

Proposal to change FIDE Handbook C.02

C.02. Standards of chess equipment and tournament venues for FIDE tournaments

This document defines the general standards for chess equipment to be used in FIDE competitions.

1 The chess equipment offered by the organisers (hosts) of a FIDE or Continental Championship, Olympiad and other FIDE registered tournaments shall conform with the standards mentioned below, and shall be approved by the Chief Arbiter.

1.1 The chess pieces used in the final of Individual World or Continental Championships must be approved by both players. Their approval shall be obtained for other equipment - the chess table, board and clock.

In case either side disagrees, the equipment to be used shall be decided by the Chief Arbiter of the match, bearing in mind the standards for its size and form as mentioned below.

1.2 It is highly recommended that the chess equipment used in a competition is the same for all games.

2. Chess Pieces

2.1 Material

Chess pieces should be made of wood, plastic or an imitation of these materials.

2.2 Height, weight, proportions

The King's height should be 7 to 8.5 cm. The diameter of the King's base should measure 40 to 50% of its height.

The size of the other pieces should be proportionate to their height and form; other elements such as stability, aesthetic considerations etc., may also be taken into account.

The weight of the pieces should be suitable for comfortable moving and stability.

2.3 Form, style of pieces

Recommended for use in FIDE competitions are pieces of new Staunton style.

The pieces should be shaped so as to be clearly distinguishable from one another. In particular the top of the King should distinctly differ from that of the Queen. The top of the Bishop may bear a notch or be of a special colour clearly distinguishing it from that of the Pawn.

2.4 Colour of the pieces

The dark pieces should be brown or black, or of other dark shades of these colours. The light pieces may be white or cream, or of other light colours. The natural colour of wood (walnut, maple, etc.) may also be used for this purpose. The pieces should not be shiny and should be pleasing to the eye.

3. Chess boards

For the World or Continental Championships wooden boards should be used. For other FIDE registered tournaments boards made of wood, plastic or card are recommended. In all cases boards should be rigid. The board may also be of stone or marble with appropriate light and dark colours, provided the Chief Arbiter finds it acceptable. Natural wood with sufficient contrast, such as birch, maple or European ash against walnut, teak, beech, etc., may also be used for boards, which must have a dull or neutral finish, never shiny.

Combination of colours such as brown, green, or very light tan and white, cream, off-white ivory, buff, etc., may be used for the chess squares in addition to natural colours.

Referring to 2.2 the size of a square should be twice the diameter of a pawn's base. It is recommended that a side of the square should measure 5 to 6.5 cm.

A comfortable table of suitable height may be fitted in with a chessboard. If the table and the board are separate from one another, the latter must be fastened and thus prevented from moving during play.

4. Chess tables

The size of a table should have a minimum length of twice the length of the chessboard and a width of 15 – 20 cm more than the chessboard. It is recommended to use tables with a minimum size of 120 x 80 cm for top level FIDE tournaments.

The height of a table and the chairs should be comfortable for the players. Any noise when moving the chairs should be avoided.

5. Chess clocks

Mechanical chess clocks should have a device signalling precisely when the hour hand indicates full hours. They should have the so-called "flag" fixed so that its fall can be clearly seen, helping the arbiters and players to check time.

The clock should have no shine which would make the flag difficult to see. It should run as silently as possible in order not to disturb the players during play.

5.1 Requirements for electronic chess clocks

(a) Clocks must function in full accordance with the FIDE laws of chess.

(b) The display at all times should show the time available to complete a player's next move.

(c) The displays must be legible from a distance of at least 3 meters.

(d) From at least a distance of 10 meter a player must have a clearly visible indication which clock is running.

(e) In case of passing a time control, a sign on the display must give clear signal which player passed the time limit first.

(f) For battery powered clocks, a low-battery indication is required.

(g) In case of a low-battery indication the clock must continue to function flawless for at least 10 hours.

(h) Special attention should be given to the correct announcement of passing time controls.

(i) In case of accumulative or delay timing systems, the clock should not add any additional time if a player passed the last time control.

(j) In case of time penalties it must be possible that time and move counter corrections are executed by an arbiter within 60 seconds.

(k) It must be impossible to erase or change the data in display with a simple manipulation.

(l) Clocks must contain a short user manual on the clock

Electronic chess clocks used for FIDE events should be endorsed by FIDE Technical Commission.

6. **Tournament halls**
For top level tournaments a minimum space of 9 square meters per board is necessary, space for arbiters and spectators not included. For other tournaments there should be a minimum space of 5 square meters per board.
The distance between the chess boards and the spectators should be not less than one meter, for top level tournaments 1.5 meters.
The light in the tournament hall
7. The FIDE Technical Commission is competent to decide whether or not any piece of equipment is suitable for use in FIDE competitions. The Commission may recommend the use of other types of chess sets in addition to those mentioned under 2.3. It may make a list of equipment with satisfactory standards, the specimens of which would be kept at the FIDE Secretariat.
If necessary FIDE will determine the general conditions for other equipment needed in chess competitions, such as score sheets, sealed move envelopes, demonstration boards, etc.
8. The above regulations apply only to the equipment used in FIDE competitions. Manufacturers of equipment and organisers are completely free to make and use their own equipment for all other competitions. The manufacturing of sets of artistic value is encouraged, regardless of the practical possibilities of their use.

Werner Stubenvoll
Chairman

Dirk De Ridder
Secretary