

Chess Book Generator — User Manual

chessbook-generator.html · Updated September 2026 · Client-side (in-browser) processing

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1. Introduction

The Chess Book Generator is a single HTML file that builds a print-oriented A4 PDF from one or more games in PGN format. All parsing and PDF generation run in the browser (client-side). Your PGN is not uploaded to a backend by this tool.

Where you can run it

Open the file from disk or serve it from a web server—both work. Client-side means the work happens in the visitor's browser, not that the page must be a local file only.

Main features

- Publisher always “Heyl Chess”; year always the current calendar year
- Cover / optional cover & back images; Contents; Key to Symbols (states diagram rule); Introduction; games; Players Index; Openings Index (ECO)
- Languages: English, Deutsch, Français, Español
- Board orientation by player name (smart match) or White at bottom by default
- Selectable diagram rule; colour main-line diagrams; grey variation diagrams (80% size)
- Figurine notation; Elo regular weight in headers; result scores 1/0, 0/1, 1/2 in the left column
- Capacity guide for larger PGN files

2. System requirements and hosting

Desktop Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari with JavaScript. Internet on first use for libraries and optional fonts. Host as a static page (Apache, nginx, GitHub Pages, etc.); no server-side generator is required.

3. Getting started

Open the page → Title and Author (required) → optional subtitle, language, introduction → load PGN → layout (font, orientation player, diagram rule, coordinates, images) → Generate PDF. Hard-refresh after deploying a new HTML version.

4. Book metadata

Field	Notes
Book Title / Author	Required; no defaults.
Subtitle	Optional cover line.
Year	Not on the form — always the current year.
Publisher	Not on the form — always “Heyl Chess”.
Language	English, Deutsch, Français, Español.
Introduction	Optional; printed after Key to Symbols.

5. PGN input

File or paste. UTF-8 then Latin-1. Tags used include White, Black, WhiteElo, BlackElo, Result, Event, Site, Date, Round, ECO, Opening, Variation, FEN, SetUp. Games sorted by Date ascending. [#] in comments is stripped.

6. Layout, fonts, orientation, diagrams, and images

Fonts: Helvetica (default), DejaVu Sans, Noto Sans, Times. Coordinates: optional.

Board orientation by player

Optional name field. If it matches White or Black in a game (smart match), that side is drawn at the bottom of the diagrams for that game. Otherwise White is at the bottom. Match is case-insensitive: full name, substring (e.g. Heyl → Heyl, Thomas), tokens, or last name before a comma. Per-game decision. If both sides match, White stays at the bottom.

Diagram occurrence rule

Option	Effect
Comment or NAG	Default. Diagram after text comment and/or NAG.
Written text comment only	Only real {text}; pure NAGs do not create a diagram.

Applies to main line and variations. The chosen rule is printed on the Key to Symbols page.

Cover/back images: JPEG, PNG, WebP, GIF, BMP as full-page backgrounds (not SVG/PDF).

7. Generating the PDF and capacity

Level	Games	Meaning
Comfortable	≤ ~60	Annotated games with many diagrams
Heavy	~60-120	Warning; lower diagram resolution
Hard limit	250	Run refused; split the PGN

8. Structure of the finished book

- Cover → blank → Contents (Game n: White - Black only) → Key to Symbols → Introduction → Games
- Players Index → Openings Index (ECO) → (blank if needed) → Back cover

9. Notation, Elo, and annotations

Figurine notation; main line bold; variations regular. Header: name bold, Elo regular; result 1/0, 0/1, or 1/2 right-aligned in the left column. Event, Site on one line (comma). Date · Round · ECO below.

10. Diagrams (main line and variations)

- After the move's comment (per selected rule)
- Main line: colour, column width; variations: grey, 80%, centred
- Orientation follows the player-name setting per game
- Skip variation diagram if it equals the current main-line position

11. Two-column layout and running footers

Game body in two columns. Running footer with title and page number (odd/even placement).

12. Contents, Key to Symbols, and indexes

Contents without tournament names; dotted leaders. Key to Symbols includes the active diagram rule. Players and Openings (ECO) indexes with linked game numbers.

13. Chess960 / freestyle

SetUp + FEN supported; freestyle castling when needed.

14. Encoding

UTF-8 then Latin-1 on upload. Unicode in introduction and names supported.

15. Tips

- Works from a web server or a local file; processing is always in the browser.
- Set orientation player to your name so you sit at the bottom in your games.
- Hard-refresh after deploying a new HTML version.

16. Troubleshooting

Symptom	Try
Hangs on loading pieces	CDN/network; hard-refresh.
Old behaviour after update	Hard-refresh / clear cache.
Wrong board side	Check orientation player spelling; smart match uses partial names.
No diagram on NAG only	Use "comment or NAG", or add {text}.
Too many games	Split PGN; max 250 blocks/run.

17. Limitations

- Browser memory and jsPDF limit practical book size.
- Publisher and year are fixed (Heyl Chess / current year).

- Fixed A4 portrait; not a full Chess960 engine.

18. Quick reference

Deploy: Static HTML anywhere; open in a browser; PDF is built client-side.

Workflow: Title & author → PGN → font / orientation player / diagram rule / images → Generate PDF.

Fixed: Publisher “Heyl Chess”; year = current year.

Orientation: Matching player’s colour at bottom; else White at bottom.