

The world's largest endgame study database - edition 4 (HHdbIV)

Introduction



The fourth edition of the famous Harold van der Heijden endgame study database (HHdbIV) is available now. The new edition not only has more than eight thousand extra studies, but also the solutions of tens of thousands of studies have been corrected or updated. It is by far the most comprehensive collection of endgame studies available.

Chess players can benefit from endgame studies by trying to solve them. This trains both one's calculation ability and tactical performance in the endgame.

For the endgame study enthusiast, either admirer, cook hunter, composer or tourney judge HHdbIV is indispensable. Apart from the new studies the new version has many improvements over the previous edition.

www.hhdbiv.nl

What is an endgame study?

An endgame study is a chess position presented as a puzzle with the stipulation *White wins*, or *White draws*, and has a unique solution. Although it looks like a game fragment, an endgame study has been composed. A good endgame study should have an entertaining solution with surprising moves or beautiful combinations that baffle chess players. It is also fun to try and solve endgame studies for both beginners and world class grandmasters as difficulty ranges from simple to very difficult.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endgame_study

Chess Players

"Studies are a very important part of the chess culture. I use a lot of studies for the training of imagination and calculations. The study database of Harold van der Heijden is the best source if you are looking for the less known positions".

GM Artur Yusupov, 2010.

"In addition to providing excellent material for training one's calculating abilities, endgame studies open a window into the artistic side of chess. The van der Heijden database is widely recognised as the premier reference source for studies". **GM John Nunn, 2010.**



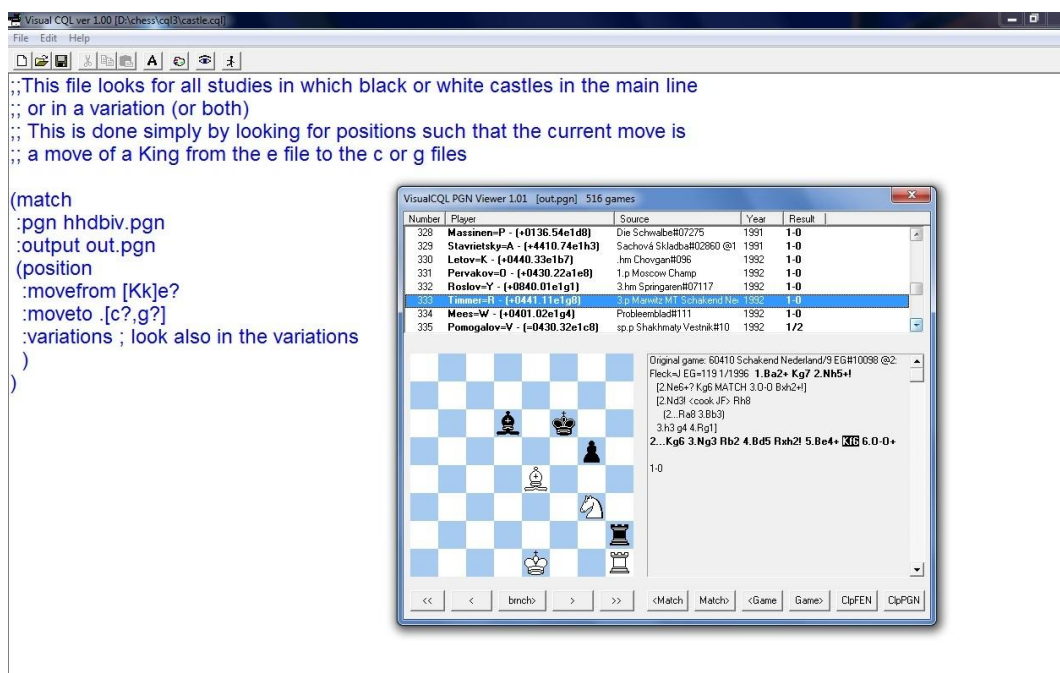
Yusupov solves a study

Software

The database is in PGN-format. This is a standard chess database format and can be accessed by commercial chess database programs (like ChessBase, Chess Assistant), commercial chess playing software (Fritz, Rybka, Shredder, etc.) and many freeware programs (e.g. PGN-readers).

The PGN-format was developed for storing chess games, but is also suitable for a database of endgame studies. Apart from the initial position and the solution (including sublines or analysis) also additional information is provided: the name(s) of the composer(s), the GBR-code which is an index code denoting the chess force in the initial position, place and date of the primary source (tourney, journal, magazine) and whether it is a win or a draw study.

The chess software mentioned above can be used to find studies in the database by name, year, source, material balance, and numerous other criteria. Most chess software also allows you to find positions or moves. For advanced users (like judges and composers) a magnificent tool was especially developed for the endgame study database by Lewis Stiller and Gady Costeff for finding complex patterns and manoeuvres: Chess Query Language (CQL). CQL as well as the graphical interface Visual CQL (programmed by Emil Vlasák) are freely downloadable.



Screenshot of Chess Query Language and Visual CQL.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portable_Game_Notation

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ChessBase>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chess_Assistant

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_chess_software

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GBR_code

<http://rbnn.com/cql/>

<http://www.volny.cz/evcomp/vcql.htm>

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~timkr/chess2/cql.htm>

Comments of Endgame Study Experts

"Enthusiasm and dogged persistence can compile a comprehensive database. It is an achievement in another dimension to maintain, expand and improve it over nearly two decades since the first compact disk in 1991. Yet this is what Dutchman Harold van der Heijden has done, and we can all reap the benefit. Competition? There *is* no competition". **John Roycroft, founder of EG.**



Gady Costeff (endgame study composer and CQL programmer) & John Roycroft

"The study database of Harold van der Heijden is the biggest and most comprehensive one. One can always discover something new. Due to its PGN format, it is easily possible to search for specific authors and tourneys". **Siegfried Hornecker, Germany.**

"Die Studiendatenbank von Harold van der Heijden ist die größte und vollständigste. Man kann immer wieder etwas Neues entdecken. Das PGN-Format ermöglicht dabei die mühelose Suche nach bestimmten Autoren oder Turnieren". **Siegfried Hornecker.**

"Harold's database today is a must for endgame study composers and judges; ignoring it is like having to rediscover America again and again, in this way wasting both your time and reputation. 8000+ new studies, references to the EG magazine and to anticipators, exact dates – again it represents a lot of invested effort". **Emil Vlasák, Czech Republic.**

„Haroldova databáze je dnes pro skladatele studií a rozhodčí zcela nezbytná; bez ní budou znovu a znovu objevovat Ameriku a ztrácet tak cenný čas i reputaci. 8000+ nových studií, reference do EG magazínu a na předchůdce, přesná data – to vše reprezentuje mnoho tvrdé práce tradičně vložené do nové verze“. **Emil Vlasák.**

"Van der Heijden's Database is the definitive source of chess studies and the release of the enlarged and improved Edition 4 is great news. These studies, challenging the reader to win or draw in improbably circumstances, are great tactical training material and will amaze, baffle, entertain and enthrall in turn. Terrific value". **Guy Haworth, Great Britain.**

What's new in HHdbIV? (information for experienced users)

HHdbIV contains considerably more information than HHdbIII. Apart from over 8000 extra studies, also the solutions of tens of thousands of studies have been updated, e.g. by adding sublimes from primary sources. For instance, all sublimes from the gigantic book *1414 Fins de Partie* (1950) of Henri Rinck have been added, while in HHdbIII in most instances only the main line was given. That is useful, because e.g. CQL allows to search for patterns in sublimes.

Also, many endgame study enthusiasts reported thousands of cooks in studies to Harold. Even software has been used to systematically check every sub-7-man position of the main line in the corresponding EGTB, and the results have been kindly supplied for implementation in HHdbIV. Probably all incorrections (where Black is able to refute the stipulation) in sub-7 man positions have now been included in the database. Of course, unsoundness of other endgame studies is an ongoing issue; i.e. work in progress!

A major improvement in HHdbIV is that also the sources of corrections, modifications or versions have been added as text before the 1st move of the solution. The same goes for the cooks, including the names of the person(s) who cooked the study (and the relevant move is marked with his initials). This information is relevant for people writing about endgame studies. Without HHdbIV it is almost impossible to find out where a certain correction of a study was published, or who managed to cook that famous prize winner!

Other details/corrections:

- Publication year of pre-1792 studies added.
- Square brackets in GBR-code (interfere with some PGN-readers) replaced by standard brackets.
- Cooks in main line without sub-branching are now correctly indicated.
- Underscores in names replaced by space.
- If known, exact publication dates (e.g. newspapers) or publication month (magazines) are included.
- Plagiarism: reference to the relevant study added.
- For studies that were inspired on a previous study ("after"): reference to the relevant study added.
- EG-number added.
- For some studies, the composer mentioned the composition date (year) of a study which (of course) was earlier than the year of publication. This information is included.

Similarly to HHdbIII, codes are included to be able to identify cooks, corrections and other relevant properties of the endgame studies:

@1: second solution (at move 1).

@2: cook; extra solution after move 1.

@3: incorrect; White is unable to fulfil the stipulation (in a win study Black draws or wins; in a draw study White loses).

@4: "super-cook". White can even win in a study with a draw stipulation.

(@1) or (@2): minor duals.

@1?, @2?, @3?, @4?: suspicious, or claim without analysis.

(c): correction; i.e. original study was incorrect.

(m): modification; i.e. original study was correct, the improvement has another motivation.

(v): version (perhaps a correction or a modification).

(s): corrected solution (without changing the position).

(ea): too many composers' names to fit. All names given as text before the first move.

(tw): twin study (also triplicates, quadruplicates, etc).

(pl): plagiarism or accidental re-composition (it does happen!). Although there is no doubt in many a case, all studies in the database are only considered “suspect”.

(ph): posthumously published.

(te): theoretical ending (i.e. probably not an endgame study).

(cr): colours reversed (the original stipulation was, for instance: Black to play and win).

(ce): computer ending (EGTB-derived ending).

(tt): theme tourney.

Statistics

The previous editions from 1991, 2000 and 2005 contained 23358, 58801, and 67691 endgame studies respectively. The new version has no less than 76,132 endgame studies. When you would undertake to play through all the studies at a rate of 3 minutes per study for 3 hours EVERY day, it would cost you three and a half years to accomplish that task!

Personal profile

Dr. Harold van der Heijden (b. 1960) is one of the world's leading experts on endgame studies. He is: chief editor of the famous international magazine EG, board member of the Dutch endgame circle ARVES, FIDE judge for endgame studies, Section Director of the endgame study section of the FIDE Album, author of two books about endgame studies, collector of books with endgame studies and a successful endgame study composer himself.

Professionally, after obtaining a PhD in 2009 (Utrecht University), he became head of the R&D-department of a veterinary laboratory early 2010. He is married and has two sons (21 and 18).

Harold's endgame study website: <http://home.concepts.nl/~he16442/>



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_van_der_Heijden

http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_van_der_Heijden

http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_van_der_Heijden

http://webcast.chessclub.com/preview/Watson/2010_04_27/Watson_preview.html

<http://www.maxeuwe.nl/columns/index.html>

<http://www.arves.org/English/index.htm>