorded in the INI file.

The **Library | Ignore** option allows you to switch off the search.

Create a Starting Position

The **File | Create** gives you a bare board on which to place pieces, e.g. for an end-game tournament.

When you click on an empty square of the board a copy of the selected item appears- the currently selected item is shown on the right hand side of the display.

The currently selected item changes if

- 1) You click on the available choice from the selection panel, or
- 2) You click on an occupied square of the playing board. In that case the board square becomes empty and the removed item becomes current.

You may not place a pawn on the first or last rows. You must finally have one King of each colour before the OK to use the set-up position. The side whose turn it is to play must not be able to capture the opponent's King!

The player to move is adjusted by clicking on the "White to Move" control. It is assumed that en passant is not possible on the first move, otherwise you can adjust what is available with regards to castling by clicking on the other options. Any obvious mistakes are corrected, but note that if a King and Rook are on their original squares and you tell me that it is not possible to castle, then I believe you.

In this type of game, if Black has the first move it is numbered as 1, the white reply being a move 2.

Search for a Game

You can find a game if you know some of the text that occurs in it. This text could be part of the comments for the game itself, or given against one of the moves (as a date or comment). The menu **File | Text Search** gives you a screen in which you place the text string to search for. The search results in a list of games containing at least one instance of the text. The search is carried out over all games held in the DBSCHESS directory and subdirectories thereof.

If you click on one of the games found, this game is loaded. If the text was found as a game comment the game details screen is loaded, otherwise the move of the game in which in the text was found. If the text occurs in several places in one game, a game comment will be found first, otherwise it simply depends on where it was found in the physical order of the saved file.

You can choose to note or ignore the difference between upper and lower case in the search by clearing or setting the "Match Case" box. The "Text of Move as well?" box determines whether the search is to include the text of the move. It is a little quicker to include the text of the move, but if you do so then a search for e4 is liable to find rather of lot of successes!

Results Summary

The **Info | Results** menu item gives you a summary of the results of your games.

A new game is assumed to have an unknown result and not to be played by yourself, until you use **File | New** or **Edit | Game details** to record otherwise.

Games are analysed as a group within each directory or subdirectory, starting from the directory holding the program and scanning any subdirectories below it. If there are no games, the directory does not generate a row of the output. Finally an overall total is given.

The results are given in the format ...

+aa, =bb, -cc, (pp%), ?dd, &ee

where there are **aa** wins, **bb** draws and **cc** losses in your games. Unless no games are concerned this is given as a percentage **pp%**. There are also **dd** games presumably still in progress and **ee** games with other opponents.

You may optionally set the clipboard to the displayed output.

Info | Games Summary sets the clipboard with a summary of all the games in \DBSCHESS and its sub-directories. You may choose which of the fields are used. Depending on the amount of text, you will have to adjust the tab positions for this output when you paste it into a word processor document.

PGN - Portable Game Notation

Import.

On **File | Import | Clipboard** the STR (Seven Tag Roster) format is acceptable. The [Event], [Site] and [Round] values are combined as the Tourney value of a DBS game description. The [Result] value is noted. Move numbers (followed by a "." (period) or a space) are required before white moves. The process will be terminated on meeting the Game Termination Marker - the result of the game as given in the STR is believed.

PGN comments in the ";" rest of line ignored" style are NOT acceptable. A comment in "{ }" (braces) is used as a comment for the appropriate move. The characters of a NAG (Numeric Annotation Glyph), i.e. a "\$" (dollar) followed by numeric characters are ignored.

Collections of games in PGN text format are often available. **File | Import | PGN file(s)** reads the entire file and produces a list of the separate games - click on the required entry to import that game. The text of that game is left in the clipboard.

You can also import a selection of the games - you must give the start and final game numbers and the name of a new subdirectory (folder) to be created below the \DBSCHESS (or whatever) level. The games are given a filename of the form **nnnn.DBS** within the new subdirectory, where the number is that of the game within the PGN file and leading zeroes are added to give a 4 character name.

Export.

If the **Edit | Copy to Clipboard (File | Export | Clipboard)** is used to create "PGN", I attempt to produce acceptable output with the features as described above for importing.

Dates.

The screens for Game and Move edits contain buttons that can be pressed to insert today's date in PGN format (yyyy.mm.dd).

Variations.

RAV (Recursive Annotation Variation) will be implemented when I can obtain its definition.

Forsyth Notation

This is a description of the position in text form. A few examples (display the clipboard at the same time as DBSCHESS) are the easiest way to understand it. The white pieces are denoted in upper case, black in lower case and empty squares by a count of the number of consecutive ones. The position is described rank by rank, left to right, starting from black's back rank. Ranks are separated by a "/" (solidus) character.

The notation has been extended by Steven Edwards to include extra information, to comply with the FEN standard the board description should be in the English PRNBQK letters. The extra items consist of groups separated by space characters.

- 1) The side to move (a single character "w" or "b")
- 2) Castling potential. Up to 4 characters (or a "-" (hyphen) if none apply). E.g. "Kq" would denote that white can O-O and black O-O-O (but not necessarily at the moment).
- 3) The target square for en passant capture if the move before the position was a double pawn advance, "-" otherwise.
- 4) The number of halfmoves since the last capture or pawn move. This is needed for the 50 move draw rule.
- 5) Fullmove number, e.g. 3 for both white or black's third move to be played next from the position.

Merging games

You can merge several games together, e.g. if you are playing in a thematic tournament and wish to have a summary of all the lines considered. The first game opened is the only one which retains some of its moves as being of "game" status. From a given game, if you then use ***File | Merge*** to specify another game, all moves from the latter that do not already occur in the existing game appear as variations. Comments from the new game are only preserved if they concern the "additional" moves. Repeated use of ***File | Merge*** allows many games to be combined.

A composite game is given the title MERGED.DBS, you will probably wish to use ***File | Save As*** to write it to disc under another name.

Default First Move

If you wish the first move from a position to be a variation (as opposed to having the default "game" status) then keep the Ctrl key down while it is being made. This applies both to a move made directly with the mouse and by a selection from the list of valid moves.

Function Keys

The program reacts to the following Function keys ...

- F1 Help. If possible it will take you to the appropriate area of the help facility, depending on where you are at the time in the program.
- F2 File | Open shortcut.
- F3 File | Save shortcut.
- F4 File | New shortcut.
- F5 Shortcut Comment - insert from or edit a standard list.
- F6 Email Window.
- F7 Toggle display of Last few moves.
- F8. Signature file. This loads the contents of the file SIG.TXT in the root directory (e.g. \DBSCHESS) into the clipboard. This is normally used for the purposes of adding the final bit to an e-mail message.
- F9 Toggle board help. The small yellow hint is a pain when you have got the idea of moving and happen to leave the mouse in the board image or valid move list areas. F9 will switch it on/off thereafter and record your preference in the INI file for next time.
- F10 Shortcut for confident people! This sets the current position to be the last game move and sets the clipboard to hold the last 3 move pairs so that you can paste it into your email or postal reply. The date comment against the move is set to today's date. NB the only acknowledgement is a "bleep", F12 is slower and safer!
- F11 Shortcut to the Edit | Game details screen.
- F12 Shortcut to the Edit | Move details screen. If the position is not the current final game move, you are asked whether you would like to make it so (the normal usage will be when you have decided on the move you are going to make).

Tutorial

Chess is a game for 2 players on an 8*8 checker board of alternately light and dark squares (with a light square in the right-hand corner nearest to you). Each player has a collection of 16 playing pieces set out in a standard layout at the start of the game (**File** | **New** gives the initial layout). The opposing sides are conventionally White & Black, in setting up the initial position, remember that being fashion conscious, the Queen insists on starting on a square to match her colour. You make each move alternately. The rules of the game go back many centuries, but have been stable since the 17th century - in spite of several attempts to produce alternatives! F.I.D.É. is the organisation responsible for the rules.

The aim of the game is to put your opponent's King in a position where he cannot make a legal move. Note that you never actually take the King - and it is never a legal move on your part to put your King in a position where he can be taken - see Checkmate.

For a beginner the rules seem somewhat devious, this a combination of the historical development of the game and the introduction of a variety of different elements that make the game at its highest levels a rich and complex exercise. All I can say is that it's worth the effort of learning. You will find that one way of checking on what is legal, is to click on a given piece - when the program will list the moves for that piece (rather than all the moves available).

To describe a move, the Algebraic system is normally used nowadays. In English/Spanish speaking countries the descriptive notation was popular, but for once we seem to have been willing to give way! In the Algebraic system a square on the board is described by a letter (a-h) for it's co-ordinate across the board (the file), and a number (1-8 = rank) for it's co-ordinate down the board viewed from the White side. If a move is ambiguous an extra clue has to be given to make it clear, but usually a move such as "Bf5" means that a Bishop is moving to the square "f5". In the program you will see the co-ordinates alongside the board.

The boring bit now! I'll describe briefly how the various pieces move ...



The Rook (or Castle (or Tower as I used to call it when I was 7)) can move as far as he likes either across the board or down the board. However, if he meets a piece of his own side that is a barrier he cannot pass - this rule holds for everything, you cannot take your own pieces. If there is clear space until he meets an enemy piece, he can capture that piece by taking over the enemy square when the opponent's piece is removed from the board. Of course, the other player may have "protected" his piece by having something ready to take your Rook with his next move!



The Bishop moves in a different way - it only moves diagonally. Like the Rook it can move as far as it wants to across unoccupied squares. Because diagonal moves mean that the piece always stays on a square of the same colour as the square it started on, it makes sense to talk about your White Bishop and your Black Bishop. Both Bishops and Rooks work well at a distance from their current positions, so prefer positions where there are fewer players left on the board, or where they have a nice long line of squares that are clear from their point of attack..

The Bishop is the most interesting piece for it's name. Chess was a mirror of the Court system of Royal government, but this piece is not well defined as to its place! In France it is a "Fou" or jester, in Germany a "Laufer" or runner to describe it's mobility.



The Queen is the most powerful piece - strange when the aim of the game concerns the safety of the King - you must always remember that no matter how much power you have, the fate of the game depends on the fate of the King. The moves available to the Queen are simple to describe, she can do anything either a Rook or a Bishop can do.



The Knight (Horse!) has a strange move which makes it totally different from the other pieces - in particular although it can only move to certain squares from its current position, it can "jump" over anything that might be thought of as in-between. The move is 2 squares horizontally/vertically and then 1 square at right angles. This means that the Knight always moves to a square of the opposite colour from the one it currently occupies - and also that it cannot quickly get from one side of the board to the other - although it can do a lot of damage in its immediate neighbourhood! In the centre of the board it can move to 8 possible squares, nearer to edges and corners it gets more restricted in its choice. It is normally reckoned to be about as valuable as a Bishop, but better in congested positions and less useful as more pieces are exchanged.



The King is what the game is all about. He normally only emerges in the end-game, spending most of his life protected much as is a Queen Bee! He can move only one square away from his current position, in any direction (like the Queen but limited to a range of adjacent squares, i.e. the (at most) 8 squares next to him. Now is the time to say that the King and the Rook are involved in a special manoeuvre called Castling, which is an important way to move the King to a hopefully safer part of the board. To Castle, you move the Rook up to the King which then jumps over the Rook - but only if the "small print" allows it!



Pawns are the lowest form of life on the chessboard, but always have the ambition to gain higher status. If they succeed in getting to the far side of the board they are transformed into a piece of the player's choice (except that they cannot become a King nor remain a Pawn) - normally you choose a new Queen, but this is not always the best choice. Yes, you can end up with 9 Queens or several Bishops all on the same coloured squares - unlikely, but legal.

They are the exception in that they do not capture with their normal non-capturing move. Their move if not capturing is to go 1 square down the board - they cannot move backwards. They capture an opponent if he is foolish enough to be one square diagonally in front of the current position. E.g. a White Pawn on d4 can take a Black piece (or pawn) on either the c5 or e5 squares. If there is a Black (or White) piece (or pawn) on d5, then the our Pawn cannot move forward. If that isn't complicated enough, there is one extra rule - a Pawn can move either 1 or 2 squares forward from its starting position. This amendment to speed up the game has a further complication of en passant.

Once you've got all that, you will be able to start playing. There are some important

rules as to how the game can end. It's polite to resign if you are in such a mess that should admit defeat rather than just waste time in the hope that your opponent will do something stupid. You get better at chess by getting beaten and observing what went wrong, not by wasting time in a hopelessly unequal position. Checkmate is the definite way to finish a game, and although it may not appear to be honourable Stalemate is actually a very satisfying way of forcing a draw. You also get a draw if a position is repeated 3 times or if it can be shown that you can just keep on checking the opposing King forever. It is also a draw if 50 moves occur with no piece being taken or a pawn moved. You can also agree a draw - the etiquette is that you make your move and then immediately offer the draw to your enemy (he is entitled to see what you have in mind for your move before deciding).

One question that is often asked when you look at a chess position is "who is winning"? Fortunately this cannot easily be answered as there are many things to take into account (it's no consolation to be ahead on material or the amount of the board you occupy if you are about to be checkmated!). But the normal "rule of thumb" to calculate material strength is that if a Pawn is worth 1 unit, then a Bishop or a Knight are worth 3, a Rook 5 and a Queen 9. A King is invaluable. It may not be true, but it's better than nothing.

I wish you many happy hours playing the best game ever invented so far!

German

Die deutsche Version der Hilfe Datei wurde übersetzt von M. Hamacher
(100627.1662@compuserve.com)

Wenn Sie die englische Version der Hilfe Datei durch eine deutsche Version ersetzen wollen, so befolgen Sie folgende Schritte.

- 1) Besuchen Sie die Homepage <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/DBSugden>
- 2) Folgen Sie dem "DBSCHESS Description" (DBSCHESS Beschreibung) Link.
- 3) Empfangen Sie die "DEUTSCH.ZIP" Datei.
- 4) Wenn Sie wieder offline sind, entzippen Sie die Datei in Ihr Verzeichnis \DBSCHESS (es werden die Dateien DEUTSCH.HLP und HILFE.TXT entstehen).
- 5) Löschen oder umbenennen Sie die existierende englische Version DBSCHESS.HLP.
- 6) Benennen Sie nun die Datei DEUTSCH.HLP in DBSCHESS.HLP um.
- 7) Beachten Sie bitte, daß die deutsche Hilfe Version wieder durch eine englische Version überschrieben wird, wenn Sie eine neue Version von DBSCHESS installieren. Sie sollten sich also eine Kopie der Datei DEUTSCH.HLP angelegt haben um die Schritte 5 und 6 wiederholen zu können.

Email Window.

The ***Edit | Email Window*** or *F6* shortcut key shows you the current contents of an internal edit area that can be altered either by any operation that sends text to the clipboard - or directly using the keyboard to alter the contents of the window. The program keeps all text alterations to the clipboard as insertions in this separate area within the program. For instance, if you have two game moves to send to an opponent, then two employments of the *F10* key at the appropriate times will mean that both games details are created. A further *F8* for the signature file and a manual edit (use *F6* and *Ctrl/Home* to insert "Hi Chessfriend" at the top of the composition window) and you have created a new clipboard that contains the entire email to be sent.

If you alter the cursor position in the Email window, subsequent insertions are made at that point.

You can close this window either leaving the current clipboard contents unaltered, or set it to the accumulated Email window contents (which also clears the Email window).

There is one exception, the *F12* key edit to set move details always sets the clipboard, but you have to set a flag to insert the amendment into the program's Email window. This is because when you receive a move from your opponent, you will want to record the date on which it was sent, but do not wish to send the last 3 moves up to that point back to him as well as the position after your move.

Shortcut Comments

If you have a standard set of comments (or prefer to use the PGN NAG - "Numeric Annotation Glyphs"), you can set up a file called SHORTCUT.TXT in the same directory as DBSCHESS.EXE. This file can be edited either by DBSCHESS or by a text editor. Note that if you use a text editor, DBSCHESS will sort the file into alphabetic order later.

To add a short-cut comment into the current cursor position of the comment area in the main display of the program, press the F5 key. You can then select the comment, either by typing the start of the phrase, or by using the mouse or cursor keys to select the required row of the list. If you press the OK button or the return key it will add it to your comment area. Alternatively just double-click the required row. The Cancel button abandons the operation.

The selected row may be deleted using the "Delete selected row" button, or a new row added by typing it into the area normally used to select a row.

The set of PGN NAG phrases is held in a file PGN_NAG.TXT available on David's homepage - you will have to rename it to SHORTCUT.TXT in the DBSCHESS directory.

File Compression

The program has a "cheap and cheerful" compression system *File | Compress Directory* so that you can save some disc space by compressing all the DBS files in a directory/folder. To restore the uncompressed version of a file simply *Open* and *Save* it (the *Save* operation always writes in uncompressed form, the *Open* will read either, with no appreciable difference in speed).

Unless you add "interesting" characters in your comments, DBS files are always in 7 bit form so that they can be sent as text rather than binary form - this applies to the compressed form as well (in contrast to ZIP compression). I confess to using 12 characters in the range ASCII 14 to 25, but they don't appear to cause email problems.

The bad news is that the preparation of a compressed file is much slower and does not save as much disc space (see below). I suggest that if you compress a directory, it should not be the one of current games, but the "archive" directories of previous years. Some very small files are left in the original format, but decent size games seem to compress to a new version some 70% to 75% of the original size. Every little helps!

I do not suggest my compression if you are running your disc in a general purpose compression mode - you will not be helping it, I suspect the same syndrome as I found ...

To give some idea of how effective the compression is, I compared the results of the directory holding my 1996 games with PKZIP compression (maximum), and then UUENCODed the ZIP files to get 7 bit text files. The original directory was 941k, compressing to 696k with DBS, the result being compressed to 432k by PKZIP - producing a UUE file of size 606k.

But, and this is a large "but", if you PKZIP the directory in its original form (i.e. not compressed first by DBSCHESS), the ZIP file is of size 321k giving a 449k UUE.

