

Can kids play and are they welcome?

Players of all ages are welcome to play at the MCC.

There are, however, many factors that should be considered in deciding if you want your child to play at the club. This brochure should provide you with the information you need to make the decision that is best for you and your child.

Can I bring my child to learn how play?

No, the club does not provide instruction on how to play.

All players are expected to know the rules of chess, how the pieces move and the basic concepts of the game.

Rules about castling and capturing en-passant, check, checkmate and stalemate should be well understood.

I have seen mention of a Group Class, isn't that for teaching how to play?

No, the club has an occasional "Group Class" which meets before the tournament game begins. Club members are encouraged to attend.

The material covered in the class addresses a wide range of skill levels and may be too advanced for beginners. The target audience are players with a rating between 1200 and 1700.

Are there other young players at the club?

Typically we have several young players participating in each event. Some, but not all, are very seasoned players. Through the years we have sometimes had several who were in **the top 100 list in the country for their age bracket.**

What are the requirements for playing?

The MCC is affiliated with the USCF (United States Chess Federation), and all the tournaments at the club are USCF-rated events. Because of this, everyone who plays in club tournaments needs to be a member of the USCF.

What does "rated" mean?

A rating is a numerical indicator of a player's strength. The USCF is the official US organization that calculates ratings for players based on the results of the games they play and the ratings of the players they play against.

Do you have to join the club?

Club membership is **not** required but is recommended. Club members pay less to play in the monthly event and may participate in group classes when they are available

The club meets on a school night. When does the game begin and how long will it take?

Each tournament runs for one month on all the same nights in that month. There is no elimination if you lose. **Games start at 7:30 pm.** If both players use all the time allotted to them, the game can may not end until **close to 11:00 pm..**

Will the game really take that long?

Typically, the lower the players' ratings are, the sooner the games are over. Assuming that your child does not take full advantage of the time allotted due to age, temperament and ability, and assuming that the opponent is an adult who might use most of their allotted time, a reasonable guess is that the game would end around 9:30 pm. It could end even sooner if someone loses quickly. If both players play patiently and use their allotted time, the game may end close to **11:00 pm.**

In general, even the adults who play in the lower section are frequently finished by 10 pm. However, because most adults play much more slowly than the typical scholastic player, there is another issue to consider. Your child might get bored with the pace of the game and lose interest in it or lose in chess generally.

By the end of the day, kids are too worn out. Why doesn't the club play during the day?

The club, is run by volunteers who, because of their own jobs, have only their evenings and weekends free to give to the club. Moreover, the facility has to have the time slot we want to play available

Who will my child play?

Once you have registered your child to play in the monthly event, we will arrange **one game each week** with someone who is also playing in the same rating range you have entered your child in

Children and Adults all play together. As there are usually many more adults than children, your child will likely play more adults than other children.

Can I watch my child play?

As is the practice in most scholastic events, parents or otherwise responsible adults are not permitted to remain in the playing room.

Anything I need to know as a Parent at the event?

You are not allowed to interfere with the game in any way or assist in the playing of the game.

Players are not allowed to discuss any game in progress, including their own game. This applies to you as the parent as well.

You cannot behave in a manner that might be construed as assisting your child or any player.

Frequent entry or exit from the playing room is not permitted by you or your child. Your child must be prepared to remain primarily in the playing room out of contact with you.

What other things should I take into consideration before deciding to play at the club?

Will my child be discouraged if they lose many weeks in a row?

It is common, even for adult beginners, to go many weeks without winning a tournament game. This is true even for players who have played for years casually among friends, because people who play in a club environment generally improve much more quickly than those who do not.

Because of the level of competition in our tournaments, children should expect to lose many games.

Careful study of lost games can be one of the best ways to improve, and players routinely "analyze" their games with each other immediately after it is over. You and your child will need to decide whether the improvement from playing tough competition outweighs the discouragement of losing.

The main point is to encourage kids to continue playing—no one gets better by not playing. And we at the MCC want to avoid any situation where discouragement due to losing causes anyone to stop playing chess altogether.

Playing in area scholastic tournaments may provide more opportunities for wins but may be less challenging and less discouraging.

Will my child be too discouraged if he is occasionally selected to be “paired out.”?

Being paired out means that because there is an odd number of people playing a particular round in a tournament, someone is left without an opponent for that round.

We recognize that being paired out can be discouraging, but it is an unavoidable situation that sometimes occurs when there is an odd number of players. All players are subject to being paired out, but the person actually paired out is usually the lowest-rated player in the lowest score group.

No one can be paired out more than once in any single tournament, but anyone who loses frequently is at greater risk for being paired out repeatedly. Sometimes we can find an opponent for players who are paired out, so they can have a game that night after all, but sometimes we can't.

Can I expect more things to be concerned about as my child improves?

As your child improves, the game will likely end later and later into the evening. This can create several additional concerns:

- They may get sleepy and lose the game. This might make them very upset. This happens all the time, even to adults. Hopefully, you can communicate the idea to your child that they are obviously improving to have played so long and so well up to that point.
- They are up much later than you may like, especially when school is in session.

May I drop off my child at the club?

No, all youth shall have someone responsible for them always present.

While we supervise the activity of the event to ensure that it is well run and enjoyable for our participants, we expect everyone will behave courteously and responsibly of their own accord, including children.

What things should parents try to prepare their children to expect and deal with?

- **No food is allowed in the playing room.**
- There is **no talking** in the playing room.
- There is no running, jumping or other distracting behavior allowed.
- It may be many weeks before they win a game or they might win one or two games at first but then not win again for a very long time.
- There is **only one game scheduled each week**. If they play fast or impulsively, they will be packing up early to head home.
- **“Touch move”** rules apply. When a piece is touched, it must be moved or captured. No one is allowed to “take back” any move.
- They might get paired out from time to time, which could mean a quick return home if an extra match-up can't be found.
- They are not allowed to get advice from anyone else, and once they sit down to play, they are expected, out of respect for their opponent, to **pay attention** to their game until it is done.
- They might become tired and lose the game **because they got sleepy**. Even adults face this problem every week.
- You might decide it is too late for them to go over the game with their opponent after it is over. They may be disappointed by this.
- They must **write down their moves**.

Once we decide to play at the club, is there anything else we should know?

We have other brochures that describe what you need to know once you start playing at the club.

What other chess activities are available in the area for our children?

The Massachusetts Chess Association, (**MACA**) is the clearinghouse for all things chess in Massachusetts.

MACA runs youth tournaments throughout the year and conducts the Massachusetts Scholastic Championship series of events that determine the state champions for various categories.

MACA web site at www.MassChess.org



MetroWest Chess Club

Largest Chess Club in New England

Serving the MetroWest Boston chess community since 1983

**Young
Players
at the MCC**



www.MetroWestChess.org