

Practical Examples of Named Checkmate Patterns

There are certain checkmate patterns in chess that are either so common, or so spectacular that they have been given names. A partial list of named checkmates contains:

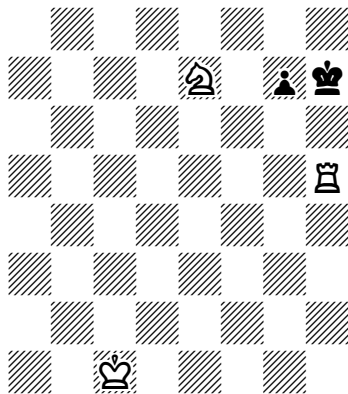
- Anastasia's mate
- Arabian mate
- Bishop and knight mate
- Boden's mate
- Epaulette mate
- Hook mate
- Legal's mate
- Reti's mate
- Philidore's mate
- Fool's mate
- Scholar's mate

There are many more. You can see a comprehensive online list at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Checkmate_pattern

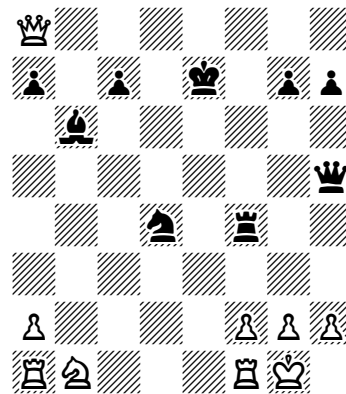
I would like to take a few examples from above, show the bare bones position, then show an example from a real game where the pattern emerged.

Anastasia's mate



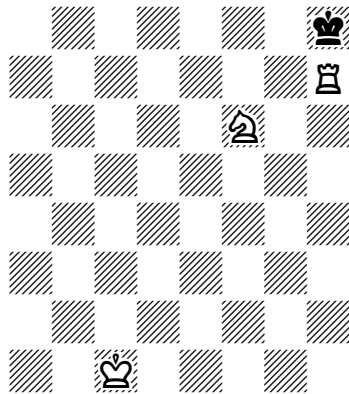
Note how the white knight and black pawn hem the black king against the side of the board.

Bayer v Falkbeer, 1852



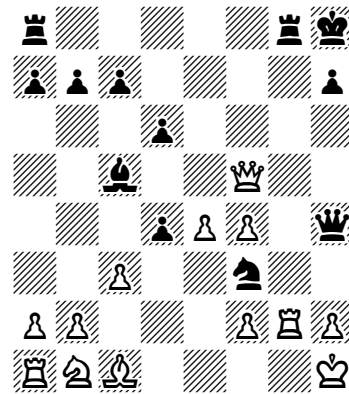
This position occurred after white played 20 Qxa8. Black followed up with 21...Ne2+ 22 Kh1 Qxh2+ 23 Kxh2 Rh4#.

Arabian mate



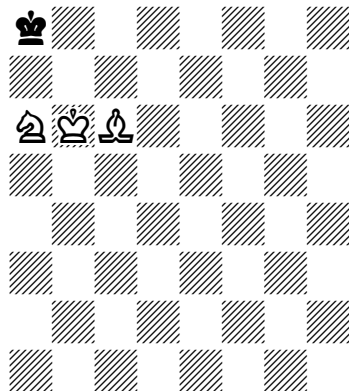
Note that the knight supports the rook giving checkmate in a corner of the board.

Reiner v Stienitz, 1860



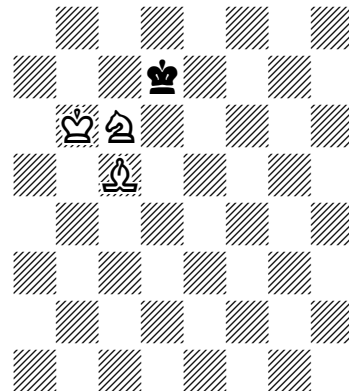
This position occurred after white played 17 Rg2. Black followed up with 17 Qxh2+ 18 Rxh2 Rg1#.

Bishop and knight mate



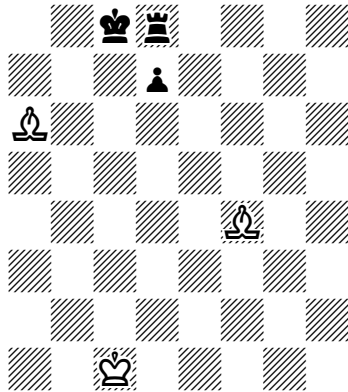
This position (in a corner) can be forced in less than 50 moves once the last pawns come off the board. The checkmate corner color must match the bishop's color.

Zechiel v GuestLZXQ, 2011



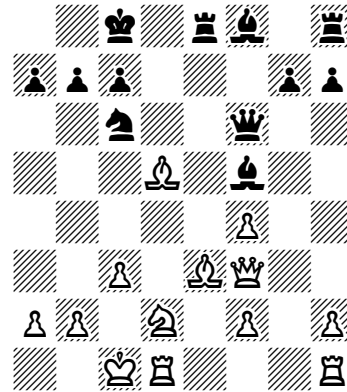
This position occurred after white played 68 Nxc6. Play continued 68...Kc8 69 Ne5 Kb8 70 Kc6 Ka8 71 Nf7 Kb8 72 Nd6 Ka8 73 Ne8 Kb8 74 Nc7 Kc8 {this is the "starting" position that must be achieved, with knight, king and bishop lined up} 75 Ba7 Kd8 76 Nd5 Kc8 77 Ne7+ Kd8 78 Kd6 Ke8 79 Ke6 Kd8 80 Bb6+ Ke8 {we are "walking" the king to the correct corner} 81 Bc7 Kf8 82 Nf5 Ke8 83 Ng7+ Kf8 84 Kf6 Kg8 85 Kg6 Kf8 86 Bd6+ Kg8 87 Nf5 Kh8 88 Be7 Kg8 89 Nh6+ Kh8 90 Bf6#.

Boden's mate



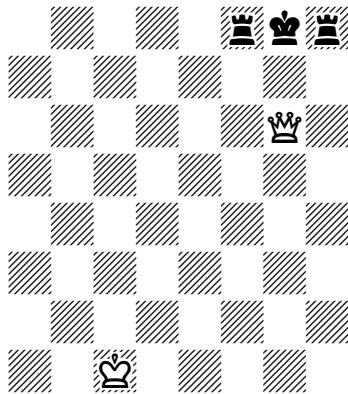
Boden's mate is characterized by the bishops delivering checkmate typically to a king that has castled on the queen's side, along with a queen sacrifice.

Schulder v Boden, 1853



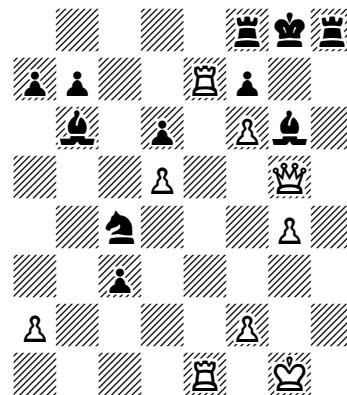
This position occurred after white played 14 Bxd5. Play continued 14...Qxc3+ 15 bxc3 Ba3#.

Epaulette mate



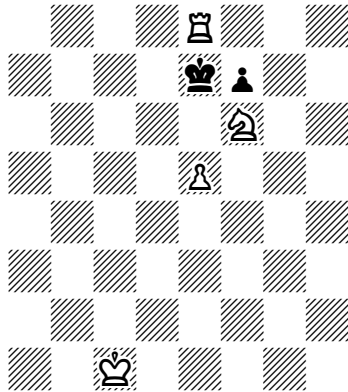
The Epaulette mate is characterized when mate is delivered to a king on an edge of the board, and the squares on either side of the king are occupied by his own men.

Neumann v Mayet, 1866



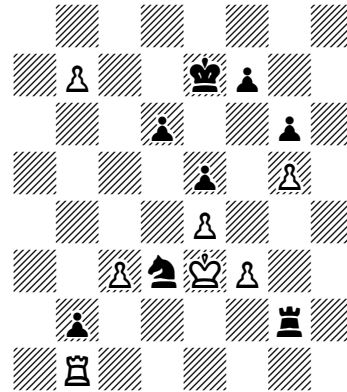
This position occurred after black played 29...Bxg6. Play continued 30 Qxg6+ fxg6 31 Rg7#.

Hook mate



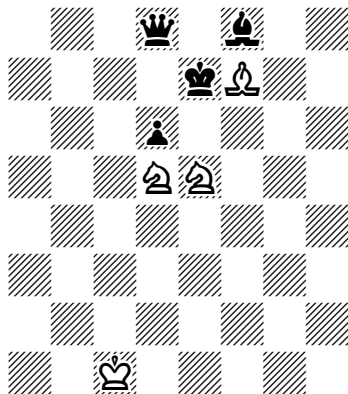
The Hook mate has the rook, knight and some of the opponent's men working to effect the checkmate.

sjames666 v Zechiel, 2012



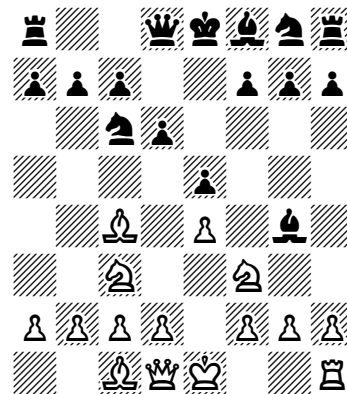
White has just played 50 b7?? instead of capturing the black knight. Play continued 50...Nf4 51 Rxb2 Rxb2 52 b8=Q Re2#.

Légal's mate



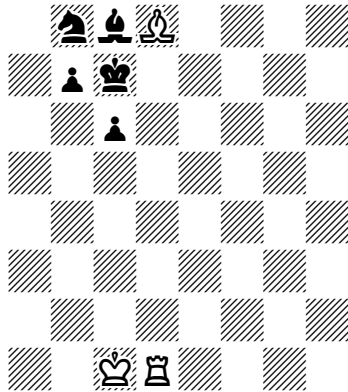
Légal's mate, in which two knights and a bishop effect checkmate.

Légal v Saint Brie, 1750



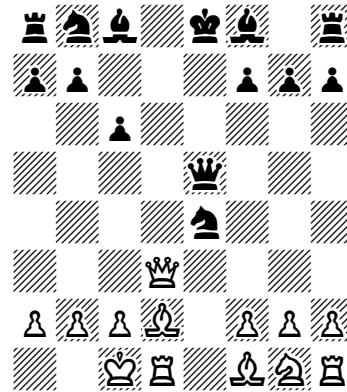
Position after 4...Bg4. Légal gave his opponent queen rook odds in this game. Play continued 5 Nxe5 Bxd1 6 Bxf7+ Ke7 7 Nd5#.

Réti's mate



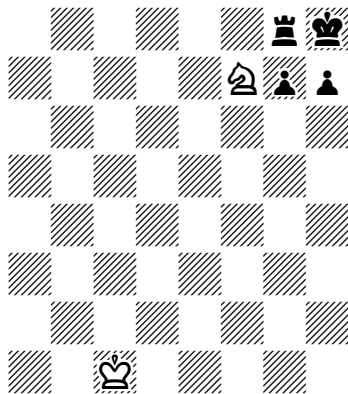
This pattern is named after Richard Réti, one of the better players from the early 20th century. Note the bishop delivering mate on the 8th rank.

Réti v Tartakower, 1910



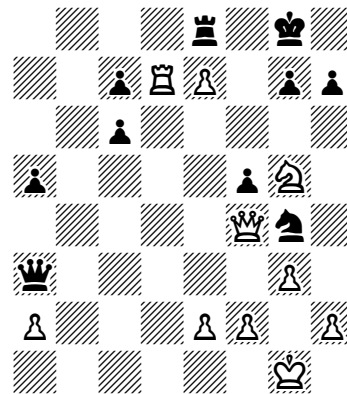
This position occurred after black's move, 8...Nxe4. White uncorked a sucker punch with 9 Qd8+ Kxd8 10 Bg5+ Kc7 11 Bd8#. A very pretty finish!

Philidore's Legacy



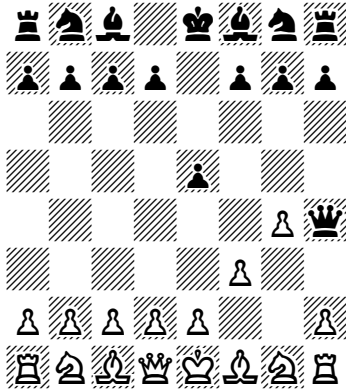
The ending of the smothered mate popularized by François-André Danican Philidor, the great 18th century player.

Timman v Short, 1990



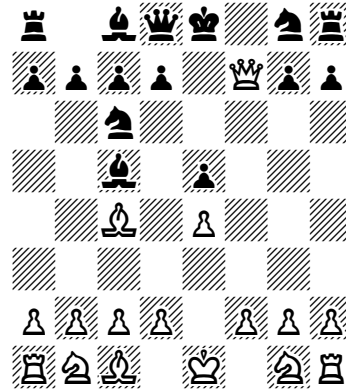
This is the position after black played 25...Re8. Play went as follows: 26 Qc4+ Kh8 27 Nf7+ Kg8 28 Nh6+ Kh8 29 Qg8+ Rxc8 30 Nf7#. About as pretty of a checkmate that there is.

Fool's mate



This is the first checkmate that you typically learn. 1 f3? e5 2 g4?? Qh4#.

Scholar's mate



This is the second checkmate you typically learn. 1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Bc5 3 Qh5 Nc6 4 Qxf7#.