

T.O.P.P.S.

- T.** = THREAT
- O.** = OPPORTUNITIES
- P.** = PLAN
- P.** = POSITION
- S.** = SAFETY

THREAT

Is your opponent threatening to do something? e.g. take an unguarded piece? Fork two more valuable pieces? e.g. knight fork on king and queen. Checkmate?

Counter the threat with:

- A = AVOID
- B = BLOCK
- C = CAPTURE
- D = DEFEND
- E = EVEN BETTER MOVE

OPPORTUNITIES

Can you make a threat? On an unguarded piece? Use one of your own pieces to threaten to capture a more valuable piece? Threaten checkmate?

PLAN

What are you trying to achieve? Which direction are you attacking in? Are you threatening to Queen a pawn? or Checkmate? Can you move a piece that will help you to achieve your aim?

POSITION

Can you strengthen your position? Move a piece to make your position stronger.

SAFETY

Move a piece away from any potential threat but without weakening your position. It may be a 'nothing' move such as moving the king behind its defensive wall and then moving it back to its original position.