

QueenAlice - The Site for Casual Chess on the Web (A Review)

Article Rating: NA

Submitted by: articlediner on 2005-10-05 and viewed 84 times.

Total Word Count: 723

Author Rating:

Sample of Content:

This review is about QueenAlice.com, an impressive free web site for playing a nice casual game of chess with your friends, or with anyone else around the world. Enjoy the review.

Content:

I've been playing chess since I was 15 years old. I was in the Chess Club in school. And I remember the big media blitz on chess during the Boris Spasky versus Bobby Fisher matches. Whew! That was a long time ago. But I'm still a big chess player. As such, I'm always on the lookout for a good internet based chess client where I can hang my chess hat. In my initial search I tried many different sites. I even paid for membership on one of the sites for awhile. But then I came across www.queenalice.com! QueenAlice is a

web based chess site that provides correspondence chess playing in a very laid back and non-intimidating environment. What attracted me to QueenAlice was the need to be able to play some chess with some of my remote friends, by making moves when I had the time. Which is where QueenAlice shines! When a player makes a move, QueenAlice will send an email to the opponent, letting them know that it's their turn to move. Moves can be spread out for up to 14 days per move or up to 90 days per game. The email message contains a layout of the board and a history of the game moves.

One of the features that I use the most on QueenAlice is called the "Think" gear. When you click on this, you can move pieces around the board and try out different move combinations, without affecting the actual game. Then when you're done trying out your "what if" positions, you click on the gear again and go back to the original board setup. Currently there are just a little over 600 players, from all around the world. There is support for multiple languages and players can contribute to new translations if their language is not currently supported. Players can play rated or nonrated games. Ratings are provisional during the first 25 games, and then the player gets an "established" rating. The rating calculations are posted on the site for review. There are also ongoing Round Robin and Swiss System tournaments.

The ART of Software Development in QueenAlice is in the feel of the site and the dedication of the author Miguel. The theme of the site is taken from the book "Through the Looking Glass" by Lewis Carroll. The site itself is very easy to use and does not promote the "pretentious" attitude found on many chess sites. It's the perfect place to go for a "casual" game of chess. Miguel has done an excellent job of putting the site together. He's always available to listen to comments and recommendations made by the users. Much of the feel and functionality of the site is due to comments from the players. There is an active forum on the site where players can discuss chess tatics, site functionality, or just life in general topics. I have found QueenAlice to be an excellent location for playing chess with many of my friends who are not computer or internet experts. It's very easy to register and begin playing without having to jump through a lot of techical configuration hoops. And the site is currently free to use. It has been during the past few years that I've been using it. There is a minimal amount of advertising on the site, but it does not get in the way of playing or using the site.

Now if you're looking for high end chess discussions with international chess masters and advocates, then you'll be happier on other sites like The World Chess Network, The Red Hot Pawn, or The Internet Chess Club. If you want a casual game of chess, with some very friendly folks, on a very easy to use site, then QueenAlice is THE place to go. Now if they could just figure out how to serve expresso with each game. Check it out at www.queenalice.com

Timothy Trimble, The ART of Software Development

Timothy Trimble is a award winning, freelance writer, and software developer. He has written a book for Microsoft Press, articles for significant computer industry trade magazines, and is currently working on his second computer technology book to be published in early 2006. He is the Blog publisher of The ART of Software Development which can be found via his web site at <http://www.timothytrimble.info>

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About the Author:

Timothy Trimble