

Online Training with ChessBase 14

This short manual will show you how you might run online training sessions by using ChessBase 14 and the playchess.com client (included in ChessBase 14). For verbal communication we presume you may want to use Skype. However, the use of Skype will not be explained here, as Skype offers some tutorials on their website.

The basic idea is to use the playchess.com client as a chessboard which the trainer and the trainee are using at the same time despite the fact that they might be several hundred or even thousands of kilometres apart. And they can use Skype to talk to each other without losing time or concentration such as are inherent in the use of a chat window.

This manual will show you – step by step – how to conduct, as a trainer, online training and how to get the most out of it as a trainee. Beside the technical instructions the manual will also give you a lot of recommendations. It is not mandatory to follow them but they are at least worth a think.

If you do already have experience with doing online training sessions with ChessBase 14 on playchess.com you might simply skip through this manual to make sure you had not missed anything important.

If you have any questions, remarks or criticisms please contact me under Martin.Fischer@chessbase.com.

Enjoy the read

Martin Fischer

Content

Part 1 - Technical Requirements	2
Part 2 – Your ChessBase Account and the Playchess World	3
Part 3 – The Online Training session	6
Part 4 – Tips and Tricks	12

Part 1

Technical Requirements

You need a PC or notebook with ChessBase 14 and Skype. As ChessBase 14 requires a Microsoft system, Windows 7 or better, you have to make sure that your PC or notebook provides this environment. If you use a Mac, a program like Parallels Desktop will solve the issue for you.

Skype is available for free and you have to install it and register yourself to Skype. How to do this is not part of this manual but is not too difficult, look at <https://www.skype.com>. In order to use Skype you need a microphone, a speaker and a webcam.

Should you not already have ChessBase 14 on your machine, you have to install and activate it. If you have a DVD with ChessBase just run the setup file and follow the instructions during the installation process. It is recommended to use the default settings as ChessBase is more convenient to use if you do not change these settings (Unless you do know exactly what you are doing). If you have ChessBase 14 as a download in your ChessBase online shop account you must first click on Setup ChessBase (make the right choice between 64bit and 32bit). An .exe-file will be downloaded to your machine. When the download is completed just run the .exe-file and follow the instructions during the installation process.

When the installation is completed you have to activate ChessBase 14 by entering the serial key. You will find the serial key either in the DVD box or in your shop account. The key has five blocks with five characters each, followed by a sixth block with CB14. The activation is necessary to make full use of ChessBase 14 and to get the free updates we do offer from time to time. You will be able to install and activate ChessBase 14 on three machines simultaneously.

Part 2

Your ChessBase account

2.1 Basics

As soon as you have started your ChessBase 14 you have the opportunity to connect yourself with just one click to playchess.com. In order to offer training on playchess.com or to receive training there you need a playchess.com/ChessBase account. If you own ChessBase 14 the serial key is worth three months Premium Membership.

2.2 The design of your playchess.com/ChessBase account

Your playchess.com account represents something like a business card for you. Therefore you should use the chances we offer to you to design your account and provide information about you and your work as a chess trainer.

When you have entered playchess.com you will see at the top of your screen a wide choice of features:



Please click on “Account” and then when you click on “About Me” you will be able to see your account as anyone else will see it. You are able to change this information by using “Edit User Data” when the following window will pop up:

Identity	
Unique Nickname:	Martin_Fischer
E-Mail:	Martin.Fischer@chessbase.com
First Name:	Martin
Last Name:	Fischer
Country:	Germany
Geographic Position:	53°42'00" N 010°01'01" E
	<input type="button" value="Find Coordinates"/>

The first option you have is to make clear your identity. Although we accept all kind of names, like Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse etc., as long as they do not hurt the ethical or religious feelings of other people, I do recommend trainers to just use their real name. This is simply the most reliable. Your e-mail address is not shown publicly. Just sysops with special rights are able to see it. However, it is necessary to enter it as

we need it to contact you in the event of an emergency or a password reset, etc.

This feature is more or less self-explanatory. Naturally you are not obliged to enter this data, but of course it is once again a question of the reliability of your account.

Rating and Title Data

Gender: Mr. Ms. Comp.

Birthday:

FIDE Title FM IM GM

No download of my games

If you activate “No download of my games” no user is able to download your internet games. The other way round, any user who is using ChessBase may download your last 40 games.

Change Picture

Personal Information

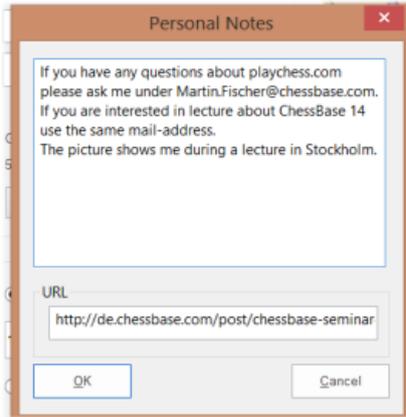
Personal Information

Maybe the best way to create trust in your future trainees is a picture. Therefore you must not miss this opportunity to show yourself.

If you want to add a picture click on “Change picture” and browse through your machine until you find the right one. Take care that it is not bigger than 70 kb and that it is in JPEG. Recommended is approx. 360 pixels square.

The next important step is to write something about yourself. The text must not be too long. A maximum of approx. 240 characters will be shown.

The text is your chance to offer your services as a trainer or as a player (in league matches). Do not forget to mention an e-mail address at which



people can contact you or even better, if available, mention your homepage.



Finally, once everything is done, your ID card will look like this. Your web page is just one click away as the program will directly set a link.

2.3 Ranks on playchess.com

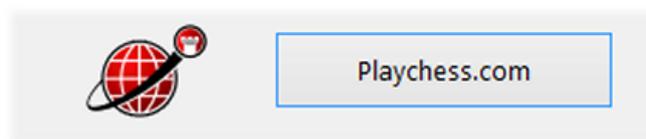
On playchess.com we have different ranks. In general they depend on two parameters. Playing strength and activity. Each FIDE GM (or WGM) will receive the rank of King, each IM or WIM the rank of Queen at least. Other ways to obtain a higher rank are activity and a high server elo.

Part 3

How to start and run an online training session on playchess.com

3.1 Getting started

The first step is to start your ChessBase 14. Here you can log in with your ChessBase account, as you can see from the following picture:



At the top of your screen you will see if you are logged in with your ChessBase account.

At the right side of your screen you will see the room structure of playchess.com. As a trainer you might navigate to the rooms “Training and Teaching” or Fritz-Chess-School. Both rooms are designed especially for online-training. In the brackets you see how many people have entered the virtual rooms.

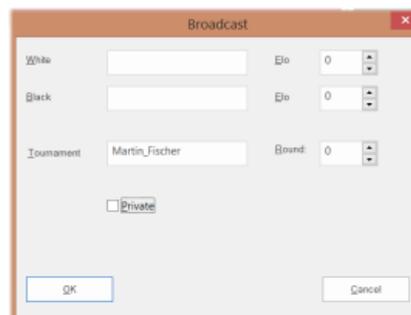
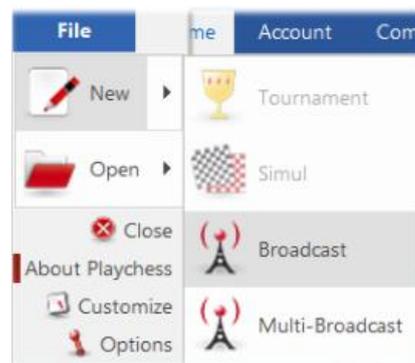
The next step is prepare the online session and to start it. An online training session is defined on playchess.com as a broadcast. Therefore you have to start a new broadcast. Please go on File → New → Broadcast and click here with your mouse. You are able to do the same with just the keyboard, as we have defined a short-cut key here:

Ctrl+B

A window will pop up on the right. As mentioned before, an online training session will be handled by the program like a game broadcast. Therefore you have White, Black and Tournament and you are obliged to make use of these squares to give a name to your training session.

Why these, at first impression somewhat ridiculous settings? The

If you are not logged in just click at the bottom left corner of your screen on the button to Playchess.com and without any further click you will be logged in with your ChessBase account.



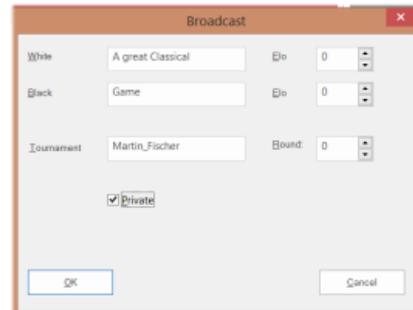
reason is of a technical nature! If you want to save the content of your online session you might later on simply hit Ctrl+S (this will be explained in detail later on) and the training session will fit perfectly into any ChessBase database, thanks to these “ridiculous” settings.

The next step will be to name your training session by filling out White and Black. You might choose a title for your lecture or, if you want to show just a single game, take the name of the players.

The program proposes automatically the name of the trainer as the Tournament, but you are free to change it. However, in a database this will be shown as “Tournament”.

A really important feature, were you to make use of it, is “Private”. If you activate “Private” the training session can only be followed by users who have been invited by you. Usually this is the recommended setting, especially when you take money for your training.

By clicking OK you will start your online training session.

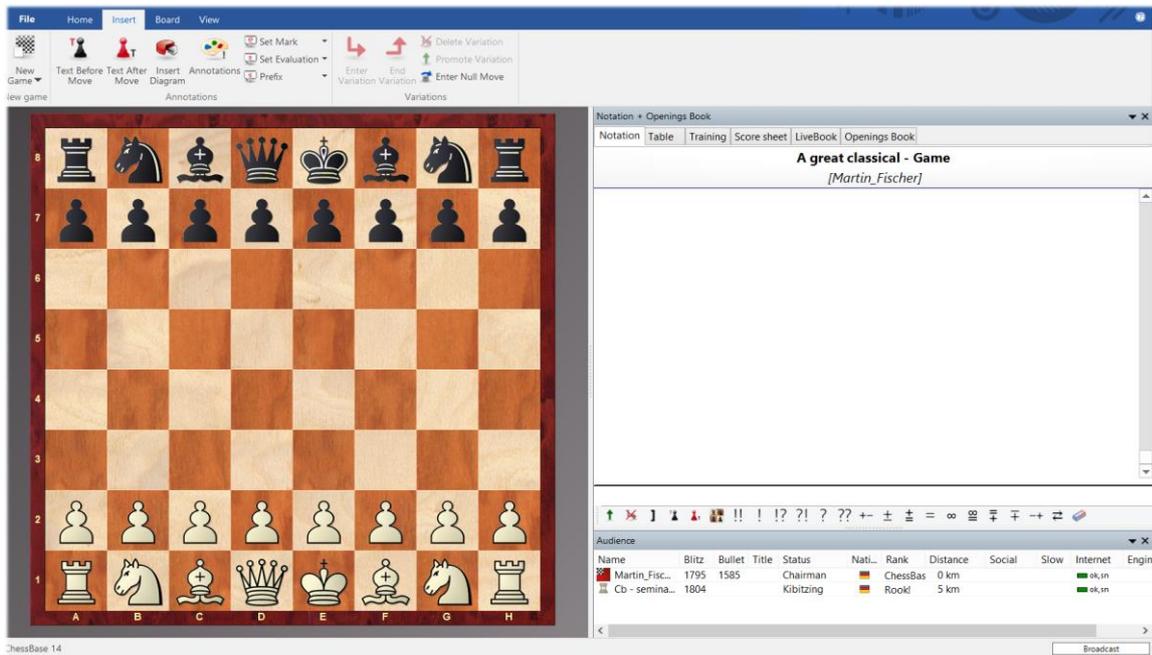


Field	Value	Elo	Bound
White	A great Classical	0	0
Black	Game	0	0
Tournament	Martin_Fischer	0	0

Private

OK Cancel

After you have clicked on the OK button a board will be opened and you will see on your screen something like this:



Let me explain the reasons for the chosen screen.

1. I have closed the clocks, as this is training and neither a blitz game nor a real broadcast. There is no need for them!
2. And I have shut down the chat window as I will communicate with the trainee by using Skype. Therefore there is no need for the chat window.
3. I have set the audience window to be just as large as needed to show me and all the trainees (in the example just one).
4. The board and the notation are set as large as possible, as it is here that the action will take place.
5. Finally, at the top of the screen I have chosen the feature “Insert”, as it provides me with easy access to all the features I might use during the training session to annotate the game. However, it is quite easy to change between the features File, Home, Insert, Board and View, if necessary. Just pick the one you want to use with the mouse.

At the same time you and your trainee have set up a connection via Skype, so it is easy to communicate verbally. From a technical point of view it is possible to communicate without Skype, via chat, but this is definitely less comfortable and much slower. If you are training more than one person in the same session you might set up a Skype conference.

3.2 Invite your trainee to the session

When you have chosen the option “Private” you have to invite each trainee manually to your lecture. Therefore you have to visit the “hall” by clicking the following symbol (take care that you do not close the board windows):



Then chose the tab “Players”

Info	Players	Games	World			
Name	Blitz	Bullet	Title	Status	Nati..	
Zoranp	2639	2516	IM	Chairman		
Martin_Fisc...	1795	1585		Chairman/L...		
Cb - semina...	1804			Kibitzing/Id...		
Rosslare78	1227			Kibitzing		

and highlight your trainee. Then hit the right mouse button and choose the option “Invite to private broadcast”. As soon as you have invited your trainee to your private broadcast the board window will pop up on the screen of your pupil and the session may start.

3.3 Starting the training session

You have several options to enter moves or positions.



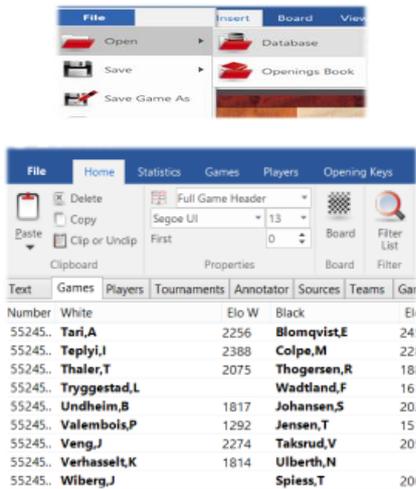
The first one is the obvious and classical one: simply enter the moves on the board. When you enter a move the same move will appear on the board of your trainee(s), maybe, depending on the connection, with the delay of a fraction of a second.

Bear in mind if you have activated “Assisted analysis” in ChessBase 14 this feature will be shown on your screen only and not on the screen of your pupil as well. Your trainee will just see the moves when you have entered them. The trainee will see text annotations when you have entered them and hit OK, but not while you are typing.



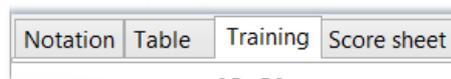
Another option is to build up the position manually. Simply hit the button S when the cursor is above the board window and a window like the one on the left will appear. The process of constructing the position is not transmitted to your trainee. He/She will just receive the position on the board when you hit OK.

The third option is to upload the game from a database on your machine. Chose File → Open → Databases (or just hit the button F12). The typical Microsoft window will be opened and you may browse your way to the database of your choice. Open the database and the list of games will be shown to you.



You have the usual choices available as in ChessBase 14, especially the search mask. If you double-click on a game the game will be opened on your screen as well as on the screen of your trainee. You are now able to go over the complete game with your pupil.

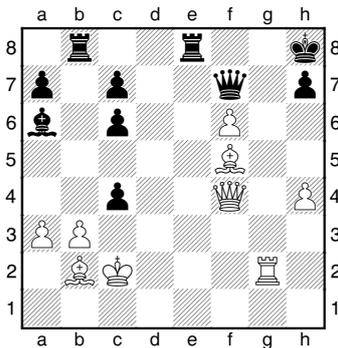
It might be a useful idea to ask your pupil to switch to the “Training” mode



in cases like this as it is more demanding to replay a game this way.

3.4 Allowing your trainee to enter moves or keeping the role of a chairman

Usually, the trainer is the only one who is able to enter moves or comments to the games. The trainee is technically not able to do this. The trainee has to give all his/her input via Skype (or chat). However, these default settings are not always useful.

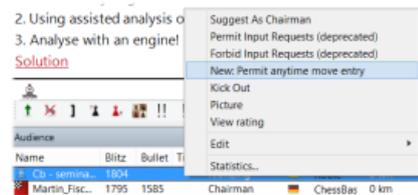


White to move

For example, in the position on the left, you want to see how your trainee tackles the task of detecting candidate moves and analysing them correctly. It is useful to allow him/her to enter moves, let him/her do so and see how the job will be done.

The best way to do so is to go into the player list, highlight your trainee (you may even highlight more than one, if this seems to be useful) and click on him/her with the right mouse button:

Then chose “Permit anytime move entry” and your trainee may enter moves. The moves will be shown on your screen, and the screens of any other trainees. However, you are still able to enter moves. As the chairman you are able to revoke the permission at any time. Highlight the trainee again, use your right mouse button and stop the right to enter moves.



If you choose “Suggest As Chairman” your trainee will be in the role of the chairman with all that person’s rights.

Part 4

Tips and Tricks

So far I have demonstrated the technical basics of running an online training session in ChessBase. In this chapter I will show some features of ChessBase, especially ChessBase 14, which will make the work flow more easily for you and for your trainee or which will help you and your trainee to achieve better results.

4.1 Preparing Your Lesson

It is always useful to prepare your lesson and store – in advance – all the games and all the positions you want to show or you want to use during a session in a

special database. You are able to save some time and your performance will look more professional.

If you are using positions for exercises, take care that you do not upload the solution as well when you upload the position. In order to avoid this it is useful to save just the starting position in your database and mark it as an exercise. See the following example:

Number	White	Elo W	Black	Elo B	Result	Mov...	ECO	Tournament
1	Fischer,R		Reshevsky,S		Line		B35	<i>Exercise New Yo..</i>
2	Tal,M	2620	Uhlmann,W	2570	Line		C07	<i>Exercise Alekhin..</i>

Here there are just the starting positions of the exercises (see move → no moves entered) and the example is named as Exercise. I have added the task to be solved as a text so it is easier for your trainees to see what they have to do and it is easier for you when this is prepared as you save some time.



4.2 Save your analysis during the training session

If you want to save the analysis your trainee has done, or you have done together with your trainees, you have to do this before you start a new game or upload a new position. Just enter Ctrl+S, choose the database where you want to save the analysis and do so.

Bear in mind that the “Save” feature is somewhat different in ChessBase 14:

-
Command Save (Ctrl+S) With this command you will always save the game on your screen in its actual version and overwrite earlier versions. The two commands, save and replace, you might know from earlier ChessBase versions, are combined in a single command: Save.

Command Save as A New Game (No shortcut defined) If you want to save the actual version of the game as a new game in another database (or even the same database as a copy) you have to choose this command. Browse your way to the database you need and then save the game here.

4.3 Using an engine

If you are, or your trainee is, using an engine during the session, this will not be shown on the other person's screen. Therefore you have to trust your trainee that he/she is not wasting your time. On the other hand, if your trainee is doing the analysis of a difficult and very tactical game you might check the suggestions with an engine. It might be helpful to spot mistakes immediately as this saves your (and your trainee's) energy.

Sometimes it might be useful to encourage your trainee to use an engine with the idea that the trainee has the job to "translate" the engine's evaluations, which are just numbers, into prose and explain what is going on in the position. This is a useful exercise in learning the efficient use of an engine. In this case you should use your own engine too.

4.4 Use the cloud feature of ChessBase

ChessBase 14 has an efficient and very strong cloud feature (introduced with ChessBase 13). This feature is a useful tool for any trainer, but very efficient when supporting online training.

Basically, with the cloud feature you are able to save games and positions in cloud databases and share these databases with other users. Or publish these databases with an URL in the web, so your pupil might have access even without owning ChessBase 13 or 14.

You may enter the cloud with your ChessBase account. Just click on the Cloud feature in your ChessBase start window:



You might create a special cloud database for each of your trainees. Just select “Create Cloud Database” and choose a name for the database, maybe the name of your trainee:

Dateiname:

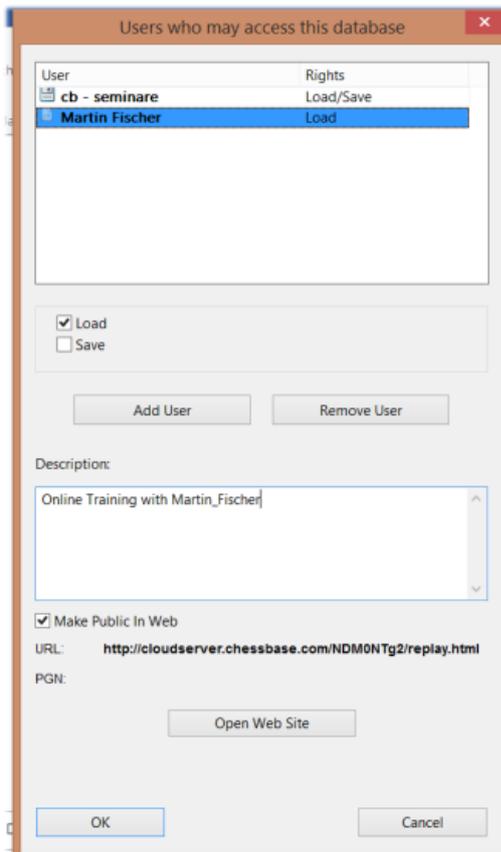
Dateityp:

The program will create a new database in a special cloud-format (CBCLOUD). This database is the sort of database you are familiar with. You can enter games, positions, exercises and you may use all the annotation features you know from ChessBase. The icon for the database is shown as a cloud:



Trainee

With the feature “Database Sharing” you are able to define for a highlighted cloud database who has access and which form of access.



With the feature “Add User” you are able to add people with whom you share the database. Just enter their ChessBase account name.

They now have access to the database when they are using ChessBase 13 or 14. Either they are able to load the database and have a look at it, even copy the content on their machines (Load) or they are able to add their own variations or games (Save).

The creator of a database has the option to make the database public on the web by using the feature shown on the left below. However, this is just semi-public, as the URL is rather arbitrary.

However, as a trainer you might send this URL to your trainees and they will have access to the cloud database. They will see the content in the following way:





As mentioned above, the cloud feature is a great tool to support your online lessons. Here are a few examples of how to use it efficiently:

- You might save the analysis from your online sessions in the cloud databases and share with your trainee.
- If you have a group of trainees you might save all the material in a cloud database. Then you might progress with your lessons even if one trainee has missed the lesson, as he/she is able to work over the material.
- You might publish additional material here to deepen the understanding or offer your trainees additional possibilities.