

## 2026 TOURNAMENT CHESS CALENDAR

I have attempted to select suitable tournaments and give a brief description. Generally the tournaments selected are reasonably local, but some may involve an overnight stay depending on where you live. Further information can be found on the ECF website: select Calendar; Events; and scroll down to the date of the tournament. It's worth keeping an eye on this page as tournaments are added all the time. For example I'm expecting some Psyon tournaments at Whittlesford again this year.

Events are usually Congresses (5 round standard play rated weekend tournaments) or Rapidplays (one day, 5 or 6 rounds). There are usually several tournaments with rating limits at each event, catering for different standards of player. It's probably best to enter the tournament in which your rating fits, but if you are close to the top of that section and want to test yourself against stronger opposition by all means play in the next higher tournament.

24/25 January East Anglian Closed Championships, Newmarket. Three standard play tournaments (Open, U1950, U1650). Junior titles and prizes in each section.

24/25 January Northampton FIDE Congress. 5 standard play rounds with 4 tournaments (U2400, U1900, U1600, U1400)

Sunday 25 January Colchester Junior Chess Rapidplay. Suitable for keen but inexperienced players.

Sunday 1 February Norfolk Rapidplay, Coltishall (NE of Norwich - quite a trip). Open and U1450 tournaments.

Sunday 1 February Nottingham Rapidplay. Open, U1900, U1700, U1500, U1300 tournaments.

**Saturday 7 February ALCA Junior Under 16 Rapidplay**, Sawston. Three tournaments (Open, U1250, U1000 rating). An ideal starter event for keen players new to tournament chess. Full details and how to enter attached.

Saturday 14 February Broadland Junior, Norwich (Three tournaments, U12, U15, U18)

Saturday 21 February Colchester Rapidplay

**7/8 March English Youth Championships**, Nottingham. Separate boys and girls tournaments in age bands U10, U12, U14, U16, U18. The best players will get the opportunity to represent England in international junior events.

**14/15 March British Rapidplay Championships**, Peterborough. Play from midday to mid-evening on Saturday and morning to late afternoon on Sunday. Just one tournament and the standard will be high among the elite players, but there will be club players attracted by playing in a British Championship. Suitable for stronger, keen players with good stamina .

28/29 March Milton Keynes Congress. Four tournaments (Open, U1900, U1600, U1400).

11/12 April St Albans Congress Four rated tournaments.

18/19 April Nottingham Congress Five rated tournaments.

25/26 April Great Yarmouth Congress Three rated tournaments.

### **Dates for your diary**

**1-9 August British Chess Championships**, University of Warwick Includes junior championships and lots of opportunities to play in different events.

Sunday 27 September Cambridgeshire Rapidplay (Whittlesford)

Sunday 11 October East Anglian County Junior Teams Jamboree

18/19 October Bury St Edmunds Chess Congress

You will see that I have marked four tournaments in bold. The ALCA Rapidplay on 7 February is aimed at keen players who wish to experience tournament chess and to get an ECF rating. This requires ECF membership (Junior Gold is free in the first year and £14pa thereafter), but ECF membership is needed for all rated events.

The other three tournaments are rather different to the weekend Congress/rapidplay, but each presents opportunities for the stronger juniors to gain recognition beyond East Anglia.

I'm conscious that I've got a rather longer list than I originally envisaged, and I'm not suggesting that you do more than play in a few events, but playing in some (preferably including a standard play tournament) is an important part of your chess development.

Paul Kemp