

Bahr's Rule - Conditions

Bahr's rule is a neat rule that can be used to quickly help an Attacker with a blocked Rook pawn and an outside passed pawn determine if a position is a win or if the Defender can get a draw.

In other words, Bahr's rule helps one to easily determine visually and without calculation in many pawn endings whether a defender can draw or whether the attacker can win. There are some caveats. First of all, you must realize that Bahr's rule only applies under certain conditions.

The three conditions required for Bahr's Rule to apply are:

Condition 1):

The attacking rook pawn has not crossed the middle of the board (i.e. the attacker's Rook pawn has not reached the 5th rank).

Condition 2)

The attacking King must be standing directly beside the passed pawn

Condition 3):

The defending King must be standing directly in front of either the passed pawn or the attacking King.

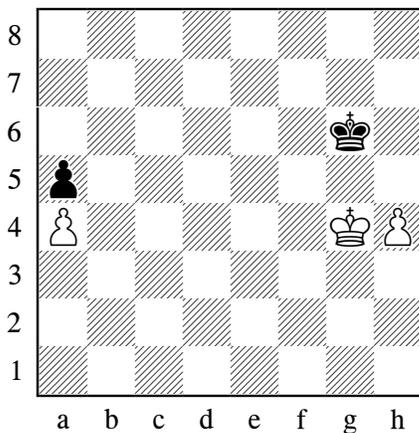


Diagram 1

Bahr's Rule Applies
because all three Bahr's Rule conditions
have been met

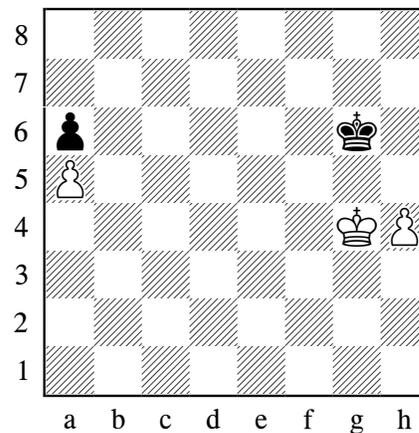
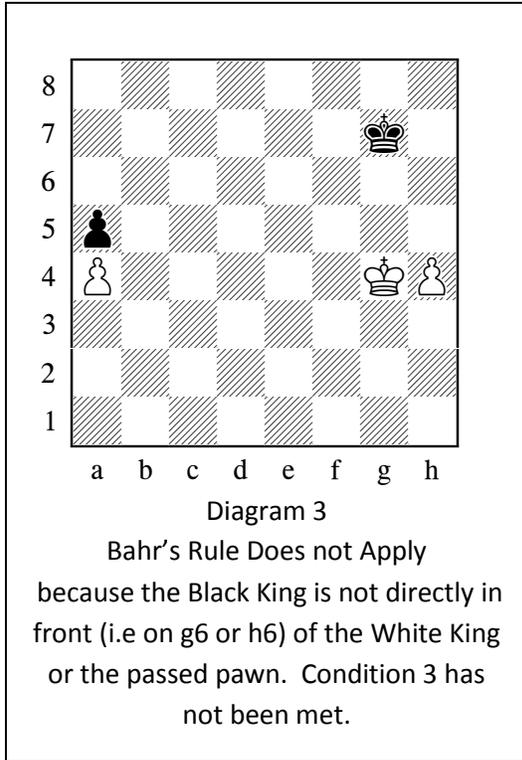


Diagram 2

Bahr's Rule does not apply because the
White Rook pawn has crossed the middle
of the board and is now on a5. Condition
1 has not been met.



Question:

In Diagram 3, If Black is to move, can he get a draw? If so, to what square must he move?

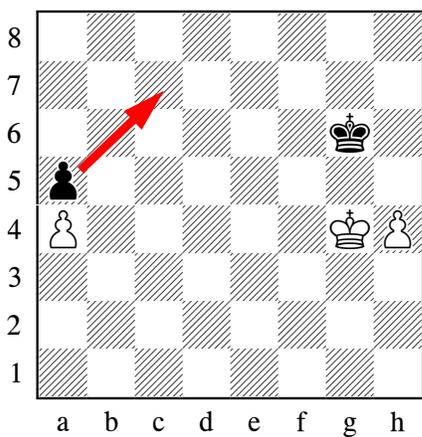
Answer:

Black can get a draw if he moves to either g6 or to h6. Then Bahr's rule applies and because the h-pawn is on the Defender's side of the "Border Line" Black can draw the game.

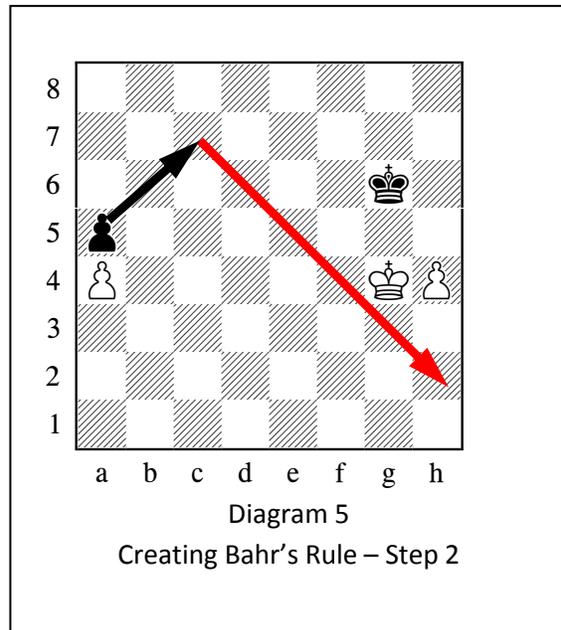
We'll discuss the "Border Line" in the next section.

Creating Bahr's "Border Line"

Draw a diagonal line from the defender's pawn towards his first rank. Then, at the bishop file, bend the line (called the "Border Line") back towards the attacker's first rank.



Creating Bahr's Rule – Step 1



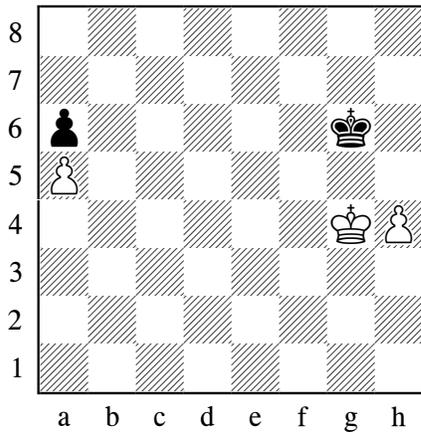
Creating Bahr's Rule – Step 2

Bahr's Rule

If the passed pawn is on or below (i.e. **on the Attacker's side** of) the "Border Line", the attacker wins. If the passed pawn is above (i.e. **on the defenders side** of the "Border Line", the position is a draw.

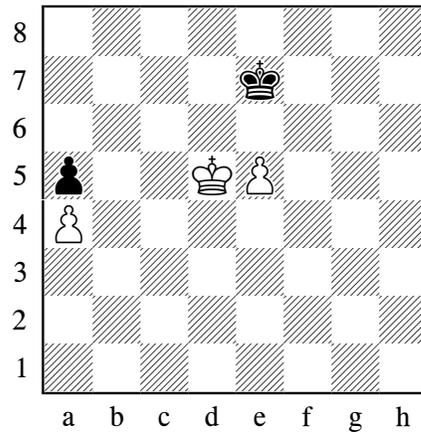
In the case of Diagram 5, the position is a draw because:

- 1) Bahr's rule conditions are met and
- 2) The passed pawn is on the defender's side of the "Border Line"



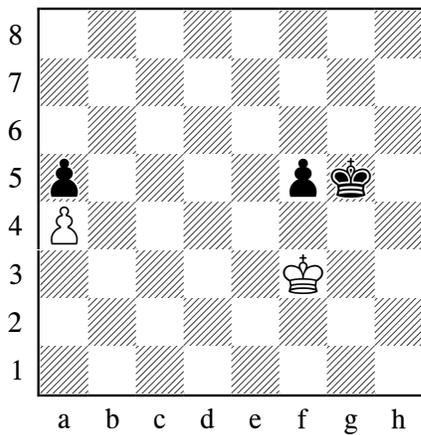
Does Bahr's rule apply?

If not, why not? If so, is it a win for White or a draw?



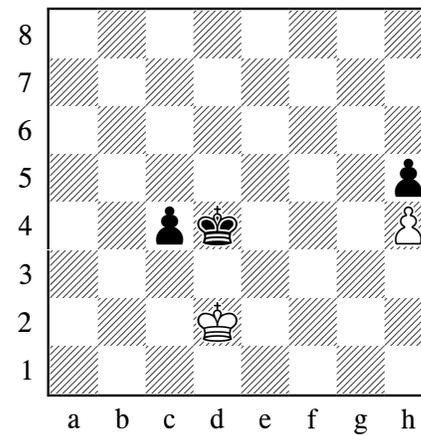
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Does Bahr's rule apply?

If not, why not? If so, is it a win for Black or a draw?



Does Bahr's rule apply?

If not, why not? If so, is it a win for Black or a draw?

Answers:

Diagram 6:

Bahr's Rule does not apply because Condition 1 is not met. White's Rook Pawn has crossed the middle of the board. White wins, but not because of Bahr's rule.

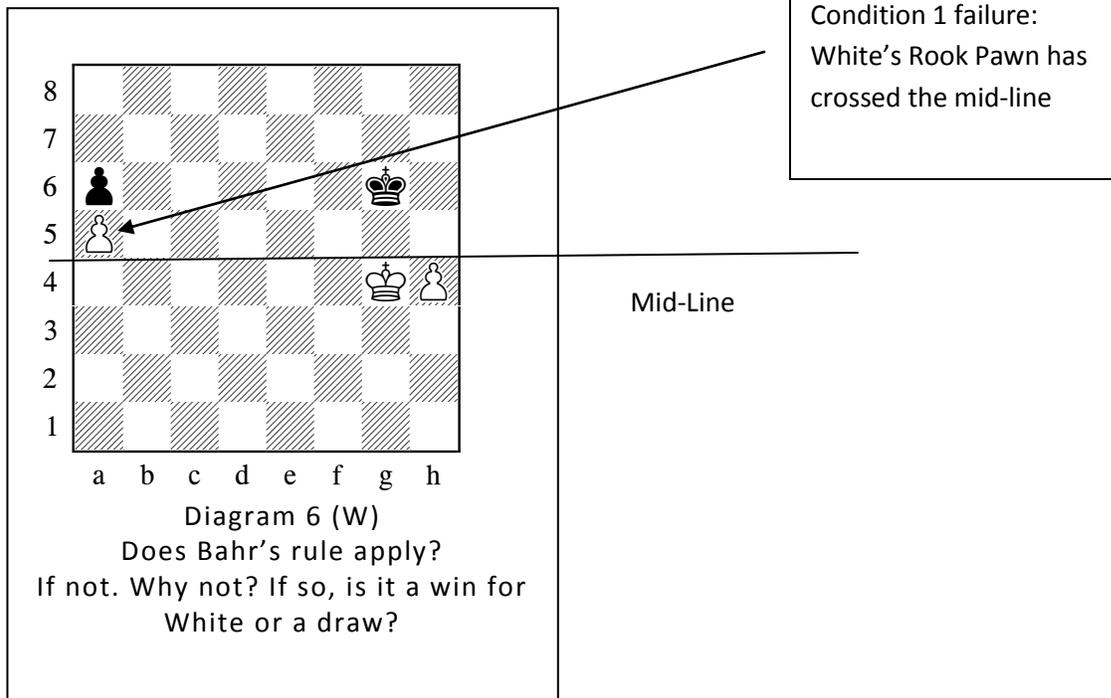


Diagram 7:

Bahr's rule applies because all conditions have been met. White wins because the passed pawn is on the "Border Line"

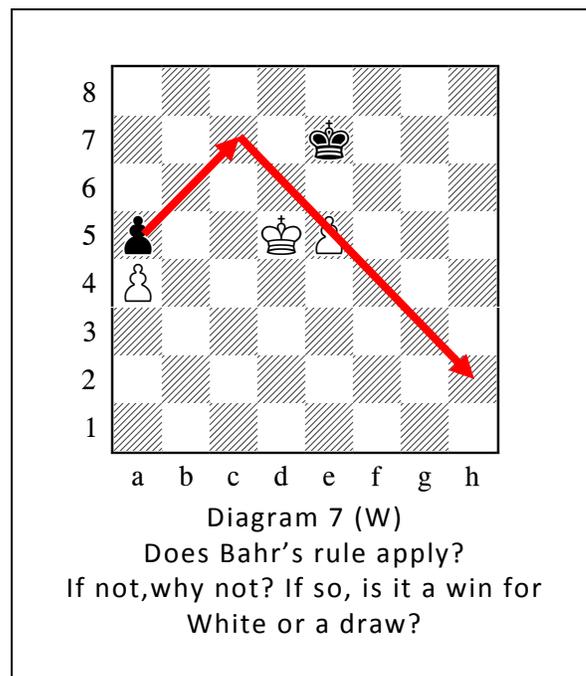


Diagram 8:

Bahr's rule applies because all conditions have been met. Black wins because the passed pawn is on the "Border Line"

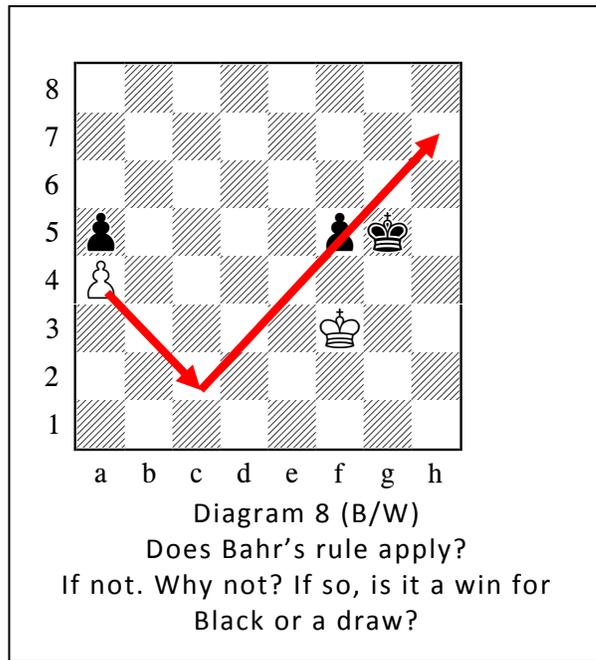


Diagram 9:

Bahr's rule applies because all conditions have been met. The position is a draw because the passed pawn is on the Defender's side of the "Border Line"

