

White's objective is to not let black push the pawn forward.

If white plays Kd8, then black can check with Kh1+ and will eventually be able to push the pawn (first diagram).

So, white should play Kf1 with the following moves: 1. Kf1 Rh1+ 2. Kg2 Ra1 3. Rb5 Ke2 4. Kb2+ Kd3. Eventually, this leads to Rb3 preventing e3 with the pawn, while the black king is on 1st rank (Ke1). No progress is possible for black, and white can secure the draw by repetition.



All that can be further explored by the interested reader.

11.7. Lucena position

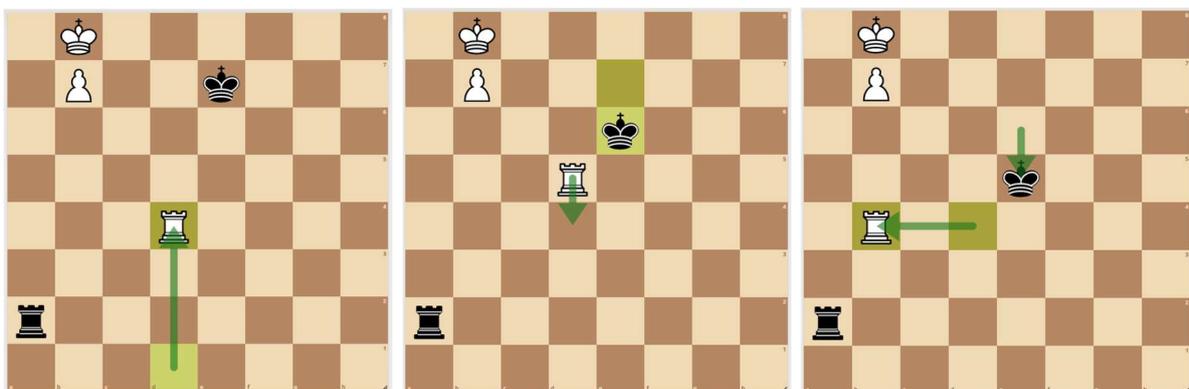
The previous Philidor position means that the side with the additional pawn can not win and has to accept the draw, if the opponent plays perfectly.

The alternative position is the Lucena position. Usually, rook and pawn endgames lead to either of them. Contrary to the Philidor, the Lucena position is winning for the side with the extra pawn. So, this is what the winning side wants to achieve. White to play (and win) in this position.



The way to win from that position includes the concept of building a bridge. The bridge is a shield of the king and pawn by the rook. I will try to show how this is done with the following diagrams. Moves are 1. Rd1+ Ke7 (second diagram above)

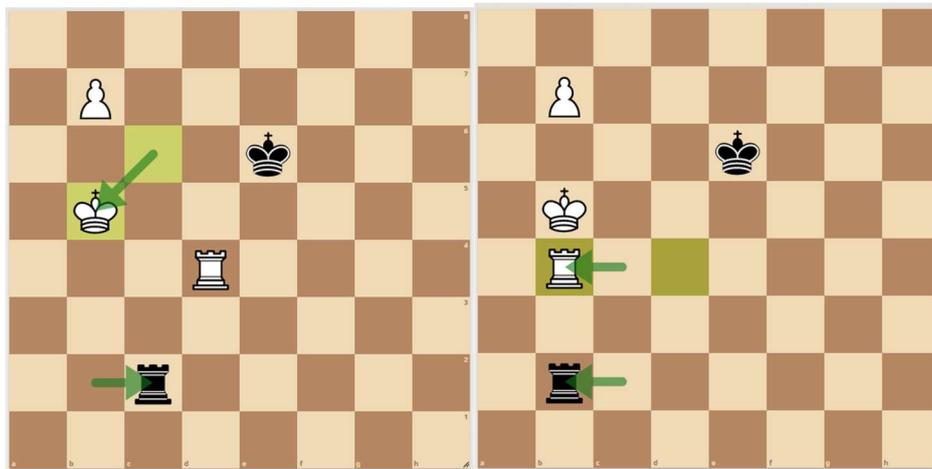
Continued moves: 2. Rd4 (first diagram below). Note that Rd5 is also winning (second diagram), but we avoid the 2.. Ke6, which requires again 3. Rd4 (third diagram) anyway, and in case the black king follows attacking the rook, the rook will go to b-file, as intended from the beginning. So, we will follow this without those interim moves.



So, after the initial Rd4, let us assume that black king will go closer, to Ke6. White moves their king to Kc7 looking forward to bring the king behind the pawn and build the bridge with the rook as follows:



The final position (right hand side below) is the famous bridge. Black can not check, nor threaten the pawn. White will queen and win the game.

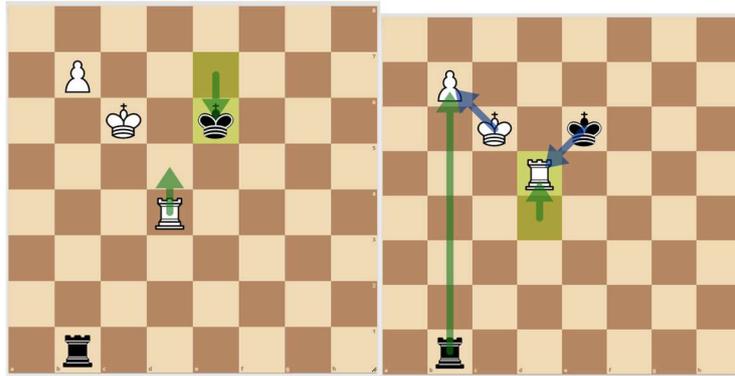


If black tried to go far in order to threaten the pawn later, say on Rf2, white would still build the bridge, and then the king would protect the pawn on the 8th rank. After the position to the right-hand side, black can not check the king and can not avoid exchanging the rook for the new queen, even if he tries to stop that by Rb8, as the white king will approach.



11.7.1. Best chance of black to get a draw.

If white is not very well prepared, there is a way for black to get a draw. Instead of checking the king on Rc1+, black could go into horizontal opposition with Ke6. This may induce a blunder by white! If white thinks that a bridge can be build on the fifth rank, and moves: Rd5, then black can take the pawn with the rook, which will lead to exchange of rooks and a draw! Here is how:

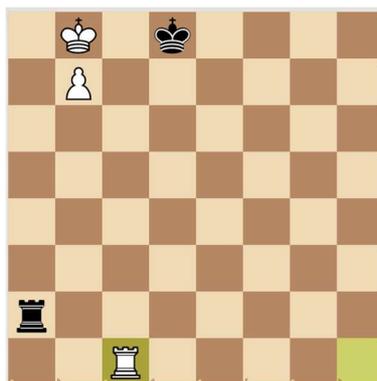


In this case, white can check the black king with $Rd6+$, which will push him away, thus making it indeed possible to build the bridge on the fifth rank.

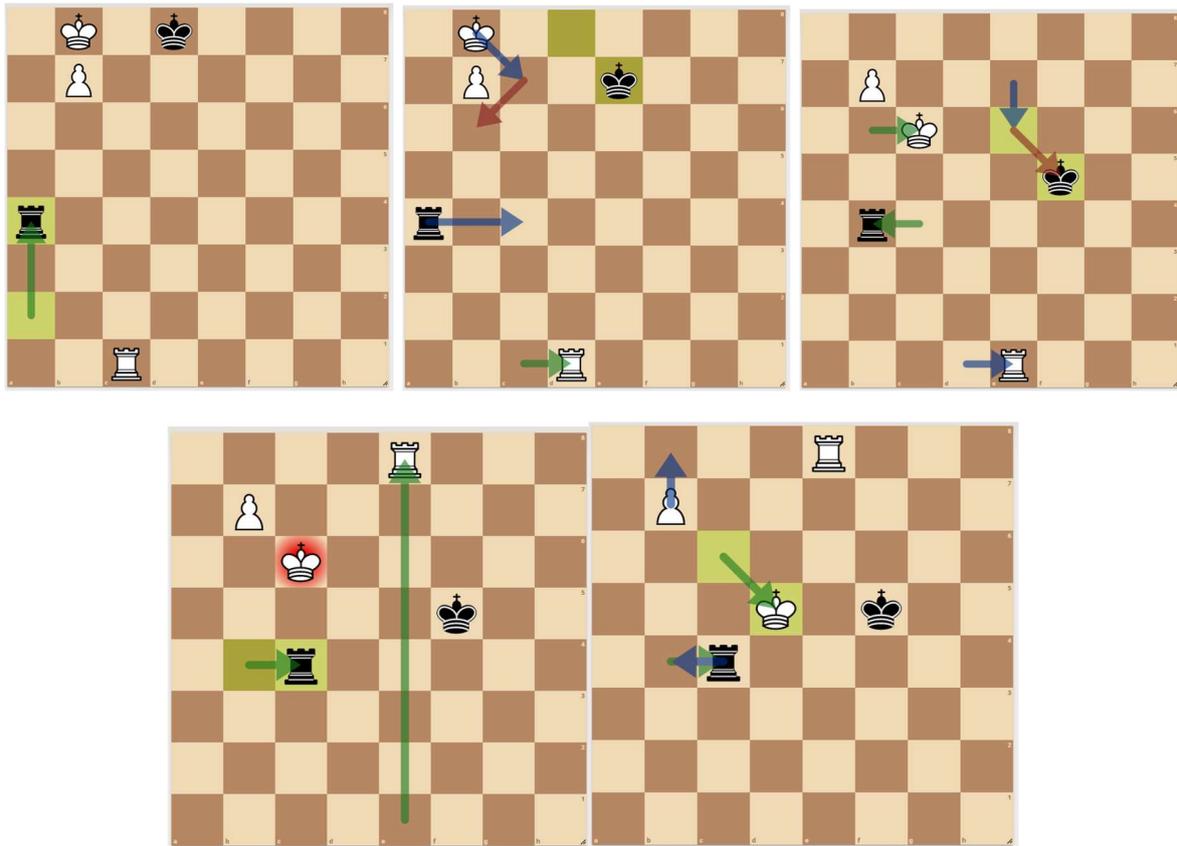


11.7.2. Lucena position with black to play

If it is black's turn, white still wins! Black has two main moves: $Ra1$ and $Kd7$. Both are losing. We will analyse them separately.

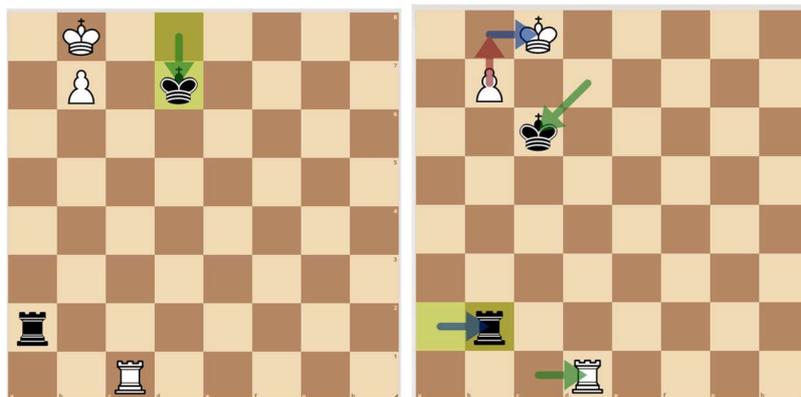


First choice: $Ra4$



As you see above, white can queen and exchange the new queen for the black's rook.

Similarly in the case of Ke7, as follows:



The conclusion is that the side with the rook and pawn (vs the side with the rook only) wants to get the game to the Lucena position regardless of whose turn it is, rather than the Philidor position, which is a draw if played well by both players.