



## **The King Hunt - Mato Jelic**

For all the talk of strategy, checkmate ends the game. And hunting the enemy king is the first and final love for many chess players, the ultimate essence of the game.

The high stake sacrifice, tenacious defense and the brilliant finishing move are a major part of many of the most beloved games in history. Now Mato Jelic, the hugely popular chess coach, has produced an extraordinary 17 hour investigation and training into the art of the King Hunt.

Over 300 games are examined as Mato deconstructs some of the greatest attacks ever played, teaching you how to win games in the most satisfying way imaginable!

By the end of this course, you will have absorbed hundreds of tactical ideas and patterns for winning with attacks on the castled king and sacrifices on each of the classic target squares f7, g7 and h7.

Want to win more games with exciting onslaughts and create works of art you're proud to show to others? Learn the art of The King Hunt with Mato Jelic!

### **The course is divided into 4 chapters:**

Chapter 1: Attack on the uncastled king (73 games)

Chapter 2: Attack on f7 (76 games)

Chapter 3: Attack on g7 (88 games)

Chapter 4: Attack on h7 (74 games)

## Chapter 1: Attack on the Uncastled King

1. The most natural place for the king is to be castled safely in the corner. It is advisable for each chess player to castle on time and on the correct side. However, plenty of chess players castle too late. Especially in the early phase of the opening, kings are vulnerable, because of the weak squares f2 and f7 which are guarded solely by the king.

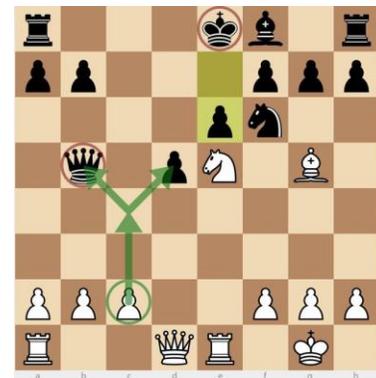
**Example 1:** Black's king is far away from castling and White can already win the game with **1.Bxf7+! Kxf7 2.Ng5+ Ke8 (2...Kf6 3.Qf3#) 3.Ne6**. Black's queen is trapped.

2. If you're attacking an uncastled king, you can't waste time. The king in the center is a **dynamic factor**, not a static one. Dynamic chess is all about momentum. The first World Champion, Wilhelm Steinitz, said: *"If you have an advantage, you must use it immediately, or it will disappear"*.



3. Generally speaking, if your king is castled and your opponent's king is not, then the strategy is simple - stop your opponent from castling. Therefore, it is necessary to **open the position**. There are two ways to do this: by **pawn breaks** and by **sacrifices**.

**Example 2:** In the following position, White has a lead in development, while Black still has to castle. Given the time, Black would play ...Be7 and ...0-0. Hence, in these types of positions it is important to create threats with every move, since our opponent only needs one or two tempi to find safety. It is important to stop our enemy from castling. White goes for the strong pawn break **1.c4!** Black's queen on d5 is under attack. If Black takes the pawn, the d-file opens and White already has a winning combination - **1...dxc4 2.Bxf6 gxf6 3.a4!**. Black's queen has to move and is unable to protect the d7-square anymore - **3...Qb6?** (3...Qd5 4.Qxd5 exd5 5.Ng6+ +-) **4.Qd7#**.



**Example 3:** Sometimes, the attacking player has to sacrifice material in order to attack the opponent's king. In this example, White plays **1.Ng6! fxf6** **2.Bxg6+ Ke7** **3.Re1+** and Black's king won't survive the attack.



4. If you're attacking the king in the center, always create threats with your moves! This does not necessarily mean that you need to always go for checks and captures. More often than not, **calm moves** can pose serious problems for your opponent.

**Example 4:** In this example, White starts his attack with the spectacular **1.Nxf7 Kxf7**, but then plays the calm move **2.f5!** White had a very strong attack and went on to win quickly.

5. If you're playing with a king in the center, you should try to safely cover all the potentially vulnerable squares around your king. Try to neutralize your opponent's development advantage.



### Attack on the Castled King, f7, g7 and h7 squares - General concepts:

1. In most chess games, both players manage to castle in the opening. After that, the king is usually a lot safer than in the center. However, there are still plenty of possibilities to attack a castled king.
2. **Attack the weakest point in your opponent's position.** First of all, it is of paramount importance to choose a clear target for your attack. Instead of randomly placing your pieces on the kingside, you need to focus on a certain square to build up your attack against. For this reason, you have to look for weaknesses first and only then maneuver your pieces in a way to directly exploit them.
3. **Include all your pieces in the attack.** Many attacks fail because the last piece is missing from the attack. That's why you should try to use as many pieces as possible for your attack. Try to overpower your opponent on the wing you're attacking on and to involve as many pieces as possible into the attack. The more pieces you have lined up against your opponent's king, the

more likely your attack is to succeed.

**Example 5:** In this position, White has a lot more attacking pieces than Black has defenders - perfect conditions for a final blow. **1.Bxh7+! Kxh7 2.Rh5+ Kg8 3.Nf6+! gxf6 4.Qg4+ +-.**



## Chapter 2: Attack On f7

1. The f2 and f7 squares are particularly weak for White and Black respectively. The knights, bishops and the queen can reach these squares quickly, even in the opening. The f2 and f7 squares are only protected by the king in the beginning of the game. Because the kings are that close to these two squares, these squares are especially attractive for dangerous attacks. Also, after castling, if the rook guards f2 (or f7), this square is susceptible for attacks. The goal of the attack on f2 or f7 is either a mating attack, or the destruction of the king's protection. Chasing the king from safety and into the dangerous open areas of the board is also a major aim.

**Example 6:** In this position, the f7-square is extremely weak. White does not hesitate to lure Black's king into the center - **1.Bxf7+! Kxf7 2.Ne6!** (White threatens to take the queen on d8 - Black's answer is forced.) **Kxe6 3.Qd5 Kf6 4.Qf5#.**

2. Pawns are important defenders. If you want your attack to succeed, you might have to eliminate them by sacrificing a more valuable piece.
3. An attack against the king does not necessarily lead to checkmate. It can also be successful if it results in a material advantage.



## Chapter 3: Attack on g7

1. The squares g2 and g7 are very vulnerable after castling as they are only protected by the king.
2. **Sacrifices** – Don't be afraid to sacrifice material in order to destroy your opponent's pawn shelter in front of the king. If there are no obvious weaknesses in your opponent's king position, most of the times you will need to sacrifice a piece to fuel the attack.

3. **Exchange key defensive pieces.** While the attacking side should generally try to avoid exchanges in order to keep more attacking forces on the board, sometimes the most effective attacking idea is to first trade off your opponent's main defensive piece. If there is one piece which defends all the critical squares, try to trade it off. By exchanging off the key defender in the opponent's position you will make the attack much stronger.

**Example 7:** In this position, White has good attacking prospects on the kingside. However, Black's knight on f6 does an important job in defending all the vulnerable squares. For this reason, White exchanges Black's key defensive piece - **1.Nh5! Nxf6 2.Bxf6+! Kxf6 3.Qxh5+ Kg8 4.Bxg7! Kxg7 5.Qg4+ Kh8 6.Rf3 +-.**



4. It is important to keep in mind that the key defender is not always the strongest piece, like the queen – it can also be a pawn, a knight or a bishop.

## Chapter 4: Attack on h7

1. Right after the castling, the squares h2 or h3 become a target. The rook doesn't protect the square anymore, leaving the king as sole defender. This weakness often makes it a target for combinations until the late middlegame. Frequently, the attacking player sacrifices pieces on h7 or h2 to eliminate an important defending pawn and to smoke the king out of his safe shelter.
2. Try to get your pieces to work together. If you want to attack the h7 square, for instance, the combination of a light-squared bishop on c2 and a queen on d3 can be extremely strong. Both pieces eye the vulnerable h7 square.
3. Concentrate your pieces before you attack. Before you launch a massive attack, you need to make all necessary preparations. The more pieces you have in the attack, the higher are your chances to succeed.
4. Aim for material superiority on the part of the board where you're attacking. This does not mean that you need to be a piece up before you should think about attacking your opponent. Before you start an attack, make sure you have more attacking pieces than your opponent has defenders.
5. A rook lift to the kingside is an effective attacking technique to keep in mind. Therefore, a rook is usually transferred to the g-file or h-file along the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank.

6. If your opponent has already moved a pawn in front of his king, another attacking idea is to move the h-pawn up the board and open files against the king.

**Example 8:** In this position, White already managed to push his h-pawn to h5. After **1.hxg6 fxg6** (1...hxg6 2.Rxh8#) **2.Rxh7+ Kxh7 3.Ng5+! Kg8 4.Qh5+!! gxh5 5.Bh7#**.

7. Be careful about the right attacking conditions!  
A good defensive technique is to answer an attack on the wing with a strike in the center. Therefore, you should always look for your opponent's counterattacking chances before launching an attack. Don't just calculate your own ideas and plans, also think about your opponent's and calculate those too.

