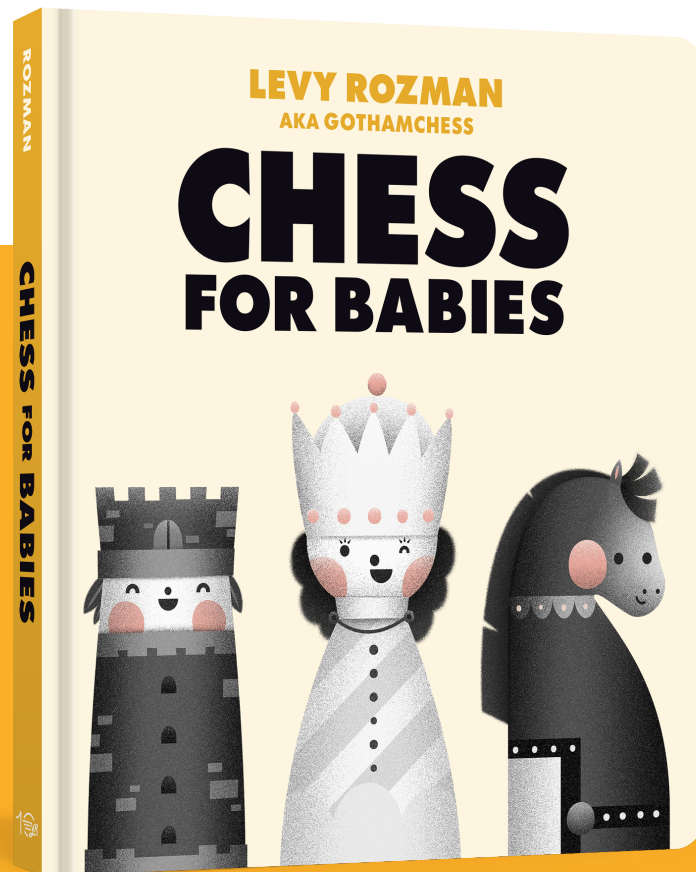


# CELEBRATE CHESS FOR BABIES!

**BY LEVY ROZMAN**  
**ILLUSTRATED BY ¡ZAMORA!**



**CHESS FOR BABIES** introduces the world’s greatest game to its youngest audience yet through bold, high-contrast art and simple concepts, making it perfect for developing minds. Written by International Master and YouTube phenomenon Levy Rozman (aka GothamChess), this story-time program encourages playful early learning, interaction, and accessible exploration.

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## PROGRAM GOALS

- Supports children’s early literacy and learning.
- Introduces chess concepts in an imaginative, age-appropriate, and non-competitive way through encouraging movement and sensory exploration.
- Creates a welcoming environment for children (and other attendees), no chess experience required!

## IDEAL AUDIENCE AGE

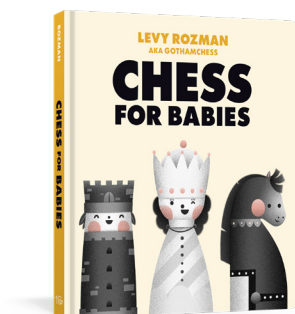
Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers—but really, if you don’t know anything about chess, this is a truly fun way to learn!

## EVENT DURATION

20–30 minutes (5-10 minutes reading time with 10-20 minutes for activities)

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Painter’s tape or foam tiles for marking out a “chessboard” area
- Large chess pieces—paper cutouts are more than sufficient
- Preprinted silhouettes of chess pieces
- Paper crowns
- Crayons, stickers, glue sticks, popsicle sticks
- Music source for movement activities



# CHES FOR BABIES

# EVENT OUTLINE

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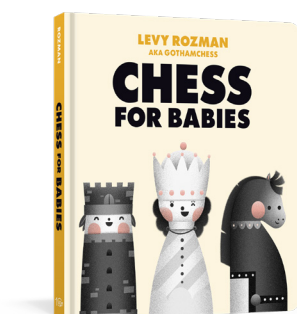
## WELCOMING REMARKS (approx. 2 minutes)

Greet families and introduce the book and the author.

**Levy Rozman (aka GothamChess) is an online chess streamer and International Master. A former scholastic chess coach, he is passionate about chess accessibility and has helped teach millions of people to play chess. Today we're learning the very basics, perfect for babies, toddlers, and beginners of all ages!**

Read *Chess for Babies* and point out some of the following things:

- Highlight the bold illustrations.
- Talk about the names and shapes of the pieces.
- Invite audience participation—"Point to the rook! What color is the King's page?"



# CHESS FOR BABIES ACTIVITIES

## A GENTLE MOVEMENT ACTIVITY: BE THE CHESS PIECE!

Children in the group act out how each piece “moves.”

Pawn → small steps, Rook → straight lines, Bishop → diagonals, Knight → L-shape jumps, Queen → any direction they choose, King → slow, regal steps

**BENEFITS:** Encourages gross motor play and concept recognition.

## SENSORY PLAY: GIANT FLOOR CHESSBOARD EXPLORATION

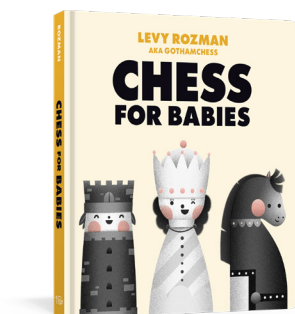
- Tape out a simple chess board on the floor (you can also use foam tiles here) and place your chess piece cutouts on the board.
- Babies can crawl around while toddlers walk to identify squares or pieces.

**BENEFITS:** Encourages spacial awareness.

## FINE MOTOR SKILLS AND CREATIVE PLAY: CHECKMATE CRAFTS

- Decorate a crown good enough for a King or a Queen!
- Create chess piece stick puppets.
- Encourage participants to imagine and tell a simple story using their puppet and crown creations.

**BENEFITS:** Explores creativity and storytelling skills.



# CHESS FOR BABIES ACTIVITIES

## STORYTELLER GAME: WHERE WILL THE PIECE GO?

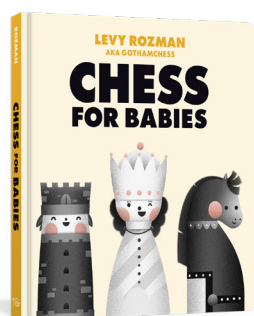
- Event leader performs a simple hand gesture that gives the rest of the group a clue as to which piece is moving (e.g., a straight line in the air for the rook or a diagonal line for the bishop). Invite the group to guess the piece from the gesture.
- Once they have guessed correctly, deliver a short prompt, for example: “The bishop wants to slide. Which way does it go?”
- Encourage the group to point or move their bodies in the direction that matches the piece’s movement.
- Get creative and add in some imaginative or playful prompts like, “The Knight is galloping across a field!” or “The Queen zips any way she wishes!”

**BENEFITS:** Supports early listening skills and gesture-to-meaning recognition.

## GROUP PLAY: CHESS PARADE

- Have everyone in the group form a line around the room for a gentle parade.
- As the leader calls out different chess pieces, the group alters how they move around the room to match (e.g., tiny Pawn steps, gliding L-shapes for Knights, or anything goes for the Queen).
- Talk about the kind of movement you think each piece would have—flying, marching, zooming. Have some fun!
- Rotate through chess pieces every 10 or so seconds to keep things moving.
- To end, invite everyone to come together for a stately King’s stroll around the space, finishing where they started.

**BENEFITS:** Encourages listening and group coordination. This activity can also help reinforce how each chess piece travels with playful repetition of movement.



# EVENT CLOSING REMARKS

(approx. 2 minutes)

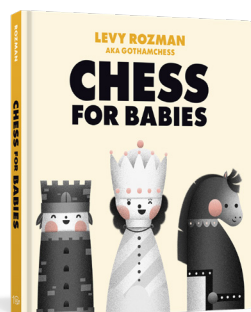
Gather attendees to share which chess piece (or pieces) they liked best.

## Recite an optional goodbye poem:

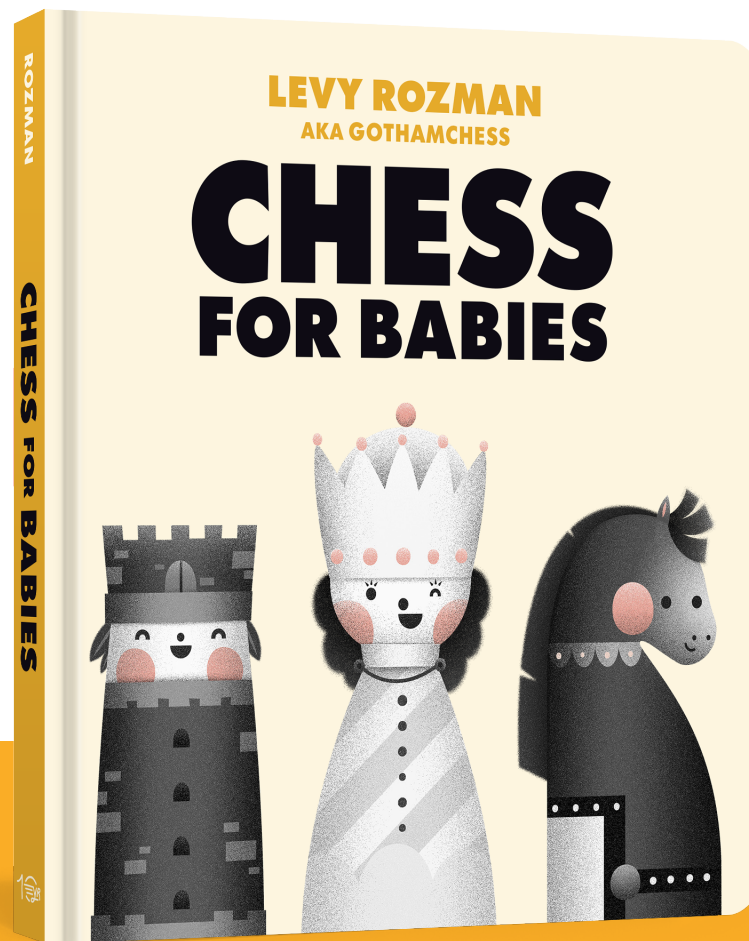
We've met all the chess pieces today,  
And can show how they move when they play.  
First, let's gather them all,  
In the two rows that they fall,  
One side's black, one side's white—there they lay!  
In the front row stands all the pawns—there's eight!  
They can move a square, or two, and go straight,  
But when they move for a capture,  
Then diagonally they go after,  
Just one square at a time, are all their traits.  
In the back row the pieces get tricky!  
Castle-shaped rooks glide across oh so quickly,  
The knights ride in an L,  
the bishops slide diagonally well,  
Each in pairs that flank the royal family.  
The last two can determine a game's fate.  
With the Queen any direction is great,  
The King with careful feet,  
One square he can unseat,  
But watch if he's cornered for a checkmate.  
Chess will keep you learning—you're never done!  
Now it's your turn to play and have some fun!

## NOTES FOR ORGANIZERS/INSTRUCTORS:

- The theme is play, not mastery! Children (and other attendees) do not need to understand chess rules in advance.
- Please emphasize the message that chess really is for everyone—babies, parents, and fans alike.
- Here are some suggestions for how you can use *Chess for Babies* as part of future program planning:
  - Family literacy initiatives
  - STEM and STEAM early learning events
  - Game-themed programming weeks
  - Baby and toddler discovery programs



# CHESS FUN FOR LITTLE ONES!



**WHERE**

**WHEN**