

Westmoreland County Libraries

Chess Tournament Rules

Divisions

The tournament will have two divisions:

- **Fourth grade and under**
- **Fifth through eighth grade**

The tournament style will be determined based on the number of participants. See judge notes.

General Rules

1. Tournament Area Access

- After announcements and a review of the rules, only facilitators, players, and tournament officials are permitted in the chess playing area.
- A judge may recruit a parent/caregiver to help supervise games in the opposite division of their child if needed.
- Spectator policy is determined by the host library after a discussion with the judge(s).
 - If spectators are allowed, the library must provide a designated viewing area separate from the playing space.
 - Spectators may not interfere with games in any way, including offering advice, signaling moves, or speaking to players during matches.
 - Any violation of this rule may result in removal from the tournament area.

2. Game Setup & Timing

- Piece color will be assigned at the start of each game.
- Games will last 30 minutes. If a game is unfinished, the judge may adjudicate the winner (typically requiring a 3+ point lead).
- If time does not permit, an alternate tie-breaker rule may be implemented at the discretion of the tournament director.
- All decisions by the judge(s) are final.

3. Scoring

- Win = 1 point
- Draw = ½ point
- Loss = 0 points

4. Player Conduct

- a. No talking to opponents or others during games, except to clarify a move (e.g., announcing intent to castle).
- b. Players may practice between rounds, but no hovering over ongoing games.
- c. The tournament follows **touch-move** rules:
 - i. If you touch one of your pieces on your turn, you must move it if a legal move is available.
 - ii. If you touch an opponent's piece, you must capture it if a legal capture is possible.
 - iii. A move is final once your hand leaves the piece.
- d. If you need a rule clarification, raise your hand to call a tournament official.

5. Participation Rules

- a. Each player may only enter one Westmoreland County Library first-round chess tournament.
- b. The 1st and 2nd place finishers in each division will advance to the Westmoreland County Libraries Championship Tournament.
- c. The 3rd place finisher will be an alternate in case one of the top two players is unable to attend.

Thank you for participating! Play well!

Tournament Director / Judge Notes

- Tournament format depends on the number of players in each division:
 - **7+ players:** Swiss Style preferred
 - **5–6 players:** Round Robin preferred
 - **3–4 players:** Double Round Robin preferred
 - **2 players:** Best of 3 or 5 games
- In Swiss Style or Round Robin, no two players should play each other twice during preliminary rounds.
- For Swiss Style pairings, birthdates on scorecards may be used.
- **No player should receive the same color three times in a row.**